

## CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND WORK CULTURE AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF ACEH JAYA REGENCY (Study on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions)

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### Abstract

Initial findings in the field show that there is resistance from some employees who feel that they have lost status or influence due to a change in position. Some employees also experience confusion about new roles and responsibilities in functional positions, which has an impact on decreased work motivation and organizational effectiveness. The purpose of this study is to determine the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policy Through Equalization of Positions with changes in organizational structure and work culture at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency. The grand theory used is William N Dunn's theory of policy evaluation. The research method used is a qualitative research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism or interpretation. The focus of his research is Changes in Position Structure, Organizational Culture and Bureaucratic Reform Policy. Research results: Overall, the implementation of bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency has had an impact on the organizational structure and work culture. However, these changes are not fully effective because they are faced with a number of internal obstacles, such as employee unpreparedness, weak socialization, and not optimal support systems. Therefore, a more adaptive, participatory, and based on strengthening human resources is needed so that the goal of bureaucratic reform can really be realized at the regional level. The main novelty of this study lies in the comprehensive approach used, the local context raised, and the depth of analysis of the experience of employees as the main actors of bureaucratic reform. This dissertation makes an important contribution in bridging the gap between macro policy and the micro-realities of bureaucracy in the field.

**Keywords** : *Organizational Structure; Work Culture; Policy Impact; Bureaucratic Reform; Equalization of Positions.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Bureaucratic reform is a strategic agenda of the Indonesian government in realizing clean, effective, and serving governance. One of the key policies in this reform framework is the equalization of positions, namely the transition of structural positions of echelons III and IV to functional positions. This policy was launched through the Circular Letter of the Minister of PAN-RB Number B/617/M.SM.02.00/2020 regarding Appointment to Functional Positions through First Appointment explaining that civil servants with JF formation but have not been appointed to JF to be immediately appointed to JF by the Regional Government Personnel Supervisory Officer in accordance with their authority and applied comprehensively in ministries and institutions, including within the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The main goal of this equalization is to simplify bureaucracy, speed up decision-making, and improve the effectiveness of public services.

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia since the 2019–2021 era has focused on simplifying the government structure, one of which is through the equalization of structural positions (administrators and supervisors) into functional positions. This policy is regulated through Permenpan RB No. 28 of 2019 and updated with Permenpan RB No. 17 of 2021, which stipulates the conversion of echelon III and IV positions into functional positions as an effort to form a more *streamlined, dynamic, and professional* bureaucracy, (Nur Rochman, 2024). The process of equalization of positions has been widely carried out in various regional and central agencies. For example, the Lampung Provincial Government equalized 503 structural positions, which led to significant changes in the bureaucratic work system, making it more flexible and timoriented, (Amantha et al. 2023). In general, this policy has

been proven to reduce the number of structural positions and simplify the chain of command in the public bureaucracy, (Deli Indra Wahyudi, et al. 2023).

The impact of equalization is complex and varies, both in terms of organization, individual, and work culture:

**a. Changes in structure and working mechanism**

Equalization reduces the number of structural positions, changes the organization of work procedures, and sometimes leads to a disproportionate accumulation of tasks in functional positions, (Septa Firmansyah Putra, et al. 2022).

**b. Public services**

In theory, functional systems empower employees for faster responses. However, in practice, role ambiguity, service delays, and obstacles were found due to a lack of competency coaching.

**c. Work culture and employee motivation**

This simplification causes demotivation in some civil servants. In addition, functional systems are often considered to hinder career development due to the limitations of formation and the absence of clear promotion paths, (Maria Agustini Permata Sari, et al. 2022).

**d. Career development and credit scores**

The income threshold and credit score of functional positions are lower than structural, raising concerns over career stagnation in the absence of formal educational support, formation adjustments, or adequate mentoring.

**e. Agency's policy capacity**

From an institutional aspect, the ability of agencies to manage budgets, adjust structures and cultures, and use information technology (SPBE) has not been optimal, (Aldina Mahtiasari, 2023).

