Basic Assessment of Military Academy Cadets Selected on the Basis of Merit

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Abstract: Based on reports on the implementation of recruitment activities for Taruna and Taruni Akmil candidates in 2019 and 2020, several problems were found during the recruitment and selection process for Taruna Akmil. These problems certainly must be resolved by the Indonesian Army, with the aim of getting the best and quality Military Academy cadets. Departing from these problems, the researcher conducted an evaluation of the policy of the Army Chief of Staff Decree No. Kep/1023/XII/2016 concerning Technical Instructions on Admission of Military Academy Cadets and Cadets based on a merit system. This research was conducted using the literature review method. Several criteria are used to identify the application of the merit system during the recruitment and selection process for Akmil Cadets. These criteria are equal opportunity, open competition and fairness, and passing grade. The results found were that the recruitment and selection policies for Cadets of the Military Academy had supported the implementation of the merit system. However, problems occurred when the policy was implemented, which ultimately resulted in these criteria not being met during the recruitment and selection process for Academy Academy Cadet.

Keywords: Policy Evaluation, Merit System, Military, Public Sector, Recruitment and Selection

A. Introduction

The Indonesian National Army (TNI AD) is part of the main force in the country's defense system (Simanjutak, et. al., 2022). This makes the TNI AD have an important role in maintaining national defense and security. In Law Number 34 of 2004 concerning the Indonesian National Armed Forces, it is explained that the duties of the TNI AD are to carry out tasks in the defense sector, maintain the security of land border areas with other countries, develop and also build forces on land, and carry out activities to empower defense areas in land (Syafutra, et. al., 2021).

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the tasks of the TNI AD are very important in maintaining national defense and are not easy to do. Professional and adaptive personnel are needed, so that these various tasks can be carried out properly. Especially now that science and technology are advancing, it is undeniable

that the negative impact of this progress can be a threat to national defense. However, creating professional and adaptive TNI AD personnel is also not an easy thing.

Many factors hinder the creation of a professional and adaptive TNI AD. One of them is because there are problems when recruiting and selecting TNI AD personnel, especially in the recruitment and selection of Military Academy Cadets (Akmil). Recruitment and selection are part of human resource management, namely the process of obtaining, assessing, training, paying attention to health and safety, paying attention to employee relations, providing compensation, and related to justice issues (Dessler, 2018; Bohlander & Snell, 2007; Gatewood & Field, 1998; Gatewood, et. al., 2016).

Recruitment and selection process will not give maximum results, if you do not apply a merit system in it. The merit system is a fair and orderly process of recruitment, promotion, reward and punishment based on qualifications, performance and also competitive selection assessed by experts (Berman, et. al., 2016). If the recruitment process and selection process are carried out by implementing a merit system, the results of the two processes will be maximized and avoid all kinds of fraud.

The application of a merit system in the recruitment and selection process is indeed very important. However, this is not easy to do in the recruitment and selection process for Military Academy Cadet, because there are still obstacles that hinder it. These problems are described in the table as follows:

Table 1. Problems during the Recruitment and Candidate Selection Process Cadets of the Military Academy (Akmil)

Year	Problems during the Recruitment and Candidate Selection Process Cadets of the Military Academy	
	Recruitment	**Selection**
2019	1. Candidates for graduation from the Javanese ethnic group are still dominant at 49.17%, while candidates from ethnic groups in the Eastern region are still relatively few.	1. Security in field psychology activities is still not optimal. 2. The occupation of the parents of candidates who have passed is dominated by the Indonesian Army, with 46.90%.
2020	1. Leadership policies related to ethnic/regional representation are not supported by the readiness and quality of candidates sent by regional committees	1. Achievement of targets in terms of quantity has been achieved well from the allocation of 400 people to 425 people (106.25%). However, the quality achievement was only 70.82% (301 pure graduates).

Source: Report on the Implementation of Admissions for 2019 and 2020 Akmil Candidates

Seeing from table 1 above, the main problem in the recruitment process for Akmil Cadets in 2019 and 2020 is that there is still a lack of representation of Akmil Cadets candidates ethnically or regionally. Meanwhile, the problems in the selection process for Military Academy Cadets in 2019, namely the occupation of the parents of candidates who have passed are dominated by the Indonesian Army. Then in 2020 the achievement of targets in quality is lower than the achievement of targets in quantity, these two things should be achieved in balance.

