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### RECRUITMENT OF BUREAUCRATIC OFFICIALS FOR THE POSITION OF HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE EMPOWERMENT AGENCY, 2018, IN THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF WEST JAVA PROVINCE, POST-GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the recruitment of bureaucratic officials for the position of head of the community and village empowerment agency, in the Regional Government of West Java Province, in 2018, after the simultaneous regional head (governor) general election in 2018. The positions are filled by the open selection, and this is a reflection of the merit system's implementation.

The motivation of the study about the recruitment of bureaucratic officials very interesting because in the implementation of determining bureaucratic officials are very vulnerable to political factors or patronage factors in the implementation of the recruitment process for bureaucratic officials. With the existence of an open recruitment system, elected officials are officials who have the competence and ability to carry out their duties. That way it will serve the community is created well because the placement of bureaucracy officials is in accordance with competence.

In addition, this study utilized a qualitative research method, and data collection was carried out through interviews and documentation. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative technique, by drawing conclusions.

The results showed the recruitment of bureaucratic officials for the position of the agency head, besides referring to the merit system principles of jobs at every level, the best candidate, open to all, and systematic, transparent as well as challengeable, requires one more dimension to perfect the merit system's implementation in open selection. This dimension is the commitment of a regional head.

The authority of a regional head (governor) in the selection of the best out of three candidates, based on the selection committee's assessment, leads to possible gaps in the existence of non-merit factors during the implementation. This is due to the lack of transparency in delivering information on the three best candidates' assessments, submitted only by name, in alphabetical order. In the past, the governor's assessment was performed in private, and this strengthened the non-merit factor gap. Therefore, the reform was brought about by the Governor's interview method, originally a closed interview, but now changed to an open interview for the three candidates and broadcast live, by local television.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The effectiveness of governance in Indonesia is quite low, compared to other Southeast Asian countries (KASN, 2018). This is due to the staffing management of Civil Servants (PNS), characterized by a mismatch between the candidate's competencies and the competencies required for the positions, leading to low productivity and performance levels. Furthermore, the presence of underemployment, where the authority and duties of each employee are unclear, the allocation and distribution of civil servants are unbalanced and unequal, in terms of quality as well as quantity, and a non-strict reward and punishment system is implemented, inhibits the morale as well as the motivation of employees to work, and causes low employee welfare and other problems (LAN, 2010) in (Riyan & Prasojo, 2020). Furthermore, the low effectiveness of governance is also caused by the behavior of lazy and arrogant civil servants, as well as civil servants playing favoritism, and prioritizing the provision of services to superiors. This is because civil servants assume a connection with power has positive impacts on careers (Prasojo & Rudita, 2014).

Another cause of low effectiveness of governance is the low quality of bureaucratic officials, a result of implementing recruitment or appointment in positions and promotions, based on subjective considerations (KASN, 2018). This is because the bureaucracy is operated in a patrimonial form, and client patrons have an indirect impact on the recruitment and career development patterns of bureaucrats. These patterns are generally based on the personal links of a person in the bureaucratic environment, where positions are offered based on the concept of "who are you?", rather than on quality or experience (Setiyono, 2012).

Several studies by (Blunt et al., 2012), show appointment to a position is more to the practice of spoils system, as positions are awarded to people related to the ruling party or the highest ruling leader. This means positions are awarded

to candidates close to the authorities. In this system, the recruitment of bureaucratic officials depends on the extent of the relationship between the candidate and the leadership in government, as well as the placement of political relatives in strategic positions within the government bureaucracy (Nurlinah & Syamsul Bahri, 2016).

The practice of spoiling the system does not only occur at the central level but also at local governments, in the appointment and filling of positions. In addition, there are other factors, including nepotism, trust, loyalty and disloyalty, intervention, relationships, or individual interests of actors involved in the decision making process for appointments and filling positions (Kelly & McGrath, 1985; Firmansyah, 2005; Elip Helda, 2012; Nurlinah & Syamsul Bahri, 2016). Other subjective considerations include seniority, and "closeness" to superiors on the basis of belief, regional origin, ethnicity, as well as religion, in the form "like it or not" or "political order" (Halim, 2002; Herman, 2012; Baharuddin & Djabbar, 2014).

This became increasingly evident after the implementation of direct regional head elections (Pilkada), with an impact on the subjective and closed (closed career system) appointment as well as filling of bureaucratic positions within the local government (Azhari, 2011; Edison, 2011; Desy Mutia et al., 2017). Therefore, this system prioritizes the role, authority, as well as power of top leaders/political officials of the government bureaucracy (in this case, the regional head) in appointing officials into lesser positions (based on appointment), and pays no attention to the required qualities and qualifications. Thus, many officials occupy positions mismatching with the qualifications possessed (Azhari, 2011; Istiyan Harun Nur & Ferdi Gani, 2018), and this influences the low performance of regional government bureaucratic officials.

