

STRATEGY OF IMPLEMENTING MERIT SYSTEM AT INSPECTORATE OF *DKI* JAKARTA PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of a merit system is a crucial component in enhancing the professionalism and competency of civil servants within government institutions. This study explores the strategy for applying the merit system within the Inspectorate of the Special Capital Region (*DKI*) Jakarta Province. The research is driven by the gap between regulatory mandates and the actual application of merit principles in staffing processes, such as recruitment, promotion, and placement, which often remain inconsistent with employee competencies. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study collects data through interviews, observation, and document analysis involving key informants from the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate and related agencies. The findings reveal that although legal frameworks and policies supporting meritocracy are already in place, such as the *Peraturan Gubernur No. 8 Tahun 2022* and the *Keputusan Gubernur No. 120 Tahun 2022*, several challenges persist. These include insufficient talent management practices, lack of transparency, limited public oversight, and internal resistance to change. The study proposes strategic recommendations to optimize the merit system, emphasizing competency-based human resource management, enhanced supervision, talent pool development, and institutional capacity building. The results are expected to provide insights for public HR policy formulation and serve as a reference for improving bureaucratic performance through merit-based governance.

Keywords: *Merit system, human resource management, civil service, Inspectorate of DKI Jakarta, bureaucratic reform*

A. INTRODUCTION

The role of employees as human resources determines the success of achieving government implementation goals. Employees who are competent and professional will be able to work efficiently. Conversely, if employees who have inappropriate competencies and are not professional, employees will actually become an inhibiting factor. (Saleem et al., 2019).

Some thoughts and research results show that the merit system is a mechanism that is considered the most feasible in developing bureaucratic human resources because it illustrates the management of bureaucracy proportionally and professionally. In addition, the merit system is an ideal principle that underlies a universal reform model based on equality and quality. This means that everyone has the same opportunity to occupy a position in the bureaucracy, but only the best are selected by ignoring personal bias (van Dijk et al., 2020). Meritocracy is

believed to be a fair and legitimate social system, which can motivate each individual to be more rational, maintain their existence, can reduce the status quo and uncertainty and can maintain and appreciate better interpersonal relationships (Hess & Ledgerwood, 2014; Ledgerwood et al., 2011).

The reality shows that many cases are motivated by the appointment of civil servants (*PNS*) (including promotions and transfers) that are contrary to the principles of good governance. Other problems relate to the placement of officials or employees that are not in accordance with the merit system, mismatches and unprofessional development of competencies that are not directly related to regional development goals, and the need to improve the quality of public services, as well as the lack of budget allocations. Data from the Public Service Index (*IPP*) of the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform, shows that one of the aspects measured, namely HR professionalism, still needs to be improved to produce the expected public services. The national *IPP* is at 3.84 with the *IPP* achievement of ministries and institutions of 4 and the *IPP* of local governments of 3.65 (Admin, 2021) This shows that the mismatch of competencies that leads to employee unprofessionalism still urgently needs improvement.

One of the concepts applied to overcome the incompatibility and unprofessionalism of employees in the government environment is to apply merit bureaucracy. Based on article 1 of the *Peraturan Menteri Reformasi Administrasi dan Birokrasi Nomor 40 Tahun 2018* concerning Guidelines for the Merit System in State Civil Apparatus Management, the definition of a merit system is “Merit system is *ASN* policy and management based on qualifications, competencies, and performance in a fair and reasonable manner without distinguishing political background, race, color, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability conditions”.

The government itself has provided a legal umbrella for the implementation of the merit system. Through the *Undang-Undang No 5 Tahun 2014* on the State Civil Apparatus, the government has emphasized the need to reform the management of the state civil apparatus. In the *Undang-Undang No 5 Tahun 2014* concerning State Civil Apparatus”, it is expected that through the implementation of civil apparatus management, it can encourage the achievement of implementation based on the comparison between the competencies and qualifications required by the position and the competencies and qualifications possessed by candidates in recruitment, appointment, placement, and promotion to positions in line with good governance. Regarding the competency standards and position requirements needed in civil servant management, it has been contained in the *Undang-Undang No 5 Tahun 2014* concerning State Civil Apparatus”, it is expected that through the implementation of civil apparatus management, it can encourage the achievement of implementation based on the comparison between the competencies and qualifications required by the position and the competencies and qualifications possessed by candidates in recruitment, appointment, placement, and promotion in positions in line with good governance. Regarding the competency standards and position requirements needed in civil servant management, it has been contained in the “*Peraturan Menteri Administrasi dan*

Reformasi Birokrasi Nomor 38 Tahun 2017 concerning ASN Competency Standards”.

