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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSESSMENT CENTER POLICY IN THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CENTRAL SULAWESI

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ABSTRACT

CONCLUSION

The Assessment Center in Indonesia has developed significantly over the past two decades. On one hand, many business institutions, government agencies, private organizations, and educational institutions have shown considerable interest in the Assessment Center. On the other hand, there are also institutions that have not yet acknowledged or considered the importance of organizations that operate Assessment Centers to support their strategic direction. Others are still unable to contribute effectively to organizational growth.

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This may be due to the absence of objective standards that can be used as guidelines when establishing assessment centers in business entities and service-oriented organizations. The majority of assessment centers today are organized by assessment service providers, and these providers vary greatly. Each of them has its own strengths in competing to attract users to their services. At times, they pay insufficient attention to the standards set out in the Guidelines and Code of Ethics for the Implementation of Assessment Centers in Indonesia.

Nevertheless, the results of assessment centers are an essential component of an individual's career path. The organizational structure of the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi currently has the authority to conduct and provide assessments of the competencies and skills of all civil servants (ASN) for positions in the Senior Executive Service (Pimpinan Tinggi Pratama) within its administrative scope.

This includes the implementation of Assessment Center policies. The Assessment Center method employs various evaluation techniques. Every civil servant (ASN) is required to be professional in their field and able to ensure accountability for their position, according to their respective levels. The Assessment Center aims to support a progressive, responsive, and participatory bureaucracy through public service, governance, and development responsibilities.

The placement and appointment of civil servants must adhere to the principle of the right man in the right place through an objective competency assessment mechanism due to the significance of their roles. This ensures the recruitment of trustworthy, competent employees who are capable of working with people from diverse cultural, racial, and religious backgrounds while serving the interests of all citizens.

Civil Servant Management (ASN management), as mandated by Law Number 5 of 2014 on the State Civil Apparatus, must be based on a framework of legitimacy or a correlation between abilities, skills, and the performance expected by situational demands (Indonesia, 2014).

Therefore, placement and position assignments must be conducted impartially and thoroughly through competency assessments, one of which is the use of capability measurement. The National Civil Service Agency (BKN), as the manager and coordinator of competency assessments, plays an important role in leading objective evaluations of potential and capabilities.

Accordingly, the ASN Competency Assessment Center (Pusat Penilaian ASN – BKN) provides guidance and collaborates in the implementation of potential and competency evaluations to improve the quality of civil servant placement at all levels. In this regard, the ASN Competency Assessment Unit serves as a task agent of BKN in promoting and directing competency assessment activities, with model aggregation serving as preliminary data for activities related to assessing and reviewing ASN potential and skills.

According to the National Civil Service Agency Regulation Number 26 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Civil Servant Competency Assessments, an Assessment Center is a standardized method that uses multiple assessment tools or simulations based on job competencies and is carried out by multiple assessors to measure competence and predict employee success in a position.

Based on international standards, the Assessment Center is a competency-based method. It is also defined as a systematic process for evaluating the skills, knowledge, and abilities of individuals that are considered essential for achieving superior performance, based on universally accepted conceptual definitions. Standardized behavioral evaluations using various simulations and behavioral testing instruments form the foundation of the Assessment Center methodology. Final evaluation results and developmental feedback are provided by trained assessors who observe participant behavior through various test

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materials, personality assessment instruments, and interviews.

The Assessment Center plays a major role in evaluating employee competence and potential, not only in open selection processes; the method may also be used for promotion, job mapping, talent pool development, and employee development. The results of assessments and developmental feedback are expected to significantly contribute to improving employee quality. Employees who successfully complete the Assessment Center stages may subsequently be included in the merit system and encouraged to apply ASN talent management principles so they are prepared to occupy targeted positions based on their highest potential and performance, in order to meet the needs of government institutions and support the acceleration of national development.

As previously mentioned, the Assessment Center plays a crucial role in government institutions, one of which is preventing the practice of buying and selling positions. Since this also applies to the government of Central Sulawesi Province, it becomes necessary to question how the Assessment Center process is actually implemented in selecting key positions.

