

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MERIT SYSTEM IN FILLING STRUCTURAL POSITIONS IN THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SINJAI REGENCY SOUTH SULAWESI PROVINCE

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan mendeskripsikan efektivitas pelaksanaan sistem merit dalam pengisian jabatan struktural di Kabupaten Sinjai Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode penelitian kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan induktif. Adapun teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah reduksi data, paparan data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Untuk mengetahui efektivitas pelaksanaan sistem merit dalam pengisian jabatan struktural di Badan Kepegawaian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Aparatur (BKPSDMA) Kabupaten Sinjai ini menggunakan teori ukuran efektivitas dari Duncan yang meliputi penetapan tujuan, integrasi dan adaptasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa efektivitas pelaksanaan sistem merit dalam pengisian jabatan struktural di Badan Kepegawaian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Aparatur (BKPSDMA) Kabupaten Sinjai telah dilaksanakan dengan baik seperti terdapat komitmen dari pimpinan terkait pelaksanaan sistem merit dalam pengisian jabatan struktural, adanya dasar hukum yang kuat, dan adanya dukungan dari pemerintah Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan bagi Badan Kepegawaian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Aparatur Kabupaten Sinjai. Namun, masih terdapat beberapa kendala yang ditemukan berupa keterbatasan anggaran, minat pegawai untuk mengikuti uji kompetensi, belum tersedianya Assesment Center dan belum adanya tenaga fungsional assesor. Oleh karena itu upaya untuk mengatasi kendala tersebut adalah dengan menyediakan sarana Assesment Center, mengalokasikan anggaran untuk pelaksanaan sistem merit, dan memberikan motivasi dan dorongan kepada pegawai.

Kata Kunci : Efektivitas, Manajemen ASN, Sistem Merit

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine and describe the effectiveness of the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions in Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with an inductive approach. The data collection techniques covered observation, interviews and documentation. Data were analyzed using some stages, namely data reduction, data exposure, and drawing conclusions. The effectiveness of the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions in the Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMA) of Sinjai Regency was based on Duncan's theory of

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effectiveness measures covering goal setting, integration and adaptation. The results of the study showed that the merit system in filling structural positions in the Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMA) of Sinjai Regency has been well implemented. This is indicated by the leadership's commitment to the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions, a strong legal basis, and support from the South Sulawesi provincial government for the BKPSDMA. However, the implementation faced some challenges, namely budget constraints, employee interest in taking competency tests, the unavailability of an Assessment Center, and the absence of functional assessors. The effort to address those challenges includes providing Assessment Center facilities, allocating budgets for the implementation of the merit system, and providing motivation and encouragement to employees.

Keywords : Effectiveness, Management of Civil Servant, Merit System

Introduction

Currently, Indonesia is implementing a legally formal Merit System based on Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus in Article 1. The Merit System is a civil servant policy and management based on fair and reasonable qualifications, competencies, and performance without distinguishing political background, race, skin color, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability (Law Number 5 of 2014). The implementation of this system aims to recruit professional civil servant (ASN) who have high integrity and to place them in positions according to their educational qualifications, competencies, and performance as well as to avoid practical political activities. The implementation of this Merit system enables finding echelons who truly have good competencies and expertise, especially in terms of career development and fulfillment.

According to the executive journal of State Civil Apparatus System Management (Study on the Merit System in the Placement of the Highest Leadership Position in the regional government of Kepulauan Sangihe Regency), Merit System is "a system; a set of things that are connected or that work together (A combination of some factors that are related to each other, and if one factor changes it will change another)". The word "Merit means a good quality which is worthy to be praised (good things deserve to be appreciated)" Wunggu (2003). Moreover, the journal highlights that the selection of officials without applying the Merit System as a basis for assessment results in low professionalism in carrying out duties and functions (Sahambangung, 2019).

The implementation of this Merit System is also regulated by Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 concerning Civil Servant Management in Article 1 paragraph (24) and in the

Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Number 40 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Merit System in State Civil Apparatus Management.

The Merit System has also been applied to Civil Servants in Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province (<http://www.kabarsinjai.com>). The Merit System in this region is applied by carrying out a competency test, which is in collaboration with the Regional Civil Service Agency of South Sulawesi Province because Sinjai Regency does not have Assessment Center facilities.

This competency test aims to measure whether the employee's competency level is in accordance with the competency standards of their position. The State Civil Apparatus, especially Civil Servants in Sinjai Regency have to possess this competence in carrying out the duties and functions according to their position.