Based on this description, there is a need to evaluate the implementation of recruitment for bureaucratic positions in the Regional Government, full of bureaucratic actors' interests, the arrogance of top leaders using political power sources to determine the filling of positions, thus taking advantage of political power. This contradicts the ideal bureaucracy image, according to Max Weber, a German sociologist, stating the bureaucracy must be filled, led, and operated by professional officials (competent in respective fields). Weber (1947) stated bureaucratic officials ought to be selected based on technical skills assessed through competitive examinations, while career structures in promotion ought to be based on seniority (experience) and expertise (merit system).

Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus (ASN), was passed by the central government in order to present competent bureaucratic officials in respective fields and overcome irregularities related to the appointment and filling of bureaucratic positions in government agencies. This law is a new approach in the appointment of bureaucratic officials. Prasojo (2009) reported this regulation implies a change in the bureaucratic career system, from a close-career system approach, prioritizing seniority and authority, to an open-career system, prioritizing competence and competition, in filling positions.

The West Java Governor, Mochamad Ridwan Kamil, announced the recruitment/open selection to fill the bureaucratic positions of agency heads, including the position of the head of community and village empowerment agency, two months after the inauguration on December 29, 2018. This study therefore provides an in-depth description of open selection, based on a merit system, in the appointment of bureaucratic officials, as an interesting discourse. The mechanism of open selection for a position ensures the right person is placed on the right job, and officials are placed according to the competence of the position. This study therefore uses a merit system theory developed by McCourt (2007), with the principles of jobs at every level, the best candidate, open to all, and systematic, transparent as well as challengeable.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Recruitment*

Recruitment is generally defined as a process of finding and attracting applicants to be employed in or by an organization. However, (Cardoso Gomes, 1999) disclosed the term is currently not limited to the search for new employees, as the fundamental reason for recruitment is "the expansion of organizational activities, creation of new jobs and activities, or the movement of workers to other organizations". Similarly, Armstrong & Taylor (2020) expressed recruitment " as ad hoc demands for human resources, due to the creation of new posts, expansion into new activities or areas, or need for replacement". This means recruitment is carried out at will, due to the expansion in the work area and the need to fill new places.

This perspective indicates an open job position. Thus, because recruitment refers to a position, the term's definition in a broader sense does not only refer to recruiting new employees for a job in an organization but is also interpreted as a process of recruiting both new and old employees or an official, to occupy a new position or to obtain potential human resources for the position.

Recruitment is an interesting and significant function of human resource management because the process relates to the values and conditions of the surrounding environment, from social, economic, and political aspects. This means recruitment is necessary because of the need for personal placement in accordance with individual expertise (the right man on the right place) and the needs of the organization, in an effort to support the organizational goals' efficiency as well as effectiveness, and to maintain control over the bureaucrats in charge of electing the official. Thus recruitment is usually intended to give groups of workers greater authorization in performing roles.

In this regard, the recruitment of bureaucratic officials is the process of appointing civil servants (PNS) to positions in the bureaucratic structure where rights, authorities, and responsibilities to lead work units in the bureaucracy are awarded. According to Azhari (2011), this is the process of appointing civil servants to a higher or broader level of authority and responsibility,

within a particular bureaucratic scope.

The appointment of bureaucratic officials is generally loaded with practical political interests from the head of the region in power (Azhari, 2011), and positions are awarded based on personal relationships (personal links) or the concept of "who are you?", rather than the quality of experience (Setiyono, 2012). Thus, the existing regulations are distorted by regional head authorities. This is evident and became highly prevalent after the implementation of regional autonomy policies and particularly, after the implementation of regional head elections (Azhari, 2011; Edison, 2011).

Several studies on the bureaucracy in local governments show similar conditions in bureaucratic positions. A study by Baharuddin & Djabbar (2014) showed the recruitment of bureaucratic officials is based on appointment decisions prioritizing the factors of like and dislike, loyalty and disloyalty as well as other nuances of personal and group political interests. (Mashuri, 2007) also reported "appointments in bureaucratic positions and even employee transfers in the regions are currently characterized by political nuances and various interests of political and executive elites."

"First, a candidate for office must possess the required abilities for the position to be held. Second, elections must be free from personal influence, collusion and nepotism. Third, there must be examination requirements as well as open and competitive elections in filling every bureaucratic position".

