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The Dynamic of Challenges of Managing Functional Civil Servant in Malang Regency Indonesia

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Abstract: Simplifying the bureaucracy is a vocal policy priority initiated by President Joko Widodo. Basically, the simplification of the bureaucracy tries to rebuild the bureaucracy based on functions and expertise which ultimately results in better output and performance. So far, the consequence is the transfer of structural positions to functional positions. These changes also have an effect on changes in the management of the state civil apparatus (ASN). Even though the management of functional positions in regional government is still a formidable challenge. Therefore, this research aims to describe the various problems of managing functional positions in local government, which are increasingly complex with the presence of the obligation to simplify the bureaucracy. Researchers conducted interviews with multiple parties, both with managers of functional positions and with individuals who have functional positions in the Malang Regency Government. The results of this study show the dynamics of the problem from three aspects, namely, first from a comparative point of view in the era of bureaucratic simplification, which shows the lack of clarity in policies seen from policy clarity, policy direction, and policy effectiveness. The second point of view of the actor is that of a functional official who experiences various human resource management problems as a functional official. The third point of view is the management of functional positions that face cultural and structural challenges such as habits and human resources management at the

Keywords: Bureaucratic Reform; Bureucratic Simplification; Functional Worker; Local Government.

Introduction

The government has consistently carried out bureaucratic reform actions to achieve good governance. Nowadays, bureaucratic reform has reached all levels of the bureaucracy, from individual bureaucracies to organizational structures to government institutional systems. There have been significant changes in the

human resource management element, such as the merit system, recruitment, salary and incentives, supervision to evaluation, and even innovation, with varying results (Turner, Prasojo, & Sumarwono, 2019; Danar, Kusumasari, & Muluk, 2020; Muluk, & Pratama, 2021).

The challenge of implementing the ideal public sector HRD is getting higher



when the era of disruption comes to a head. The supply of the millennial generation is abundant until the COVID-19 pandemic hits. However, changes must still be made to move towards a worldclass bureaucracy in 2025. Therefore. there has been an important top-down policy initiation regarding bureaucratic simplification as part of the Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform. Bureaucratic simplification is one of the policy priorities initiated by President Joko Widodo in the period of his leadership (Faedlulloh, Yulianto & Karmilasari. 2020).

Basically, bureaucratic simplification attempts to make the bureaucracy based on functions and expertise, which ultimately results in better output and performance. This far, the consequence has been the transfer of structural positions to functional positions. These changes also have an effect on changes in the management of the civil service (ASN). In more detail, the government simplifies the bureaucracy by changing administrative positions (echelon III) and supervisory positions (echelon IV) and implementing positions (echelon V) into functional positions.

So far, the number of functional positions is quite large compared to the number of other civil servants. Based on statistical data from the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) (2020), it shows that in 2020 functional positions will dominate civil service positions in Indonesia with a percentage of 49.93%, or 2,080,942 civil servants. Meanwhile, the executive position is 39.13% and the structural position is 10.95%. Despite having a dominant portion in the number structure, functional positions are still seen as "number two" positions and are not yet optimal in their implementation.

According to Santosa et al. (2018), in the State Administration Agency's Grand Design of Functional Positions, there are several problems that cause the management of functional positions to be suboptimal, namely: 1) The design of government organizations in Indonesia is still dominated by managerial functions; 2) Functional positions are still regarded as inferior among civil servants; and 3) Management and development of functional positions are still administrative (procedural); 4) The organizational current pattern interaction is oriented towards structural positions, which has the potential to lead to the centralization of command; 5) There is an error in managing the performance of functional positions, which is the cause of the organization's non-optimal role of functional positions; and 6) Internal factors, namely the quality and motivation of functional positions.

In the context of regional autonomy, Sulistiyani and Sukmayeti (2007) stated that the development of functional positions in the regions must pay attention to aspects of mandatory affairs related to quality public services. In achieve minimum service order to standards, it requires a bureaucratic presence in the regions, especially in professional and capable functional positions. The concept of functional position development is limited to legal, operational technical, economic, service needs aspects.

