

Implementation of the Merit System in the Placement of Graduates from Politeknik Statistika STIS

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Abstract. The merit system has become part of State Civil Official management as regulated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2014 and should have been used as a basis for staffing and assigning functional positions according to the qualifications and competencies of each State Civil Official to achieve good governance. This study aims to describe whether the merit system has been implemented in the assignation of the graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS. This study used a qualitative descriptive method and took place in the Statistics Agency of Central Sulawesi Province. Data were collected through interviews with relevant informants as the primary data, while the secondary data were collected from internal employment databases and literature such as books, journals, and reports. This research revealed that the implementation of the merit system in assigning graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS has not been fully optimized. This is primarily due to three main reasons: (1) shortage of employees to fill specific functional positions; (b) insufficient addition of human resources, particularly in the administrative sector; and (c) the discrepancy between the current quantity of State Civil Officials and the creation of functional positions based on job analysis.

Keywords: merit system, competencies, placement

1 Introduction

Statistics Indonesia is a non-ministerial government institution. It has the responsibility and role to assist the President in providing basic statistical data at the national and international levels and producing accurate reports describing the actual situation to support Indonesia's development. To realize this vision, competent human resources with a deep understanding of statistics are essential. This expertise falls within specific competencies in various fields, acquired through education in government-affiliated colleges overseen by ministries or institutions, such as Statistics Indonesia. According to [1], at first, this government-affiliated college was called Akademi Ilmu Statistik (AIS), formed based on Decree Number 377/PM/1958 on August 11, 1958, by Ir. Juanda, who served as Prime Minister of Indonesia at that time. The main purpose of the college was to educate the employees in implementing statistical activities at a semi-expert level for national statistics. This government-affiliated college evolved, and on February 24, 1997, the Directorate General of Higher Education issued letter number 295/D/T/97 regarding permission for Statistic Indonesia to organize the Diploma IV Education Program, which was followed by Presidential Decree Number 163 of 1998 concerning Akademi Statistik, under Statistics Indonesia. In 2016, the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia issued Decree Number 429/KPT/I/2016 concerning the opening of the Statistical Computing Study Program and the

Statistics Study Program (Diploma-IV and Diploma-III) in the context of changing the form from academy to polytechnic. The college then became Politeknik Statistika STIS, which then received approval from the Minister of State Official Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia based on Letter Number B/479/M.KT.01 2017 on September 19, 2017.

Graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS are placed all over the country as candidates for state civil servants (*Aparatur Sipil Negara* – ASN) to sit as statisticians and IT staff. Law Number 5 of 2014 about ASN explains that a merit system is used in bureaucracy reform in Indonesia to produce ASN of high integrity and professionalism; as such, the selection and recruitment of ASN must consider their qualification, competence, and performance [2].

This merit system emphasizes the importance of aligning qualifications and competencies in employee assignment so that the performance of the employee would help achieve good governance. This system supports how to maximize the utilization of human resources in the organization by assigning employees according to their competencies so they can work optimally. [3] strengthens the sentence stating that good employee assignment is the process of assigning employees for jobs that are compatible with their skills so they can work effectively based on job analysis information. The importance of the right assignment was also conveyed by Luther [4] through the POSDCoRB (Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting) theory that capable employees are the key to organizational productivity so it is important to assign the right people for the right tasks for work effectiveness.

The right assignment would impact the output produced by workers, and this output would impact the organization's achievements. [5] stated that research indicates a positive and significant relationship between the staffing process (including assignment) and firm performance. [6] stated that the right staffing process (starting from recruitment, selection to assignment) is a long-term investment in an organization because employing the right person will increase individual productivity and organizational performance. The previous research explains that when firms hire the best applicants, and create a rare, valuable, and difficult-to-imitate value, competitive advantage will be created [6,7]. This high quality of human capital resources can lead to increased levels of organizational performance [6,8], as well as enhanced workforce flexibility and efficiency [9]. On the other hand, competencies that are not compatible with qualifications in employee assignment would become the main problem in employee management, and this would lead to a public spotlight.

