Merit System Implementation in the Government of Pekanbaru, Riau

Desi Andarwati[1], Seno Andri[2], Okta Karneli[3], Adianto Adianto[4]

Abstract:

This study aims to explore the implementation of the merit system in the Pekanbaru City Government using qualitative research methods. The findings indicate that the implementation of the merit system is characterized by both progress and challenges. While the system intends to modernize civil service management by focusing on qualifications, competencies, and performance, there are still significant areas for improvement. Although the civil service management system (SIMPEG) in Pekanbaru can process real-time data, it is not fully integrated with performance assessments, disciplinary actions, or career development processes. The e-performance system remains isolated, complicating the integration of personnel data for benefits and career growth. Furthermore, electronic documentation services are only partially digitized, and there is inadequate integration with the National Personnel Information System (SIMPEGNAS) managed by BKN. The planning and development of SIMPEG are ongoing, with many plans being short-term and incomplete. Addressing these issues requires a more comprehensive and long-term strategy, along with the establishment of technical policies to guide SIMPEG integration. Overcoming these challenges is crucial for enhancing civil service management and achieving improved governance and public service outcomes.

Keywords: Merit System, Implementation, Government, Pekanbaru

1. Introduction

Research on the merit system from 2014 to 2023 shows fluctuations, with a significant upward trend identified since 2019. Analysis from Romme & Meijer (2020), Gajduschek & Staronova (2023), Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen (2016), Mitchell (1940), and Stančetić (2020) reveals several best practices that governments in various countries can adopt to optimize regional government performance through the merit system. Key steps include periodic adjustments and updates to the merit system, implementing transparency in selection and evaluation, empowering employees through self-development opportunities, recognizing achievements as motivation, integrating technology in merit management, and

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[1] *Universitas Riau, Indonesia.* *desi.andarwati7075@grad.unri.ac.id*
[2] *Universitas Riau, Indonesia.*
[3] *Universitas Riau, Indonesia.*
[4] *Universitas Riau, Indonesia.*

stimulating innovation and collaboration. Adopting these practices is expected to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of regional governments, creating a fair, transparent, and innovative environment to provide better public services.
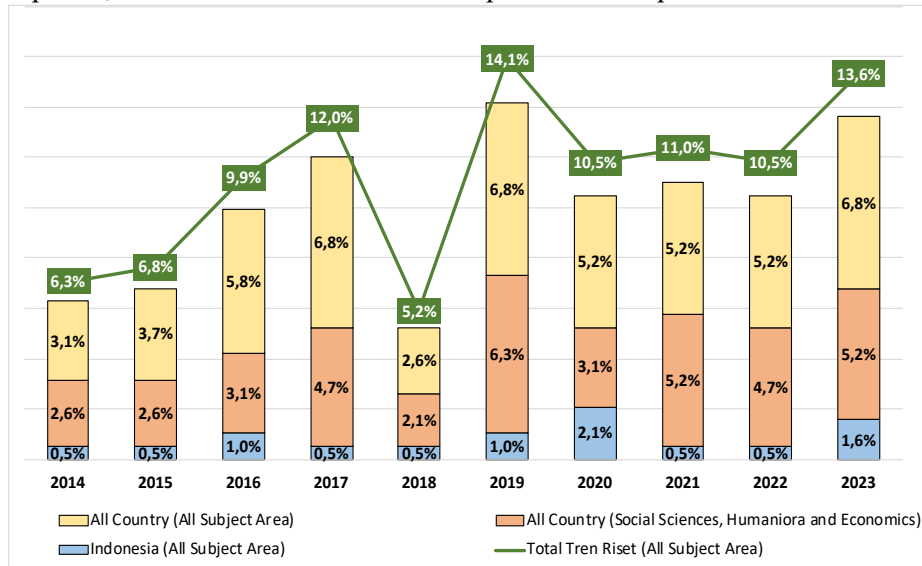