Initial findings in the field show that there is resistance from some employees who feel that they have lost status or influence due to a change in position. Some employees also experience confusion about new roles and responsibilities in functional positions, which has an impact on decreased work motivation and organizational effectiveness. In addition, there is a perception imbalance between structural officials who are equalized with other employees who do not experience equalization, which in turn affects team cohesion and collaborative work culture.

In academic studies, changes in organizational structure and work culture have been widely discussed. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), changes in organizational structure can trigger changes in the behavior of individuals and groups within the organization, and require adjustments to the existing organizational culture. Schein (2010) emphasized that organizational culture is the result of long-term interaction and is not easy to change, so drastic structural reform policies without cultural change can cause disorientation and conflict. Meanwhile, Hasibuan (2019) reminded that the success of an organizational change depends on the extent to which change communication is carried out clearly, openly, and consistently. Bureaucracy plays an important role in the wheels of a country's government. In Indonesia, the bureaucracy is expected to be able to carry out its duties effectively and efficiently to achieve national goals. However, the Indonesian bureaucracy is still faced with various problems, such as:

- a. Low performance: Indonesia's bureaucracy is often perceived as slow, unresponsive, and not results-oriented.
- b. Corruption: Corrupt practices are still rampant in various bureaucratic sectors, which hinder development and public services.
- c. Lack of professionalism: The State Civil Apparatus (ASN) still does not have adequate competence to carry out their duties optimally.
- d. Complex systems and regulations: Bureaucracies are shackled by complex and convoluted systems and regulations, which hinder work efficiency and effectiveness.

These problems become obstacles to the creation of *good governance* and hinder the achievement of national goals. Therefore, comprehensive and systematic bureaucratic reform is needed to overcome these problems. The organizational structure and central management, decentralization of authority, duplication of the format of government instruments in the regions, unsettling competence of the apparatus, and policy agendas that are not helpful in answering problems and challenges are some of the bureaucratic problems that arise in the current implementation of good governance. national progress. Steps or efforts are needed to improve the performance of government apparatus in the government bureaucratic system and structure by paying attention to changes in the work environment and the tendency of the socio-economic dynamics of the universal society in order to develop the direction of the Indonesian bureaucracy. reform in realizing good governance.(Anwar, 2018)

## CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND WORK CULTURE AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF ACEH JAYA REGENCY

(Study on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions)

Idris Suteja et al

The Ministry of Religion is committed to improving the quality of services to the community, finding solutions to existing problems, as well as evaluating the performance of the Ministry of Religion apparatus in providing services to the community. Based on this, in order to implement government reform policies that increasingly require the Ministry of Religion to make changes. For this reason, the Minister of Religion also asked all employees of the Ministry of Religion to work seriously and be able to increase their achievements, dedication, and loyalty to produce maximum achievements.

Some of the following things must be considered:

- a. The importance of strengthening the commitment, mental, and work culture of employees is actualized in improving performance, abandoning corrupt behavior, and employee discipline.
- b. The importance of renewing the *mindset* in work that prioritizes *output oriented* and *outcome oriented*.
- c. Changes in the organizational structure of the Ministry of Religion at the central level and the organizational structure of the vertical level based on the principle of "simplifying the structure and enriching functions". The arrangement of this vertical structure will be outlined in the form of a Regulation of the Minister of Religion which will be signed soon.
- d. The availability and implementation of standard operating procedures in the provision of services as well as the implementation of the duties and functions of the Ministry of Religion apparatus as mandated in KMA No. 168 of 2010 concerning Guidelines for the Preparation of SOPs in the Ministry of Religion.
- e. The development and development of employee assessments that have started in 2011 can be implemented in 2012, including efforts to improve the quality of recruitment of employees of the Ministry of Religion through the fulfillment of international standards for quality management, ISO 9001: 2008.
- f. The conformity of the annual work plan with the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Religion 2010-2014 so that it can improve the accountability assessment of the performance of the Ministry of Religion carried out by the Ministry of PAN and RB.
- g. All officials of the Ministry of Religion can continue to strengthen their hearts, strengthen their intentions, strengthen their commitment and integrity, and optimize all their potential to improve performance in an effort to maintain the WTP title in the future.

The Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Province, Dr. Iqbal S.Ag, M.Ag together with the Head of Administration, Drs Amiruddin MA, participated in an exit meeting for the evaluation of bureaucratic reform and the Government Agency Performance Accountability System (SAKIP) of the Ministry of Religion via zoom meeting, Thursday, January 7, 2021. This activity was led by the Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Zainut Tauhid Saadi. Also present were the Secretary General of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Nizar Ali, the Regional Head of the Ministry of Religion of all provinces, and the rector of PTKIN throughout Indonesia. Nizar Ali said that the RB and SAKIP index of the Ministry of Religion had increased since 2015-2019. He explained, in 2015 the RB value of the Ministry of Religion was at 62.28 with criterion B, then in 2016 it got a score of 69.14 (B), in 2017 it was 73.27 (BB), then in 2018 it was 74.02 (BB), and in 2019 it was 75.04 (BB). Then in 2015 the Ministry of Religion's SAKIP got a score of 62.01 (B). In 2016 it was at 68.17 (B), in 2017 it increased to 70.02 (BB). Then in 2018 it increased to 70.12 (BB), and in 2019 it increased to 70.52 (BB). He said that the Ministry of Religion targets the RB index to continue to increase from 2020-2024, and it is expected that in 2023 and 2024 the RB index of the Ministry of Religion will reach 80 with accreditation A. In addition, in the meeting Nizar also conveyed about the strategic issues of the RB of the Ministry of Religion 2020-2024 including, digital transformation, the implementation of risk management, the implementation of performance management, simplification of bureaucratic structures and institutions. (Ministry of Religion of Aceh, 2021)

With this change, the complexity of the challenges faced by the organization is increasing, this gives rise to the need for an organizational culture that can direct and develop employees to manage and control the organization to remain consistent with the changes that are being implemented in accordance with the vision and mission of the Ministry of Religion. With the occurrence of changes in organizational shapes, changes in culture and the implementation of internal and external provisions such as the implementation of code of ethics provisions that direct employees in *good governance services*, the importance of a study on employee satisfaction and employee performance of the Ministry of Religion is felt.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

### **2.1 Research Approach**

Researchers are the main instruments in qualitative research methods based on postpositivist or interpretive philosophy and are used to study the state of natural objects. Triangulation is a technique used to collect data that combines observation, interviews, and documentation; The data obtained is usually qualitative, and the data analysis is inductive/qualitative. The results of the research are intended to help understand meaning, understand uniqueness, construct phenomena, and find hypotheses.(Sugiono, 2019). The research approach used in this study is a qualitative and deductive research approach.

### **2.2 Research Location**

The research place is a place where the social situation is related to the target or problem to be researched.(Sugiono, 2019). The location of this research is at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency which is located in the office complex of the local government of Aceh Jaya Regency, Krueng Sabee District. The office has been occupied since 2008, which was previously the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency located in Krueng Sabee District.

### **2.3 Research Focus**

The focus of the research states that the focus is a single domain or several related domains of the social situation.(Sugiono, 2019:275). In accordance with this research, the researcher determined the focus of the research based on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policy Through Equalization of Positions.

This research is focused on an in-depth analysis of the impact of the implementation of bureaucratic reform policies, especially through the equalization mechanism, on the organizational structure and work culture at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency. This study aims to understand how equalization of positions that are part of the national agenda of bureaucratic reform change the pattern of formal organization and work values that develop in the local bureaucratic environment.

### **2.4 Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection was carried out using clear conditions, preliminary data summaries, and more observational, documentation, and in-depth data. The types of data collection used in this study are observation, questionnaire, and documentation. The data collection method is expected to be able to significantly increase the amount of information needed according to the research findings. (Sugiono, 2019).

### **2.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis for qualitative research is carried out at the time of data collection and after the data collection is completed for a certain period of time. In the interview, the researcher has conducted an analysis of the interviewee's answers. If the results of the analysis are inconclusive, the researcher will continue to ask questions until the current stage is reached, based on reliable evidence. Activities in data analysis, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification, are called Miles and Huberman Model Data Analysis (Sugiyono, 2019).