Has everything been carried out properly in Central Sulawesi Province? Conversely, as we all know, cases of position trading have occurred in various regions across Indonesia. According to the online media Antara Sulteng on Monday, January 16, an investigation team formed by the Governor of Central Sulawesi looked into allegations of abuse of authority related to the inauguration on 28 April 2022.

Cases of position trading were reportedly widespread within the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government itself. M. Muchlis, the Head of the Provincial Inspectorate, delivered an official statement to the media at the Governor's Office, indicating that approximately 28 witnesses had been questioned, and based on the examination results, six individuals were found to have committed violations. Such incidents would not occur if the Assessment Center process were conducted properly. The example above is one of the main reasons why it is important to understand the extent to which the Assessment Center policy has been implemented in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government, as well as the extent of its influence in realizing a clean and professional bureaucracy.

Many questions arise when observing the current reality, where the objectives of establishing an Assessment Center system in the selection of high-ranking officials have not been fully achieved. This suggests that there may be errors in the implementation of the policy. Based on these problems, the researcher is interested in identifying the root causes and understanding how the Assessment Center system should be properly implemented. Therefore, the researcher chose the title "Implementation of the Assessment Center Policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi."

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design, presenting problem-solving based on data by analyzing and interpreting ongoing conditions. It is comparative and correlative in nature, aiming to address problems systematically and factually regarding the characteristics and attributes of the population. The selection of informants as data sources must consider the characteristics of the social situation, including setting, actors, events, and processes (Garna, 2009).

The researcher used a purposive sampling method to determine the informants, which requires careful selection and identification of individuals who are more knowledgeable about the subject matter and who can provide reliable information. The informants in this study consist of Senior Executive Officials (Pejabat Pimpinan Tinggi Pratama), Administrator Officials, Supervisory Officials, and Civil Servants holding Functional Positions within the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi.

Data collection techniques used in this study include in-depth interviews with informants and focus group discussions (FGDs) involving selected representatives of the informants in scheduled meetings. Furthermore, field observations were conducted to obtain a

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real depiction of actual conditions, where the researcher directly observed the research object to gather accurate descriptions of the phenomenon being studied.

In this study, three informants were selected: the Head of the Testing and Assessment Section for Assessment Tests, the Head of the Interagency Relations Section, and an Apparatus Human Resource Assessor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Assessment Center Policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi.

The implementation of the Assessment Center Policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi is one of the government's efforts to strengthen the management of civil servant human resources, particularly in the stages of selection and job placement.

This policy aims to ensure that candidates appointed to certain positions possess the competencies, abilities, and qualities that align with the demands of their roles within the government environment. Through this policy, it is expected that improvements in work efficiency, bureaucratic professionalism, and the quality of public services can be achieved (Pratama, 2021).

Furthermore, the Assessment Center policy is expected to guarantee that selected candidates truly meet organizational needs and are capable of addressing various challenges faced by the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi in carrying out its public service responsibilities. The Assessment Center is considered an objective method for assessing civil servant competencies through a series of standardized simulations and assessment instruments (Mahmudi, 2019).

Based on the research findings, the implementation of the Assessment Center policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi was analyzed using George C. Edward III's policy implementation theory as the analytical framework. This research approach focuses on the main question: "How is the Assessment Center policy implemented in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi?" Edward III's theory was selected because it emphasizes the factors that comprehensively influence policy implementation success (Edward, 1980).

According to Edward III (1980), the success of policy implementation is determined by four key factors: communication, resources, disposition (attitudes of implementers), and bureaucratic structure. These four factors serve as the foundation for analyzing the effectiveness of the Assessment Center policy implementation in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi. By examining these aspects, it is expected that a deeper understanding can be gained regarding the extent to which this policy can be optimally implemented to improve the quality of public services (Subarsono, 2015).

1. Communication

The success of public policy implementation is highly determined by the effectiveness of communication between policymakers, implementers, and target groups. Effective communication ensures that the objectives and goals of the policy are conveyed clearly, thereby reducing distortion, misunderstanding, and even resistance from target groups. As explained by Winarno, the communication dimensions that influence the success of policy implementation include transmission, clarity, and message consistency (Winarno, 2012).

