

Human Resource Management of the Indonesian Armed Forces Special Operations Command in Developing Counterterrorism Capabilities

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian Armed Forces Joint Special Operations Command (Koopssus TNI) has a strategic role in ensuring national security, especially in situations that require quick and precise action. This study aims to analyze human resource management aspect in the Koopsus TNI in fostering special operations capabilities to deal with the threat of terrorism. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This study uses direct observation and in-depth interviews with the TNI Kooppssus for data collection. The results of the study indicate that fostering special operations capabilities of Kooppssus TNI requires a planned, directed, sustainable, and integrated strategy, with a participatory approach that optimizes the involvement of all parties to improve joint capabilities. This strategy includes the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of coaching involving individual training, consolidation, unit training, and inter-unit training arranged in an integrated calendar. These steps support Kooppssus TNI in overcoming the threat of terrorism with a focus on intelligence, defense, and regional empowerment. The strategy evaluation shows the need to improve the quality of personnel, training facilities, and resource management to ensure optimal preparedness in dealing with special tasks.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Kooppssus TNI, Military Capability Development, Security Threat Mitigation.

ABSTRAK

Komando Operasi Khusus Gabungan (Koopssus) TNI memiliki peran strategis dalam menjamin keamanan nasional, terutama dalam situasi yang membutuhkan tindakan cepat dan tepat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis aspek manajemen sumber daya manusia di Kooppssus TNI dalam pembinaan kemampuan operasi khusus untuk menghadapi ancaman terorisme. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Penelitian ini menggunakan observasi langsung dan wawancara mendalam dengan Kooppssus TNI untuk pengumpulan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembinaan kemampuan operasi khusus Kooppssus TNI memerlukan strategi yang terencana, terarah, berkelanjutan, dan terpadu, dengan pendekatan partisipatif yang mengoptimalkan keterlibatan semua pihak untuk meningkatkan kemampuan gabungan. Strategi ini meliputi perumusan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi pembinaan yang meliputi latihan individu, konsolidasi, latihan satuan, dan latihan antarsatuan yang disusun dalam kalender terpadu. Langkah-langkah ini mendukung Kooppssus TNI dalam mengatasi ancaman terorisme dengan fokus pada intelijen, pertahanan, dan pemberdayaan wilayah. Evaluasi strategi menunjukkan perlunya peningkatan kualitas personel, sarana dan prasarana latihan, dan pengelolaan sumber daya untuk memastikan kesiapan optimal dalam menghadapi tugas-tugas khusus.

Kata kunci: Kooppssus TNI, Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Mitigasi Ancaman Keamanan, Pengembangan Kapabilitas Militer.

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of terrorism in Indonesia continues to be a significant concern, influenced by a complicated interplay of radical beliefs, local security factors, and the changing landscape of international terror organizations. In light of these ongoing threats, Indonesia has enhanced its law enforcement and intelligence capabilities while also forming specialized military units that operate under the command of the Indonesian Armed Forces (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia/TNI*). The elite unit is known as the Indonesian Armed Forces Joint Special Operations Command (*Komando Operasi Khusus Tentara Nasional Indonesia Koopsus TNI*). The occurrence of terrorism on an international scale is one of the reasons or factors that encourage the formation of a three-dimensional integrated special force (Boy et al, 2020). Of the several threats in Military Operations, acts of terrorism are threats that have increased in networks, military strength, and damage caused (Wulandari et al, 2021). This elite force embodies the nation's commitment to evolving its counter-terrorism approach by integrating military expertise into a comprehensive national security framework, with the goal of effectively addressing the complex challenges posed by contemporary terrorism.

Indonesian Law Number 34 of 2004, Article 7 states that one of the main duties of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) is “to provide protection to all Indonesian people from any forms of threats and disturbances to the integrity of the nation,” which is carried out through Military Operations for War (MOW) and Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW). One of the MOOTW missions is to address terrorism threats (Putra & Lubis, 2022). As outlined above, terrorism is one of the ideological threats currently faced by Indonesia. According to the Commander of the TNI's Decision Number Kep/712/VII/2019 on War Military Operation Doctrine, Chapter II, military threats include armed terrorist threats from international terrorism networks and/or collaboration with domestic terrorists (Syahdi, 2025).

