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The Mecanism For Appointing Officials At The Regional Office Of Ministry Of Religious Affairs In The Province Of Bangka Belitung Islands Based On A Merit System From The Perpective Of The Principle Of Tranzparancy

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Abstract

The implementation of the merit system in the management of the Civil Service (ASN) is an effort to create a professional, competent bureaucracy free from nepotism and political interference. One important aspect of the merit system is the mechanism for appointing officials based on objective qualifications, competencies, and performance. This study aims to analyze the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province based on the merit system and to review its implementation from the perspective of the principle of transparency. The research method used is normative legal research with a statutory approach and a conceptual approach. The results of the study indicate that the mechanism for appointing officials has been in accordance with the provisions of the merit system as stipulated in the laws and regulations regarding civil servants. However, there are still several challenges in the implementation of the principle of transparency, particularly regarding access to information, the publication of selection stages, and the openness of competency assessment results. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the oversight system and information transparency in order to Appointment of officials.

Keyword: Appointing Officials, The Regional Office, The Ministry of Religious, Merit System, The Principle of Transparency

INTRODUCTION

Bureaucratic reform is a strategic priority for the Indonesian government in achieving effective, efficient, accountable, and public service-oriented governance. One of the key aspects of bureaucratic reform is the professional management of civil service human resources through the implementation of a competency- and performance-based management system for the Civil Service (ASN). These efforts are realized through the implementation of a Merit System that prioritizes qualifications, competencies, integrity, and performance as the primary basis for the appointment, promotion, transfer, and career development of ASN¹. This situation has the potential to create a perception of unfairness among civil servants and could undermine trust in human resource management processes within the bureaucracy.

One of the key principles that must underpin the implementation of the Merit System is the principle of transparency. Transparency is a principle of governance that requires openness of information, accessibility to decision-making processes, and ease for the public and civil servants to obtain information related to public policy. In the context of official appointments, transparency is a crucial element as it relates to ensuring objectivity, accountability, and fairness at every stage of the selection and appointment process. Through transparency, every employee has an equal opportunity to understand the requirements, procedures, selection stages, and the final results of official appointments, thereby minimizing the potential for abuse of authority.²

Theoretically, transparency is one of the core principles of the concept of good governance. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), transparency requires the availability of adequate, easily accessible, and understandable information for stakeholders. In the management of civil servants, transparency serves not only as an oversight tool but also as a means to build organizational trust and foster a professional and integrity-driven bureaucratic culture. Therefore, the success of implementing the Merit System is not solely determined by the availability of regulations that but also by the extent to which the principle of transparency is implemented in every process of appointing officials³

¹ Eko Prasodjo (2014) *The Civil Service and Bureaucratic Reform*, Publisher: National Institute of Public Administration

² Eko Prasodjo et al., "The Transformation of the Merit System in Indonesian Civil Servant Promotions," in *Policy & Governance Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 2019, pp. 240–255

³ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Governance for Sustainable Human Development* (New York: UNDP, 1997), pp. 9

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, as a government agency with an organizational structure extending to the regional level, implements the Merit System policy in the management of civil servants. As a vertical agency of the central government in the region, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Province of Bangka Belitung plays a strategic role in carrying out governmental duties and functions in the field of religion. To support the implementation of these duties, officials with the competence, integrity, and professionalism required by the organization are needed. Therefore, the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province must be carried out based on the principles of the Merit System and the principle of transparency.

In recent years, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has continued to make various efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Merit System, including through the conduct of competency assessments, the implementation of talent management, the development of a personnel information system, and the strengthening of internal oversight of the promotion and job transfer processes. These policies demonstrate the institution's commitment to achieving professional and accountable human resource management. However, the success of these policies' implementation at the regional office level still requires a more in-depth analysis to determine the extent to which the principles of the Merit System and transparency are actually applied in the practice of appointing officials⁴.

The Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Province of Bangka Belitung is an interesting subject for research because it has a relatively complex bureaucratic structure with various work units spread across the provincial and district/city levels. This complexity requires a professional civil service management system to support the achievement of organizational goals. Furthermore, research on the implementation of the Merit System in the Ministry of Religious Affairs' vertical agencies at the regional level remains relatively limited compared to studies on local governments or other ministries. Therefore, this study is expected to provide empirical contributions to enrich the literature on civil service management and bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

The urgency of this research also stems from the importance of ensuring that every official appointment process is conducted objectively and transparently. Appointments that are not

⁴ Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Road Map for Bureaucratic Reform at the Ministry of Religious Affairs 2020–2024 (Jakarta: Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020), pp. 45–52.

based on the principles of the merit system have the potential to cause various negative consequences, such as a decline in employee motivation, poor quality of public services, the emergence of internal organizational conflicts, and a loss of trust in government institutions. Conversely, the implementation of the Merit System, accompanied by adequate transparency, can enhance the professionalism of civil servants, strengthen organizational accountability, and foster the creation of a bureaucracy that is adaptable to changes in the strategic environment.

This study is based on the assumption that transparency is one of the key factors determining the effectiveness of the merit system in the appointment of officials. The more open the official appointment process is, the greater the opportunity for fairness and objectivity in filling positions. Conversely, if the appointment process is conducted behind closed doors and with minimal information, various negative perceptions will arise that can undermine the legitimacy of the organization's decisions. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis is needed regarding how the official appointment mechanism is implemented and to what extent the principle of transparency is applied at every stage of the process.

Based on the above description, this study focuses on the mechanism for appointing officials within the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands based on the Merit System from the perspective of the principle of transparency. The research focuses on identifying the mechanisms used in the official appointment process, analyzing the implementation of Merit System principles—including qualifications, competencies, performance, and integrity—and evaluating the application of the principle of transparency at every stage of the appointment process. In addition, this study also seeks to identify factors that support or hinder the application of the Merit System and transparency in the appointment of officials.

The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study can enrich the literature on the merit system, transparency, and bureaucratic reform, particularly in the context of civil service management within vertical government agencies. Practically, the research results can serve as evaluation material and recommendations for the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province as well as the Ministry of Religious Affairs in general in strengthening the implementation of the Merit System and the principle of transparency in the process of appointing officials. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to supporting the

realization of a bureaucracy that is professional, has integrity, and is oriented toward quality public service.

Research Questions

1. How is the principle of transparency applied in the appointment process for these officials?
2. What are the factors that support and hinder the implementation of the merit system in the appointment of officials?
3. What is the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands based on the merit system from the perspective of the principle of transparency?

Novelty (Research Novelty)

This study offers a novel approach through its integrative analysis of the Merit System and the principle of transparency in the mechanism for appointing officials within the provincial-level vertical agencies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, specifically in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands. Most previous studies have focused solely on the implementation of the Merit System or civil service management in general, whereas this study prioritizes transparency as the primary perspective in evaluating the effectiveness of the Merit System's implementation in the official appointment process.

This approach is expected to result in a more comprehensive evaluation model for personnel management based on good governance⁵

METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Merit System Theory

The Merit System is a human resource management concept that emphasizes that the appointment, promotion, transfer, and career development of employees must be based on qualifications, competencies, performance, and integrity without being influenced by subjective factors such as kinship, political affiliation, ethnicity, religion, race, or specific

⁵ Governance and Good Governance, (London: Sage Publications, 2000), pp. 14–18;

groups. In modern public administration, the Merit System is viewed as the primary instrument for creating a professional, neutral, and public service-oriented bureaucracy⁶.

According to Rosenbloom, Kravchuk, and Clerkin (2022), the merit system is a personnel management mechanism based on the principles of competence and work performance, ensuring that every individual has equal opportunities for career development based on their abilities. This system was developed to replace the patronage system, which prioritizes political connections or personal relationships in the filling of public office positions⁷.

In Indonesia, the Merit System gained legal legitimacy through Law No. 20 of 2023 on the Civil Service. This regulation stipulates that the Merit System is a policy and management framework for civil servants based on qualifications, competencies, and performance in a fair and reasonable manner, without discrimination.

Based on various sources of literature and civil service regulations, the indicators of the Merit System include⁸:

Educational qualifications and work experience.

1. Technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies.
2. Objective performance evaluations.
3. Integrity and moral character.
4. Equal career opportunities.
5. Civil servant talent development.
6. Objectivity in promotions and job transfers.