In the context of implementing the Assessment Center policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi, the research findings indicate that the communication process has been carried out quite effectively. Based on interviews with several informants, the Employee Competency Assessment Unit (UPT Penilaian Kompetensi Pegawai) has undertaken various formal and informal socialization efforts to ensure that understanding of the policy reaches all levels of positions. Mr. Ahmad Rozali, one of the key informants, stated that the implementation of competency assessments using the Assessment Center method in Central Sulawesi Province is currently still focused on

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Senior Executive Service positions (JPT Pratama), but socialization efforts continue to be extended to administrator, supervisory, and functional levels.

However, understanding at the lower levels is still uneven due to limited opportunities for socialization and a lack of familiarity with the Assessment Center concept. The socialization efforts conducted by the UPT include direct communication with regional officials, the preparation of brochures containing policy information, and joint socialization activities with the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) involving district and municipal governments.

This is reinforced by the explanation of Ms. Ulfah Meidya Rachmawati, who stated that the UPT also has an inter-agency relations division responsible for communication and cooperation across regions, including providing direct explanations to civil servants in districts/municipalities regarding the assessment stages prior to position promotion or open selection. Over time, the understanding of regional civil servants regarding the Assessment Center mechanism has improved, indicating the effectiveness of vertical communication between the provincial and district/municipal governments.

These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Marita Ahdiyana and Arum Diyan Sukmawati, which emphasizes the importance of clarity and consistency of information in the implementation of social programs in Yogyakarta City. Their research explains that the success of policy implementation largely depends on the implementer's ability to convey policy information repeatedly, in a structured manner, and in ways that are easy for target groups to understand (Ahdiyana & Sukmawati, 2022).

Such a communication pattern is also evident in the implementation of the Assessment Center in Central Sulawesi, where information is disseminated through various media and formal forums to ensure that policy messages are well received.

In the study The effectiveness of policy communication in promoting the #KangPisMan program among university students, it was found that policy communication strategies were quite effective in encouraging environmental programs among students. However, the researchers noted that consistency in message delivery remained a weakness that needed improvement. This condition indicates that although communication efforts were made, the understanding and acceptance of target groups may still be limited if the messages are inconsistent or if the communication channels are inappropriate (Zaenudin et al., 2021).

In the context of the implementation of the Assessment Center in Central Sulawesi Province, this suggests that although socialization has been conducted at higher levels, communication channels and media still need to be adjusted for lower-level positions to ensure that policy goals and objectives are effectively conveyed. Nevertheless, as highlighted by Olena Mykhaylova in her research on public communication strategies in Ukraine, communication effectiveness is often disrupted by communication channels that do not match audience characteristics or by fragmentation among message recipients (Mykhaylova, 2023).

This challenge is also evident in the Central Sulawesi Provincial Government, where—despite effective communication at the leadership level—lower-level employees still demonstrate limited understanding of the purpose and objectives of the Assessment Center. This condition underscores the need for adjustments in communication channels and approaches so that they are more targeted and easily understood by all levels of civil servants (ASN).

Overall, the findings of this study show that communication in the implementation of the Assessment Center policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi has met the three communication dimensions proposed by Winarno. First, in terms of transmission, information dissemination has been carried out widely through socialization activities at both the provincial and district/municipal levels. Second, in terms of clarity, policy content has been conveyed through supporting media such as

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brochures, face-to-face meetings, and inter-agency coordination. Third, in terms of consistency, the messages delivered remain aligned with the provisions of Law Number 5 of 2014 on the State Civil Apparatus and the guidelines for implementing the Assessment Center, thereby preventing differences in interpretation among implementers.

Thus, it can be concluded that policy communication in the implementation of the Assessment Center in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi has been carried out effectively, as indicated by extensive socialization efforts, consistent information, and the active involvement of relevant institutions in delivering policy messages.

However, challenges remain in achieving uniform understanding at the lower levels, which requires more adaptive and segmented communication strategies. These findings reinforce the view in various literature that effective communication is not merely about delivering messages but also ensuring that the messages are understood, accepted, and internalized by all policy implementers.