The merit system itself is considered to have various positive impacts on the running of the government. According to (Suryanto & Darto, 2020) that the merit system fulfills the Weberian ideal type of bureaucracy which emphasizes bureaucratic neutrality. This is because the bureaucracy is in a neutral position with whoever (politician) is the party in power. In another statement, it is stated that the merit system is based on fostering positions on a scientific, objective basis and the results of work performance (Asep Heryyanto & Muzakki Muzakki, 2022). The merit system thus places emphasis on promotions based on individual performance achievements and qualifications, rather than simply relationships or other factors. It carries the concept that everyone should advance in their career based on their performance and abilities, which will ultimately result in a more efficient and fair system.

Using a merit system makes the employees involved have assurance in their proficiency and professionalism to carry out the duties and responsibilities assigned to them. One of the policies supporting the merit system is the *Peraturan Presiden Nomor 58 Tahun 2018* concerning the National Strategy for Corruption Prevention that “The challenges and targets of Law Enforcement and Bureaucratic Reform are the weak supervision of the merit system in the management of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN), the uneven quality of information disclosure and public participation in monitoring public services”

From this statement, it can be seen that the challenges faced in law enforcement and bureaucratic reform are weak supervision of the merit system in the management of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN), lack of information disclosure, and lack of public participation in monitoring public services, the same applies to the *DKI* Provincial Inspectorate, where the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate has the main task of carrying out supervision of the implementation of Regency/City regional government affairs and the implementation of government affairs in the Regency/City area. The agency has a very important role, namely as a supervisory agency for all cities in the *DKI* Jakarta area which is directly responsible to the Governor of *DKI* Jakarta Province.

Referring to data related to the Merit System Index for Provinces throughout Indonesia, *DKI* Jakarta Province is still ranked 6th out of all provinces in Indonesia. *DKI* Jakarta Province is below the Provinces of West Java, East Java, Yogyakarta, South Sulawesi and Central Java. (Recap of Merit System Implementation Values in Several Provinces in the *KASN* Meritocracy Award (2022)), Until 2023 data related to the Merit System Index at the Provincial Level, *DKI* Jakarta Province decreased so that it was ranked 7th out of all Provinces in Indonesia, under West Java Province, Bali Province, East Java Province, Special Region of Yogyakarta Province, Central Java Province and South Sulawesi Province (Recap of Merit System Implementation Values in Several Provinces in the *KASN* Meritocracy Award until the end of 2023. This shows that the implementation of the merit system in *DKI* Jakarta Province and its subordinate agencies based on the *Peraturan Gubernur DKI Jakarta Nomor 8 Tahun 2022* concerning Talent Management has not been optimal.

This phenomenon is indicated by the fact that the results of the assessment of the aspects of career development, promotion and mutation have not been maximized, leading to the old paradigm that makes appointments in structural positions in the context of civil servant management based on seniority factors in rank, age, education and experience. In addition, placement in structural positions that should be able to support motivation and professionalism at work, in fact, in its implementation it tends to be oriented towards career development that emphasizes less in the aspects of performance & competence possessed by employees (Talent Pool). This principle is not in line with the merit system, where management related to *ASN* is carried out on the basis of appropriate qualifications, qualified competencies and the best performance (interview written with the informant one of the Middle Apparatus Analysts of the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Civil Service Agency, November 15, 2023).

The implementation of the Merit system is also outlined in the Regulation of the Governor of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Number 8 of 2022 concerning Talent Management stating that "As a manifestation of an open, objective, planned, and accountable merit system in the implementation of Civil Servant management, every Civil Servant within the Provincial Government of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta who meets the predetermined requirements and criteria, can occupy target positions and has the same opportunity to develop their career and position. Whereas based on Article 134 paragraph (2) letter d of the *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 11 Tahun 2017* concerning Civil Servant Management as amended by the *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 17 Tahun 2020*, career management consisting of planning, development, career patterns, and succession planning groups is one of the criteria for implementing a merit system obtained from talent management and must be applied in the development of sip-1 civil servants, so that the implementation of talent management needs to be regulated by gubernatorial regulation."