This paper examines several things. These include whether the merit system has been implemented in the assignation of graduates of the government-affiliated college, what the competence of the graduates is, and whether the competence has met the job qualification. It also analyses of the government-affiliated college has been able to help the government achieve the merit system's objectives. Though similar research has been conducted elsewhere, especially about staffing practices based on a merit system, there is a lack of empirical studies in the context of government-affiliate colleges. This study then becomes important since it will provide key information for policy evaluation and decision-making related to government-affiliated colleges and the merit system the government builds.

2 Research Method

This is descriptive qualitative research conducted at Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province. According to [10], qualitative descriptive research is performed to describe and illustrate existing phenomena, in natural or human engineering, the focus more on characteristics, quality, and interrelationships between activities. Our study describes the placement of Politeknik Statistika STIS graduates based on the merit system.

The data used in this research are primary and secondary. Primary data was collected through interviews with informants determined purposively. The informants consist of personnel management officials in Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province, the head of the relevant Statistic Indonesia in regencies and cities in Central Sulawesi, and the human resources and legal team of Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province. Secondary data was collected from official personnel databases such as competency data, qualifications, and organizational distribution maps in Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province, as well as related literature and journals. The scope of this research is limited to the placement process of graduates in the last 5 years, from 2018 to 2022. The details are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS in at Statistics Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province

No	Study Program			Graduation Year Group	Placement Year
	Statistic Diploma 3	Statistic Diploma 4	Statistic Computation Diploma 4		
1	-	13	1	55	2018
2	-	16	3	56	2019
3	2	9	2	57	2020
4	2	9	1	58	2021
5	2	13	1	59	2022
	6	60	8	-	-

Source: SIMPEG Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province

3 Result

3.1 Management and Human Resource Management

Before explaining much further about the merit system, it's better to start by explaining about management. [11] wrote management as a set of activities including planning, decision-making, organizing, leading, and controlling—directed at organizational resources such as human, financial, physical, and information—to achieve organizational goals efficiently and effectively.

The purpose of human resource management is to help an organization in achieving its vision just like what [12] stated in defining human resource management as the design of formal systems in an organization to ensure the effective use of employee's knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOCs) to accomplish organizational goals. [13] defined human

resource management as the utilization of human resources within the organization, which is carried out through the functions of human resource planning, recruitment and selection, human resource development, career planning and development, wages and welfare, occupational safety and health, and industrial relations.

[12] also explains activities in human resource management starting from recruitment, selection, training and development, compensation and profits, retention, evaluation, and promotion. From the descriptions above, it can be concluded that to understand the concept of human resource management, it is necessary to understand the main parts of human resource management in an organization, starting from recruitment, selection, promotion, career development, competency, and performance.

One process in management relevant to the present study is staffing. According to [14], staffing consists of recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, developing, and replacing employees to produce goods and services most effectively and efficiently. Parks also explains the purpose of staffing including helping in the realization of employee synergy with all their duties and obligations, the establishment of cooperative, effective, and integrated work mechanisms, facilitating the workers with expertise in their respective fields to complete their jobs, encouraging workers to provide maximum efficiency and results for the organization. In staffing, it is necessary to look at two aspects, education and skill. Education determines formation or position assignment in an organization, while skills (ability) relate to a person's ability to complete a job efficiently, precisely, and effectively [15].

3.2 Job Placement

Placement is one part of the activities in human resource management. It is about assigning employees to a certain position to carry out certain work needed to achieve organizational goals. Placement is described differently by experts. Employee assignment is an activity that assigns prospective employees to the right job position and follows the prospective employee's abilities so that it can be assessed how compatible and how well the prospective employee is positioned in the appropriate place, which will influence the quality of the work they will produce [16]. Placement can also be defined as matching a person's abilities and talents to the work they will do [17]. Placement can also mean matching or comparing the qualifications held with job requirements, and at the same time assigning tasks and jobs to prospective employees to carry out [18].

[14] states that the main principle in assigning an employee to a position is “the right man in the right place and time”; this means every employee must be assigned the right job based on their competence and ability, therefore job tasks should be done by the right person to get an optimal result.

Thus, it can be concluded that placement means considering abilities, talents, and qualifications that suit the job description and job specification in putting a person in a certain job or position. Inappropriate employee placement will result in less-than-optimal performance [19].