In the context of this study, the Merit System was used to analyze whether the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung has been implemented in accordance with the principles of professionalism and objectivity as mandated by civil service regulations.

⁶ Public Administration and Public Affairs, 13th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 327–330;

⁷ David H. Rosenbloom, Robert S. Kravchuk, dan Richard M. Clerkin, *Public Administration: Understanding Management, Politics, and Law in the Public Sector*, 10th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2022), 173–181

Transparency is one of the key principles of good governance. Transparency refers to the government's openness in providing information that is relevant, accurate, and easily accessible to the public and other stakeholders⁹.

According to Mardiasmo (2021), transparency refers to the government's openness in providing information about the process of governance so that the public can be informed and monitor the conduct of government affairs¹⁰.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explains that transparency requires the availability of adequate information that is freely accessible to stakeholders in the public decision-making process.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) explains that transparency requires the availability of adequate information that is freely accessible to stakeholders in the public decision-making process.

In the context of civil service management, transparency serves as a crucial tool to ensure:

- Objectivity in decision-making.
- Accountability of personnel management officials.
- Equal opportunities for civil servants.
- Prevention of collusion, corruption, and nepotism

Transparency indicators in the appointment of officials can be measured through:

1. Openness regarding job openings.
2. Clarity of selection requirements and procedures.
3. Openness regarding assessment results.
4. Ease of access to information for civil servants.
5. Accountability for appointment decisions.
6. Complaint and objection mechanisms.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme, *Governance for Sustainable Human Development* (New York: UNDP, 1997), pp. 9–10

¹⁰ Mardiasmo, *Local Autonomy and Financial Management*, Latest Edition (Yogyakarta: Andi Publishers, 2021), pp. 18–20

In this study, the principle of transparency is used as a framework for evaluating the implementation of the merit system in the appointment of officials.

2.1.2 The Theory of Good Governance

The concept of good governance has emerged as a new paradigm in public administration that emphasizes effective, efficient, transparent, participatory, and accountable governance¹¹.

According to the UNDP (1997), good governance is based on several key principles, namely:

1. Participation
2. Rule of Law
3. Transparency
4. Responsiveness
5. Consensus Orientation
6. Equity (Equity)
7. Effectiveness and Efficiency (Effectiveness and Efficiency)
8. Accountability (Accountability)
9. Strategic Vision (Strategic Vision)

Transparency and accountability are two principles closely linked to the implementation of the merit system. Appointing officials in a transparent manner will increase civil servants' trust in the organization and strengthen the legitimacy of personnel policies.

2.1.3 Theory of Professional Bureaucracy

According to Weber, an ideal bureaucracy is built on the basis of competence, a clear division of labor, formal rules, and an objective career system. Public positions must be filled by individuals with the best qualifications based on a rational and professional selection process¹².

¹¹ Sedarmayanti, *Good Governance* (Bandung: Mandar Maju, 2012), pp. 3–8.

¹² Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth dan Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 956–1005.

From the perspective of professional bureaucracy, the appointment of officials is not merely a prerogative but rather the result of an objective evaluation of employees' abilities and performance.

This theory is relevant because the Merit System is essentially a modern implementation of the concept of professional bureaucracy proposed by Weber.

2.1 State-of-the-Art Analysis

Based on previous research, several key findings have emerged.

First, most studies focus on the implementation of the Merit System in the promotion and transfer of civil servants in local governments. Second, studies addressing transparency primarily examine the openness of the job selection process without linking it to the effectiveness of the Merit System. Third, there is still very little research that specifically examines the appointment of officials in the vertical agencies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs¹³.

Furthermore, no research has been found that comprehensively integrates the perspectives of the Merit System and the principle of transparency into the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands.

2.2 Novelty (Research Novelty)

The novelty of this research lies in:

1. The research subject, which focuses on the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung as a vertical agency of the central government.
2. The integration of Merit System analysis and the principle of transparency within a single research framework.
3. The evaluation of the mechanism for appointing officials based on the principles of good governance.
4. The development of a conceptual model for official appointments that incorporates the following indicators:

¹³ State Civil Service Commission, 2023 Merit System Index for Government Agencies (Jakarta: KASN, 2023), pp. 1–15.