### **2.6 Data Validity**

Data analysis is carried out to verify whether the research conducted is indeed scientific research and also to challenge the data that has been analyzed. In the validity test of data in qualitative research, it includes tests, *credibility* (internal validity), *transferability* (external validity), *dependability* (reproducibility), and *confirmability* (objectivity) (Sugiyono, 2019).

## **3. RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **3.1 The Impact of the Implementation of Bureaucratic Reform due to Changes in the Organizational Structure in the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

The change in the organizational structure at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency is part of the implementation of the bureaucratic reform policy promoted by the central government through the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB). One of the tangible forms of this policy is the equalization of structural positions to functional positions, which began to be implemented



## **CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND WORK CULTURE AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF ACEH JAYA REGENCY**

**(Study on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions)**

Idris Suteja et al

gradually since 2021. Prior to the equalization of positions, the organizational structure of the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency still adopted a hierarchical structural pattern consisting of the Head of Office, Head of the Administration Subdivision, Heads of Sections (Pendis Section, Islamic Guidance, Hajj and Umrah), and Sharia Organizers. Each official has a structural position of echelon IV or III that is attached to a bureaucratic position, including administrative authority, command, and decision-making. However, after the enactment of the equalization policy, most of the structural officials of echelon IV were transferred to functional officials according to their fields of expertise. The position of section head and some technical coordinator positions that were previously structural, have been equated into certain functional positions, such as Personnel Analyst, Planner, or Associate Expert Extension Officer, depending on the background and competence of each employee. The impact of this change is a shift in work patterns, coordination, and authority in the organization. Employees who previously had a structural position with decision-making authority are now more focused on the function of expertise and individual performance output. This changes the dynamics of work relationships between employees, including in terms of reporting, performance evaluation, as well as the reward system and work discipline. Structurally, the organization of the Aceh Jaya Regency Ministry of Religion Office appears to be more streamlined and flexible, with a shorter command line. A.

### **3.2 The Impact of the Implementation of Bureaucratic Reform is due to Changes in Organizational Culture at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

Work culture is an important element in creating a professional, productive, and accountable bureaucratic environment. At the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency, the work culture has been formed by religious values, discipline, and a strong spirit of togetherness, in line with the social characteristics of the Acehnese people who strongly uphold religious values. The results of the interviews show that before the implementation of the equalization policy, the work culture in the office environment tended to be oriented towards a structural command system. Employee discipline relies heavily on direct direction from superiors, and decision-making is done hierarchically. Work communication also runs formally, with fairly clear boundaries between structural officials and executive staff. However, after the equalization of positions was enforced, there was a shift in the pattern of interaction and work dynamics. Structural positions that are removed and transferred to functional positions cause changes in employee relations. Employees are now more required to work independently, based on individual skills and performance targets, not just based on direction from their direct superiors. This raises the need for a new work culture that is more collaborative, initiative, and competency-based.

### **3.3 The Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

Equalization of positions is part of the bureaucratic reform policy which aims to simplify the organizational structure of the government, accelerate the service process, and improve the professionalism of the state civil apparatus (ASN). At the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency, this policy began to be implemented gradually since 2021, and has had a number of significant impacts both in terms of organization and individual employees. The results of the study show that the most obvious impact of equalization of positions is the transition of a number of structural positions of echelon IV to functional positions. Previously, the head of the section and the coordinator of the work unit held structural positions with administrative authority and decision-making. However, after this policy is enforced, they are required to adjust in functional positions according to their skill sets. The positive impact of this policy includes simplifying bureaucracy and cutting convoluted coordination channels. Organizations become more lean, responsive, and efficient in carrying out tasks. Some employees said that they felt more focused on the substance of the work because they were no longer busy with administrative matters of a structural nature. However, the negative impact is also quite felt, especially in terms of clarity of duties and responsibilities. Many employees are confused due to changes in the reporting system and authority structure that are no longer as firm as before. In some cases, equalization of positions also causes psychological anxiety due to the loss of structural position status which has been a symbol of appreciation and career path.