3.3 The Merit System

The merit system is a development of human resource management. According to [20], the merit system can be defined as a human resource management system that is based on achievements or all good employee work behavior, which will ultimately influence the increase or decrease in position and also affect employee's income. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2014 mentions that the merit system as a policy in ASN management is based on qualifications, competencies, and performance fairly and reasonably without distinguishing between political background, race, skin color, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability. Therefore, it means recruitment and assignment of ASN must fulfil the requirements of the merit system.

According to [21], the implementation of a merit system could proceed effectively under certain conditions, namely:

- i. setting high performance standards, because low expectations tend to become self-fulfilling predictions. top achievements rarely come from mediocre expectations;
- ii. developing an accurate performance appraisal system, focusing on results-oriented and job-specific criteria;
- iii. training supervisors in performance appraisal mechanisms and in the art of providing feedback to employees. ineffective performance must be managed constructively;
- iv. connecting the rewards based on performance by using semi-annual performance appraisals to grant or deny merit system increases; and
- v. using a wide range of merit system increases by making salary increases more meaningful.

3.4 Competencies of Graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS

Competence is defined as the underlying characteristics of a person that are related to the effectiveness of an individual's work in their work [22]. Competency consists of knowledge, skills, and behavior adapted to the field of work required by the organization or company, so it can produce high-achieving employee performance [23]. In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 5 of 2014, competence is divided into 3 types, namely [24]:

- i. technical competency as measured by educational level and specialization, functional technical training, and technical work experience;
- ii. managerial competency as measured by level of education, structural or management training, and leadership experience; and
- iii. socio-cultural competence as measured by work experience related to a pluralistic society in terms of religion, ethnicity, and culture to have a national insight.

For government-affiliated colleges, technical competence is truly aligned with the needs of government organizations. The following table down here are technical competencies based on the level of educational specialization of Politeknik Statistika STIS graduates.

Table 2: Competencies of Graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS

No	Study Program	Competencies
1	Diploma III Statistics	Capable in survey management and methodology by applying statistical rules to carry out statistical implementation such as collecting data, processing data, presentation and analysis of statistical data, also know theory and practice of official statistic
2	Diploma IV Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capable of designing efficient surveys in economic, social, and demographic fields b. Capable of studying instruments that are used by Statistic Indonesia in producing valid and reliable official statistics c. Capable of developing methods that are used to increase the quality of data d. Capable of coordinating stages of survey implementation in the field based on the predetermined plan e. Capable of communicating survey results based on the rules that have been established in the survey design, written and verbally
3	Diploma IV Computation Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capable of making analysis using basic techniques or advance statistics, data mining techniques and machine learning b. Capable of using or developing their own various data processing and statistical analysis applications using computer programming languages c. Knowing how to develop information systems, data basis, and developing applications whether they stand alone or through networks

Source: [25–27]

Besides technical competencies, the graduates must develop competencies in soft skills to support their job, including integrity and trustworthiness, good communication and interview techniques, capability in adaptation, psychological self-mastery, ethics, character, leadership, and mastering local socio-cultural conditions.

As previously stated, the competencies of the graduates are intended to support the duties and role of Statistic Indonesia as a non-departmental government institution, namely as a provider of statistical data for development. Meanwhile, Politeknik Statistika STIS itself, as a government-affiliated college managed by Statistic Indonesia, aims to improve the quality and competency of human resources in statistics and statistical computing. Based on the performance report of Politeknik Statistika STIS in 2022, its first strategic target is “to produce graduates who are qualified and have integrity”, which is measured by the objective indicator of the percentage of graduates with a GPA ≥ 3 , and it results in 97.85%. These results reflect the success of Politeknik Statistika STIS in providing excellent statisticians. Previous research

found that competency greatly influences employee performance so the relevant organization makes it a priority to increase the competency potential of each employee [28].

3.5 The Merit System in Graduate Placement

The implementation of a merit system in employee management starts from recruitment to retirement to produce a professional ASN. As previously explained, the merit system-based placement considers some aspects such as competency, qualifications, and performance compatible with organizational needs; however, performance aspects are not included in this research. Therefore, this research looks at the merit system from two points: compatibility between competency and job qualifications and compatibility between job competencies and job qualifications with organizational needs.

Table 3 compares the job qualifications and the competencies a graduate of Politeknik Statistika STIS must have.