2. Resources

The success of policy implementation depends not only on the clarity of communication and regulatory support, but also on the availability and capacity of adequate resources. Without sufficient resources, policies cannot be effectively implemented to address public problems or improve the quality of public services. According to Wahab, resources in policy implementation may include human resources—namely the competence of implementers—and financial resources that support policy activities (Solichin, 2008).

In the context of implementing the Assessment Center in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi, the resources in question encompass two key components: human resources (HR) and supporting facilities and infrastructure. Based on interviews with Mr. Ahmad Rozali, it was revealed that, in general, the availability of human resources is adequate: "In terms of HR, we currently have six assessors, which is sufficient for the scope of Central Sulawesi Province, as our focus is still on senior executive positions. As for administrator and supervisory positions, we are still assisted by the supervising institution, in this case the Competency Assessment Center of BKN RI."

This statement indicates that quantitatively, the HR at the Competency Assessment Unit is relatively sufficient for certain levels of assessment, although administrator and supervisory positions still require support from central agencies. However, in terms of facilities and infrastructure, conditions in the field still face significant limitations.

As noted by Ahmad Rozali: "In terms of facilities and infrastructure, they are still very limited… perhaps the leadership does not fully understand the role of the assessment center, so budget support has not been maximized. We have submitted a staff review, and efforts to improve facilities have begun." This situation is reinforced by the statement of Mrs. Muthmainnah, who pointed out the lack of physical facilities and infrastructure support: "In terms of facilities and infrastructure, they are very limited.

We do not yet have a dedicated building, but in practice, the team has been able to adapt so that the assessment objectives are still achieved." A similar statement was made by Mrs. Ulfah Meidya Rachmawati, who mentioned that although human resources are adequate, facilities and infrastructure remain very limited. Thus, it can be concluded that while the human resource aspect of this policy is relatively strong, improvements in facilities, infrastructure, and financial support are still needed to ensure that the implementation of the Assessment Center can run optimally in accordance with regulatory requirements.

These findings are consistent with the study by Alamsyah et al., which emphasizes that the development of human resource quality is the fundamental basis for achieving good governance. The quality of civil servant human resources is a driving factor that determines the effectiveness of public policy implementation.

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Without competent human resources supported by adequate facilities, policies often remain at the administrative level without producing substantive changes in the field (Alamsyah et al., 2023). Furthermore, Fitriyani and Salomo, in their study on the readiness of local governments to implement talent management policies, found that the low readiness of facilities, infrastructure, and budget support constitutes one of the main obstacles in implementing competency-based policies.

They assert that the optimization of civil service (ASN) policies requires a combination of personal capacity, organizational systems, and adequate infrastructure support at every level of government (Fitriyani & Salomo, 2025). Based on the field findings and supporting literature, it can be affirmed that resource aspects—both human and physical—are key elements in the successful implementation of the Assessment Center policy.

The Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi needs to strengthen its commitment to providing adequate facilities and budget support, as well as enhancing the capacity of assessor human resources so that the implementation of the policy aligns with regulatory objectives and yields maximum results in improving ASN management quality.

3. Disposition

Wahab explains that disposition refers to the character and traits possessed by implementers, such as commitment, honesty, and democratic values. When implementers have a good disposition, they will carry out policies in accordance with the intentions of policymakers, enabling the implementation process to run effectively. According to Edward III's theory, if implementers are to carry out a particular policy, they must share the same perspectives as policymakers.

When the attitudes or views of implementers differ from those of policymakers, policy implementation becomes more complex (Solichin, 2008). In this study, disposition reflects the attitudes of those managing the Assessment Center, particularly their commitment to implementing the policy.

As stated by Mr. Ahmad Rozali: "The commitment of the leadership—here we are assigned the responsibility to carry out Assessment Center activities by the highest leadership in our agency, in this case the Head of the Personnel Agency, who delegates authority and grants full responsibility for implementing Assessment Center activities to the Competency Assessment Service Unit managed directly by the assessors." This commitment is evident from the actions of agency leaders who provide full authority to the implementing unit to execute the Assessment Center policy in accordance with prevailing regulations. This finding is consistent with Utami's research, which shows that the integrity and commitment of implementers are crucial factors in creating good governance.