- a. Competence,
- b. Performance,
- c. Integrity,
- d. Procedural transparency,
- e. Information transparency.

Thus, this study not only examines compliance with civil service regulations but also evaluates the quality of governance in the appointment of officials from the perspective of transparency and modern bureaucratic reform.

3.1 Rationale

This study is based on the premise that the appointment of officials within the Civil Service (ASN) must be carried out in accordance with the Merit System as mandated by Law No. 20 of 2023 on the Civil Service. The Merit System requires that every appointment of an official be based on qualifications, competencies, performance, integrity, and organizational needs, without being influenced by subjective factors or specific interests.

However, the success of implementing the Merit System is not determined solely by compliance with regulations but also by the application of the principle of transparency throughout all stages of the appointment process. Transparency serves as a crucial instrument to ensure that the appointment process is conducted openly, objectively, accountably, and in a manner that can be justified.

From a Good Governance perspective, transparency is one of the core principles that must be realized in government administration. Therefore, the merit-based mechanism for appointing officials must be supported by open information, clear procedures, adequate access to information, and accountability in decision-making.

Based on this reasoning, this study analyzes how the implementation of the Merit System in the appointment of officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung is viewed from the perspective of the principle of transparency.

Key Research Variables

A. Merit System

Based on the Civil Service Law and merit system theory, the indicators used include:

Dimension	Indicator
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Qualifications Education, work experience, rank

Competencies Technical, managerial, and socio-cultural competencies

Performance Performance Appraisal Form (PAF), performance targets, work achievements

Integrity Morality, discipline, track record

Objectivity Free from interference, free from nepotism

Talent Management Talent pool and talent management

B. Principle of Transparency

Referring to the principles of Good Governance and public information transparency.

Dimension Indicator

Information Transparency Job information is available and easily accessible

Clarity of Procedures Clear selection and appointment stages

Accessibility Civil servants can easily obtain information

Accountability Decision-making is accountable

Information Equity Equal opportunity to obtain information

Complaint Mechanism Mechanisms for objection and oversight are available.

C. Mechanism for Appointing Officials

The stages analyzed include:

1. Planning for position requirements
2. Identification of candidates
3. Competency assessment
4. Performance evaluation
5. Consideration by the Performance Evaluation Team (PET)
6. Appointment and swearing-in of officials
7. Post-appointment evaluation

3.2 Research Framework

The appointment of officials is part of civil service management that must be carried out in accordance with the merit system. In practice, the effectiveness of the merit system is greatly influenced by the application of the principle of transparency. Transparency ensures that the entire process of appointing officials can be known, understood, and monitored by civil servants and relevant parties.

This study focuses its analysis on the mechanism for appointing officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung by examining:

1. The alignment of the official appointment mechanism with the principles of the merit system.
2. The degree to which the principle of transparency is applied in the official appointment process.
3. Factors that support and hinder the implementation of the merit system and transparency.
4. The implications of implementing these two principles for the realization of a professional bureaucracy and good governance.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Type and Approach of Research

This study employs an empirical legal research methodology with a descriptive qualitative approach. Empirical legal research was chosen because the study not only examines the legal norms governing the Merit System and the principle of transparency in the appointment of officials but also analyzes the implementation of these norms in the practice of civil service management at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands.

A qualitative approach was used to gain a deep understanding of the mechanisms for appointing officials, the decision-making process, and the application of the principle of transparency at every stage of the appointment process. Through this approach, the researcher was able to uncover empirical facts, perceptions, experiences, and views of informants directly involved in the official appointment process.

According to Esmi Warassih Puji Rahayu (2020), it is time for legal research to no longer be detached from its social context and to no longer ignore issues of ethical, moral, and spiritual values (*hati nurani*).¹⁴

Therefore, through the use of qualitative methods grounded in behavioral sciences and other social sciences, the essence of this approach is to understand the unique dynamics and holistic nature of human existence and its interaction with the environment¹⁵

The research was conducted at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, located in Pangkalpinang City, Bangka Belitung Islands Province.