Figure 1. Tren Riset Sistem Merit Secara Global 2014-2023

Based on the chart above, research on the merit system is predominantly conducted in the United States, accounting for 48.2%, with Indonesia in second place at 4.6% (average of 2.33%), reflecting a dominant focus on meritocracy in public administration. This phenomenon indicates that merit system research is more frequent in the United States, possibly due to the complexity and scale of its public administration. This demonstrates that the merit system has been implemented in advanced countries (Cardona, 2002; Drechsler, 2005; Gajduschek & Staronova, 2023; Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen, 2016). Meanwhile, research in Indonesia, although contributing less in percentage, may indicate an interest in the application and development of the merit system in the context of developing countries. This empirical phenomenon illustrates the dynamics of globalization and the complex challenges faced by both countries in improving government performance through the merit system.

In Indonesia, according to Ministerial Regulation No. 40 of 2018 on Merit System Guidelines, the purpose of merit system assessment in government agencies is to serve as a supervisory function to ensure the implementation of the merit system in ASN management within government agencies. It also aims to provide feedback for improving the quality of merit system implementation in ASN management and to build a database on merit system application information in ASN management within government agencies. According to Dwiputrianti (2020), and referring to National Civil Service Commission (KASN) Regulation No. 9 of 2019 on the Procedures for Self-Assessment of the Merit System in ASN Management in Government Agencies, the government shows significant attention to human resource development, strengthening bureaucratic reform, and the implementation of the merit system in ASN management.

Based on data from the National Civil Service Commission (KASN) on Merit System Implementation for Region 2, there are five local governments that scored above average in merit system performance in 2022, categorized as good or better. In the provincial government category, West Java ranked first with a merit system score of 375.5 (Category IV Very Good). This was followed by D.I. Yogyakarta, East Java, South Sulawesi, and Riau. In the district/city government category, Bandung had the highest score, followed by Tangerang City, Pekanbaru City, Sumedang Regency, and Sidoarjo Regency. Pekanbaru City received a "Good" rating with a score of 314.5 (<325), which means that compared to Tangerang City with a score of 326 (Very Good), Pekanbaru City needs to implement strategies to achieve a "Very Good" rating, with only a 10.5-point difference.

Given this empirical phenomenon, the focus of this research is on Pekanbaru City. The choice of Pekanbaru City as the research locus in the context of merit system implementation is significant, considering its strong performance in managing Civil Service (ASN). The good assessment in 2022 provides concrete evidence of Pekanbaru City's efforts to ensure that bureaucratic positions are filled by professional, competent, and high-performing ASN. Additionally, Pekanbaru City is an attractive subject for research because its success, marked by the "Very Good" rating, can offer inspiration and serve as a model for other districts/cities in enhancing merit system implementation for government employees. Pekanbaru City also received a "Good" award from the National Civil Service Commission (KASN) in 2020 and 2021, indicating consistent achievement in implementing the policy of providing additional income to employees. Although this achievement presents a positive outlook, further evaluation shows that Pekanbaru excels in the aspects of needs planning and procurement, achieving a perfect score of 100%. The success of this Merit System implementation is not only seen in the increased score but also in the change of category to "Very Good." This confirms that the Pekanbaru City Government has effectively addressed challenges in personnel management with effective strategies. According to previous studies (Dwiputrianti, 2020; Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen, 2016; Nurprojo, 2014), the success of implementing the merit system depends on supporting factors.

2. Theoritical Background

Woodard (2005) defines the merit system as a human resource management framework grounded in the principles of fairness, equity, and performance-based rewards. The merit system aims to enhance and improve job performance. According to Ministerial Regulation No. 40 of 2018 on Merit System Guidelines for ASN, "The merit system is a policy and management approach for ASN based on qualifications, competencies, and performance, applied fairly and equitably without discrimination based on political background, race, skin colour, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability." The merit system is a framework or principle for human resource management based on evaluating and rewarding individual performance, qualifications, and competencies (Bacharach & Bamberger, 2007). This concept

ensures that job placements, promotions, and rewards are based on an individual's abilities, performance, and real contributions, rather than on subjective factors or nepotism.