### **3.4 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Bureaucratic Reform through Equalization of Positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

#### **3.4.1 Supporting Factors**

Bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency has faced a number of challenges and obstacles, but it is also supported by various factors that allow the implementation of this policy to run well. These supporting factors, both internally and externally, play an important role in ensuring that the transition to a more efficient and professional organizational structure can be carried out well. Overall, this proposition emphasizes that the successful implementation of bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions is greatly influenced by the quality of leadership. Leadership commitment and transformative leadership style are not only supporting factors, but also determining factors that connect policy to practice on the ground. Without strong and transformative leadership, the equalization policy has the potential to become an administrative formality that does not result in substantive change. On the contrary, with visionary, empathetic, and consistent leadership, bureaucratic reform at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency can run effectively, sustainably, and have a positive impact on improving the performance of the apparatus and the quality of public services. Overall, these supporting factors interact with each other and strengthen the implementation of bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency. While there are still findings or challenges that need to be faced, especially related to the adaptation of work culture and performance appraisal systems, the existence of these supporting factors provides a solid basis for the long-term success of bureaucratic reform in the environment.

#### **3.4.2 Inhibiting Factors**

The implementation of bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency is part of a national policy that aims to streamline the organizational structure and encourage a more professional and performance-based bureaucracy. Although this policy has various positive potentials, the results of the study show that in practice there are a number of inhibiting factors that affect the effectiveness of implementation at the regional level.

### **3.5 Implications of Parktis**

This research has significant practical implications, especially for stakeholders within the Ministry of Religion and other government agencies who are implementing bureaucratic reform policies through equalization. The findings obtained can be the basis for improving organizational governance, human resource development, and improving overall bureaucratic performance. By understanding and following up on these practical implications, it is hoped that government agencies, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs, can optimize the implementation of equalization as part of bureaucratic reform that aims to form a professional, efficient, and accountable bureaucracy.

### **3.6 Research Novelty**

The main novelty of this study lies in the comprehensive approach used, the local context raised, and the depth of analysis of the experience of employees as the main actors of bureaucratic reform. This dissertation makes an important contribution in bridging the gap between macro policy and the micro-realities of bureaucracy in the field.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

### **4.1. Conclusion**

Based on the results of research that has been carried out in depth, both through observations, interviews, and document studies, several important conclusions are obtained as follows:

#### **a. The Impact of the Implementation of Bureaucratic Reform at the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

The impact of the policy is focused on two main aspects, namely:

- 1) Changes in the Organizational Structure at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jayav Regency, namely the equalization of positions, have caused a downsizing of the organizational structure, especially with the elimination of echelon III and IV positions, which are transferred to functional positions. These changes have a direct impact on the hierarchical structure, coordination patterns, and division of tasks and

## **CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND WORK CULTURE AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF ACEH JAYA REGENCY**

**(Study on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions)**

**Idris Suteja et al**

responsibilities in the work environment. Changes in organizational structure through the equalization policy at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency have the potential to reduce organizational effectiveness if it is not followed by work system adjustments, transition assistance, and strengthening employee motivation in functional positions. Thus, the discussion of the results of the study shows that changes in the organizational structure at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency are transformative processes that bring systemic consequences. Its success is highly determined by the organization's ability to adapt, build new work systems, and strengthen the competence and motivation of employees in functional positions.

- 2) Organizational Culture Change at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency which discusses structural changes, this reform also triggered a shift in work culture within the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya. There were adjustments in the way they interacted, work morale, motivation, and ASN's perception of leadership and performance awards. Team-based work culture and professionalism began to be developed, although it could not be separated from various challenges in the adaptation process. The successful implementation of the new work culture as a result of bureaucratic reform at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency is highly dependent on the organization's ability to manage changes in work values, strengthen leadership examples, and support the adaptation process of all employees without exception." This discussion shows that the success of the implementation of a new work culture does not only depend on changes in organizational structure, but is also highly determined by leadership, internal communication, continuous training, and exemplary in building a performance-based work culture. The office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency is in a phase of cultural transition that requires strategic direction and intensive coaching so that new work values can be properly internalized.