The selection of the research location was based on several considerations:

1. The Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs is a vertical agency of the central government that implements civil service management policies based on the Merit System.
2. There is a process for appointing administrative and supervisory officials, which is the subject of this study.
3. There has been little research examining the implementation of the Merit System and the principle of transparency within the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the provincial level.
4. The research location is directly relevant to the study's focus on the mechanisms for appointing officials.

4.3 Research Focus

The research focus is directed toward analyzing the mechanism for appointing officials based on the Merit System from the perspective of the principle of transparency.

The research focus includes:

A. Implementation of the Merit System

1. Qualifications of prospective officials.

¹⁴ Esmi Warassih Pujirahayu, *Contemplative Legal Science (Divine and Human) in Interdisciplinary Legal Research: An Introduction to the Socio-Legal Approach*, Thafa Media, Yogyakarta, p. 21

¹⁵ The Plight of Prapti Rahayu Derita and Sulaيمان, *Legal Research Methods (2020)*, Thafa Media, p. 124

2. Competencies of prospective officials.
3. Performance evaluation.
4. Integrity and track record.
5. Objectivity of the appointment process.
6. Civil servant talent management.

B. Implementation of the Principle of Transparency

1. Openness regarding job information.
2. Clarity of appointment procedures.
3. Accessibility of information for civil servants.
4. Accountability for appointment decisions.
5. Equal opportunity to obtain information.
6. Complaint and objection mechanisms.

C. Supporting and Hindering Factors

1. Regulatory factors.
2. Organizational factors.
3. Human resource factors.
4. Bureaucratic culture factors.
5. Information technology factors.

4.4 Types and Sources of Data

This study uses two types of data: primary data and secondary data.

1. Primary Data

Primary data was obtained directly from informants through in-depth interviews.

Research informants include:

- Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands.

- Head of the Administrative Division.
- Chair of the Human Resources Team in the Administrative Division.
- Members of the Performance Evaluation Team (TPK).
- Officials who have been appointed through the promotion mechanism.
- Civil servants participating in the job selection process.

2. Secondary Data

Secondary data was obtained through document analysis and literature review, consisting of¹⁶:

a. Primary Legal Materials

- Law No. 20 of 2023 on the Civil Service.
- Government Regulation No. 17 of 2020 on Civil Service Management.
- Regulations of the Minister of Religion regarding civil service management.
- Regulations of the State Civil Service Agency governing the promotion and transfer of civil servants.

b. Secondary Legal Materials

- Public administration books.
- Civil service management books.
- National and international scientific journals.
- Previous research findings.
- Scientific articles relevant to the Merit System and transparency.

c. Tertiary Legal Materials

- Legal dictionaries.
- Public administration dictionaries.

¹⁶ Ibid.pp.81,

- Legal and government encyclopedias.

4.5 Informant Selection Techniques

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique for selecting informants based on specific criteria, specifically those deemed to be knowledgeable about and understand the research issues.

The criteria for informants include:

1. Direct involvement in the official appointment process.
2. Authority in the field of human resources.
3. Understanding of the Merit System policy.
4. Willingness to provide information openly.

To deepen the research data, the researcher also used snowball sampling, a technique for obtaining additional informants based on recommendations from previous informants.

4.6 Data Analysis Techniques

This study employs the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which consists of three stages¹⁷.

1. Data Reduction

In this stage, the researcher performs the following:

- Data sorting.
- Data grouping.
- Data simplification in accordance with the research focus.

2. Data Display

The reduced data is presented in the form of:

- Descriptive narratives.
- Data matrices.
- Analysis tables.
- Diagrams illustrating relationships between concepts.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification (Conclusion Drawing and Verification)

The researcher interprets the obtained data to generate research findings regarding:

¹⁷ Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, dan Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2020), pp.12–34.

- Implementation of the Merit System.
- Application of the principle of transparency.
- Supporting and hindering factors in the appointment of officials.

The verification process is conducted continuously throughout the research to ensure the validity of the research results.

4.8 Data Validity Testing

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the study employs triangulation. Triangulation is a method of verifying data validity in qualitative research by comparing and verifying information obtained from various sources, methods, time periods, or researchers to ensure the research results are more valid, credible, and trustworthy.