Through preliminary interviews with the Head of the Personnel Sub Group on November 10, 2023) it is known that since 2016 a competency-based career classification and a Rank Order List have been implemented. Then this human resource management principle underwent an overhaul. Starting in 2023, the implementation of merit bureaucracy was carried out again. This is because within *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government, the *Keputusan Gubernur Nomor 120 Tahun 2022* concerning Competency Standards for Middle and Primary High Leadership Positions has been implemented. It was further conveyed that what is meant by Competence is divided into 3 parts including 1) Technical Competence, 2) Managerial Competence and 3) Socio-Cultural Competence.

In its development, as well as *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate employees as part of *ASN* are expected to fulfill the principles as conveyed as Smart *ASN*. Smart *ASN* is an *ASN* that can become a digital talent and digital leader. Later, they will be ready to support the transformation of digital bureaucracy in the era of industrial revolution 4.0. Delivered by Madzakir as Deputy Secretary for Apparatus Human Resources of the Ministry of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (*PANRB*) that future expectations with Smart *ASN* principles such as thinking positively and remaining productive during the pandemic, maintaining health

during WFH, being productive by writing, consistency of service in accordance with the profession, and how the vision of millennial ASN in building a world-class bureaucracy. This aims to provide enthusiasm, inspiration, and positive insights so that they are then motivated to continue to improve their competence and skills as ASN (<https://www.menpan.go.id/site/berita-terkini/smart-ASN-menguasai-era-digital>).

The implementation of the merit system in the Indonesian bureaucracy, especially in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate, still faces various implementation obstacles even though there is a legal framework and supporting policies such as the still low level of professionalism of ASN in Indonesia, especially in the local government environment, including in the *DKI* Jakarta Province, the mismatch between employee competencies and the positions held which has an impact on low efficiency and effectiveness of work and the quality of public services, obstacles in the implementation of talent management that supports the merit system including lack of supervision, unequal openness of information, and low public participation, policy changes that have not been fully internalized and implemented comprehensively in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate environment, even though there are various supporting regulations such as the *Peraturan Gubernur Nomor 8 Tahun 2022* and the *Keputusan Gubernur Nomor 120 Tahun 2022*, the urgent need to develop ASN as Smart ASN, which is ready to face the challenges of the digital era and is able to encourage world-class bureaucratic reform, but has not been fully reflected in the existing ASN competencies, the placement of officials and employees who do not fully refer to the principles of the merit system. This has the potential to hinder the effectiveness of the implementation of institutional tasks and functions.

The role of employees as human resources in achieving government goals. Professional and competent employees can be the main driver of bureaucratic efficiency, but in reality there are still many recruitments, promotions, and placements of employees that are not based on the principle of the merit system. This results in low professionalism of the state civil apparatus (ASN), mismatch between positions and competencies, and weak quality of public services.

The merit system regulated in various regulations such as the *Undang-Undang No. 5 Tahun 2014* on ASN and the *Peraturan Gubernur DKI Jakarta No. 8 Tahun 2022* concerning Talent Management, is present as a solution to increase objectivity, transparency, and professionalism in ASN management. However, its implementation at the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate has not been optimal. Although there are policy supporters, the implementation of the merit system still faces challenges, such as the old paradigm of dominance that prioritizes seniority and ignores public supervision and participation.

The *DKI* Jakarta Merit System Index even shows a decline in national ranking until 2023. This phenomenon shows that the implementation of the merit system in the Inspectorate has not been fully internalized, and still needs a concrete strategy so that it can be implemented comprehensively and sustainably. Therefore, this research is important to identify inhibiting factors and develop strategies to optimize the benefit system at the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate.

The research hypothesis is that the implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate has not been running optimally due to the weak integration of the merit principle in personnel management, so a structured and competency-based implementation strategy is needed to increase bureaucratic effectiveness. The purpose of the study is to determine and explain the factors that cause the implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate to be less than optimal and to determine and explain the strategy for implementing the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies related to merit systems and meritocracy, both in national and international contexts. These studies provide a comparative understanding of the implementation of meritocracy in the government sector, and identify various challenges and successes of the implementation of merit systems in public institutions, especially in job placement based on competence and performance.

Public Administration

Public administration emphasizes the principles of good governance such as transparency, accountability, and public participation. In addition, the human resource management theory of Mangkunegara and Hasibuan is also explained which highlights the importance of HR functions, such as planning, development, and performance control in supporting the creation of professional apparatus.