The Koopssus TNI, established on July 30, 2019, comprises land, sea, and air forces with specialized capabilities, enabling rapid deployment and high success rates in counter-terrorism operations both domestically and internationally (Ariefana, 2019; Syailendra, 2019). Its primary mission is to conduct special operations, including counter-terrorism, while maintaining a high level of operational readiness supported by robust logistics, as evidenced by JSOC's successful operation against Osama Bin Laden in 2011 (Herdayatamma et al., 2022). Additionally, Koopssus TNI addresses various core missions, including cybersecurity, reflecting the dynamic nature of emerging threats (Sulistiyana et al., 2022). According to the Commander of Koopssus TNI Regulation Number 01 of 2020 on the main organizational structure and procedures of Koopssus TNI, the organizational structure consists of permanent and non-permanent elements. Personnel staffing for the permanent organization requires qualifications such as commando and/or anti-terror training, with relevant field expertise. The total strength of the unit is around 400 personnel, and personnel readiness is ensured through standardized training as outlined in the Commander of Koopssus TNI Regulation Number 11 of 2020, covering military tactics, general skills, physical health, psychological standards, and other requirements (Rahendra, 2021).

Koopssus TNI enhances its capabilities through individual training, intelligence skill maintenance, and operational readiness drills. However, non-permanent operational units face challenges due to a lack of monitoring mechanisms for their readiness (Rohmy et al., 2020). The emphasis on intelligence support equipment has also resulted in insufficient weaponry for counter-terrorism missions (Dili, 2021). Key issues affecting Koopssus TNI's effectiveness include suboptimal unit capacity, lack of integration among specialized units, and inadequate equipment (Haripin et al., 2020). To overcome these challenges, deploying professional soldiers with expertise in military equipment and strategic movement is essential, as outlined in the TNI Doctrine Decision Number Kep/555/VI/2018 (Sugiarto, 2022). Continuous development of personnel and systems is necessary to ensure operational readiness (Putro, 2022).

Research on counter-terrorism in Indonesia has largely centered on security strategies, national policies, and law enforcement roles, with minimal focus on human resource management (HRM) in military special operations units such as TNI Koopssus. Existing studies emphasize operational capabilities and legal frameworks (Boy et al., 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021) but rarely examine how recruitment, training, career management, and competency development directly enhance special operations performance against terrorism. Moreover, the integration of personnel readiness across land, sea, and air dimensions remains suboptimal, and monitoring systems in non-permanent units are limited, affecting operational consistency. This study aims to fill these gaps by analyzing HRM practices in TNI Koopssus to strengthen its special operations capabilities in countering terrorism threats effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management in Koopssus TNI

Human Resource Management (HRM) in modern organizations plays a key role as a driver that aligns employee needs with the company's strategic goals. Recent literature emphasizes that HRM now focuses on value creation through talent management, leadership development, and strengthening organizational cultures that are adaptive to technological changes and global markets (Bouaziz & Hachicha, 2018; Jackson et al., 2024). Data-driven approaches and people analytics are used to identify training needs, increase productivity, and optimize workforce retention. In addition, HRM in organizations increasingly emphasizes employee experience, which includes mental well-being, work flexibility, and employee engagement, which has been proven to increase innovation and competitiveness. This transformation makes HRM not just an administrative function, but a strategic partner in achieving organizational sustainability in the digital era (Zournatzidou et al., 2025; Djunaedi, 2025).

Human Resource Management (HRM) in TNI Koopssus is crucial for sustaining effectiveness, professionalism, and readiness in facing terrorism and cross-border operations. Wibowo and Suharyanto (2025) stress that agility training, adaptability, and technological mastery are vital for preparedness. Purwantoro et al. (2024) argue that modern defense HRM must integrate motivation, competence, and adaptive rewards to sustain elite troop morale. Haripin (2019) notes that civil-military relations and MOOTW missions shape personnel management, while Honna (2022) highlights political and legal dynamics in counterterrorism deployment, requiring operational-public accountability balance. Samudro et al. (2022) emphasize integrated training facilities. Thus, HRM in Koopssus demands a holistic strategy, including selective recruitment, continuous education and training, and performance management aligned with national defense objectives.