Based on the 2018-2023 strategic plan of *the Human Resources Development Agency* (BKPSDMA), the facilities and infrastructure data at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency is fairly good. However, the BKPSDMA does not have an Assessment Center. Assessment Centers function to carry out competency assessments to measure the behavior of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) through some simulations and testing their competency as a basis for filling positions at BKPSDMA of the Sinjai Regency. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to identify the effectiveness of the implementation of the Merit System for filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The implementation of the Merit System in State Civil Apparatus (ASN) management aims to recruit professional state civil apparatus who have high integrity and to place them in positions according to their educational qualifications, competencies, and performance as well as to avoid practical political activities.

Research Methods

Research is a process to understand a rare and new object. Research is included in the perspective of knowledge management and associated with writing scientific, semi-scientific, and even non-scientific works, which are very important intellectual activities and are continuously in the process (Simangunsong, 2017:6).

Simangunsong (2017:177) explains that research consists of 3 types, namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Furthermore, in his book entitled *Government Research Methodology*, Simangunsong (2017) defines qualitative research as research that uses a natural environment so that the data sources obtained directly are naturalistic, open, and not manipulative".

This study used a descriptive method referring to Simangunsong (2017:191). Qualitative research data are descriptive in nature and collected from interviews supported by field notes, pictures, videos, electronic personal documents, supporting notes, or other official records.

Based on the description above, this qualitative study used a descriptive method with an inductive approach. Therefore, the research was carried out in accordance with the facts in the field regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of the Merit System in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province.

Results and Discussion

The study on the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province used the theory of effectiveness measurements as proposed by Duncan (1973) in a book entitled *Organizational Effectiveness* proposed by M. Steers, R. (1985:53)

The operationalization of the concept refers to Duncan's theory (1973) covering:

1. Goal achievement.
2. Integration.
3. Adaptation

In this case, the researcher understands the the relationship between theory used and this research. Thus, researchers are able to collect the necessary and data to support this research.

A. The effectiveness of the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency is based on Duncan's theory (1973) as quoted by M. Steers (1985:53) of the effectiveness measurement.

1. Goal Achievement

Achieving goals as a whole requires steps or processes in the level of development so that the achievement of goals is guaranteed until the end. Factors influencing goal achievement include: (1) determining the target achievement time, (2) targets, and (3) underlying law.

Based on the results of the researcher's interview concerning the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province with a functional official of the Human Resources Analyst of the Planning, Procurement and Competency Mapping Sub-Division, namely Mr. Syahrul Alif Utama, S.STP on 16 January 2023,

there is no definite period because in reality the merit system is continuously and sustainably carried out.

The main target in implementing the competency is prioritized to fill in structural positions for Echelon II officials. The implementation of the competency test requires large costs so not all officials have got this test. The legal basis underlying the implementation of the merit system at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency is quite strong. Nationally, the merit system is an ASN management program throughout Indonesia from the central to the regional government.

This statement is supported by the Head of Competency Development, Mr. Firmadi Sudirman, S.Sos., MM that the implementation of the merit system in Sinjai Regency has been started since 2015 using an open selection system and using competency tests since 2020. In 2020 Sinjai Regency received a good predicate in the application of the merit system. Then, this region got a very good predicate in 2021. The target is to get a very good predicate with a full score of 4.00, while currently, Sinjai Regency has a score of 3.03. Ideally, all employees from the lowest to the top levels take the competency test, but in its implementation at the BKPSDMA Sinjai Regency only focuses on echelon II now.

The implementation of the merit system is supported by clear regulations such as Law Number 5 of 2014, Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation Number 15 of 2020, and Sinjai Regent Regulation to support the implementation of the merit system in filling public positions.

The results of the interview were analyzed and associated with the indicators of achieving goals, namely: (1) determining the target achievement time, (2) targets, and (3) underlying law. It can be said that there is no definite time for the implementation of the merit system in filling positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency as it depends on the budget available. The target for implementing the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency does not cover all employees. The current priority is for Echelon II officials.

Furthermore, the legal basis supporting the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency is quite strong, because there are national regulations strengthened by Sinjai Regent Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the Road Map for Bureaucratic Reform of the Sinjai Regional Government 2019-2023 to implement the merit system in filling positions.