Nwanisobi & Christopher (2020) refer to public administration as the activities of the executive branch of government whether at the national, state or local level. The word “public” refers to the people of a particular region or country. Since the will of the people of a country is represented by the government, the word “public” also connotes a special meaning, namely government. Therefore, when the government carries out any administrative action, it is called “public administration”. The English word “administration” is derived from two Latin words “ad” “ministrare” which means “to serve” or “to serve” or “to manage”. So, in simple language, administration means “management of affairs” or looking after people. It is a management process found in all types of organizations from households to common goals achieved, administrative activities are considered involved. In other words, every group activity involves administration.

Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia

According to Rafiq et al. (2019) descriptive theory shows the idea of the interconnectedness and coherence of HRM concepts as integrating system frameworks. There are four main functions of HRM as fundamental areas of HRM. Integrating the field and mapping inputs and outcomes, both are descriptive parts of human resource management. Theories can appear at both levels but, at a very general level of specification.

1. Normative theory

The perceptive and reflective nature is part of normative theory. These theories basically focus on the nature of knowledge available to interpret practices. After that, sixteen HR practices emerged which have been squeezed into thirteen are current practices in normative theory and are known as high-

performance work activities. In addition, D. E. Guest's study (in Rafiq et al., 2019) on an integrated HRM framework to achieve normative strategic goals of high-performance organizational efforts.

2. Strategic theory

Strategic theory identifies and explores the main external influences on human resource management (HRM) policies and practices. A major and important contribution was made by Hendry and Pettigrew (in Rafiq et al., 2019) as an affirmation of the spotlight on the limitations of HRM that can limit the implementation of the practice. They have explored the idea of HRM as a contextual fit. The implied but unproven hypothesis is that a good contextual HRM fit can lead to strong development in the organization. The application part of Hendry and Pettigrew's theory is to explore and map the internal (within the organization) and external (outside the organization) contextual parts of HRM and explore the adoption of change in relation to the situation rather than its relationship to performance. In the recent era, the principles of human resource management have become very important in organizational policies and uses.

Merit System Concept

The concept of a merit system as an approach to managing civil servants based on qualifications, competencies, and performance fairly and without discrimination. This explanation is supported by regulations such as the *Undang-Undang ASN Nomor 5 Tahun 2014* and the *PP Nomor 11 Tahun 2017*, as well as views from experts such as McCourt and Kasim who emphasize the importance of meritocracy to avoid nepotism and patronage practices in the bureaucracy.

C. METHOD

This study raises one main variable, namely the implementation of the merit system, which is explained in the context of the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate. This variable is operationally defined as all policies and practices of *ASN* (State Civil Apparatus) management based on qualifications, competencies, and performance fairly, without discrimination, as regulated in the *Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 2014* and other derivative regulations. The research design used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, which aims to describe in depth the phenomenon of the implementation of the benefit system, as well as formulate strategies for optimizing it. The research subjects were determined through purposive sampling techniques, namely the selection of key informants who have in-depth and relevant knowledge, such as structural and functional officials within the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate and the Regional Personnel Agency. Data collection techniques include in-depth semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies.

Six (6) informants from within the *DKI* Inspectorate as policy makers, supervisors of the implementation of the *ASN* Merit System and those responsible for implementing the *ASN* Merit System. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification to find patterns, themes, and deep meanings from empirical data obtained in the field.

Interviews were conducted with:

Tabel 1: Sampel Penelitian

No.	Initials of Informant/Resource	Person Position	Data obtained
1.	DS	Inspector of <i>DKI</i> Province	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Policy
2.	DH	Secretary of <i>DKI</i> Province Inspectorate	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Policy
3.	SP	Assistant Inspector for Field	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Implementation Supervisor
4.	DB	Assistant Inspector for Field	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Implementation Supervisor
5.	M	Head of Provincial Sub-Division	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Implementation Person in Charge
6.	MHR	Head of Provincial Personnel Sub-Division	<i>ASN</i> Merit System Implementation Person in Charge

Source: *Researcher, 2025*

D. EXPLANATION

The implementation of the merit system in the *ASN* environment is a must that must be carried out by the government to create a professional, proportional, accountable, and responsible bureaucratic system and pattern in carrying out its duties and work. The same thing in the implementation in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate environment, the merit system is expected to produce values of equality and equality as well as healthy competition. All *ASN* have the same opportunity to develop themselves to occupy certain positions, regardless of the background of an *ASN*. The merit system produces proportional, highly dedicated and fair *ASN*. Therefore, this study will examine the influencing factors and strategies implemented to optimize the implementation of meritocracy in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate environment.