According to Noer (2014), the merit system has the benefit of controlling the abuse of public office in the bureaucracy for the interests and influence of certain political parties, because the system practices a neutral bureaucratic attitude in government. Noer also stated this neutrality is evident in the open recruitment process, providing equal opportunities for the public to participate in a transparent and objective selection process. Meanwhile, Sowa & Selden (2003) conveyed the parameters required in the recruitment process. These parameters are outlined below.

1. Recruitment is performed based on requirements including, open to every qualified applicant, and with a determined procedure.
2. There is no special consideration for close family or political parties in the employee/official appointment process.
3. The appointment of an official/employee is determined by technical ability, with an objective selection.

According to Sowa & Selden (2003) these parameter or merit systems aim to recruit professional officials for government bureaucratic positions based on competence. (Tjokrowinoto, 2001) also stated the bureaucracy ought to keep prioritizing the merit system during recruitment of officials. This means considering the increasing public need for services, expert (capable) bureaucratic officials with the ability to translate the community's desires are most important needs because the government's goal is to serve the community.

In a merit system, the positions of bureaucratic officials are awarded based on ability and openness. Thus, bureaucratic positions are available, at least in theory, for the entire society, not just the relatives of the leaders (Setiyono, 2012), as in the Chinese Qin and Han dynasties. The system was developed with the aim of keeping government positions from being occupied not just by aristocrats, but also by capable rural residents (Kim, 1978).

### *Merit System*

Recruitment of bureaucratic officials based on the merit system means prioritizing ability and competence. According to Young (1961) in the book titled "The Rise of The Meritocracy", meritocracy is often interpreted as one view, or providing opportunities for people to advance based on merit, specifically in terms of abilities. Young (1961) reconceptualizes merit as a combination of intelligence (I), resulting in learning, and one's basic potential with effort (E) effort, symbolized by  $I + E = M$ , "Merit is composed of intelligence and effort ( $I + E = M$ ), as the lazy genius is not really a genius". This expression means a lazy genius or person with high intelligence does not fall into the category of merit. In terms of work, effort is often interpreted as working optimally, and the term meritocracy has been widely derived into the term merit system.

The merit system is defined as a staffing system where the appointment of employees is based on practical and theoretical skills. Practical skills are demonstrated by how candidate concerned performs practical work in daily life, while theoretical skills are proven by passing a job examination (Moekijat, 2007). Resulting in the merit system is a "reaction to the spoil, nepotism, and patronage systems". Therefore, this system emphasizes the required expertise and competence for a certain position (Suwaryo et al., 2019). An objective assessment is a fixed procedure strictly followed in determining a candidate to occupy a position in the government bureaucratic organization.

According to Stahl Glenn (1962) the merit system is broadly defined in modern government as "a personnel system where comparative merit or achievement governs each individual's selection and progress (promotion) in the service, and where the conditions and rewards of performance contribute to the competency and continuity of the service". This means the merit system is a staffing system where there is a comparison of skills or achievements affecting each individual's selection and progress in service, as well as performance conditions and rewards contributing to competence and service sustainability.

Meanwhile, McCourt (2007) defined the merit system as "the appointment of the most suitable person for any given job". This means the appointment into positions is based on the quality and abilities of candidates. Therefore, positions must be filled by the most suitable candidate, based on qualities and abilities (Herman, 2012), and not because of religious factors, politics, family, friends, ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, and other ascriptive factors.

This is in line with the report by Widodo's (2012) stating the merit system is a system for recruitment into positions or promotion of employees not based on kinship, patrimonial (including, children, nephews, relatives, alumni, regions and groups) but on knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences of candidates.

However, McCourt's (2007) definition of the merit system as "the best person" must therefore be correct, otherwise, corruption or nepotism is bound occur. McCourt also showed how the misrepresentation of merit possibly encourages corruption. However, defining merit merely as "being able to do the job", in a situation where there are several capable candidates, allows selectors to take advantage of the ambiguity and appoint families or supporters, almost as capable as other very capable candidates.

This makes the "patron" face difficulty in placing "clients" into a position, where precise knowledge and skills requirements are required, rather than the positions left (McCourt, 2007). Furthermore, McCourt (2007) stated perhaps there is no application of meritocracy as defined so far. Defining meritocracy as a system of filling positions ought to result in "the best person providing the best quality service to the community."

According to McCourt (2007), government/bureaucratic organizations ought to apply the principles of merit in making selections, to obtain "the best candidate". These principles are outlined below.