This far, various problems still arise in the management of functional positions at various levels from the central government to local governments, such as compensation and benefits, employee perceptions of functional positions, the development of employee quality or competence, information systems, organizational design, mindset, functional

position capacity, and performance management, which is considered not optimal (Irfan, 2013: Rahayu Rahmayanti, 2018; LAN-RI, 2018; Maulana et al., 2022). Therefore, the management of functional positions at the local government level is still a formidable challenge. This research aims to describe the various problems of managing functional positions in local governments that are becoming increasingly complex with the presence of the obligation to simplify the bureaucracy.

Method

The main objective of this research is to obtain a thick description of the various problems of managing functional positions in local government, which are becoming increasingly complex with the presence of the obligation to simplify the bureaucracy.

In order to obtain thick description data, in-depth data is required. This is because, theoretically, in various changes, various challenges and dynamics emerge that are not visible on the surface, such as the emergence of individual and group resistance (Van de Ven, 1993; Kets de Vries & Balasz, 2003; 1999). Therefore, the researcher obtained data in three main conducting wavs: first, by interviews to approach key informants in the bureaucracy; second, by conducting indepth interviews with key informants in the bureaucracy; and third, by conducting interviews with focus group discussion (FGD) models for key information. All interviews with key informants were carried out purposefully and were directly related to changes in public organizations (Patton, 2009).

The location of this research was chosen purposefully, namely in institutions that experienced structural changes to functional positions but were

specific in the context in accordance with the research objectives, especially structure and culture.

The researcher conducted interviews and held a focus group discussion (FGD). In-depth interviews were conducted with macro policy implementers at the Personnel and Human Resources Agency level, starting from the Head of Office, Secretary of Office, and Head of Division. While the FGD was carried out by bringing in implementers at the macro level, namely the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency of Malang Regency, and civil servants at the micro level, who were the policy targets. Civil servants with functional positions representing present, various regional apparatus organizations (OPD) in Malang Regency, namely the teacher inspectorate, the office of meteorology, the procurement section of goods and services, and the municipal police unit.

Result and Discussion The Existing Condition of Public Sector Human Resource Management in Malang Regency

Analyzing the general condition and character of the Malang Regency area is required when viewing the context of the bureaucracy in Malang Regency. Malang Regency itself has a regional character, with most of it in the form of mountains. Malang Regency consists of 33 sub-districts, which are further divided into a number of villages and sub-districts, with the central government located in Kepanjen District.

Rural character is more attached to Malang Regency, with economic strength coming from the agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sectors. This character should influence the bureaucracy, which tends to be weaker in several dimensions such as participation, transparency,



accountability, corruption, procedures, and delivery of public services (Jairo et al., 2015). Thus, it can be stated that making changes to the bureaucracy in rural areas has different challenges compared to urban areas. Definitely, there is the possibility of greater challenges in simplifying the bureaucracy through changing structural positions to functional positions.

In addition to its wide coverage area and the fact that Malang Regency is also the third largest district on the island of Java after Banyuwangi Regency and Sukabumi Regency in West Java Province, Malang Regency also has a large bureaucracy. The number of civil servants in Malang Regency is one of the largest in East Iava Province, which is the third largest after the Surabaya Government and Iember Regency Government (Central Bureau of Statistics, Province of East Java, 2020). Furthermore, the composition of civil servants in Malang Regency in 2020 will be 5,132 male civil servants and 6,554 female Civil Servants. The highest number of Civil Servant is still dominated by the teachers, who reached 62.02 percent, and the healthcare workers. at 10.56 percent. In 2020, there will be an increase in Civil Servant education, with the highest education level being at least a diploma or bachelor's degree, which reaches 73.01 percent of the total employees. In addition, based on the rank group, the number of Civil Servant is dominated by group III, which reaches 51.88 percent. While Group I is only 1.22 percent of the total Civil Servant. With a large number of human resources, it will definitely also create its own complexity when simplifying the bureaucracy through changing structural positions to functional positions.

In the end, two important challenges emerged in the bureaucratic

of the Malang character Regency Government in the context of simplifying bureaucracy through changing positions functional structural to positions, namely: 1) The character of the rural bureaucracy, which tends to be more challenging than the bureaucracy with an urban character; and 2) the large number of Civil Servant human resources that must be managed in these changes. If these two challenges are not an important consideration in making changes, it will be much more difficult to internalize changes in bureaucratic simplification.