### **b. The impact of the implementation of bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions in the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

The results of the comprehensive study show that the implementation of bureaucratic reform policies through equalization of positions within the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency has had a wide and significant impact on various aspects of the organization, both structurally and culturally. This policy, although it aims to build a more lean, agile, and performance-oriented bureaucracy, in practice at the regional level poses adaptation challenges that are not simple. Overall, it can be concluded that the implementation of the equalization policy as part of bureaucratic reform at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency has a complex impact. The policy not only brought structural changes administratively, but also disrupted the stability of institutional functions and the balance of the work culture that had been formed beforehand.

Adjustment efforts are still being carried out by agencies at the district level, but the success of the implementation of this policy is highly dependent on the readiness of support systems, clarity of derivative regulations, and strengthening human resource capacity. Without synergy between levels and consistent coaching, the expected bureaucratic transformation will be difficult to achieve effectively. Bureaucratic reform through equalization of positions at the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency will only be effective if it is accompanied by the readiness of a performance system that supports functional positions, employee empowerment, and active involvement in the change process. Thus, the equalization of positions within the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency is clear evidence that bureaucratic reform is not just an administrative change, but a systemic transformation that touches the aspects of organization, human resources, work culture, and public services as a whole.

## **4.2. Suggestions**

### **a. Advice on the Impact of Implementing Bureaucratic Reform at the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

#### **1) Need for Contextual Structural Adjustments**

It is recommended that the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Aceh Jaya Regency make adjustments to the work structure contextually, in accordance with local needs and the condition of available human resources. These adjustments do not always have to mimic the central or provincial structures, but rather are adjusted to capacity, number of employees, and actual workload.

#### **2) Strengthening the Coordination and Command Function**

In order to avoid a vacuum in decision-making and coordination, it is necessary to strengthen informal roles or appoint functional coordinators who have managerial capabilities and institutional legitimacy. This is important to keep the workflow running even though the formal structure has been simplified.

**3) Continuous Coaching and Consistent Socialization**

Bureaucratic reform needs to be accompanied by continuous coaching, structured training, and socialization that is clear and easy to understand by all civil servants. The Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Province together with the central Ministry of Religion need to increase forums for coaching, mentoring, and functional training based on real tasks.

**4) Periodic Evaluation of the Impact of Reform**

It is important for the Aceh Jaya Ministry of Religion to periodically conduct internal evaluations of the implementation of bureaucratic reforms, especially related to the effectiveness of the new structure and its impact on public services, internal communication, and the achievement of organizational performance.

**b. Advice on the Impact of Implementing Bureaucratic Reform through Equalization of Positions at the Ministry of Religion of Aceh Jaya Regency**

**1) Remapping of Workload and Competencies of Functional Positions**

Equalization of positions should not only be seen as a transfer of administrative status, but also followed by a remapping of workload, required competencies, and support for work facilities. This is important for the established functional position to be substantially functional.

**2) Optimization of Functional Performance Appraisal System**

It is necessary to strengthen a credit score-based assessment system that is transparent, objective, and applicable. The system must be easy to understand and run by ASN who were previously familiar with the structural system, so as not to cause confusion or demotivation.

**3) Career Strengthening and Incentive Schemes for Functional ASN**

The government through the Ministry of Religion and the Ministry of Internal Affairs needs to ensure that functional civil servants still have clear room for promotion, incentives, and career development. Without a convincing level of professional growth, equalization will be perceived as a "decline" by many employees.

**4) Psychological and Organizational Assistance**

Changes in the position system also affect the psychological aspect of ASN. Therefore, it is necessary to take a more humane approach in assisting them through the transition. This can be done through coaching programs, career counseling, and strengthening the values of work motivation based on integrity and professionalism.

With these suggestions and recommendations, it is hoped that the bureaucratic reform process within the Ministry of Religion, especially through the equalization policy, can be implemented more effectively, humanely, and oriented towards quality public services. Structural and cultural transformation that go hand in hand is the main key to realizing a bureaucracy that is professional and adaptive to the challenges of the times.

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# CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND WORK CULTURE AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGION OF ACEH JAYA REGENCY

(Study on the Impact of Bureaucratic Reform Policies through Equalization of Positions)

Idris Suteja et al

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