2. Integration

The level of organizational capability in implementing socialization, increasing consensus, and communication with other organizations is influenced by two factors, namely (1) methods or

procedures and (2) the process of socialization. Based on the results of the interview with the Head of Information, Performance and Welfare of State Civil Apparatus, Mrs. Badriyanti Arta, SE., M.Ak concerning the implementation of the merit system at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency on 16 January 2023, the procedures for implementing the merit system in filling structural positions start from eligible employees who will fill structural positions need to prepare and submit administrative document to the selection committee for filling positions. Previously, a team was established to discuss the aspects of the independent assessments. Then, if the documents are complete, the next stage is the competency at the Regional Civil Service Agency of South Sulawesi Province. After getting the test score, it is continued with an interview test as well as a physical and mental health test.

The competency test scores will be adjusted to the placement for structural positions according to the person's competencies. The socialization regarding the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions in this region has been carried out 2 times in 2018 and 2019.

Based on the results of the interview, the stages of implementing the merit system in filling a structural position cover (1) preparing administrative documents, (2) competency tests, (3) interview tests, and (4) physical and mental health tests. This is in accordance with the procedures for implementing the merit system stated in the Announcement of the Selection Committee Number 1 of 2019 concerning Filling Structural Positions in Sinjai Regency.

The results of interviews, observations, and documentation on the integration dimension of the procedure indicators showed a clear procedure in the implementation of the merit system starting from eligible employees who will fill structural positions to prepare and submit administrative documents to the selection committee. Previously, there was a team of selection committee to discuss aspects to conduct independent research for the selection. If the documents are complete, a competency test will be carried out at the Regional Employment Agency (BKD) of South Sulawesi Province. After getting the competency test score, the next stage is an interview test and a physical and mental health test. The results of the competency test scores will be adjusted to the placement to fill in structural positions in accordance with the person's competencies.

In terms of the socialization process indicators, the socialization related to the implementation of the merit system in Sinjai Regency was carried out on 25 April 2018 in the Sinjai Regent's Office, and the socialization of independent assessment of the implementation of the merit system in government agencies in Sinjai Regency.

3. Adaptation

The adaptation process of an individual to environmental changes is influenced by two factors, namely (1) increased ability and (2) facilities and infrastructure. In this study, the researcher interviewed the Secretary of Sinjai Regency BKPSDMA, Mr. Ashar Ishak, S.Sos., MM on 16 January 2023 to examine the adaptation process in the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province.

Based on the results of the interview concerning the implementation of the merit system for filling structural positions by carrying out the competency test, the respondent had taken this test and felt an increase in his competence to fill the position. In this competency test, some aspects need to be achieved such as integrity, cooperation, orientation towards results, public service, self-development and others, managing change, decision-making, and the unifier of the nation. The facilities and infrastructure for the implementation of this merit-based competency test, the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency collaborates with the BKD of South Sulawesi Province which has an Assessment Center to carry out the competency test.

Based on the interviews concerning the adaptation indicators, namely increasing ability and facilities and infrastructure, there is an increase in ability after carrying out the competency test because the test covers some aspects including integrity to the unifier of the nation. From the assessment of these aspects, the competence of employees who have taken the competency test can be seen because there are assessment categories, development requirements, and placement requirements for filling structural positions. Concerning the facilities and infrastructure, Sinjai Regency does not have an Assessment Center so it collaborates with BKD to implement a merit-based competency test for filling in structural positions.

B. Inhibiting factors in the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province.

1. Goal Achievement Dimension

Based on interviews with the Head of the Program and Finance Sub-Division, Mrs. Iin Indriyani Indris, SE concerning the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions associated with the goal achievement dimension, there is no inhibiting factor because the implementation time is carried out annually depending on the budget availability. In terms of target indicators, the inhibiting factor is also the limited budget to carry out competency tests for all echelons at the BKPSDMA Sinjai Regency so the priority is echelon II officials. Besides, the echelons III and IV also have a low interest in participating in competency test assessment tests because of the lack of understanding of the importance of competency tests in the process of competency development and future career development. The legal basis indicator is clear so there

is no inhibiting factor in the legal basis indicator for implementing the merit system in filling structural positions.

The statement above is supported by research data on the limited budget in the Sinjai Regency to carry out competency tests. Therefore, only 2 (two) employees of the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency have taken the test.