Table 3: The Comparison between Competencies and Job Qualification of Graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS

No	Education	Position	Job Qualification	Competencies
1	Diploma III in Statistics	Statistician Assistant	1. Providing information and statistical data including preparation for statistical activities, data collection, data processing, data analysis, and dissemination of statistical results 2. Strengthening the National Statistical System (<i>Sistem Statistika Nasional</i> – SSN) at advanced levels	Capable of doing survey management and methodology by applying statistical rules for statistical implementation such as collecting data, processing data, presentation, and analysis of statistical data, also knowing the theory and practice of official statistics
2	Diploma IV in Statistics	Statistician	1. Providing information and statistical data including identification of priority needs for	a. Capable of designing efficient surveys in the economic, social, and demographic field b. Capable of studying instruments used by

No	Education	Position	Job Qualification	Competencies
			<p>statistical data, design and preparation for the implementation of statistical activities, data collection, data processing, data analysis, and dissemination of statistical results</p> <p>2. Strengthening the National Statistical System (<i>Sistem Statistika Nasional – SSN</i>) at advanced levels</p>	<p>Statistic Indonesia in producing valid and reliable official statistics</p> <p>c. Capable of developing methods to increase data quality</p> <p>d. Capable of coordinating survey implementation in the field based on the predetermined plan</p> <p>e. Capable of communicating survey results based on the rules established in the survey design, written and verbally</p>
3	Diploma IV Computation Statistics	IT Staff	<p>1. Carrying out information technology administration</p> <p>2. Arranging information technology infrastructure</p> <p>3. Arranging information systems and multimedia</p>	<p>a. Capable of making analysis using basic or advanced statistics techniques, data mining, and machine learning</p> <p>b. Capable of using or developing their own various data processing and statistical analysis applications using computer programming languages</p> <p>c. Knowing how to develop information systems and databases, and developing applications whether</p>

No	Education	Position	Job Qualification	Competencies
				they stand alone or through networks

Source: [29,30]

Table 3 confirms that the competencies of graduates are aligned with the job qualifications required in the functional position of Statistical Assistant, Statistician, and Computer (IT) Administrator. This confirms that a government-affiliated academy aims to improve abilities and skills in carrying out official duties for ASN and ASN candidates.

In terms of compatibility between job competencies and job qualifications with organizational needs, Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System clause 29 paragraph 1 explains that the function of government-affiliated colleges is to improve abilities and skills of ASN and ASN candidates in carrying out official duties of a department or non-departmental government institutions [31]. Furthermore, Statistic Indonesia Regulation Number 8 of 2020 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Provincial and Regency or City Statistics Agency mentions that these agencies are responsible for (1) performing basic statistics at provinces and regencies or cities aligned with the provisions of statutory regulations; (2) coordinating functional activities in implementing the tasks at province or regency or city levels; and (3) streamlining and coaching the activities of government agencies in statistical activities at province or regency or city levels. Based on the aforementioned theories and regulations, it can be said that the competencies and qualifications for graduates align with organizational needs.

3.6 Barriers to Implementing the Merit System in the Placement of Politeknik Statistika STIS

The merit system had not been fully implemented even though the competencies of Politeknik Statistika STIS graduates were compatible with job qualifications. Some Politeknik Statistika STIS graduates are not assigned according to their competencies. Table 4 shows the incompatibility in competencies and job qualifications.

Table 4: Table of Incompatibility Between Competencies and Current Position

No	Diploma Programs	Position/task now (%)		
		Statistician	IT Staff	Other Position
1	Diploma III in Statistics	83.4%	-	16.6%
2	Diploma D IV in Statistics	95%	1.6%	3.3%
3	Diploma D IV in Statistics Computation	75%	25%	-

Source: SIMPEG Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi

This incompatibility turns into a barrier to implementing the merit system because it leads to a kind of shortage in the relevant human resources for the jobs. Statistics Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province serves 10 regencies, 1 city, and 1 province. Each work unit needs certain employees based on job analysis. Table 5 compares the number of existing employees with the ideal number of employees based on workload analysis.