The problems above can occur because the merit system has not been properly implemented in the recruitment and selection process for Military Academy Cadets. If this continues, it will certainly become a problem, adaptive and professional personnel cannot be realized. Therefore, this research was conducted to evaluate the recruitment and selection policies of Akmil Cadets based on a merit system. This research is important to do because the acceptance of Akmil Cadets, aims to obtain prospective Soldier class officers in order to meet the organizational needs of the Indonesian Army. These officers will occupy important positions in the organization and they will become leaders in the TNI AD organization, so it is important in the recruitment and selection process for cadets to implement a merit system.

B. Methods

This study discusses issues related to the implementation of the merit system in the implementation of recruitment policies and also the selection of Akmil Cadets. The research method used in this research is literature review. Literature review is an important feature of academic research, through a review of relevant literature the breadth and depth of existing frameworks can be understood, and can identify gaps to be explored. Summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing a group of related literature, done in order to test certain hypotheses and/or develop new theories. In addition, it can also be used to evaluate the validity and quality of existing work, as well as reveal weaknesses, inconsistencies, and contradictions (Paré, et. al., 2015).

Literature review according to (Randolph, 2009) is a framework related to new findings and previous findings, which are then used to identify whether or not there is progress from the results of a study. It was produced from comprehensive research and interpretation results from the literature related to the topics discussed. Research questions are identified by searching and also analyzing relevant literature through a systematic approach. Based on several explanations regarding the literature review, researchers in this study will identify research questions that have been prepared by searching and analyzing relevant literature. The aim is to evaluate the quality and reveal the weaknesses of the recruitment and selection policies of the Academy of Military Cadets by using a merit system approach.

In this study, the literature used by researchers to identify and also analyze research problems was sourced from the three databases (Scopus, Sage Journal, and Google Scholar). The keywords used to find the desired literature are recruitment and selection process, public sector, military, policy evaluation, and merit system. After selecting using predetermined keywords, seven journal articles were obtained from

the three databases which will be used in this literature review. One article is from Scopus, two articles are from Sage Journal, and four articles are from Google Scholar.

C. Results and Discussion

This study evaluates the recruiting and selection policies for Akmil Cadets based on a merit system, because several problems were found during the recruitment and selection process for Akmil Cadets in 2019 and 2020. These problems must of course be resolved and the first thing to do is to find out what be the cause of this problem. Only then determine the right solution to overcome the problems that occur.

Policy evaluation is carried out using a merit system approach, because to ensure that the recruitment and selection process runs fairly, transparently, and is also responsible. This study uses the literature review method to evaluate the recruitment and selection policies of Military Academy cadets based on a merit system. After selecting the articles that have been collected, seven articles are obtained that are in accordance with the issues raised in the study.

Based on the results of a review of the seven selected articles, it was found that problems still often occur during the recruitment and selection process in public sector organizations. One of these problems is recruitment, which is less flexible and attractive (Lavigna & Hays, 2004). This happens because the recruitment process in public organizations is often too complicated, as well as excessive formalization (Sievert, et. al., 2022). These various problems will certainly cause a decrease in public interest, so that the interest that will register will also decrease. The lack of innovation in the socialization of recruitment and selection activities (Prasetyono, et. al., 2021), the process of screening candidates that takes too long, and problems with entry requirements and examinations (Lavigna & Hays, 2004) exacerbate problems in recruitment and selection activities in public sector organizations.

The Military Academy (Akmil) as an educational school for the Indonesian Army and included in the public sector environment is also not immune from these problems. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the recruiting and selection policies for Military Academy Cadets. The recruitment and selection policy for Military Academy cadets is stated in the Decree of the Chief of Staff of the Army Number Kep/1023/XII/2016 dated 14 December 2016 concerning Technical Instructions on Admission of Military Academy Cadets and Cadets.

Evaluation according to (Nugroho, 2004) is a necessary stage to see the gap between "expectations" and "reality". The main purpose of the evaluation is not to blame one party, but to see how big the gap is between the achievement of policy performance and the expectations of a political policy. Therefore, policy evaluation is an activity carried out to assess the performance and benefits or impact of the policy. In addition, an evaluation is also carried out to measure the gap between the expectations to be achieved and the facts that occur in the field. Policy evaluation is one of the most important stages in the public policy process (Marlian, et. al., 2021).