1. *Job at every level*: The merit principle applies as much to promotion as to initial recruitment. In this case, every level of work must follow the principle of merit.
2. *The best candidate*: This means the candidate proven to be the most capable of appropriately complete job duties in a number of candidates (demonstrated as the most suitable in a number of candidates, all able to perform the job adequately). Ideally, the candidates with the most achievements and the best competence in respective fields are the best.
3. *Open to all*: This means appointments/filling of positions does rely solely on internal sources of candidates or based on a limited number of candidates. This principle requires fairness and equity, where all parties are entitled to the same opportunity.
4. *Systematic, transparent and challengeable*: This means appointments to positions are carried out systematically, openly, and competitively. All appointment decisions in an office must be open to probing, including for unsuccessful candidates, because in principle, these questions are highly valuable feedback and help improve future appointment decisions in the office.

Based on these thoughts, the merit system is therefore interpreted as a system, pattern, or recruitment model where positions are awarded to the right person, based on competence, expertise, ability, as well as experience, and not on spoil, nepotism, or patronage systems, where recruitment of officials is based on primordial relationships, groups, and subjective interests of policymakers. This system emphasizes professionalism, expertise, and experience possessed by bureaucrats, thus, a bureaucrat with the competence and objective

requirements is suitable for the position (Thoha, 2010). Thoha emphasized the merit system is commonly used to select candidates for career positions within the bureaucracy. To realize a bureaucratic career based on the rules of the merit system as expected by Weber's (1947) ideal concept, Thota also stated:

“Employment decisions based on merit: Selection and promotion decisions are based on technical qualifications, competence, and performance of candidates. Career tracks for employees: Members are expected to pursue careers in the organization. In return for this career commitment, employees have tenure, meaning employees are retained despite the occurrence of "burn out" or skill obsolesce.”

Weber's (1947) view shows the concept of a merit system in the appointment or recruitment of bureaucratic officials selected, based on technical skills as well as experience (seniority), and obtained through competitive, open examinations. This opinion was later refined by Robbins (1990) into:

“Selection of members is based on qualifications rather than "who they know"; requirements of the position determine the candidate to be employed and what positions are to be filled; while performance is the criterion for promotions. Commitment to the organization is maximized and conflicts of interest eliminated, by providing lifetime employment and separating members off the job roles from employees required to fulfill organizational responsibilities”.

According to Weber and Robbins, the important things related to the recruitment of bureaucratic officials are based on expertise and technical competence, in addition to high commitment to the organization, as explained by (Widayadi et al., 2021).

The views of these experts imply the recruitment of bureaucratic officials without using the merit system as the basis for implementing recruitment guidelines, results in low professionalism of bureaucratic officials in carrying out duties and functions. Numerous studies on the merit or meritocracy system in recruitment have been widely conducted by academics, practitioners, and institutions. Meanwhile, several studies from the western world have focused on aspects of the benefits of recruitment, based on merit/meritocracy systems, among others (Charron et al., 2017; Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen, 2016; Rauch & Evans, 2000). Generally, these studies concluded a merit system was considered important and applied to ensure fair and competitive recruitment (selection process followed by examination).

In addition, the (World Bank, 1997) shows countries running a merit system have a higher rate of economic growth, compared to countries not operating a merit system. This is supported by a study by the UNDP (2015), (Suwaryo et al., 2019) stating the merit system's implementation is also believed to be able to encourage economic growth and reduce the occurrence of corruption.

Scholars in Indonesia, including (Riyan & Prasajo, 2020; Baharuddin & Djabbar, 2014), as well as (Setyowati, 2014), have also studied recruitment



based on the merit system and discovered the obstacles causing ineffective recruitment and selection based on the principle of merit are administrative, political, cultural, and technical barriers. Meanwhile, doctoral research by Desy (2018) showed the practice of open selection in the Government is currently not based fully on merit because structural and cultural blockages occur during implementation.

According to Stahl Glenn (1962), there are several factors making the successful implementation of a merit system difficult in the government sector, including political bargaining, collective corruption, political corruption, spoils system, and nepotism. Furthermore, Herman (2012) showed the factors becoming obstacles in the application of meritocracy while filling positions are seen from the policy framework and legislation, personnel management authority institutions, the HR management system's capacity, and the environment where the policy is implemented. These factors are also assumed to be a prerequisite for supporting the successful implementation of meritocracy in filling positions, and the success or failure of meritocracy is primarily determined by the extent of meeting these preconditions.

Meanwhile, Nurrohman (in Baharuddin & Djabbar, 2014) stated:

“The factors influencing the merit system's application in regional promotion policies include regulations, external controls, and commitments of actors. Also, the placement of apparatus in structural positions is essentially aimed at developing the apparatus's human resources, especially in terms of work productivity, efficiency, moral service, career, leadership, and remuneration”.