High-integrity implementers strengthen the success of policies, including in the context of managing civil servant human resources (Utami et al., 2023). Furthermore, fairness and impartiality are required in the selection process to ensure that the Assessment Center is conducted objectively. As noted by Mrs. Ulfah Meidya Rachmawati: "There are several leadership policies to ensure that the Assessment Center process is fair. This means that everyone taking the test is treated equally, all must follow the assessment stages, and the results are fully submitted to the leadership." This interview finding reinforces that commitment to the policy remains intact, even when external issues arise, such as allegations of abuse of authority.

The issue was not legally proven, thus the integrity of the policy implementers remains intact. This is reinforced by the statement of Mrs. Muthmainnah: "Yes, here we are committed to the regulations. Even if there are rumors outside, that is people's right to express their opinions. As long as there is no court decision or official statement from the authorities, I cannot comment.

So in my view, it is merely an issue, because factually the implementation of the assessment center continues to run according to regulations and the direction of the leadership." This finding aligns with the research of Wibiastika and Darma, which explains that the

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success of policy implementation is determined not only by structure and resources, but also by the integrity and attitudes of implementers in the field (Wibiastika & Darma, 2024).

When implementers demonstrate strong commitment and uphold professional ethics, the potential for deviation can be minimized. In the context of implementation, the relationships among actors are also essential, as they are the ones who determine the successful execution of the policy. Horizontal relationships among actors signify equal and interdependent cooperation. Delays or obstacles in one part can affect the continuity of the program as a whole.

Therefore, clear coordination and communication among implementing units are required to ensure effective implementation (Anggara, 2018). Based on field findings and the statements of informants, it can be concluded that the disposition or attitude of implementers plays an important role in the successful implementation of the assessment center policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi.

The commitment, integrity, and discipline of implementers are key factors that ensure the policy is carried out in accordance with regulations despite external issues. Strong support from leadership, along with fairness in the assessment process, demonstrates that the policy has been implemented professionally and transparently. Thus, the positive disposition of implementers serves as a critical determinant of the effectiveness of this policy implementation.

4. Bureaucratic Structure

The structure of bureaucracy refers to the characteristics, norms, and recurring patterns of relationships within executive bodies when implementing policies. According to Dimock and Dimock, administrative units are required to operate in accordance with established structures, procedures, and competencies. In this study, the bureaucratic dimension is reflected through the existence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and the cooperation established by the UPT Penkom of the Regional Personnel Agency (BKD) of Central Sulawesi Province with supervisory institutions and assessment center organizers.

A senior official of UPT Penkom explained that the implementation of the assessment center in Central Sulawesi is based on BKN Regulation No. 26 of 2019. However, this regulation had not been fully translated into a formal SOP until the end of 2022. With assistance from the Regional Personnel Agency of Central Java Province, a standardized SOP was finally developed.

Prior to that, assessment activities were still conducted by referring to existing guidelines and through cooperation with external assessors such as HIMPSI and BKN. Beyond SOP development, cooperation also includes the modification of psychological test instruments with HIMPSI, involvement of BKN in competency assessments, and ongoing efforts to collaborate with universities to develop a question bank.

These initiatives are intended to enhance the quality of competency and potential assessments. For assessment center activities at the district and municipal levels, the provincial government forms a dedicated team whenever a request is made. This team is responsible for ensuring the preparedness of assessment tools and supporting the smooth implementation of assessment center activities, as stated by one of the UPT Penkom implementing officials.

Regarding concerns that the assessment center process does not comply with regulations, another UPT Penkom official clarified that the implementation stages have followed existing rules. Adjustments made in the field are limited to minor technical issues and do not alter the core procedures. The UPT Penkom has also strengthened its internal capacity by having assessors at the intermediate, junior, and first-level categories, enabling it to meet local assessment demands.