In this study, an evaluation of the recruitment and selection policies for Taruna Akmil was carried out to measure the gap between the expectations to be achieved

and the facts that occur in the field. Recruitment and selection policies for Cadets Akmil have been established in accordance with the principles of the merit system. This can be seen from the principles stipulated in the policy, these principles must be fulfilled during the recruitment and selection activities for Taruna Akmil. There are eight principles, namely: fair, accountable, result-oriented, objective, professional, selective, orderly, and transparent. However, after the evaluation was carried out, there were principles that were not fulfilled optimally. This means that the recruitment and selection process for cadets of the Military Academy has not implemented the merit system properly.

Based on research (Prasetyono & et al., 2015) there are several criteria that can be used to identify the application of a merit system in the recruitment process. These criteria are used to identify whether a merit system has been implemented in the recruitment and selection process for Academy Academy cadets. The following are the results of the evaluation carried out by researchers:

Equal Opportunity
One indicator of the application of a merit system in the recruitment and selection process is equal opportunity. Equal opportunity means that all people are given the same opportunity to apply, regardless of race, religion, gender, political ties or physical condition. Similar to the recruitment and selection process for Taruna Akmil, in carrying out this process all Indonesian people are given the same opportunity to take part in the recruitment and selection process. But while still paying attention to aspects of quality and quantity. This is done by establishing requirements that are in accordance with the qualifications, but can be followed by all Indonesian citizens who meet the requirements.

This indicator is in accordance with several principles in the recruitment and selection policies for Military Academy Cadets. These principles are (1) fair, meaning that all Indonesian citizens get the same opportunity and treatment in recruitment and selection activities for Military Academy Cadets; (2) accountable, meaning that the implementation of the recruitment and selection of cadets must be morally accountable and the regulations in force. This explanation shows that the policy for the recruitment and selection of cadets of the Military Academy has been formed by taking into account the merit system.

However, what happened on the ground was different from the expectations of the policy. This is because there are still some problems related to these principles. First, based on reports on recruitment activities for prospective military academy cadets in 2019, prospective graduates from the Javanese ethnic group are still dominant, namely 49.17%. Meanwhile, there are still relatively few candidates from ethnic groups in the East. Second, the jobs of the parents of candidates who have passed are still dominated by the Indonesian Army, namely 46.90%. Third, based on reports on recruitment activities for prospective military academy cadets in 2020, leadership policies related to ethnic or regional representation are not supported by the readiness of candidates sent by regional committees.

The results of this evaluation indicate that there are still problems in implementing the merit system during the recruitment and selection process for Military Academy Cadets. These various problems certainly must be resolved by the Indonesian Army. Providing opportunities to everyone regardless of origin, ethnicity, and parental professional background, shows that the TNI AD has expanded the recruitment and selection of Cadets Akmil geographically and social class. This was done with the aim of getting the best cadets in the Akmil education school.

Open Competition and Fairness

Open and fair competition is another indicator in implementing a merit system during the recruitment and selection process. This indicator is an important indicator, because it aims to avoid corruption, collusion and nepotism in the recruitment and selection process. Although in research (Egeberg, et. al., 2017) it is stated that merit-based recruitment has a statistically significant negative relationship with corruption in public administration. However, merit-based recruitment can improve the quality of governance of organizations or institutions that carry out recruitment and selection processes.

The recruitment and selection process for Cadets Akmil has implemented indicators of open and fair competition. Recruitment and selection activities are carried out openly by the Indonesian Army. Every Indonesian citizen who meets the requirements can take part in the recruitment and selection activities for the Military Academy Cadet, as well as go through the same stages of examination or testing. Starting from the Subpanda level (Regional Sub Committee), the Panda level (Regional Committee), and the Panpus level (Central Committee). Announcement of examination and test results is carried out openly and directly, so that each prospective cadet has a clear picture of the results and knows the reasons for their passing or not passing.

The application of this indicator is supported by the principles that must be fulfilled during recruitment and selection activities for Cadets Akmil. These principles are objective, professional, selective, orderly, and transparent. When all of these principles are implemented, the recruitment and selection of cadets for Military Academy can take place by implementing open and fair competition. However, the application of this indicator is still considered to be less than optimal because in 2020 there is a problem, namely the implementation of medical examinations to check for epilepsy cannot be carried out entirely on candidates. This problem was due to the limited facilities owned by the health team and the timing of the selection.