Role of Indonesian Armed Forces TNI in Counter Terrorism

The role of the Indonesian Armed Forces in counterterrorism is shaped by Indonesia's unique security landscape, where terrorism is seen as both a national security threat and a challenge to social stability. Historically, counterterrorism was primarily a police-led mandate, especially after the enactment of Law Number 2/2002 and the establishment of Detachment 88. However, scholars such as Haripin (2019) note that the TNI has reasserted its role in non-war military operations (Military Operations Other Than War/MOOTW) due to evolving threats and the limitations of civilian law enforcement in certain high-risk scenarios. Honna (2022) highlights the legal and political debates over military "call-outs" for domestic counterterrorism, emphasizing concerns about civil-military relations and democratic oversight. The operational effectiveness of the TNI especially through its Special Forces (Kopassus) and Koopssus lies in rapid deployment, intelligence integration, and capabilities in high-intensity hostage or siege situations, though these also raise human rights concerns. Internationally, as Mietzner (2020) observes, Indonesia's approach combines police primacy with selective military engagement, aiming to strike a balance between operational efficiency and democratic

accountability. Studies by Djuyandi et al. (2023) suggest that strategic inter-agency coordination and improved joint training are critical for enhancing counterterrorism success while minimizing the risks of militarization in internal security.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of strategic and operational challenges within Koopssus TNI in counter-terrorism contexts. A qualitative method is deemed appropriate because it allows exploration of complex organizational phenomena, such as personnel readiness, inter-unit coordination, and strategic decision-making, which cannot be fully captured through quantitative measures (Sugiarto, 2022). Data collection was carried out through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and literature and documentation review. Observation was essential for capturing real-time field dynamics, including daily operational activities, personnel interaction patterns, and the practical application of strategic policies. In-depth interviews provided nuanced insights into the perceptions, experiences, and evaluations of stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in Koopssus TNI's counter-terrorism operations. Literature and documentation studies complemented these primary methods, enabling triangulation and strengthening the validity of findings by cross-verifying data from multiple sources.

Sampling was conducted purposively, selecting informants based on their relevance and capacity to provide rich and accurate information. Key informants included structural officials within Koopssus TNI, responsible for formulating strategies and policies, and operational personnel directly engaged in specific missions. This combination ensured that the data reflected both strategic and operational perspectives, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of the issues studied. Data validity testing relied on triangulation techniques, in which multiple data sources and informant perspectives were compared to confirm the consistency of findings. Source triangulation involved rechecking interview results against literature reviews and documentary evidence. This multi-method validation helped mitigate researcher bias and enhance the credibility of results.

The data analysis process followed the interactive and iterative model proposed by Huberman and Miles (2002). Analysis was conducted continuously alongside data collection, involving three interconnected activities: data reduction (selecting and focusing on relevant information), data display (organizing findings into coherent forms), and conclusion drawing/verification (identifying patterns, relationships, and strategic implications). This iterative process continued until the data reached saturation, ensuring that interpretations were grounded in comprehensive and consistent evidence.

RESULTS

Concept of Formation of Koopsuss TNI

The formation of Koopssus TNI is driven by the persistent threat of terrorism, which undermines national stability through violence and public intimidation (Zaidan, 2017). A specialized unit with measurable qualifications is essential to counter these threats and safeguard state sovereignty both internally and externally, as well as politically and legally. Legally, sovereignty reflects the state's authority to enforce laws within its jurisdiction, a responsibility borne by government institutions (Kamil, 2022). Politically, it embodies the people's power to shape national policies. As a state apparatus established by legal policy, Koopssus TNI plays a vital role in addressing terrorism and maintaining national stability (Putra, 2021).

The organizational structure of Koopssus TNI comprises permanent and non-permanent elements. Permanent elements include command, support staff, and operational units directly under Koopssus TNI's control, including intelligence components. Non-permanent elements consist of special, naval, air, and support units sourced from other branches of the armed forces. This multi-command arrangement

presents challenges in maintaining readiness, capability, and operational control effectiveness.

