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DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE STATE

Competence, Control, and Performance
in Indonesia's Civil Service

Jan H. Pierskalla
The Ohio State University



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One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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Jan H. Pierskalla
The Ohio State University

Author for correspondence: Jan H. Pierskalla, Pierskalla.4@osu.edu

Abstract: Does democratization lead to more meritocracy in the civil service? The Element argues that electoral accountability increases the value of competence over personal loyalty in the civil service. While this resembles an application of merit principles, it does not automatically reduce patronage politics or improve public goods provision. Competent civil servants are often used to facilitate the distribution of clientelistic goods at mass scale to win competitive elections. The selection of competent but less loyal civil servants requires the increased use of control mechanisms, like the timing of promotions, to ensure their compliance. The Element tests these claims using novel micro-level data on promotions in Indonesia's civil service before and after democratization in 1999. The Element shows that national- and local-level elections led to increased promotion premiums for educated civil servants, and simultaneously generated electoral cycles in the timing of promotions, but did little to improve public goods provision.

The appendix for this Element can be found online at:
www.cambridge.org/appendix_democratization_and_the_state

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A further Online Appendix can be accessed at
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