

**IMPLEMENTATION OF PERMENPAN RB POLICY NUMBER 17 OF 2021
CONCERNING THE EQUIVALENCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS WITH
FUNCTIONAL POSITIONS WITHIN THE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT OF
ASAHAN REGENCY**

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Abstract

This Bureaucratic simplification is one of the government's strategic agendas in its efforts to realize effective, efficient, and adaptive governance. Through Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation No. 17 of 2021, the government established a policy of equating administrative positions with functional positions as a form of structural reform to strengthen the professionalism of the civil service. This study aims to analyze the implementation of this policy in the Asahan Regency Secretariat, identify obstacles in its implementation, and examine the efforts made to overcome the obstacles that arise. The research approach used is qualitative and descriptive in nature, through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The results of the study show that the implementation of the position equalization policy in Asahan Regency has been carried out in accordance with the provisions, but still encounters various obstacles such as the unpreparedness of human resources, the lack of understanding of officials regarding functional positions, and the mismatch between competencies and positions resulting from equalization. The psychological factors of officials, changes in work patterns, and adaptation to new workloads are also significant challenges. Efforts made include increased socialization and technical guidance by the Organization and BKPSDM Division, as well as readjusting functional positions by the deadline set by the government. The findings of this study are expected to be taken into consideration by local governments in improving the effectiveness of implementing position equalization policies as part of bureaucratic reform.

Keywords: Policy Implementation, Position Equalization, Functional Positions, Bureaucratic Reform, Civil Servants

INTRODUCTION

Bureaucratic simplification is a strategic agenda of the government in realizing more effective, efficient, and adaptive governance. This policy emerged as a response to various complaints from the public regarding slow bureaucratic processes, complicated public service procedures, and overly long chains of command. The government then encouraged bureaucratic reform through streamlining the position structure, which was realized, among others, through Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021 concerning the Equivalence of Administrative Positions to Functional Positions. This policy transferred Echelon III, IV, and V structural positions to functional positions, with the aim of accelerating decision-making and strengthening the professionalism of ASN.

The implementation of position equalization has broad implications for the work patterns of the apparatus, ranging from changes in job functions, adaptation of work culture, to adjustments in the performance appraisal system. Many ASNs who have long been in the comfort zone of structural positions feel that they are not fully prepared to face these changes. The change in work patterns from instructional to expertise-based also poses psychological, technical, and administrative challenges.

This situation was also felt within the Asahan Regency Secretariat. The simplification of bureaucracy in Asahan Regency was carried out in two stages, namely December 31, 2021, and May 30, 2022, involving hundreds of administrative officials. Although the implementation followed the central government's mechanism, various obstacles were still encountered, such as the unpreparedness of the apparatus in understanding the roles of functional positions, a lack of knowledge about new job descriptions, and a mismatch between employee competencies and the positions resulting from the equalization. In addition, some officials felt that they had lost the authority, prestige, and comfort that they had previously enjoyed in their structural positions.

This situation shows that the implementation of Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021 is not merely a change in position, but a comprehensive transformation of the ASN work culture. Therefore, it is important to thoroughly examine how this policy is implemented in Asahan Regency, what obstacles have arisen, and how the local government is addressing these obstacles. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation of position equalization and serve as a basis for improving the quality of bureaucratic reform in the future.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The theoretical review in this study serves as a conceptual basis for understanding the implementation of the policy of equalizing administrative positions into functional positions as stipulated in Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021. Several main theories used include the concepts of public policy, policy implementation, bureaucratic reform, administrative positions, and functional positions.

1. Public Policy

Public policy is a decision made by the government to resolve public issues. Thomas R. Dye states that public policy is “whatever governments choose to do or not to do.” Meanwhile, Easton defines policy as the process of authoritatively allocating values to society. The policy of equalizing positions in the context of this study is part of the

government's decision to manage the state apparatus to be more professional and responsive to bureaucratic changes.

2. Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is an important stage after a policy has been established. Van Meter and Van Horn state that implementation is the actions taken by individuals or groups aimed at achieving the objectives set through policy decisions. Van Meter and Van Horn's implementation model consists of six variables, namely:

1. Policy size and objectives
2. Resources
3. Characteristics of implementing agents
4. Attitudes of implementers
5. Interorganizational communication
6. Social, economic, and political environment

This theory is used as an analytical tool in research because it explains the relationship between bureaucratic conditions, human resources, and the organizational environment with the successful implementation of job equalization policies.