The inhibiting factors in the goal achievement dimension are the target indicators because not all echelons can take the competency test, only 2 echelons III and IV of the BKPSDMA due to budget constraints. Many echelons III and IV officials do not understand the importance of competency tests for the development of their competencies and future careers. This is due to the lack of interest in taking the competency test.

2. Integration Dimension

Based on the interviews with the Head of the BKPSDMA of Sinjai regency, namely, Mr. Lukman Mannan, S.IP., M.Si concerning the implementation of the merit system, the inhibiting factor in the integration dimension, especially the indicator of the socialization process or procedure, does not exist. It depends on the implementation budget. Socialization has been carried out twice. The process and the requirements needed to take the merit-based competency test are clear.

Based on the results of the interview, it can be said that there are no inhibiting factors in the integration dimension in terms of socialization procedures and processes. The procedures for implementing a merit-based competency test in filling structural positions are clear and socialization has been carried out twice in Sinjai Regency.

3. Adaptation Dimension

The researcher conducted an interview with the Head of Information, Performance, and ASN Welfare, namely Mrs. Badriyanti Arta SE, M.Ak concerning the inhibiting factor in the implementation of the merit system for filling a structural position, especially for the indicator of increasing capability, facility, and infrastructure. The results of the interview showed that the inhibiting factor is the unavailability of the Assessment Center to implement the competency tests in Sinjai Regency. The employees here need to travel to the BKD in South Sulawesi Province to carry out the competency test so far. It's only BKD that has this assessment center. Sinjai Regency does not have an assessment center and assessors.

It can be said that the inhibiting factors in the adaptation dimension in implementing the merit system in filling structural positions at BKPSDMA Sinjai Regency are none especially if we

talk about the indicator of increasing capability. However, the inhibiting factors lie in the facilities and infrastructure where Sinjai Regency does not have an assessment center to carry out the competency tests. Besides, this region also does not yet have functional assessor staff. Therefore, the employees here need to go to BKD to take the competency test.

C. The supporting factors for the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency associated with Duncan's (1973) theory of effectiveness measurements.

1. Goal Achievement Dimension

The achievement dimension has some indicators, namely determining the target time, the target, and the underlying law. Based on an interview with the Head of the BKPSDMA, namely Mr. Lukman Mannan, S.IP., M.Si, the supporting factors based on the target determination time indicator is that there is no time target in the implementation of the merit system because the Sinjai Regency government can carry out competency tests every year for echelon officials, especially in BKPSDMA to achieve a very good value category. The target is for all echelons to achieve a very good value based on the merit system. This is supported by the interest of echelon II employees who want to carry out this competency test to find out their competency and future career development so that there is a commitment from the Sinjai regional government to implement this merit system-based competency test.

In terms of the legal basis, the implementation of this system is supported by Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning Civil Servant Management, Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 concerning Civil Servant Management, Government Regulation Number 17 of 2020 concerning Amendments to Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 concerning Civil Servant Management, Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the National Medium-Term Development Plan for 2020-2024, Regulation of the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reforms Number Number 40 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Merit System, Regulation of Indonesian Civil Service Commission (KASN) Number 9 of 2019 concerning Procedures for Independent Assessment of the Merit System in Civil Servant Management in Government Institutions, and Sinjai Regent Regulation Number 18 of 2020 concerning the Road Map for Bureaucratic Reform of the Sinjai Regional Government 2019-2023 which includes the implementation of the merit system.

It can be said that in the goal achievement dimension, all indicators are supporting factors, such as there is no determination of the target time in the implementation of the merit system in

this region so that it can be implemented every year to achieve a very good category. The commitment of the Sinjai regional government is to target all echelons for the implementation of the merit system. Moreover, the legal basis that supports the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions is clear.

2. Integration Dimension

The researchers conducted an interview with the Secretary of the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency, namely Mr. Ashar Ishak, S.Sos., MM. The interview focuses on supporting factors in the integration dimension with indicators of procedures and processes of socialization.

The supporting factors for the indicators of procedures in the implementation of the merit system are the Announcement of the Selection Committee Number 1 of 2019 concerning the Filling of Structural Positions in Sinjai Regency which refers to the Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of Number 15 of 2019 concerning the Filling of High Leadership Positions Openly and Competitively in the Government Environment. The socialization regarding the implementation of this merit system has been carried out twice. Even Sinjai Regency has won the Merit System Assessment award from the KASN at the Birawa Assembly Hall, Bidakara Hotel, Jakarta.