### *Open Selection*

Open selection otherwise referred to as “job tender”, “open bidding”, or “job bidding”, is an open offer for candidates with the qualifications required for a bureaucratic position. (Mondy & Noe, 1993) stated "Job bidding is a procedure permitting employees convinced of possessing the required qualifications, to apply for a posted job." This means open selection provides an opportunity for every qualified person to apply for a job and the procedures used in finding employees are based on qualifications.

The concept of open selection is mostly used by private organizations to find the most suitable people to occupy a position (Mondy, 2008; Schuler & Jackson, 1997). According to Mondy (2008) open selection is defined as hiring executives for a while. Thus the concept was concluded to be aimed at hiring a reliable executive temporarily, and related to hiring/receiving an employee from outside the organization. Furthermore, Mondy and Noe (1993) argued an organization's goal of obtaining competent employees is realized by providing opportunities to external candidates. The concept of open selection is actually not new to bureaucracy. In New Public Management (NMP), this selection has been adopted by public/government organizations and widely practiced in various countries, with various designations or different terms. Meanwhile, (Singer et al., 1991) defined open selection as a form of procedural justice and the concept of fairness in elections.

This means open selection is a fair process providing opportunities for every person with the qualifications to occupy a position. (Singer et al., 1991) stated:

“To be perceived as fair, procedures ought to be designed to facilitate honest communication and information exchange, be widely advertised, and offer consistent treatment towards candidates, as well as increase the utilization of the job-relevant criterion of academic qualifications in the decision process, interview, while the selection training possibly emphasizes the perceived fairness of taking qualifications, with established validity as predictors of performance, into account”.

According to (Singer et al., 1991), open selection is a form of fairness, and the procedures ought to be honestly designed, widely advertised, and provide consistent treatment towards candidates as well as work-relevant educational qualifications. In the normative rules, the appointment of regional government officials is currently competitive and open, based on Law Number 5 of 2014, concerning State Civil Apparatus and the Minister Regulation of the State Apparatus Empowerment Number 13 of 2014, set by the Central Government. Based on these rules for implementation, an assessment or selection is performed by the selection committee. The selection committee conducts various tests/selections until there are 3 (three) names of the best candidates for each (one) position, to be submitted to the Personnel Supervisor Officer (PPK) or the governor, as the Regional Government's PPK. Subsequently, the governor selects 1 (one) candidate from the 3 (three) best candidates, based on the selection committee's evaluation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized qualitative research methods. According to (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997) the "Qualitative Method" research procedure produces descriptive data in oral or written form, from people and observed behavior. In addition, this study is focused on analyzing the recruitment process for bureaucratic officials, based on a merit system, in the implementation of an open selection, for the position of service head in the West Java Provincial Government. Based on the research focus, the study's unit of analysis is focused on the institution (organization) of the West Java provincial government, as the organizer of the bureaucratic officials' recruitment, for the service head position. The data collection techniques and data sources used in this study are outlined below.

Primary data is the data obtained directly from the research object. In this study, primary data was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, from research informants, including the Sub-Division Head of Career Development for High Leadership and Administrative Positions, the Head of the Career Development Section for High Leadership and Administrative Positions, the open selection committee, and open selection participants, as head of the Community and Village Empowerment service.

Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through analysis of relevant National and International journal article literature, including Scopus indexed journals

and regulations related to the bureaucratic official recruitment for the position of service head, for instance, the Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning State Civil Apparatus and the Ministry Regulation of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform (Menpan-RB) Number 13 of 2014, on the procedures for openly filling high positions in government agencies.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research about the recruitment of bureaucratic officials very interesting because in the implementation of determining bureaucratic officials are very vulnerable to political factors or patronage factors in the implementation of the recruitment process for bureaucratic officials. With the existence of an open recruitment system, elected officials are officials who have the competence and ability to carry out their duties. That way it will serve the community is created well because the placement of bureaucracy officials is in accordance with competence. The use of the merit system method is very appropriate for the recruitment process of bureaucratic officials. Such as the research Atmojo's (2019) about echelon II structural officers in the Yogyakarta regional government. Merit system by prioritizing competence, the official who will be promoted or placed in a structural position is an official in accordance with the needs so that the policies taken are policies that are in favor of the public. Same with the research results (Nurprojo, 2014; Faiz et al., 2020) which shows the importance of the merit system in the appointment of bureaucratic officials. The merit system that forms the basis of open recruitment, in some research results such as (Ajib Rakhmawanto, 2016; Nasir, 2019) shows that open recruitment is good but in practice, it is often the right of the organizing authority/user. In this regard, this study aims to analyze the open recruitment process by promoting a merit system.