3. Bureaucratic Reform

Bureaucratic reform is a process of changing the system, structure, and work patterns of the apparatus to improve government performance. According to Sedarmayanti, bureaucratic reform is an effort to renew and fundamentally change the system of government administration. Simplifying the bureaucracy by reducing echelons III, IV, and V is part of the national bureaucratic reform agenda to create a more adaptive, agile, and efficient organization.

The Ministry of PAN-RB emphasizes that bureaucratic simplification is carried out through three main steps, namely:

1. organizational structure simplification,
2. position equalization, and
3. adjustment of the functional position-based work system.

4. Administrative Positions

Administrative positions are structural positions that function to coordinate, develop programs, and carry out administrative tasks within the bureaucracy. Administrative positions have echelon levels that regulate the organizational hierarchy structure. For many years, administrative positions have been viewed as strategic positions that provide managerial authority and prestige for civil servants, so the shift towards functional positions often causes psychological resistance.

5. Functional Positions

Functional positions are positions that involve professional service tasks based on specific expertise. According to the Minister of PAN-RB Regulation, functional positions aim to strengthen the professionalism of ASN through a career system based on credit scores, competencies, and individual performance achievements. The transition from structural to functional positions requires significant adaptation because the work pattern becomes more independent, measurable, and output-oriented, rather than hierarchical.

6. Position Equivalency

Position equivalency is the process of transferring administrative positions to functional positions in accordance with the provisions of Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021.

Equivalence is determined based on the alignment between the scope of duties of administrative positions and the duties within available functional positions. In practice, equivalence does not always proceed ideally due to competency mismatches, limitations in certain functional positions, and differences in work patterns between structural and functional position

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to describe phenomena in depth through data in the form of words, statements, documents, and field observations. This approach was chosen to gain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021 concerning the Equivalence of Administrative Positions to Functional Positions within the Asahan Regency Secretariat.

According to Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong, qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from the objects observed. The data in this study was obtained through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Data triangulation techniques were used to ensure data validity by combining various sources and techniques in the information gathering process. Triangulation was carried out through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation.

The interviews were conducted in a structured manner using a set of pre-determined questions to maintain the focus of the research. The informants in this study consisted of key informants, primary informants, and additional informants. The key informant was the Regional Secretary of Asahan Regency, while the primary informant was the Head of the Organization Division of the Regional Secretariat of Asahan Regency. Additional informants were functional officials affected by the equalization and officials at the Asahan Regency Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDM).

In addition to interviews, observations were conducted to observe the actual conditions related to the implementation of the position equalization policy, as well as interactions between employees in carrying out their duties after the change in the position structure. Documentation was used to strengthen the analysis, in the form of policy documents, laws and regulations, organizational structures, personnel data, and reports on the implementation of job equalization.

The data obtained was analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out to sort relevant information and organize it according to the focus of the research. Data presentation was carried out in the form of a narrative description to facilitate interpretation. Conclusions were obtained through repeated verification of field findings, so that the analysis results could describe the implementation of the policy accurately and validly.

The research was conducted at the Asahan Regency Secretariat from July to November 2025. This location was chosen based on the implementation of job equalization, which had a significant impact on the organizational structure and work patterns of civil servants in the region. The qualitative approach allowed researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of how this policy was implemented, the challenges that arose, and the strategies used to overcome them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Position Equivalency Policy at the Asahan Regency Secretariat

The position equivalency in Asahan Regency is implemented in two phases in accordance with instructions from the central government. The first stage was carried out on December 31, 2021, for 261 administrative officials equivalent to Eselon IV. The second stage was carried out on May 30, 2022, for 97 administrative officials from Eselon III and IV. This process is part of the bureaucracy simplification to create a more agile and effective organizational structure.

Administratively, the job equivalency process has followed the provisions of the Permenpan RB Number 17 of 2021. The Asahan Regency Government, through the Organization and BKPSDM Section, conducted data collection, job mapping, the preparation of equivalency proposals, consultations with the Kemenpan RB, and the issuance of the Job Equivalency Decrees. The results of the study show that the technical aspects of this process have already been carried out well.