According to Qualitative Research Methods, triangulation is a data validity verification technique that utilizes something outside the data itself for the purpose of checking or comparing the data obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Overview of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands

The Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands is a vertical agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs tasked with implementing policies and providing services in the field of religion at the provincial level. In carrying out its duties and functions, this organization is supported by civil servants who hold various administrative and functional positions. To achieve professional governance, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province implements civil service management policies based on the Merit System as stipulated in laws and regulations.

The appointment of officials is carried out through a mechanism that involves an assessment of competencies, track record, performance, and organizational needs. In addition, this process is also expected to fulfill the principle of transparency as part of the implementation of good governance in civil service management¹⁸.

5.2 Mechanism for Appointing Officials Based on the Merit System

A. Qualifications of Official Candidates

¹⁸ Law No. 20 of 2023 on the Civil Service; Civil Service Commission, Guidelines for Evaluating the Implementation of the Merit System in Civil Service Management (Jakarta: KASN, 2023), pp. 7–18

Based on the research findings, the appointment of officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung is carried out by considering the alignment between educational qualifications, work experience, and the requirements of the position to be filled.

Educational qualifications are one of the primary requirements in the official appointment process. Proposed employees must meet the minimum educational standards specified in the organization's job mapping and job analysis. Additionally, work experience in relevant fields is also a critical consideration in determining an employee's eligibility for a specific position.

These findings indicate that qualification criteria have been applied in accordance with the principles of the Merit System, which emphasizes the alignment between individual competencies and organizational needs.

B. Civil Servant Competencies

Competencies are the primary indicators in the Merit System. Research findings indicate that competency assessments are conducted through:

- Competency assessments.
- Evaluation of job performance records.
- Educational and training history.
- Leadership experience.

Competency assessment aims to ensure that appointed officials possess the technical, managerial, and socio-cultural skills required for the position. The implementation of competency assessments reflects the organization's efforts to reduce subjectivity in personnel decision-making.

C. Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluations are conducted based on Employee Performance Targets (SKP) and an assessment of civil servants' work behavior. Interview results indicate that employees who receive high performance ratings have a greater chance of being considered for promotion. Performance appraisal is used as a tool to measure employees' productivity, accountability, and contribution to the achievement of organizational goals. Thus, performance has become one of the objective criteria in the mechanism for appointing officials¹⁹.

D. Integrity and Track Record

¹⁹ Government Regulation No. 30 of 2019 on the Performance Evaluation of Civil Servants.

In addition to competence and performance, integrity is a factor considered in the appointment process for officials. Indicators of integrity include:

- Compliance with regulations.
- Work discipline.
- History of disciplinary violations.
- Professional ethics and integrity.

Research findings indicate that employees with a record of disciplinary violations tend not to be prioritized in the promotion process. This suggests that organizations strive to ensure that appointed officials possess strong integrity.

E. The Role of the Performance Evaluation Team (PET)

In the official appointment mechanism, the Performance Evaluation Team plays a crucial role in providing recommendations to the Personnel Development Officer. The PTA performs the following:

- Verification of candidate data.
- Assessment of competencies and performance.
- Evaluation of track records.
- Preparation of appointment recommendations.

The existence of the PTA serves as an instrument that supports objectivity and accountability in personnel decision-making.

5.3 Implementation of the Principle of Transparency in the Appointment of Officials

A. Information Disclosure

The research findings indicate that information regarding the filling of positions has been communicated through internal organizational channels such as circulars, personnel applications, and official announcements. However, some informants stated that not all information regarding the basis for appointment decisions is openly accessible to all civil servants. This situation indicates that information transparency is in place but still requires strengthening to enhance employees' trust in the official appointment process.

B. Clarity of Procedures

The procedures for appointing officials are regulated by personnel regulations and internal organizational guidelines.

The stages involved include:

1. Identification of position needs.
2. Administrative screening.
3. Competency assessment.

4. TPK deliberation.
5. Appointment of officials.

Based on the interview results, the majority of informants understand these stages, indicating that there is procedural clarity in the official appointment process.