Koopssus TNI implements a rigorous selection and training process to maintain peak readiness for special operations, particularly in responding to terrorism. While not all recruits originate from special forces backgrounds, they undergo structured programs and advanced training to meet the unit's operational standards. The selection process prioritizes individual readiness, supported by continuous and scenario-specific exercises designed to address the diverse challenges posed by varying terrains, targets, and risks. This readiness is embedded in the unit's daily operational culture, where all personnel, from command staff to operational elements, are expected to remain on standby for immediate deployment. Recruitment is highly selective, extending even to personnel from elite units in each branch of the TNI, who must undergo re-selection to ensure consistent capability standards and mental preparedness. This stringent process ensures that every soldier possesses the skills and mindset necessary for the rapid, precise, and effective execution of special operations, while maintaining the overall quality and cohesion of the organization.

The development of Koopssus TNI's personnel structure requires two approaches. In the permanent organization, personnel must undergo rigorous preparation through a strict selection process, with Koopssus TNI granted authority to select candidates provided by each Force to ensure quality standards. In the non-permanent organization, 90% of operational units, including special, naval, reinforcement, air, and support units, are not directly under Koopssus TNI, creating challenges in maintaining readiness, soldier capabilities, and effective command and control. To address this, these units should be integrated into Koopssus TNI's daily activities as standby forces, enabling close monitoring of strength, continuous capability training, and improved operational coordination. Although assigning special units to Koopssus TNI may temporarily reduce their parent unit's strength, this would encourage each main command to propose additional personnel, targeting 95% of the official personnel composition. This approach supports sustained operational readiness to meet contingencies, while keeping each Force responsible for maintaining its own strength.

Furthermore, the integration of counter-terrorism training with other anti-terror units should be implemented by formulating a policy for integrating Anti-Terror training between Koopssus TNI and elements such as: National Counter – Terrorism Agency (known as BNPT), Special Detachment 88 Polri (Densus 88 Polri), Unit 81 Kopassus (Sat 81 Kopassus), Detachment Jala Mengkara (Denjaka), and Bravo Unit 90 Paskhas (Satbravo'90 Paskhas), and other relevant institutions/agencies. The goal is to foster cohesion, solidarity, and standardization of capabilities and skills in the application of techniques and tactics to combat terrorism. This applies not only to Koopssus TNI personnel but also to the operational units originating from Sat 81 Kopassus, Denjaka, Satbravo'90 Paskhas, and includes elements of Densus 88 Polri.

Implementation of the Koopsus TNI Operation

Conceptually, special operations are the use of small units and have strategic and operational objectives, indicating that special operations are created not only for the purpose of reducing enemy strength in quantity, but rather towards achieving specifically determined objectives (Clancy et al., 2003). Special operations also focus on strategically valuable targets that specifically affect the capabilities of enemy troops, such as destroying or disrupting them. Therefore, in understanding special operations, it must be studied since their existence is intended to overcome special matters using special resources.

Special operations fundamentally have three primary tasks: deterrence, action, and recovery. Currently, the implementation of special operations conducted by the Koopssus TNI is predominantly focused on the action aspect. This is partly due to insufficient regulations for addressing terrorism threats, which has led to its role being oriented toward providing assistance for arising issues. In comparison, the concept of special operations in the United States, represented by the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC),

highlights a broader range of duties and functions. These include studying special operations techniques, standardizing equipment, planning and conducting exercises, developing joint operations tactics, and executing special operations with the deployment of special forces units at Tier One to carry out missions with high-risk targets (high value targets) (Martinage, 2009). Unlike Koopsus TNI, which assembles small units from the special forces of each branch and places them on standby, JSOC functions as a command structure that primarily focuses on operational guidance and the implementation of special operations.

JSOC's operational elements consist of Tier One special forces units in the United States (U.S. Department of Defense). In addition, there are also JSOC elements that have a role as a supporting unit (Army Intelligence Support Activity), which has the task of providing intelligence support, and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, which is tasked with providing support for air mobility for the four special JSOC units that have been explained above. Therefore, within organizational and command structure, its members are not considered as individual personnel but rather units that contribute to the command's operations.