However, policy implementation is not purely administrative. The job changes directly impact work patterns, authority, organizational culture, and the psychology of civil servants. Many employees admit they still do not have a deep understanding of the duties of the functional positions they hold. Others feel unprepared for the changes because they have been accustomed to the structural system for years.

Implementation Description Based on the Theory of Van Meter and Van Horn

a. Policy Standards and Objectives

The objective of job equivalence is to shorten the bureaucratic chain, improve organizational performance, and strengthen the professionalism of civil servants. In Asahan Regency, this objective has been socialized, but not all employees have a comprehensive understanding of the direction of this change. Employees tend to understand equivalence as merely a “job transfer,” not a paradigm shift in work.

b. Resource

Human resources are a dominant factor in the success of implementation. Interview results indicate that there are still limitations in employees' competencies and understanding when performing their duties in functional positions. Some employees feel that the positions they have been given do not fully align with their educational background and work experience.

Support resources such as technical guidelines, training modules, and mentoring are still not optimal. Although the HRD has provided guidance, continuous technical mentoring is still needed.

c. Characteristics of Implementing Agents

The implementing agents of the policy consist of the Organization and BKPSDM sections. These two agencies play a crucial role in drafting the job mapping, coordinating with the Kemenpan RB, and supporting ASN post-equalization. Structurally, the implementing agents operate in accordance with regulations, but challenges arise in the process of adapting employees in the field.

d. Inter-Organizational Communication

Communication between the local government and the relevant ministries is running quite well. However, internal communication among implementers within the Secretariat of the Regency is still uneven. Some departments have understood the technical aspects of functional positions, while others are still confused about drafting job descriptions and activity reports.

e. Implementer Attitude

The attitude of the employees is the most influential variable. Many employees are still experiencing confusion and psychological resistance. The change in status from structural officials to functional officials is perceived as diminishing their prestige, authority, and the coordinating role they have enjoyed. This attitude has led to low motivation in carrying out their functional duties.

f. Economic, Social, and Political Environment

The organizational environment in Asahan Regency is quite conducive, but the long-established structural work culture poses its own obstacles. The shift towards a functional work culture requires time, guidance, and adaptation, which is not a simple task.

Barriers to Policy Implementation

On the results of research and interviews with various informants, the main barriers that emerged include:

1. Lack of understanding among civil servants regarding functional positions and the credit point mechanism.
2. Not all functional positions match individual competencies.
3. Employees feel they have lost the authority and coordinating role they previously had.
4. Post-equivalency technical guidance is not yet optimal.
5. Psychological resistance to changes in work culture.
6. Concerns about DUPAK assessments and credit point fulfillment.

These obstacles indicate that implementation is not only a matter of policy, but also of human resource transformation.

Efforts To Overcome Obstacles

The Asahan Regency Government has taken various steps to overcome these obstacles, including:

1. Increasing the intensity of socialization and technical guidance through the Organization and BKPSDM Division.
2. Assistance in preparing functional job descriptions to suit organizational needs.
3. Strengthening employee capacity through training, workshops, and technical guidance.
4. Re-evaluating and remapping functional positions for employees deemed unqualified.
5. Promoting a work culture based on output rather than structure.

These efforts are expected to accelerate civil servants' understanding and improve the quality of job equivalence implementation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on The implementation of Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation No. 17 of 2021 concerning the Equivalence of Administrative Positions to Functional Positions within the Asahan Regency Secretariat has, in principle, been carried out in accordance with the provisions and stages set by the central government. The administrative process ran smoothly, starting from position mapping, equivalence proposals, consultations with relevant ministries, to the determination of functional positions through a Regent Decree.

However, the implementation of this policy has not been without obstacles, particularly in terms of human resources and work culture adaptation. Civil servants who were previously accustomed to working in a hierarchical structure faced psychological and technical challenges, as well as a lack of readiness in understanding the duties of functional positions, which require a work pattern based on expertise and performance achievements. The lack of understanding of the credit point mechanism, suboptimal technical guidance, and the incompatibility of the competencies of some employees are also factors that hinder the implementation of the policy

Local government efforts to overcome obstacles were carried out through socialization activities, technical assistance, capacity building for employees, and continuous evaluation. Although not all problems have been completely resolved, these steps are an important part of encouraging civil servants to adapt to the new work system. Overall, the implementation of this job equalization policy shows that bureaucratic transformation requires a long process, organizational commitment, and increased understanding among officials of the changes that are taking place.

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