Table 5: Comparison of the Number of Employees

No	Work Unit	The ideal number of employees based on the existing regulation	The recent number of employees
1	Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi	137	66
2	Statistic Indonesia of Banggai Island Regency	48	25
3	Statistic Indonesia of Banggai Regency	52	24
4	Statistic Indonesia of Morowali Regency	48	27
5	Statistic Indonesia of Poso Regency	52	26
6	Statistic Indonesia of Donggala Regency	58	25
7	Statistic Indonesia of Tolitoli Regency	52	22
8	Statistic Indonesia of Buol Regency	48	22
9	Statistic Indonesia of Parigi Moutong Regency	52	25
10	Statistic Indonesia of Tojo Una-Una Regency	48	22
11	Statistic Indonesia of Sigi Regency	50	24
12	Statistic Indonesia of Palu City	59	31
Total		704	339

Source: SIMPEG Statistic Indonesia of Central Sulawesi, accessed August 2023

Table 5 shows that the existing number of employees is far from ideal. The effect of this shortage is that graduates of Politeknik Statistika STIS having competency as Statisticians and IT Staff are forced to take administrative positions. The shortage happens due to high employee transfer rates for personal or organizational reasons. In addition, Statistics Indonesia accepts graduates from Politeknik Statistika STIS to fill the positions of Statistician, Statistician Assistant, and IT Staff almost every year, while only receiving staff for administrative positions once in the last five years due to the rare open recruitment for administrative positions. Table 6 presents the information.

Table 6: Recruitment in the Last 5 Years

No	Year	Closed recruitment for Statistician, Statistician	Open Recruitment for Statistician, Statistician Assistant, and IT Staff	Open Recruitment for the Administrative Formation
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		Assistant, and IT Staff		
1	2018	14	-	-
2	2019	19	10	-
3	2020	13	-	-
4	2021	12	-	-
5	2022	16	8	2

4 Discussion

As explained before, Statistics Indonesia has implemented the merit system correctly by assigning the right man to the right job based on competencies, job qualifications, and organizational needs aligned with the regulation. This paper uses the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5 of 2014 concerning ASN as the basis theory in seeing how institutions assigned ASN, considering the status of the research subject as the graduates of a government-affiliated school.

Even though the placement of graduates has implemented merit system values, there are problems. *First*, there is a lack of human resources, as shown by the incompatible existing number of employees with the ideal number of employees based on workload analysis. *Second*, there have been no additional human resources in the administrative section. In several state institutions with government-affiliated schools, closed recruitment of ASN targets a particular group or the graduates of government-affiliated schools. By implementing a closed recruitment system, government institutions know and could form the competencies of ASN candidates [32]. But on the other hand, this closed recruitment does not add human resources in the administration sector. To fill administrative positions such as in the finance team and human resource team, some government-affiliated graduates are forced to place their graduates in the administrative sector. *Third*, the imbalance between job formation and the quantity of ASN leads to limitations in certain functional positions [33].

Barriers to implementing a merit system are rooted in one main problem, the lack of human resources in the administrative sector. Assigning government-affiliated school graduates is not a solution because administrative positions also require certain competencies and job qualifications. Employee placement that is not compatible with their competency and educational qualifications will ultimately affect individual performance and organization [34].

Thus, if the problems come from the shortage of human resources, especially in the administrative sector, it is necessary to review planning in human resources. [35] directs the 5 steps for strategic human resource planning: (1) reviewing organization missions, objectives, and strategies, (2) reviewing human resource objectives and strategies, (3) assessing current human resources, (4) forecasting human resource needs, and (5) developing and implementing human resource plans to match the needs. [36] also stated that human resource planning has the following objectives: (1) improving the utilization of human resources, (2) efficiently adjusting human resource activities and needs, (3) increasing efficiency in attracting new employees, and (4) completing human resources information to assists organizational activities and units.

Planning and arranging employees based on needs must be done by considering all situations. Statistics Indonesia of Central Sulawesi Province must pay attention to filling administrative positions and technical positions to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. Organizations that pay attention to the role of each member by considering their potential and linking them to the right position will encourage the organization to produce optimal performance.

5 Conclusion

Overall, a merit system has been implemented in the placement of Politeknik Statistika STIS graduates. This is indicated by the competency and qualifications for positions in Assistant Statisticians, Statisticians, and IT Staff to support the work of Statistics Indonesia of Central Sulawesi. However, the implementation of this merit system is not considered optimal because some graduates are not assigned to positions compatible with their qualifications. This occurs due to some reasons, including a lack of human resources, no additional human resources in the administrative section, and the imbalance in position formation and number of employees.

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