The implementation of civil servant career management in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government is guided by Article 51 of the *Undang-Undang No. 5 Tahun 2014* concerning State Civil Apparatus, it is explained that the Merit System is "*ASN* Policy and Management based on qualifications, competence, and performance fairly and fairly without distinguishing between political background, race, skin color, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability conditions. The locus of this research is the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate, which is positioned as part of the regional government agency that carries out internal supervisory functions. The main focus is on the implementation of the merit system in *ASN* career management within the institution. The merit system here is interpreted as a principle of managing state

apparatus human resources that upholds professionalism, accountability, proportionality, and justice in ASN career development, as regulated in Article 51 of the *Undang-Undang No. 5 Tahun 2014* concerning State Civil Apparatus.



Figure 1. Research documentation at the DKI Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate

Source: Researcher, 2025

Pelaksanaan Sistem merittem Merit di Inspektorat Provinsi DKI Jakarta

The results of the study on the implementation of the merit system at the *DKI Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate* show that its implementation still faces various structural and cultural challenges. Based on data analysis and interviews with key informants, the implementation of the merit system has not been fully optimal, especially in aspects of career development, promotion, and employee transfers which are still influenced by old paradigms such as seniority and personal closeness. Although there are legal and regulatory bases such as the *Peraturan Gubernur Nomor 8 Tahun 2022* concerning Talent Management, and Governor Decree Number 120 of 2022 concerning Job Competency Standards, its implementation has not been consistent and has not been evenly applied in all units.

Various studies have examined the application of the meritocracy system in the government sector, but no study has specifically examined the application of the meritocracy system in the *DKI Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate*. Several previous studies have made important contributions to the understanding of meritocracy in various contexts. For example, Asep Heryyanto and Muzakki (2022) highlighted how the discourse of meritocracy in the context of village government can affect income equality and the effectiveness of village apparatus work. This study emphasizes the importance of educational qualifications in filling positions in order to improve the performance of village organizations. Meanwhile, Kuswara and Mayasari (2023) examined the application of the merit system in the placement of structural positions in the *DKI Jakarta Provincial Government* in general, with an emphasis on the role of the Assessment Center in employee competency. This study shows that the implementation of the merit system requires support from objective competency-based data policies.

Another study by Wattimury (2019) in Ambon City revealed that competency-based employee placement has not been successful because it does not match the employee's educational background. Research by Sunam et al.

(2022) extend the discussion of meritocracy to the context of social inclusion in the Nepalese bureaucracy, emphasizing that affirmative action can actually enrich meritocracy if implemented properly. Meanwhile, Suzuki and Hur (2022) compare citizens' perceptions of meritocracy in the public and private sectors in Europe, and show that meritocracy is more effective in countries that implement NPM (New Public Management) principles. Meanwhile, Halim (2020) provides a normative and legal perspective on the merit system, and emphasizes the importance of the merit system as a basic principle in bureaucratic reform.

From the various studies, it can be concluded that the merit system has been widely discussed from various perspectives and locations, none of which have explicitly discussed its implementation in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate. Therefore, the research conducted by Yudo Ariyono Priyadi is significant because it not only seeks to identify factors that hinder the implementation of the merit system in the Inspectorate, but also aims to develop optimal strategies in its implementation. This research complements the summary of existing literature and provides practical contributions to strengthening the merit system in one of the main supervisory institutions at the provincial level.

Based on the description of previous research, it shows that the difference in this research is in its purpose which is not only to identify factors that influence implementation but also to provide recommendations regarding the best strategy for implementing meritocracy in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate environment.

The implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Inspectorate, although under the auspices of the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government which has received the "Very Good" category in its implementation, still faces a number of fundamental challenges that hinder the optimization of meritocratic principles. The merit system as the basis for *ASN* management based on qualifications, competencies, and performance has not been fully implemented consistently and comprehensively. This is reflected in several problems, such as the incomplete job competency standards for administrator officials, limited competency assessments, and promotion and mutation practices that are still not fully based on merit. *ASN* performance management has also not been effective due to the lack of integration between performance assessments, promotion policies, and coaching mechanisms and performance dialogues.