As a central concept in human resource management within government agencies, the merit system has a significant impact on improving organizational performance and effectiveness. The basic concept of the merit system is rooted in public administration and human resource management theories that have evolved over time. In the context of public administration, Woodrow Wilson is often seen as a key figure in introducing the concepts of professionalism and meritocracy into government bureaucracy. In his famous 1887 paper, "The Study of Administration," Wilson emphasized the importance of hiring competent and skilled individuals based on their qualifications and expertise, rather than through political patronage or nepotism. As a Grand Theory, Wilson proposed that government bureaucracy should be managed by individuals with expertise and knowledge in their field, replacing the prevalent political job system of the time. This thinking laid the foundation for the development of the merit system later applied in public sector human resource management.

According to Scott (2014), behavioral and systems theories provide the foundation for the merit system concept by emphasizing performance evaluation and employee development as integral aspects of human resource management. However, Bass & Riggio (2006) argue that the application of the merit system is closely related to the evolution of human resource management theories in Indonesia. Moreover, the application of transformational leadership, as proposed by Bass and Riggio (2006), can foster an organizational culture that supports the merit system through emphasis on employee development and motivation. It is important to note that the development of the merit system in Indonesia is also linked to political dynamics and changes in government policies. In recent years, the Indonesian government has placed greater emphasis on bureaucratic reform to enhance efficiency and public service. Understanding and implementing the merit system concept have become increasingly important for achieving these goals.

The theoretical foundation of the merit system in Indonesia is reinforced by several strategic legal regulations. Articles 36 and 37 of Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services establish the obligation for public service providers to provide complaint mechanisms and assign competent personnel for managing complaints. This creates a basis for a transparent and open merit system, ensuring that public services are delivered by qualified and high-performing individuals. Furthermore, Law No. 5 of 2014 on Civil Service provides a critical pillar for establishing and implementing the merit system within ASN. This law outlines fundamental principles of ASN management, including a focus on meritocracy, professionalism, and accountability (Law No. 5 of 2014). It creates a strategic framework for developing a fair and effective merit system. At a more detailed regulatory level, Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 on Civil Service Management is a key instrument providing detailed guidance on improving human resource quality within ASN. This regulation addresses various aspects, including competency development, continuous training, and objective performance evaluation as core elements of the merit system (Gov. Reg. No. 11 of 2017).

Epistemologically, the government's efforts to improve ASN performance through regulations such as Law No. 5 of 2014 and Gov. Reg. No. 11 of 2017 have deep philosophical roots. These principles reflect a belief in the importance of meritocracy, that is, rewarding and advancing based on qualifications, performance, and competencies. Ministerial Regulation No. 40 of 2018 on Merit System Guidelines provides a more practical direction for implementing the merit system within ASN. This document offers further guidance on procedures and practices to follow in merit system implementation. Additionally, the National Civil Service Commission (KASN) Regulation No. 9 of 2019 on Procedures for Self-Assessment of the Merit System in ASN Management clarifies the self-assessment mechanisms within the merit system, ensuring that ASN performance evaluations are based on meritocratic principles (KASN Reg. No. 9 of 2019).

As a concrete effort, the Indonesian government continues to make regulatory improvements. Regulations on the merit system are regularly updated and adapted to current needs, reaffirming the government's commitment to creating a professional, efficient, and performance-oriented bureaucratic environment based on meritocratic principles. According to the literature review, it is important to note that the merit system concept continues to evolve and is enriched by contributions from various theories and perspectives in human resource management and public administration over time. While there is no single Grand Theory exclusively investigating the merit system, this concept remains a fundamental principle in managing human resources in the public sector, prioritizing fairness, transparency, and professionalism. Research by Sandinirwan et al. (2022) highlights the internal and external organizational factors influencing the success of merit system implementation. Internal organizational factors include key aspects such as leadership, employee understanding of the merit system, human resources information systems, and organizational culture. On the other hand, external factors affecting implementation include political influences.