### ***Jobs at Every Level***

The filling of high positions in the government bureaucracy is currently carried out by open selection and this process reflects the merit system. The implementation of the merit system in a position was interpreted by McCourt (2007) as "the best person". However, the full expression is "the appointment of the best person, for any given job", meaning the position ought to be filled by the most suitable candidate, in terms of quality and abilities. McCourt (2007) also stated argument and initial recruitment/search ought to be conducted (*Jobs at every level*) while determining the best person. In the West Java Province Regional Government, the filling of bureaucratic positions is carried out by open selection, with the aim of appointing officials in accordance with the qualifications. The open selection process for the head position of the community and village empowerment service begins with the formation of a selection committee with the task of determining the three best candidates to be submitted to the governor, based on various assessments. These include administrative selection, competency selection/assessment, interviews with the selection committee, as well as track record tracing related to education and position.

***The Best Candidate***

Open selection in the recruitment of bureaucratic officials aims to obtain the right man for the right place and on the right job. This relates to the best candidates in holding office. According to Miccourt (2007) “The best candidate” is demonstrably the ablest of several candidates, all able to do the job adequately. Miccourt (2007) also stated candidates with the most achievements and competence in their respective fields are the best. Therefore, Miccourt (2007) emphasized the need for knowledge and skills requirements in occupying a position. Thus, an assessment centered on the suitability of candidates’ qualifications and competencies is carried out to measure the level of the candidates’ knowledge and skills.

***Open to All***

The implementation of open selection in the bureaucratic officials' recruitment for the head position of the service in the Regional Government of West Java Province, was carried out by widely informing through the internet, with the open selection sites Jabarprov.go.id, bkd.jabarprov.go.id, as well as the jabarprov.go.id website. Based on the data on the number of participants in the open selection for the position of the head of the community and village empowerment office, a total of 23 participants, consisting of internal and external Civil Servants (PNS) of West Java province, were obtained. Table 1 shows the data on the civil servants participating in the open selection.

**Table 1:** Participants in the Open Selection, Based on Institution Origin and Gender

<b>Origin of Agency</b>										
<b>Head of Service Position Community and Village Empowerment</b>	<b>West Java provincial government</b>		<b>Regency/ City</b>		<b>Ministry</b>		<b>Outside West Java Province</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Gender</b>									
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female		
					Female Male					
<b>Educational Qualifications</b>										
		M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M

		a	o	as	o	as	o	a	o	a	o		a	o	a	o	a	o
		s	t	t	r	t	r	t	t	s	t		t	t	s	t	s	t
		r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r	r		r	r	r	r	r	r
		a	l	a	l	a	l	a	l	a	l		a	l	a	l	a	l
		1	3	3	-	5	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	1	-	-	-
		0																
																		2
																		3

According to Table 1, the position of the head of the community and village empowerment office was carried out openly, with the selection of participants not just from inside West Java province. Furthermore, a majority (20 or 87%) of the selected participants were mostly male, while only 3 (13%) were female, and only 22 people or 0.14% of the number of civil servants in West Java Province participated in the open selection. Table 2 shows the data on the number of civil servants in West Java based on rank/class and gender, in 2018.

**Table 2:** The number of civil servants in West Java

Rank / Class / Space	Gender		Number of civil servants
	Male	Female	
III.a (Junior Superintendent)	14059	18040	32099
III.b (First Class Junior Superintendent)	18230	23570	41800
III.c (Superintendent)	17166	20279	37445
III.d (First Class Superintendent)	17496	19701	37197
<b>Total Group III</b>	<b>66951</b>	<b>81590</b>	<b>148541</b>
IV.a (Supervisor)	28031	34546	62577
IV.b (Supervisor Level I)	24085	32144	56229
IV.c (Young Main Supervisor)	1671	869	2540
IV.d (Middle Main Supervisor)	134	82	216
IV.e (Main Supervisor)	37	18	55
<b>Total Group IV</b>	<b>53958</b>	<b>67659</b>	<b>121617</b>
<b>The total of Groups III and IV</b>	<b>120909</b>	<b>149249</b>	<b>270158</b>