In addition, the information system infrastructure that has not been fully integrated, especially in the Talent Management System and *SIMPEG*, also hinders accuracy and efficiency in HR management. Other challenges include the suboptimal mechanisms for payroll, rewards, and discipline enforcement, which are reflected in the lack of understanding of the code of ethics and the lack of integration of the database of disciplinary violations with the *BKN* system. In the aspect of *ASN* services and protection, complaints over injustice in the promotion and transfer process indicate a weak perception of justice that should be guaranteed by the merit system. To overcome these obstacles, strategic reforms are needed, such as strengthening information systems based on AI technology, using big data analytics, implementing a 360-degree feedback mechanism, and collaborating with external institutions to enrich the quality of HR development. In addition, improving *ASN* employer branding and providing career path

visualization are also important to foster motivation and clarity of career direction for employees. With these systemic improvements, it is hoped that the implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate can move towards professional, fair, and performance-based *ASN* management practices in real terms. The limitations of this research lie in the scope of the area and the number of informants which are limited to the internal scope of the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, so that the findings cannot be generalized to all local government agencies. In addition, because the approach used is descriptive qualitative, the results of this study are more exploratory and in-depth on the phenomena observed, but do not provide a quantitative picture of the extent to which the benefits system has been implemented proportionally and effectively. Therefore, further research is needed with a quantitative approach and broader coverage to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the merit system nationally and across agencies.

Strategy for Merit System Implementation at the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta Province

The results of research related to the Strategy for Merit System Implementation at the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta Province show that the implementation of the merit system within the Inspectorate is not optimal even though various regulations have been issued, such as the *Peraturan Gubernur DKI Jakarta Nomor 8 Tahun 2022* concerning Talent Management. The findings show that employee placement is still heavily influenced by the old paradigm, which is based on seniority, age, and experience, not on objective competence and performance. In addition, there are challenges in internal supervision, limited utilization of the Assessment Center, and a lack of comprehensive understanding of the benefits system concept among structural and functional officials.

The implementation of the Merit System in the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta Province is an integral part of bureaucratic reform aimed at creating professional, transparent and accountable governance. The *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government has adopted various strategic policies to simplify the bureaucratic structure and strengthen the human resource management system, including through equalizing structural positions into functional positions and institutional arrangements in accordance with applicable regulations. Although the implementation of the Merit System has reached the “Very Good” category with a high score, optimization is still needed, especially in the Inspectorate as an internal supervisory agency that has a vital role in ensuring bureaucratic accountability.

The optimization is realized through nine main strategies. First, strengthening data-based *ASN* needs planning through the use of workload analysis and technology integration such as big data and AI to project employee needs with precision. Second, increasing transparency in *ASN* procurement is carried out by prioritizing competency-based selection through artificial intelligence-based CAT, as well as implementing a digital tracking system to increase accountability. Third, *ASN* career development is directed more systematically through the preparation of competency-based career paths and strengthening training cooperation with professional institutions such as BPK and KPK. Fourth, the promotion and mutation system is strengthened with an

objective approach through the integration of talent data in the digital system and rotation based on assessment results.

ASN performance management is enhanced by the implementation of KPI digital dashboards and data-driven coaching mechanisms that enable real-time evaluation and improvement of individual productivity. This fifth strategy plays an important role in creating a transparent and results-based performance system. Sixth, aspects of pay, reward, and discipline are improved through strengthening transparent reward and punishment mechanisms, integration of violation data with the national system, and continuous internalization of the code of ethics. The seventh strategy targets *ASN* protection and services by building a psychological and legal support system to maintain the integrity of auditors in carrying out their duties. Eighth, strengthening the *ASN* information system through the use of AI and Blockchain is key in creating integrated, accurate, and efficient *ASN* management.

The ninth strategy is to improve the career classification system and talent management, including the development of a real-time *ASN* database and the application of the Individual Development Plan approach in succession planning. Through 9-box talent mapping, *ASN* can be classified fairly and proportionally based on a combination of performance and competence. By integrating all these approaches, the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta Province will be able to optimize the implementation of the merit system in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. This not only improves the quality of internal supervision, but also strengthens the transformation of a bureaucracy that is adaptive to change, performance-oriented, and committed to superior public services.