The merit system, as defined and framed by historical and contemporary theories, offers a robust foundation for improving public sector human resource management. However, gaps remain in understanding the practical challenges and effectiveness of the system. Future research should focus on bridging these gaps by exploring the implementation challenges, assessing the impact of regulatory frameworks, and examining how merit-based principles are applied in diverse political and cultural contexts. Enhanced empirical evidence and comparative analyses will be crucial in refining the merit system to better serve public sector needs and ensure equitable, efficient, and effective governance.

3. Methodology

This study aims to understand how the merit system is implemented in the Pekanbaru City Government using qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach and literature study. According to Sugiyono dalam Santoso (2021), qualitative research aims to provide a holistic view from the researcher's perspective, focusing on the

exploration, description, and explanation of the phenomena under study. This research falls into the category of descriptive qualitative research, which means it seeks to understand the value of a variable without comparing or linking it to other variables (Sugiyono in Santoso, 2021). The data for this study is obtained from two main sources: primary and secondary. Primary data is collected through interviews with relevant agencies, while secondary data comes from libraries or other relevant research (Bambang, 2022). Data collection techniques include literature analysis, library studies, and the use of valid sources from the internet and printed or electronic books.

Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman (1994) technique, which involves data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This method is chosen because it provides a deep and detailed understanding of the implementation of the merit system, which is crucial for identifying and analyzing key aspects of the policy. The reason for choosing this research is to gain a more comprehensive and contextual insight into the application of the merit system in Pekanbaru, which is expected to contribute to improving the effectiveness and accountability of local government

4. Empirical Findings/Result

The implementation of the merit system in the government of Pekanbaru City hinges on several crucial factors. Consistent application of policy standards is essential for effective implementation, requiring unwavering commitment from all involved parties (Adi Suryanto & Mariman Darto, 2020). Broad support from both internal and external stakeholders is equally important, as creating a supportive ecosystem can help overcome resistance and enhance the system's effectiveness (Adi Suryanto & Mariman Darto, 2020). The development of internal competencies, such as through LAN Corporate University programs, is also key to the system's success (Adi Suryanto & Mariman Darto, 2020).

Aligning the merit system with Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 is crucial for ensuring adherence to established indicators and principles (Meisi Kalesaran, 2021). The system emphasizes competence and performance for employee selection and promotion, tailored to local contexts (Tri Raharjanto, 2019). However, the initial implementation in Indonesia faces technical and political challenges, necessitating ongoing adjustments and adaptations (Tri Raharjanto, 2019). Effective implementation of the merit system requires the establishment of clear competency standards and a thorough understanding of job responsibilities (Dida Daniarsyah, 2017; Nurwita Ismail, 2019). Placement of new graduates should be merit-based, with a need for specificity in job fields to ensure alignment with competencies (Insan Firdaus, 2021). Strong leadership commitment is vital for enforcing and supporting the merit system within government agencies (Halifa Nurnadhifa & Lilie Syahrina, 2021).

Additionally, employees selected through competitive exams typically possess higher educational qualifications and advance in their careers comparably across various hiring procedures (Tim Johnson & Gregory B. Lewis, 2018). Awareness and understanding of the merit system vary significantly among educational institutions, impacting its effective implementation (Georgina M. Dioses et al., 2019). These findings provide a comprehensive view of the current state and challenges in implementing the merit system in Pekanbaru City, identifying key areas for improvement and further research.