**Data source:** The Central Bureau of Statistics of West Java Province in Figures (2018)

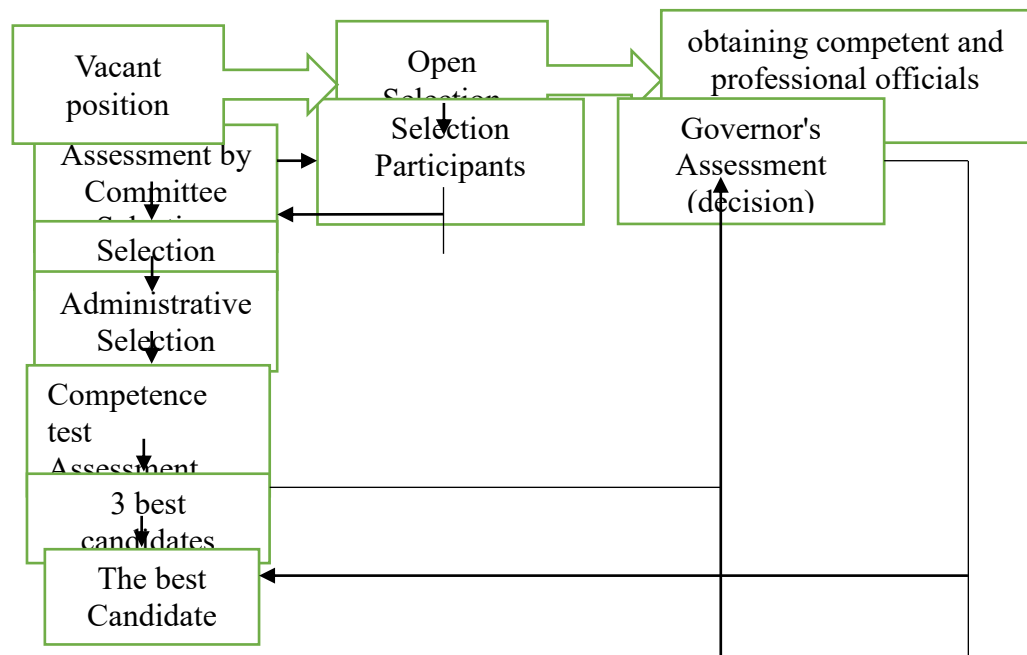
Table 2 shows the number of female civil servants is higher, compared to male counterparts, and a higher rank indicates more experience at work. A large number of class III and IV civil servants in the Regional Government of West Java Province ought to create a good climate of competition by participating in the open selection for the head of the service position. Unfortunately, the

number of applicants has not been optimal, meaning many groups III and IV workers did not apply for the open selection competition at the Regional Government of West Java Province, in December 2018.

***Systematic, Transparent, and Challengeable***

The recruitment flow of bureaucratic officials for the position of head of community and village empowerment services is carried out openly, in reference to the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative Reform and Bureaucratic Reform Number 13 of 2014 on procedures for openly filling high leadership positions openly within government agencies. Roby Budiman, the Head of the Sub-sector for career development for High Leadership and Administrative Positions for the Regional Government of West Java Province explained the procedure as outlined below.

1. Forming the selection committee tasked with conducting a selection process to obtain the best three candidates, to be submitted to the governor.
2. Subsequently, position filling is carried out online using the internet, through the [seleksiterbuka.jabarprov.go.id](http://seleksiterbuka.jabarprov.go.id); [bkdjabarprov.go.id](http://bkdjabarprov.go.id) and [jabarprov.go.id](http://jabarprov.go.id) websites.
3. Civil servants applying for the position of head of the community empowerment agency, are required to perform online registration at the [seleksi terbuka.jabarprov.go.id](http://seleksi terbuka.jabarprov.go.id); [bkd.jabarprov.go.id](http://bkd.jabarprov.go.id) and the [jabarprov.go.id](http://jabarprov.go.id) websites.
4. The selection committee conducts an administrative selection, in accordance with the requirements for the post of head of the agency.
5. Participants declared to have passed the administrative selection subsequently undergo the Competency test/assessment.
6. The selection committee conducts an assessment and determines the 3 best candidate names to be submitted to the governor.
7. The governor conducts interviews, evaluates, and chooses one of the three candidates, based on the selection committee's assessment.



**Figure 1: Schematic Representation of the Recruitment of Bureaucratic Officials**

Based on the figure above, the filling of vacant bureaucratic positions for the head of the community and village empowerment agency through open selection or position auction, is carried out by selection and evaluation of the selection committee. The selection committee has a role in the appointment of a governor. This consists of the regional government of West Java province’s internal elements and externals from academics and practitioners. According to the flow chart above, the open selection flow must be grouped into several stages to facilitate understanding. These stages are further divided based on the type of selection. Table 3 shows the stages of open selection.