The number of Civil Servant (ASN) that must be taken care of by the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency until 2020 is 11,686 Civil Servants, a decrease of 729 compared to 2019, which amounted to 12,415 Civil Servants.

Table 1. Number of Civil Servant in Malang Regency

Group	2019	2020
I	175	143
II	1950	1829
III	5936	6963
IV	4354	3651
Total	12415	11686

Source: Personnel & Human Resources Development Agency of Malang Regency, 2020

Data for Civil Servant in Malang Regency based on the distribution of positions shows the direction decreasing the number of structural positions as a whole. The comparison of 2019 and 2020 data shows a total decrease of 97 structural positions with a decrease in the number of all echelons II. III. and IV. but it must also be realized that the total number of Civil Servant in Malang Regency has indeed decreased. Even the decline in structural positions is also accompanied by a decrease in the number of certain functional positions, with a difference of 472 for certain functional positions from 2019 to 2020. In addition, the decrease in the number of structural positions has also led to a "structural position crisis" within the Malang Regency Government in 2021 (https://newmalangpos.id/180-jabatan-struktural-kosong).

Table 2. Distribution of Structural and Functional Positions 2019-2020

Position	2019	2020
Certain Functional	9090	8618
Supervisor	2147	1987
Structural	1178	1081
Echelon V	-	-
Echelon IV	877	811
Echelon III	260	235
Echelon II	41	35
Echelon I	-	-
Total	12415	11686

Source: Personnel & Human Resources Development Agency of Malang Regency, 2020

The fact that the data from 2019 to 2020 shows that there has been no significant direction of change in the management of changes from structural positions to functional positions in Malang Regency. The situation of a decrease in the total number of Civil Servant cannot be anticipated by immediately adding Civil Servant. Besides, although the number of structural positions is decreasing, it is also accompanied by a decrease in the number of functional positions, so the bureaucracy cannot be stated to be more competencybased than managerial and administrative. This explanation will lead to greater challenges in the implementation of bureaucratic simplification.

Challenges of Managing Functional Positions of Civil Servant in Malang Regency

Seven categories of problems from the perspective of actors can be found, namely first, regarding promotions to functional positions because functional officials have difficulty in getting credit

scores. Second, apart from that, the position of the assessment team for functional positions has certain conditions that result in functional officials having to take care of them outside their home base because of the unavailability of an assessment team. Third, related to the implementation of functional positions, it is often found that the work carried out is not in accordance with the functional position. Fourth, related to the relatively high workload of functional positions due to the lack of available functional positions. Fifth, related to the regeneration of functional positions, which often stagnate in the regions due to various factors such as the absence of recruitment and the lack of interest of other employees. Sixth, it is related to education and training for functional positions, which are still very limited and often cannot be carried out by local governments, so they must follow at the central government level. The seventh risk is related to the risk of functional positions with accountability, such as procurement of goods and services, which always lacks human resources due to high risks, making it difficult to attract other employees.

The problems represent the basics of civil servant management in Indonesia that have not yet been resolved. At this point, the functional civil servant remains facing difficulties in improving their position, performance, and salary. Such difficulties highlight the paradox of bureaucratic simplification. bureaucracy alters internal management through centralization and top-down pressure, but fails to meet the needs of the bottom-up. At least, the reform precisely complicates the progress of the civil servant at the local level; they face the difficulties of solidifying their position as a functional civil servant, and the transition phase is unmanageable.



Table 3. Functional Position Dynamics

Quote	Category	Aspect
It is difficult to get promoted because the Credit Score is not clear (X4 5/11/2021	Functional Position Promotion	Human Resources Management
There is no assessment team for credit scores (X5 5/11/2021)	Functional Position Assessment Team	Human Resources Management
Work does not match the functional position (X5 5/11/2021)	Functional Position Job Description Implementation	Human Resources Management
The workload is too big because there are few functional positions (X5 11/5/2021)	Functional Position Workload	Human Resources Management
Regeneration of functional positions does not work (X5 5/11/2021)	Functional Position Regeneration	Human Resources Management
Lack of education and training for functional positions (X5 5/11/2021)	Functional Position Education and Training	Human Resources Management
Functional positions with high risk are rarely in demand	Functional Position Risk	Human Resources Management

From the point of view of functional position managers at the regional level, various problems arise because changes are centralized. However, based on the results of the data analysis in Table 4, it can be seen that there are two major aspects that will challenge the management of functional positions in the future: the cultural aspect and the structural aspect.