This problem certainly cannot be allowed and must be resolved. All prospective cadets who have potential on the recommendation of a doctor must receive the same examination. The aim is that objective, professional and selective principles can be properly fulfilled in the recruitment and selection process for Academy Cadet. Therefore, the TNI AD must improve facilities and infrastructure, and review the timing of the selection process.

Passing Grade

Decision making in the recruitment and selection process is in accordance with graduation criteria and other competency requirements, including the implementation of a merit system. As it is known that in the recruitment and selection process, there are criteria or requirements that must be met by candidates. The selectors must make a decision whether or not the candidates pass or fail based on these criteria or requirements, not for any other reason. Moreover, reasons that have nothing to do with the interests of the organization or institution. It aims to obtain superior and quality human resources (Hasibuan, 2008).

In the recruitment and selection process for Taruna Akmil, criteria or conditions have been determined that must be met by candidates to be able to graduate. Starting from the administrative stage, then examining/testing health, physical, mental ideology/literates, psychology, to academic testing. The TNI AD has determined the criteria or requirements that must be met at these stages. Everything must be done objectively, professionally, and selectively, in order to obtain quality Military Academy cadets.

Policies have been well formed to support the implementation of this indicator. However, problems were still found, namely in 2020 the achievement of the target in quantity had been achieved well from the allocation of 400 people, 425 people (106.25%) were achieved. However, the quality achievement was only 70.82% (301 pure graduates). This shows that around 35.43% (124 people) did not pass purely because of the quality they had. This problem certainly cannot be tolerated, because the Indonesian Army cannot sacrifice quality to achieve quantity. There must be a balance between the quantity and also the quality of the Akmil Cadets candidates who are declared to have passed.

Based on the results of the evaluation above, it can be concluded that the policy of the Army Chief of Staff Decree No. Kep/1023/XII/2016 concerning Technical Instructions on Admission of Taruna and Taruni Akmil, has supported the implementation of the merit system. However, problems occurred when the policy was implemented, which ultimately resulted in the implementation of the merit system in the recruitment and selection process for Taruna Akmil not being maximized. Even though the merit system is very important to implement, because the merit system seeks to assess skills, abilities, expertise, knowledge, and also education in an objective, specific, and measurable way (Al-Saba, 2022). This is what the TNI AD must pay attention to, with the aim of getting superior and good quality Military Academy cadets.

The application of the merit system in the recruitment and selection process for cadets of the Military Academy is not an easy thing to do. There are several obstacles/obstacles in implementing the merit system, especially in the public sector. First, the lack of institutional readiness (in this case the Indonesian Army) to carry out open selection. Second, the credibility of the selection committee can be disrupted due

to political intervention by members of the Indonesian Army itself, political parties, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or other parties. Third, policies that support the implementation of the merit system in the TNI AD are still lacking. Fourth, the performance management system in government agencies is still weak in implementing the merit system (Dwiputrianti, 2018). These various obstacles are also the cause, the application of the merit system in the recruitment process and also the selection of Military Academy cadets has not been maximized. Of course, this must also get a settlement from the Indonesian Army, so that the application of the merit system in the recruitment and selection process for Academy Academy Cadets can run optimally.

D. Conclusion

Evaluation has been carried out on the recruitment and selection policies for Military Academy cadets, namely the Decree of the Chief of Staff of the Army Number Kep/1023/XII/2016 dated 14 December 2016 concerning Technical Instructions on Admission of Military Academy Cadets and Cadets using a merit system approach. The researcher uses several criteria to identify the application of the merit system during the recruitment and selection process for Military Academy Cadets. The criteria are equal opportunity, open competition and fairness, and passing grade. The results of the evaluation found that the recruitment and selection policies for Military Academy cadets had supported the implementation of the merit system. However, problems occurred when the policy was implemented, which ultimately resulted in these criteria not being fulfilled during the recruitment and selection activities for Taruna Akmil. The application of the merit system during the recruitment and selection process for cadets of the Military Academy has also not been carried out optimally, due to several obstacles/obstacles. As an example, policies that support the implementation of the merit system in the TNI AD are still lacking and other constraints/obstacles.

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