C. Accessibility of Information

Access to personnel information has been facilitated by the use of information technology. However, there are some limitations regarding access to competency assessment results and final considerations in decision-making. This indicates that substantive transparency still needs to be improved so that civil servants can understand the objective reasons behind the appointment of certain officials²⁰.

D. Accountability in Decision-Making

Accountability is ensured through the documentation of every stage of the appointment process and the involvement of the Performance Assessment Team in the selection process. Every appointment decision is based on supporting documents such as:

- Assessment results.
- Performance ratings.
- Employee records.
- Performance Assessment Team recommendations.

Thus, appointment decisions have an administratively accountable basis.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the Mechanism for the Appointment of Officials at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands Based on the Merit System from the Perspective of the Principle of Transparency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Mechanism for the Appointment of Officials Has Been Based on the Principles of the Merit System

The mechanism for appointing officials within the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province has, in principle, been implemented in accordance with the principles of the Merit System as stipulated in the laws and regulations regarding the Civil Service. The appointment of officials is carried

²⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Open Government: The Global Context and the Way Forward* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2016), pp. 27–35

out by considering aspects of qualifications, competencies, performance, integrity, and the employee's track record. Furthermore, the involvement of the Performance Assessment Team (TPK) and the use of competency assessments demonstrate efforts to ensure objectivity in the appointment process. The application of these indicators reflects the organization's commitment to building a professional and competency-based bureaucracy²¹

2. Implementation of the Principle of Transparency Is Not Yet Fully Optimal

From the perspective of the principle of transparency, the process of appointing officials has demonstrated openness through the disclosure of information regarding job requirements, administrative requirements, and appointment procedures. However, substantive transparency still requires strengthening, particularly regarding the disclosure of competency assessment results, the basis for decision-making, and civil servants' access to comprehensive information about the selection process. These limitations on access to information have the potential to create a perception of a lack of openness among employees, even though the appointment process has procedurally followed applicable regulations.

3. Factors Supporting and Hindering the Implementation of the Merit System

The successful implementation of the Merit System is supported by several factors, including clear regulations, organizational leadership's commitment to bureaucratic reform, the implementation of competency assessments, and the use of information technology in human resources management. On the other hand, several factors remain as obstacles, including insufficient transparency in personnel information, limitations in the management of civil servant talent, and the persistence of perceptions of subjectivity among employees regarding the promotion and appointment processes. These factors indicate that the implementation of the Merit System requires support not only from regulatory aspects but also from organizational culture and transparent information governance.

4. Integration of the Merit System and Transparency Is Key to Achieving Good Governance

This study found that the Merit System and the principle of transparency are two complementary elements in achieving good civil service governance. The Merit System

²¹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 956–1005;

ensures that the appointment of officials is based on competence and performance, while transparency ensures that the entire process is known, understood, and accountable to stakeholders. Therefore, the better the implementation of the Merit System supported by transparency, the greater the opportunity to realize a bureaucracy that is professional, accountable, and in line with the principles of good governance.

Research Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study reinforces the Merit System theory and the Good Governance theory, which identify transparency as a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness of civil service management. The findings indicate that the success of the Merit System is determined not only by the fulfillment of competency and performance criteria but also by the openness of information in the official appointment process.

Practical Implications

The research findings can serve as a basis for evaluation by the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in strengthening the implementation of the Merit System through increased transparency in the official appointment process, the development of civil servant talent management, and the optimization of a more open and accountable personnel information system.

Recommendations

1. Improve the disclosure of information regarding the stages, evaluation results, and basis for consideration in the appointment of officials in accordance with the principles of transparency and accountability.
2. Optimize the implementation of talent management as a competency- and performance-based instrument for the career development of civil servants.
3. Strengthen the use of human resources information technology to support easier, faster, and more transparent access to information for all civil servants.
4. Enhance the capacity of the Performance Evaluation Team and human resources managers so that the official appointment process becomes more objective and aligns with the principles of the Merit System.
5. Conducting periodic evaluations of the implementation of the Merit System and transparency to ensure the consistent implementation of bureaucratic reform within the

Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province.

Thus, the consistent application of the Merit System, supported by the principle of transparency, will be able to strengthen the professionalism of civil servants, enhance organizational trust, and support the realization of good and integrity-based governance.

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