For higher-level positions, cooperation with external organizations such as HIMPSI may still be required. Overall, the implementation of the assessment center by UPT Penkom BKD Central Sulawesi has been carried out in accordance with the established SOPs and remains aligned with BKN Regulation No. 26 of 2019. Nonetheless, the SOPs are dynamic and may be improved as

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needed to support better assessment center practices in the future.

5. Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Assessment Center Policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi

Bureaucratic structure refers to the characteristics, norms, and recurring patterns of relationships within executive institutions that hold authority in implementing policies. This structure regulates the division of labor, communication flows, and responsibilities among organizational units to ensure that policy implementation proceeds in a coordinated manner.

Dimock and Dimock (1984) explain that administrative units consist of individuals who must act in accordance with established structures, procedures, and expertise, and follow the working methods that serve as organizational guidelines (Tachjan, 2006). In the context of implementing the assessment center in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi, the bureaucratic structure plays an important role in ensuring that all stages of implementation run according to established procedures.

Based on interviews with the Unit for Employee Competency Assessment (UPT Penkom) at the Regional Personnel Agency (BKD) of Central Sulawesi, it was found that the preparation of a standardized Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been carried out since late 2022, with technical assistance from the Provincial Personnel Agency of Central Java. Prior to having a formal written SOP, the implementation of activities referred to the Regulation of the Head of BKN Number 26 of 2019.

However, the development of a formal SOP strengthened the consistency, transparency, and accountability of policy implementation within BKD. Furthermore, the interviews also revealed that UPT Penkom BKD Central Sulawesi conducts cross-institutional collaboration, both with supervisory agencies such as BKN RI and professional organizations such as HIMPSI, to ensure that assessment quality aligns with national standards. In addition, collaboration with universities is also carried out to support the development of question banks and more objective assessment methods.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Sipayung and colleagues, who explain that simplifying and strengthening bureaucratic structures through the application of clear work procedures can enhance the effectiveness of public policy implementation. A well-developed SOP not only serves as an administrative guideline but also functions as a coordination tool among work units to ensure that policy execution proceeds in a synchronized manner (Sipayung et al., 2022).

Similarly, Syafarddin emphasizes that the effectiveness of regional bureaucracies in implementing development policies highly depends on the capacity of institutions to regulate work mechanisms, clarify roles among actors, and strengthen both vertical and horizontal coordination across agencies (Syafarddin, 2025). Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of the assessment center by UPT Penkom BKD of Central Sulawesi Province has been moving toward the application of an orderly and structured bureaucratic system, although updates to the SOP and improvements to supporting facilities are still needed to optimize policy implementation. Cross-agency collaboration and the application of SOPs serve as strong indicators that the implementation process aligns with the principles of good governance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion regarding the Implementation of the Assessment Center Policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi, it can be concluded that the policy implementation has generally been carried out in accordance with the applicable regulations, particularly in the aspects of communication, disposition, and bureaucratic structure.

These three aspects demonstrate alignment between normative guidelines and actual practices in the field, as reflected through clear communication mechanisms among units, strong

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commitment from policy implementers, and the application of a well-organized bureaucratic structure.

However, there remain significant challenges in the aspect of resources. The resource issues in question involve two main components, namely human resources as well as supporting facilities and infrastructure. According to the provisions of the Regulation of the Head of the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) Number 26 of 2019, the ideal number of assessors at the provincial level should be 30 people, whereas the current number in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi is only 6 assessors.

This condition has implications for the institution's limited capacity to conduct assessments optimally and sustainably. In addition, in terms of facilities and infrastructure, the Competency Assessment Unit (UPT Penkom) of the Central Sulawesi Provincial Personnel Agency has not yet possessed a dedicated assessment center building as required by the regulation. As a result, assessment activities still depend on facilities belonging to other institutions.

Thus, it can be emphasized that while the implementation of the assessment center policy in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi has demonstrated positive progress at the institutional and bureaucratic coordination levels, improvements are needed in the provision and strengthening of resources—both human resources and facilities—to ensure that policy implementation can operate more optimally and sustainably in accordance with the national standards set by BKN.

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