Public administration is the process of managing public policies and state apparatus resources to achieve government goals. In the context of a merit system, good public administration should be based on transparency, accountability, and effectiveness and efficiency functions. Based on public administration theory, transparency in personnel policy is essential to prevent the practice of nepotism and ensure that all *ASNs* get a fair chance in promotion and treatment. However, in the implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, it was found that the talent management information system still experienced data inconsistencies, which had the potential to cause discrepancies in the management of *ASN* talent. This shows that transparency and accountability in public administration have not been optimized.

The legitimacy of public administration depends on public and employee trust in the system in place. If promotions and mutations are not fully merit-based, then *ASNs* in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate may feel that the existing system is unfair. In public administration theory, employee participation in decision-making related to their careers can increase the legitimacy of the benefits system. Therefore, a more transparent mechanism, such as 360-degree feedback, is needed to increase *ASN*'s trust in the implemented system.

Human resource management (HRM) in government organizations is instrumental in creating professional, competent, and high-performing *ASNs*. In relation to the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, some relevant aspects of HRM are:

- a) In HRM, career development is the main element that must be considered so that *ASN* can develop according to its competence. However, in the implementation of the merit system in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, it was found that the competency standards for Position Administrators were still incomplete, so *ASN* did not have a clear reference for developing their careers. In addition, competency assessment is carried out on a limited basis and does not cover all *ASNs*, which hampers overall HR development planning.
- b) The merit system in management staffing should ensure that promotions and transfers are based on qualifications, competencies and performance. However, in the case of the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, it was found that there were still promotions and transfers that were not fully merit-based. This is contrary to the principle of meritocracy in HRM, which emphasizes that decisions in HRM should be based on merit and performance, not subjective factors such as personal or political closeness.
- c) Performance management in HRM aims to ensure that employees work according to set targets and get objective evaluations. However, in the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta, it was found that performance management has not been effective because performance appraisal has not been integrated with promotion and treatment policies. In addition, the performance of the coaching and dialog mechanism has not run optimally, so *ASN* does not get clear direction regarding their career development.
- d) Good HRM must also ensure that the payroll, reward, and employee discipline systems are managed fairly and transparently. In the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate, it was found that database violations in the Personnel Management Information System (*SIMPEG*) had not been integrated with BKN's system, which caused data management violations to be less effective. In addition, the *ASN* code of ethics and code of conduct have not been fully understood and implemented, potentially causing inconsistencies.

There are several significant linkages in the concepts of public administration, human resource management (HRM), and the merit system with its implementation in the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta Province. Public administration as a process of coordinating resources and personnel to implement public policies with key principles such as transparency, accountability, and equity. However, the results showed that these principles have not been fully implemented optimally in the merit system in the Inspectorate of *DKI* Jakarta. Transparency in promotions and transfers still faces obstacles due to data mismatches in the Talent Management Information System (*SIMT*), potentially leading to decisions that are not fully performance and competency based.

Human resource management includes various functions such as workforce planning, career development, as well as employee motivation, which should ideally be done strategically to ensure the organization gets the right individuals in the appropriate positions. However, research shows that the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate still faces challenges in *ASN* career development because job competency standards for several positions have not been compiled completely. This hampers *ASN* in planning and developing its career path systematically. In addition, the promotion and transfer process in the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate is still

not fully based on a merit system, where subjectivity and adjustment to the organizational structure are still dominant factors in decision making.

The merit system is defined as an *ASN* management policy based on qualifications, competencies, and performance, and must be free from political influence or non-meritocratic factors. However, in practice, the study found that the *DKI* Jakarta Inspectorate still experiences various obstacles in implementing this system. One of the main problems is the integration of information systems that has not been optimized, causing discrepancies between talent quadrant data on the dashboard and individual data. In addition, the performance appraisal mechanism is not yet fully data-based and integrated with promotion and transfer policies. The database of *ASN* disciplinary violations is also not yet connected to the system owned by the State Civil Service Agency (*BKN*), so that the management of sanctions and rewards is still not fully effective in supporting the merit system.

The strategy of optimizing meritocracy emphasizes the importance of competency and performance-based HR management. In the research, it was found that the Provincial Government of *DKI* Jakarta has received a “Very Good” category in the implementation of the merit system, but the implementation in the Inspectorate still needs to be improved. Some of the recommendations proposed in the research include the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in talent management, strengthening transparency in the promotion and transfer system through more accurate data integration, and increasing the effectiveness of performance management by incorporating data-based coaching and evaluation mechanisms. In addition, strengthening regulations and improving internal policies related to the merit system are also key factors to improve the effectiveness of *ASN* management.