Successful implementation of the merit system involves several key steps. According to Adi Suryanto and Mariman Darto (2020), it is crucial to ensure commitment and consistency in applying policy standards as stipulated by regulations. This commitment determines whether the merit system will be effectively and consistently applied. Additionally, support from all stakeholders—both internal and external—is essential, as the merit system affects a broad range of parties. A supportive ecosystem helps mitigate resistance and is vital for acquiring competitive human resources that support organizational goals and public service. The strength of the internal team is also critical for the system's success, with competency development through internal programs, such as LAN Corporate University, being key. In the context of North Sulawesi, Meisi Kalesaran (2021) notes that the implementation of the merit system in the Regional Personnel Agency aligns with Government Regulation No. 11 of 2017 on ASN Management. The indicators specified in this regulation are consistent with merit principles, effectively integrating the merit system into regional human resource management practices.
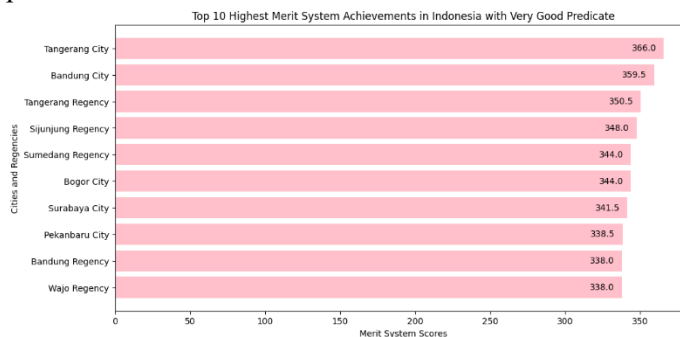

Figure 2. TOP 10 Highest Merit System Achievements in Indonesia

Pekanbaru's entry into the top 10 highest merit system achievements is a testament to its dedication to good governance and effective public administration. This accomplishment not only enhances Pekanbaru's reputation but also serves as an inspiration for other regions to strive for excellence in their governance practices. Moving forward, Pekanbaru can build on this success by continually innovating and adapting its strategies to maintain its high standards and further improve the quality of life for its citizens.

Pekanbaru's score of 338.5 places it among the elite group of cities and regencies recognized for their exemplary merit system practices. This ranking highlights Pekanbaru's commitment to transparent and accountable governance. The high score

suggests that Pekanbaru has successfully adopted strategies that promote fairness, competence, and integrity within its civil service. These strategies likely include rigorous recruitment processes, merit-based promotions, and continuous professional development for employees. By comparing Pekanbaru's practices with other top-ranking cities like Tangerang City (366) and Bandung City (359.5), it is evident that Pekanbaru is on par with leading examples of good governance. This comparison provides insights into areas where Pekanbaru excels and opportunities for further improvement.

A high merit system score correlates with improved public service delivery. Residents of Pekanbaru likely experience more efficient and responsive government services, contributing to higher citizen satisfaction and trust in local government. Achieving a top 10 ranking serves as a recognition of Pekanbaru's efforts and motivates the local government to maintain and enhance its performance. It also sets a benchmark for other cities and regencies aspiring to improve their merit system practices. Effective governance is crucial for achieving the SDGs. Pekanbaru's performance in the merit system supports SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
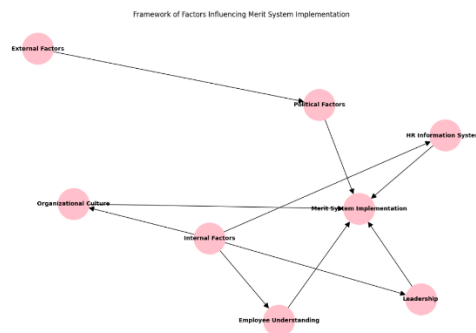

Figure 3. Framework of Factore Influencing Merit System Implementation

Tri Raharjanto (2019) emphasizes that the merit system focuses on employee competence and performance in selection and promotion. Since there is no universal design for the merit system, each country adapts it to its legal, social, and cultural contexts. In Indonesia, the system's early implementation has faced technical and political challenges at the regional level. Dida Daniarsyah (2017) highlights that high performance in the Civil Service can be achieved if the merit system is consistently applied in ASN management practices. Open selection under the merit system requires setting competency standards for positions, which should accommodate both soft and hard skills development. Nurwita Ismail (2019) outlines two main consequences of the merit system: (1) every position must have competency standards, and (2) all officials must understand their tasks and targets. These consequences ensure that ASN competencies align with job requirements during open recruitment.