Based on the results of the interview, it can be said that the supporting factor in the integration dimension with the indicator of socialization procedure or process is the Announcement of the Selection Committee Number 1 of 2019 concerning Filling Structural Positions in Sinjai Regency which is based on the Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2019 concerning Filling High Leadership Positions Openly and Competitively in the Government Environment. The socialization has been carried out twice in this region and even it received the Merit System Assessment award in 2021.

3. Adaptation Dimension

The researcher also conducted an interview with the Head of BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency concerning the supporting factor in the implementation of the merit system for filling structural positions.

Based on this merit system, the fulfillment of structural position is by implementing competency tests. This supports the increase in the ability of echelon officials, especially echelon II who are interested in taking this test. Meanwhile, only some echelons III and IV are interested in taking this test. In terms of facilities and infrastructure, BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency does not

yet have an Assessment Center. However, it can be supported by the facilities and infrastructure available at the BKD, so that BKPSDMA Sinjai Regency collaborates with the BKD in implementing competency tests.

Based on the results of interviews, it can be said that the supporting factor in the adaptation dimension is the ability of echelon employees, especially echelon II, to improve their abilities. Some echelons III and IV have a high interest in taking the test. In addition, in implementing this competency test, the BKPSDMA is supported by the facilities and infrastructure available at BKD.

D. BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency's effort to address the inhibiting factors in implementing the merit system for filling in structural positions in this region.

The BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency will continue to coordinate the budget by establishing communication with the Regional Government Budget Team (TAPD) regarding the implementation of the merit system for filling structural positions. In addition, echelons II, III, and IV who are also implementers of regional regulations, must have great responsibility in filling positions that have been obtained through the merit system-based competency tests.

The researcher interviewed the Head of Information, Performance, and Welfare of State Civil Apparatus, Mrs. Badriyanti Arta, SE., M.Ak concerning the effort to address the inhibiting factors in the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions, especially in the integration dimension. When associated with Duncan's (1973) theory of effectiveness measurement, the results of the interview show no problems related to the procedures and socialization for the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions. However, many echelons III and IV do not understand the importance of competency tests in the process of developing their competencies and future careers. Even, employees have a low interest in taking the competency. Thus, the BKPSDMA will continue to provide understanding through socialization regarding the importance of assessing potential and competency through competency tests in order to develop their competencies and careers.

The Secretary of the Sinjai Regency BKPSDMA, Mr. Ashar Ishak, S.Sos., MM also added about efforts to address inhibiting factors in the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions associated with the adaptation dimension in Duncan's (1973) theory of effectiveness measurements. The Assessment Center is a space to carry out competency tests so the Sinjai Regency BKPSDMA needs to have it. However, there is no budget to build one. Therefore, the BKPSDMA collaborates with BKD which has an assessment center. In addition,

BKPSDMA plans to build facilities and infrastructure, namely the Assessment Center, and look for the formation of a functional assessor position in Sinjai Regency.

The effectiveness of the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions cannot be separated from the continuous evaluation carried out by the Sinjai regional government in addressing the inhibiting factors. In this case, the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency focuses on addressing the inhibiting factor by continuing to enforce and implement existing regulations and coordinating with the local government regarding the budget, facilities, and infrastructure.

Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews and observations at the BKPSDMA of Binjai Regency concerning the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions, it can be concluded as follows:

The merit system for filling structural positions at the BKPSDMA of Sinjai Regency has been well implemented in terms of goal achievement, integration, and adaptation dimensions. However, the implementation of this merit system faces some obstacles or challenges.

The inhibiting factors in the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions at the Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDMA) of Sinjai Regency include budget limitations, employee interest in taking competency tests, the unavailability of an Assessment Center, and the absence of functional assessor personnel. Meanwhile, supporting factors found include the commitment of the leadership regarding the implementation of the merit system in filling structural positions, the existence of a strong legal basis, and support from the South Sulawesi Provincial Government for the Human Resources Development Agency of Sinjai Regency.

Efforts made by the Sinjai Regency Civil Service and Human Resources Development Agency to overcome these obstacles include submitting a gradual budget for the implementation of the merit system, conducting socialization to employees regarding the merit system in filling structural positions, and seeking the formation of functional assessor officials at the Sinjai Regency Civil Service and Human Resources Development Agency.

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