The challenge of the cultural aspect arises because of bureaucratic habits that often cannot change quickly, such as the emergence of various assumptions that slow down the simplification of the bureaucracy, namely the difficulty of promotion for functional positions and the perception that functional positions are lower than structural positions. Therefore,

in the future, the promotion mechanism must be clearer and more accountable so that all functional positions can be arranged in a career mechanism such as functional best practice at the level of teachers and lecturers who are already well-established. Besides, related functional positions, they must receive rewards that are not too far from structural positions so that they can attract higher interest so that not all employees only pursue structural positions due to consideration of benefits and greater power, even though functional positions have more strategic functions in public service than administrative positions.

Table 4. Functional Position Management Challenges

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Quote	Category	Aspect			
Difficulty in promotion for functional positions due to unclear credit scores (X 5/11/2021)	Bureaucratic Habits Challenges	Cultural			
Functional positions are lower than structural positions because they are always based on orders from structural positions (X 5/11/2021)	Bureaucratic Habits Challenges	Cultural			
Difficulty in the process of self- development in functional positions because training education is hampered by overload of daily work (X6 5/11/2021)	Bureaucratic HR Management Challenges	Structural			
The rules for functional positions are tremendously dynamic and changeable because new functional job nomenclatures often appear and regulations in the regions do not yet exist	Bureaucratic HR Management Challenges	Structural			

In addition. there also are challenges in the cultural aspect due to the existence of bureaucratic human resource management, which is frequently far from ideal, so that it often hinders the bureaucracy from being efficient and merit-based. The problem of overloaded workloads has become a classic problem where functional officials are ultimately unable to carry out the self-development process, so they are stuck in the initial place. On the other hand, various regulations governing functional positions are also tremendously dynamic, where the nomenclature of functional positions is always increasing and is not accompanied by the addition of definite competent human resources. Therefore, in the future, it will be necessary to improve the efficiency of the work of functional positions and implement an efficient education and training system to facilitate the density of the work of functional positions. In addition, central government regulations must also be accommodating to local governments, which have various variations in the management of functional positions. Each region can have its own uniqueness and problems that cannot be found in other regions.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study can be seen from two perspectives on the implementation of bureaucratic simplification through changing structural positions into functional positions, namely, the first from the central government's perspective and the second from the local government's perspective.

The viewpoint of the central government that has completed the change of structural positions into functional positions raises dynamics of problems before, during, and after the change process. Before the change process occurred, there were criticisms of the change policy that was not based on a planned and integrated process between sectors. During the change process, there were also problems of less internalization than optimal employees who underwent changes, including after the policy changes were



made in the government environment, namely, there were still many holes regarding career planning. employees who have changed.

The local government's perspective through the representation of the Malang Government raises several Regency problem points, among others. The character of a rural bureaucracy tends to be more challenging than a bureaucracy with an urban character. In addition, there is a large number of Civil Servant human resources that must be managed during these changes. If these two challenges are not an important consideration in making changes, it will be much more difficult to internalize changes in bureaucratic simplification. On the other hand, the Malang Regency Government Bureaucracy shows that there has been no significant change in the management of changes from structural positions to functional positions in Malang Regency. The situation of a decrease in the total number of Civil Servant cannot be anticipated by immediately adding Civil Servant. Besides, although the number of structural positions is decreasing, it is also accompanied by a decrease in the number of functional positions, so the bureaucracy cannot be stated to be more competencybased than managerial and administrative. This explanation will lead to greater challenges in the implementation of bureaucratic simplification in the Malang Regency Government.

Furthermore, three other important aspects can be found from a local level perspective, namely, the first from a comparative point of view in the era of bureaucratic simplification, which shows a lack of clarity in policies as seen from policy clarity, policy direction, and policy effectiveness. The second, point of view of the actor is a functional official who experiences various human resource

management problems as a functional official. The third point of view is that of managing functional positions that face cultural and structural challenges such as habits and the management of bureaucratic human resources in the region.

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