Internal Organizational Factors (Implementation Merit System in Pekanbaru)
1. **Leadership**:

Effective leadership is crucial in driving the merit system's implementation. Leaders must demonstrate commitment and set an example for the rest of the organization. In the context of Pekanbaru City, strong leadership commitment is evident from the efforts to align the merit system with existing regulations and the drive for consistent application of policy standards. The leadership's role in championing and supporting the merit system is crucial for its effective implementation. Examining the results related to the "Career Development" aspect, one common challenge is the development of Job Competency Standards (SKJ), which outline the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors for fulfilling job responsibilities (Permenpan 38 2017). This issue is illustrated in the infographic below.

Government agencies have not yet fully developed or established SKJs for all positions, as evidenced by the low achievement rate of only 6.6%. The highest achievement rate of 32.4% indicates that most government agencies only have SKJs for high-level positions (JPT), which are primarily used for open recruitment for these top roles. This situation poses a significant problem for the future development of human resources in government agencies. Firstly, SKJs are crucial for talent management infrastructure (Permenpan No. 3 of 2020). Secondly, SKJs ensure objectivity in promotions and transfers. Thirdly, SKJs serve as a foundation for recruiting personnel with standardized competencies. Fourthly, SKJs are used as a reference for creating assessment materials. Fifthly, SKJs guide the placement of employees according to their competencies. To address these issues, a data-driven policy brief is needed to analyze the problems causing the inefficiency in developing and establishing SKJs in government agencies. This will help formulate policy alternatives for policymakers or relevant stakeholders to resolve these issues effectively.

2. **Employee Understanding of the Merit System**:
Employees must have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the merit system, including its principles, processes, and benefits. This understanding is essential for proper adherence to the system's guidelines. For the merit system to succeed in Pekanbaru City, it is necessary to ensure that all employees have a thorough understanding of the system. This involves regular training and communication about the principles and practices of the merit system. Enhancing employee understanding can reduce resistance and increase adherence to merit-based practices.
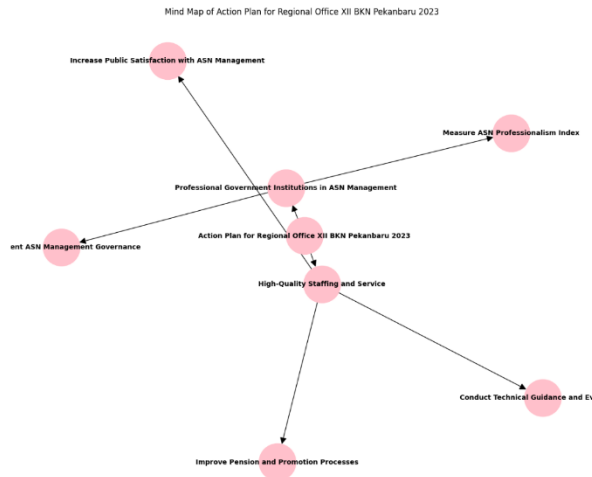
Figure 4. Mind Map of Action Plan For Regional Office XII BKN Pekanbaru 2023

The mind map illustrates the Action Plan for Regional Office XII BKN Pekanbaru 2023, emphasizing the implementation of the merit system in managing ASN (Civil Servants). The mind map effectively organizes the action plan into primary goals and implementation measures crucial for the successful application of the merit system in ASN management. The emphasis on professionalism, public satisfaction, and quality service is tied back to the legal framework and national priorities, ensuring ASN practices are fair, competent, and aligned with merit-based management principles. The central node of the mind map is the Action Plan for Regional Office XII BKN Pekanbaru 2023, which outlines the overall strategy and objectives for the year. The primary objectives of this plan include developing Professional Government Institutions in ASN Management and achieving High-Quality Staffing and Service. These objectives are designed to enhance ASN management and ensure exceptional public service.