**Table 3:** Open Selection Stages in the Regional Government of West Java Province

Stages	Activities/Selection	Description	Total Participants	Announcement of Selection Results
Stage I	Announcement	Informed online		
Stage II	Registration	Registration is carried out in 15 (fifteen) days	23	By Name
Stage III	Administrative Selection	Verification of Participant Files	23	By Name
Stage IV	Announcement of Administrative Selection Results	Verification of results of participant files	9	By Name
Stage V	Competency selection	Paper writing, Assessment	8	By Name
Stage VI	Health Test	Health Tests, Drug Tests	8	By Name
Stage VII	Track Record Tracing, interview with selection participants	Personality exploration, educational suitability, participant experience/position	7	By Name
Stage VIII	Submission to governor	The final result of the three best candidates who get the highest score	3	By Name

Stage IX	Interview by the governor	The three best candidates from the committee's assessment were interviewed by the governor	1	By Name
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Based on Table 3, the implementation of open selection has actually been carried out systematically. However, in terms of transparency of announcements, or the participant assessment results, this has not been carried out transparently, as every participant declared to have passed at each selection stage is only announced alphabetically, based on name and original agency. Selection participants have the right to know the reasons for rejection on the announcement letter, therefore the reasons have to be notified and follow strict criteria. McCourt (2007) stated this is important because the process must be systematic, transparent, and challenging. This means all appointment decisions in an agency are open to questioning, including for unsuccessful candidates because, in principle, these questions are highly valuable feedback to improve future appointment decisions.

According to the informant, "based on the rules in term of the announcement, the committee needs to announce the scores openly, along with the names of participant passing to the next stage". During the time of the implementation of the open selection for the position of the head of the community and village empowerment agency in 2018, the Regional Government of West Java Province had not optimally implemented this because the announcement of the selection results was not carried out along with the scores obtained by each participant. The lack of transparency is also evident in the announcements of the three best candidates (only displaying names in alphabetical order, as well as names of agencies), the domain of the Selection Committee. In the selection process, the requirements selected are the highest scorers in the selection stage, especially the 3 (three) participants in the final assessment, based on the merit system.

This is in line with the report by Roby Budiman, stating the West Java Provincial Government has currently not displayed results in the form of scoring and ranking. Furthermore, the selection committee remains tasked with the responsibility of determining the top three candidates. The committee's main task is to determine the three best candidates for each vacant position, out of a number of participants, and submit the names to the governor, as the final appraiser/decision-maker.

Meanwhile, the Personnel Development Officer (PPK)/regional head has the authority to select 1 (one) official for a vacant position. The choice of 1 (one) out of 3 (three) best candidates for bureaucratic high leadership positions has been regulated by law and has become the authority of the Personnel Development Officer (PPK). This is in line with Dedi Mulyadi's report, stating "determining the best out of three people is the authority of the PPK and has been regulated by law". According to the Law, the Personnel Development Officer (PPK) has the authority to determine the next stage's results and



therefore has the flexibility to determine the candidate to be elected subsequently, after previously being recommended by the Selection Committee. This will often create a gap in the subjectivity of the governor's assessment, and this is difficult to avoid because the governor is a political official and existing regulations are a political product. This is in line with the selection participant informants' disclosure stating:

The PPK is a political official, while regulations are a political product. Therefore, in determining the elected candidates, applicants with lower scores on previous assessments are commonly elected to occupy a position. The results of the selection committee may or may not be followed, thus, in the end, the best candidate is probably not elected.

The deviations and subjective assessments on these top three are rather difficult to be identified and assessed because the selection committee (PANSEL) works only to provide recommendations by determining the top three. Furthermore, interviews conducted by the governor actually have benchmarks/indicators for assessment and ought to be conducted openly. Therefore, there ought to be benchmarks/indicators for assessing the three best candidates, for instance, open candidate presentations/debates. Thus, the principle of the merit system in open selection is not only based on "jobs at every level, the best candidate, open to all, and systematic, transparent as well as challengeable", as the recruitment of bureaucratic officials is also made effective by a commitment dimension (consistency) during implementation.

This commitment is highly significant, important, especially the Regional Head's part, as the regional apparatus development officer. However good the selection process is, the results of the selection committee's assessment definitely lead to the Regional Head. Therefore as the selection committee submits the best candidate report, consisting of three best candidates for one position, the Governor must be able to commit to determining a choice to occupy a position with an assessment reference, based on the competence and track record in accordance with the position being applied for.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis, results, and description, the recruitment of bureaucratic officials for the position of community and village empowerment office head in the West Java Province Regional Government in 2018 was concluded to have been performed by open selection. The best out of the three best candidates was determined transparently, during implementation, to avoid gaps in the subjectivity of the governor's assessment. In addition, the governor's interview method was originally closed, but changed to an open interview with three candidates and broadcast live on local television. The implementation of merit system principles including "jobs at every level, the best candidate, open to all, and systematic, transparent, as well as challengeable" in the recruitment of bureaucratic officials, was made effective by a commitment dimension (consistency).

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