As an example of JSOC's special operations missions in capturing or eliminating of high-value targets, the highest command of JSOC assigns a specific Tier One unit based on to the relevance of its mission to execute the operation. For instance, during the operation to eliminate Osama Bin Laden on May 2, 2011 in his hideout, in Abbottabad, Pakistan, the unit selected to carry out the mission was Devgru from Seal Team 6. Unlike the Koopsus TNI, JSOC does not assemble a small unit from Tier One special forces into a new permanent unit. If faced with a spectrum of threats and operational conditions requiring the force to be a joint operation involving more than one Tier One unit, the deployment is handled on an ad-hoc basis through the formation of task forces. Once the mission is completed, the units involved are ideally returned immediately to their respective original units.

Thus, every member of the Tier One unit that is an element of JSOC, such as SEAL Team 6, RRC 75th Ranger Regiment, Delta Force, and 24th STS, is automatically part of JSOC. With the absence of a Standby Force method and no direct personal relationship between operators (soldiers) and JSOC, all relationships are only institutional. Hence, the orders instructed by JSOC are directly addressed to the operational unit, namely the unit appointed to be responsible for preparing several personnel to carry out the mission to completion.

To ensure that the Koopsus TNI is capable of comprehensively carrying out its duties and functions, it is necessary to adjust its implementation, focusing on the entire spectrum of prevention, enforcement, and post-incident recovery. This holistic approach is crucial given the complex, organized nature of the threat of terrorism, often involving multiple dimensions of social, political, economic, and technological. Therefore, the Koopsus TNI is required not only to be resilient in directly executing operations but also to be adept at building an integrated framework with various parties.

Koopssus TNI Special Operations Capability Development Strategy

Koopssus TNI's strategy formulation, guided by its vision and mission as the Central Operational Agency, focuses on overcoming terrorism through careful internal and external analysis to align resources, strategic conditions, and supporting or inhibiting factors. Capability development follows a staged approach: first, individual training conducted by each special TNI unit to meet standardized skills as a prerequisite for Standby Force selection; second, consolidation training to integrate personnel from land, sea, and air backgrounds, fostering a unified mindset and action pattern; third, unit training to strengthen coordination at unit, team, and task force levels; fourth, inter-unit training to ensure seamless cooperation with other operational forces in responding to terrorism threats; and finally, an integrated training calendar to synchronize selection, recruitment, and training schedules, avoiding overlaps while ensuring continuous and

tiered capability development. This structured process ensures Koopssus TNI maintains high operational readiness and cohesive special operations capability.

Strategy implementation. The implementation of the Koopssus TNI development strategy basically requires a decision from the authorized party, taking into account existing factors to ensure effective execution. Furthermore, the target capabilities for the development process are aligned with the Koopssus TNI's work program and budget, including intelligence, defense, security, and the empowerment of the Defense area (Meo, 2024). All of these efforts aim to equip Koopssus TNI to effectively address the evolving various threats of terrorism.

Strategy evaluation ensures Koopssus TNI's programs meet operational goals, with 2021 assessments highlighting three key areas. In intelligence, improvements require strict personnel selection, prioritization of special security materials, and provision of integrated communication systems to address equipment shortages. In defense, challenges include budget constraints, lack of operational guidelines, organizational gaps, limited counterterrorism-qualified personnel, and inadequate facilities, all of which hinder optimal capability development and necessitate organizational validation. For defense area empowerment, efforts remain limited due to budget shortfalls, though collaboration with TNI and civilian special operations experts offers potential for enhancement.