The plan includes several sub-objectives and implementation measures. For improving Professional Government Institutions in ASN Management, the plan emphasizes the need to Implement ASN Management Governance by establishing and enforcing governance frameworks that align with merit system principles. This ensures fair and competent management of ASN. Additionally, it calls for the Assessment of the ASN Professionalism Index, which involves regularly evaluating ASN to ensure they meet the required qualifications and competencies central to the merit system. To achieve High-Quality Staffing and Service, the plan aims to Boost Public Satisfaction with ASN Management by enhancing public trust through merit-based practices. It also includes Providing Technical Guidance and Evaluation, which involves offering ongoing training and assessments to ensure ASN staff adhere to the merit system's standards. Lastly, the plan seeks to Enhance Pension and Promotion Processes by ensuring that promotions and pensions are handled fairly and based on merit, consistent with the system's focus on qualifications and performance.

3. **Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS)**:
Robust HRIS supports the merit system by providing accurate and timely data on employee performance, competencies, and qualifications. This technology facilitates fair and objective decision-making. The use of advanced HRIS in Pekanbaru City is essential for managing and analyzing employee data. By leveraging HRIS, the city can ensure that decisions regarding promotions, placements, and rewards are based on accurate and objective data. This minimizes the risk of bias and enhances the fairness of the system. Personnel in the institution lack adequate knowledge in formulating Job Competency Standards (SKJ), both in terms of methodology and guidelines. This lack of understanding may be due to the infrequent conduct of SKJ socialization and technical guidance sessions. According to a survey by KASN, 63.3% of respondents reported never having received SKJ socialization, either from the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform or BKN. This limited knowledge can negatively impact the management of human resources based on the merit system, as SKJ serves as the foundational basis for assigning individuals to roles according to required standards and qualifications.

This resistance is particularly evident in regional institutions. Efforts to standardize minimum qualifications and competencies raise concerns among current officeholders. Before the merit system was introduced for ASN management, job placement often overlooked qualifications and competencies. As a result, there is a fear that job standardization might displace individuals currently holding positions that do not meet the new requirements. This resistance can hinder the SKJ development process and potentially lead to interventions that accommodate personal or group preferences.

4. **Organizational Culture**:
A supportive organizational culture that values meritocracy, fairness, and transparency is fundamental. This culture helps in overcoming resistance and ensures the sustainability of the merit system. Cultivating an organizational culture that supports the merit system is a continuous process. In Pekanbaru City, efforts to promote values such as fairness, transparency, and performance-based rewards are necessary. This cultural shift helps in embedding the merit system within the organizational fabric. The merit system implementation is in line with the RPJMN 2020-2024 (National Medium-Term Development Plan) and is part of the RKP 2020 (Government Work Plan) with the following priorities:
1) Enhancing Accountability, Oversight, and Bureaucratic Reform: The merit system improves accountability by ensuring ASN management is based on performance and qualifications, promoting transparency and effective oversight.
2) Boosting Innovation and Public Service Quality: By emphasizing merit, ASN are better positioned to deliver innovative and high-quality services, directly affecting public satisfaction and service delivery.
3) Strengthening Merit-Based ASN Management Implementation: This supports the core objective of implementing a merit-based management system, ensuring that ASN practices align with merit principles.

External Organizational Factors (Implementation Merit System in Pekanbaru)
1. **Political Influence**:
Political factors can significantly impact the implementation of the merit system. The system's success depends on the extent to which it can operate independently of political pressures and influences. The political environment in Pekanbaru City can pose challenges to the merit system's implementation. It is crucial to mitigate political influences that may undermine the system's integrity. Strategies to maintain the merit system's independence from political pressures include establishing clear regulations and oversight mechanisms.