However, this study has limitations, including the limited coverage of informants from the lowest level of *ASN* who are directly affected by the merit policy system, so that the perspective of the implementing level may not be thoroughly described. On the other hand, the qualitative approach used is descriptive and has not quantitatively measured the effect of the application of the benefits system on individual and organizational performance. Therefore, further research that is evaluative in nature and uses a mixed method approach is highly recommended to provide a more comprehensive and measurable picture.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government has received a “Very Good” category in the application of the merit system, its implementation in the Inspectorate still faces various obstacles that hinder optimization. One of the main challenges is the value of the merit system which can still be improved, with a score of 335.5 and an index of 0.81. Although relatively high, this figure shows that there is still room for improvement in the principles of meritocracy, especially in the aspects of transparency and *ASN* talent management.

In the aspect of career development, the study found that the Position Competency Standards for Position Administrators are not yet fully complete, so

there is no clear reference in *ASN* career planning. In addition, competency assessment is carried out on a limited basis and does not cover all *ASNs* in the *DKI* Jakarta Provincial Government. This hampers employee potential mapping and strategic talent management. In terms of promotion and healing, it was found that the process is still not fully based on qualifications, competencies, and performance. Data inconsistency in the Talent Management Information System is also an obstacle that has the potential to cause errors in decision making related to employee promotion and rotation.

Performance management in the Inspectorate also still faces challenges, especially in terms of objectivity and integration with promotion and treatment policies. Performance coaching and monitoring mechanisms have not been effectively applied in performance analysis, resulting in suboptimal *ASN* development. In addition, aspects of payroll, awards, and discipline also still have weaknesses, especially in terms of integration of the database of disciplinary violations with the system owned by *BKN*. The *ASN* code of ethics and code of conduct have not been fully understood and implemented by all employees, which has the potential to cause inconsistencies in work ethics standards.

One factor that has contributed to the suboptimal benefits system in the Inspectorate is the low level of information system integration and transparency in HR management. Without an integrated system, personnel administration processes such as leave applications and promotions are still carried out manually, which can reduce performance efficiency. In addition, competency assessments that have not covered all *ASNs* hamper the mapping of employee potential and overall HR development.

To overcome these challenges, the study recommends a number of strategic improvements. First, it is necessary to improve job competency standards and implement competency assessments for all *ASNs* so that career planning is more focused. Second, transparency in the promotion and transfer process must be carried out through a more integrated information system, so that performance and competency-based decisions can be implemented objectively. Third, the effectiveness of performance management needs to be improved by developing a digital-based *KPI* dashboard that allows real-time monitoring of *ASN* performance.

In addition, digitizing personnel administration is an important step in improving efficiency and transparency. The utilization of technologies such as AI and big data analytics can assist in shaping *ASN* competencies as well as predicting training needs and leadership success. Integration of the disciplinary violation database with the *BKN* system also needs to be done immediately to improve the effectiveness of managing violations and enforcing discipline in the *ASN* environment.

Improving protection and services for *ASN* is also a crucial aspect in optimizing the merit system. Complaints related to fairness in promotion, treatment, and treatment of employees must be followed up with stricter monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The Inspectorate also needs to improve Employer Branding by building an image as a professional and merit-based institution. This can be done through the achievement of publications on social

media and the provision of a career path visualizer so that ASN can see their career path more transparently.

Another recommended step is collaboration with external institutions such as universities, training institutions, and the private sector to deliver innovative and relevant HR development programs. Adopting best practices from the private sector in the talent management system can also improve ASN competitiveness in the Inspectorate. In addition, a 360-degree feedback mechanism involving superiors, coworkers, and subordinates in competency assessment can improve the objectivity of performance evaluation and help employees understand their areas of self-development.

Research suggestions based on the research conclusions that further research can be concentrated on transparency and objectivity in the merit system, especially in the process of promotion, rotation, and management of ASN talent in the Inspectorate of DKI Jakarta Provincial Government. This study can explore the application of 360-degree feedback mechanisms and the application of best practices from the private sector to improve the professionalism and competitiveness of ASN. A follow-up study could examine the development of an AI-based personnel information system and big data analytics to improve the efficiency and transparency of ASN management. This study could also highlight the effectiveness of real-time KPI dashboards in monitoring performance and disciplinary violations of the integration database with the BKN system to enforce employee ethical and disciplinary standards.

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