DISCUSSION

The establishment of Koopssus TNI is a strategic response to the persistent terrorism threat, which undermines national stability through acts of violence and intimidation. Such threats require a specialized force with rapid-response capabilities to safeguard state sovereignty in both political and legal dimensions. Political sovereignty reflects the people's authority in shaping national policy, while legal sovereignty pertains to the state's authority to enforce its laws. Koopssus TNI operates within this dual framework, legitimized through legal policy, with the primary mandate of addressing terrorism through decisive and lawful measures, thereby reinforcing national stability and the protection of the political-legal order. From an organizational theory perspective, its creation reflects a targeted mandate in counterterrorism that demands professional management supported by highly competent personnel. Recruitment emphasizes not only physical capabilities but also mental resilience, discipline, and readiness for complex operations. Continuous capacity building is implemented through advanced training in specialized anti-terrorism institutions, both domestically and internationally (Marius-Emanuel, 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Consistent with participatory development theory, Koopssus TNI adopts a collaborative approach that actively engages its personnel to enhance joint operational capabilities (Mangunhardjana, 1986). Effective personnel management is achieved through structured and measurable development programs. Following David's (2011) strategic management model, development requires integrated processes of strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. One key initiative is integrated training with elite units, such as BNPT, Densus 88 Polri, Sat 81 Kopassus, Denjaka, and Satbravo '90 Paskhas, which enhances interoperability, standardizes operational procedures, and strengthens mission readiness. Such coordination is a critical element in human resource management to maximize operational effectiveness (Purwanto & Siagan, 2025; Yang & Shen, 2025).

Persistent challenges remain, as noted by Widodo et al. (2018), where efforts to revitalize operational readiness are often constrained by inefficient procurement and development, a poorly structured education system, and ineffective personnel placement. Overcoming these issues necessitates strengthening management resources, particularly in competencies and technical skills, to enhance task performance (Sembiring & Sembiring, 2024). Key measures include organizational restructuring, specialized training, competency enhancement, and digitizing reporting systems to meet shifting operational demands (Muncahyo, 2024; Minculete, 2025). Ultimately, boosting Koopssus TNI's counterterrorism effectiveness requires a holistic assessment of

organizational structures, operational capabilities, personnel preparedness, logistics, and defense assets. Future strategies should prioritize improving soldier adaptability and ensuring systematic, well-coordinated solutions to address operational constraints (Wibowo et al., 2025). As a unit with both domestic and international mandates, Koopssus TNI must strive for peak capability to sustain its role in counterterrorism operations.

Practical implications of this study emphasize the need for Koopssus TNI to continuously strengthen its organizational structure, human resource competencies, and operational readiness through integrated training and strategic coordination with other elite units. Optimizing capacity-building programs both domestically and internationally can enhance adaptability to evolving terrorism threats, while structured personnel management ensures consistent performance standards. Furthermore, the adoption of advanced technology, digitized reporting systems, and efficient logistics support is essential to maintain rapid-response capabilities. These measures not only reinforce Koopssus TNI's role as a reliable counterterrorism force but also contribute directly to sustaining national stability and safeguarding political-legal sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the Koopssus TNI plays a pivotal role in safeguarding national stability and sovereignty through its specialized counter-terrorism mandate. The unit's effectiveness is grounded in rigorous personnel selection, continuous capacity-building, and strategic collaboration with other elite forces, ensuring operational readiness in high-risk environments. However, challenges remain in optimizing human resource management, including procurement, training systems, and performance placement, which necessitate structured and measurable development programs. Strengthening organizational frameworks, enhancing interoperability, and improving agility are critical to maintaining Koopssus TNI's status as a highly capable, responsive, and reliable counter-terrorism force. These measures will ensure the unit's sustained ability to address evolving terrorism threats both domestically and internationally.

This study's main limitation lies in its scope, which focuses on a limited number of interview respondents and selected key informants, potentially restricting the diversity of perspectives and experiences captured regarding Koopssus TNI's operational dynamics. Although supported by qualitative interview data, the findings may not fully represent all strategic, organizational, and operational variations within the unit. Despite this, the study offers practical implications, highlighting the urgency of continuous professional development, integrated joint training with other elite units, and reforms in human resource management to strengthen operational agility and interoperability. It is recommended that the Indonesian Armed Forces institutionalize standardized recruitment, structured training, performance evaluation, and enhanced inter-agency collaboration, alongside investments in technology and intelligence systems. For future research, expanding the sample size, incorporating perspectives from different levels of command, and employing approaches that combine qualitative interviews with quantitative performance analysis would provide a more comprehensive understanding of Koopssus TNI's strategic role in safeguarding national security.

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