The framework based on Sandinirwan et al. (2022) provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing the implementation of the merit system in the Government of Pekanbaru City. By addressing both internal and external factors, the city can enhance the effectiveness of the merit system, ensuring that it operates fairly and transparently. This framework underscores the importance of leadership, employee understanding, HRIS, organizational culture, and political independence in achieving a successful merit-based system. Insan Firdaus (2021) indicates that placement of graduates from Poltekip and Poltekim is aligned with the merit system, based on their study programs and functional positions in corrections and immigration. However, a lack of specificity in placement fields may lead to mismatches with graduates' competencies. Halifa Nurnadhifa and Lilie Syahrina (2021) report that the Ministry of Finance has implemented the merit system with strong commitment and support from leadership, ensuring active enforcement by top management. Emily Paige Lipka (2017) notes that an individual's acceptance into a system can be influenced by their ability to provide financial resources and prestige, as well as their ability to integrate well. However, those who strive to improve productivity but fall short may not be as valued. Tim Johnson and Gregory B. Lewis (2018) find that employees hired through competitive exams generally have higher initial education levels compared to those hired through alternative methods, though career advancement rates are similar across various hiring procedures. Georgina M. Dioses et al. (2019) reveal significant differences in faculty awareness of the merit system between public and private universities, particularly regarding procedures and guidelines, with varying levels of academic experience between institutions.

SIMPEG contains comprehensive personnel data, including employee profiles, competency data, performance data, training history, disciplinary history, awards, and retirement information, among other details. Although the system provides real-time data, it has yet to be integrated with performance assessment systems, disciplinary enforcement, and employee development. Additionally, the e-performance system operates independently, meaning it is not integrated with personnel data for benefits calculation and career development. Furthermore, the electronic documentation services (e-office) in regional government offices are not fully digitalized, with some processes still being handled manually. Moreover, the database related to disciplinary enforcement, code of ethics violations, and behavioral codes integrated into SIMPEG (performance and competency data) is not yet connected with the National Personnel Information System managed by BKN.

The low quality of SIMPEG in regional government offices can be attributed to two main factors. First, the underdeveloped planning of SIMPEG. The information system development plans in these offices are often short-term and relatively incomplete. This lack of thorough planning is due to the local government offices' insufficient understanding of the necessary components, features, and functions of SIMPEG. The absence of comprehensive information on SIMPEG requirements stems from the lack of technical policies governing the development of SIMPEG, including required personnel data, necessary features/functions, and integration procedures with the National SIMPEG managed by BKN.

5. Conclusions

The implementation of the merit system in the Pekanbaru City Government is a multifaceted process that highlights both progress and areas needing improvement. The merit system, intended to enhance the quality of governance by focusing on qualifications, competencies, and performance, is fundamental to modernizing civil service management, while Pekanbaru City has made strides in implementing the merit system, significant improvements are needed in system integration, SKJ development, and planning. The current state of the civil service management system (SIMPEG) in Pekanbaru shows that while real-time data capabilities exist, the system is not fully integrated with performance assessment, disciplinary enforcement, and career development processes. The e-performance system remains separate, which hampers the integration of personnel data for benefits calculations and career advancement. Additionally, electronic documentation services are not entirely digitized, and there is a lack of integration with the National Personnel Information System (SIMPEGNAS) managed by BKN. The planning and development of SIMPEG in Pekanbaru are still evolving, with short-term and incomplete plans being a common issue. There is a need for a more comprehensive and long-term approach to address the gaps in SKJ development and system integration. The absence of technical policies governing the development and integration of SIMPEG further exacerbates these issues. Addressing these issues will be crucial for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of civil service management in the city, ultimately leading to better governance and public service outcomes.

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