

Factors Affecting the Capacity of Bureaucratic Apparatus in Providing Public Service in Southeast Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was: (1) to study and analyze the factors influencing bureaucratic apparatus capacity of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation and their separate impact on public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. (2) To study and analyze the simultaneous impact of bureaucratic apparatus capacity of knowledge, skill, work ethic and motivation on public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. (3) To study and analyze qualitatively whether political factor support or hinder the capacity and professionalism of bureaucratic apparatus in the provision of public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi.

This study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population of this study was all civil servants working at some offices and institutions which provide public services in four municipalities (excluding the heads of the office) and the service recipients. The samples were determined by using a cluster random sampling technique which applied Machin and Campbell formula, resulting in a total of 266 respondents. To statistically analyze the data, a method of path analysis was applied.

The results of the study showed that the simultaneous effect of bureaucratic apparatus capacity, which includes knowledge, work ethic, and motivation on public services in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. The remaining 48.8 % was affected by other factors beyond the scope of this study. Separately, every single variable had a different effect: the effect of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation. Of the four variables that were examined quantitatively, knowledge appeared to be the most dominant one. However, separately those variables did not have any significant effect. Political factor, which was analyzed qualitatively, turned out to be inhibiting the capacity and professionalism of bureaucratic apparatus in the province of Southeast Sulawesi, owing to the fact that assignment of high echelon officers and placement of staff are not based on their competence; rather, the positions and placement become political gifts given to those who have helped current heads of municipality or city major to win election.

Keywords: apparatus capacity, governmental bureaucracy, knowledge, skill, work ethic, motivation, political factor, public service

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I. INTRODUCTION

Public service is the core of public administration theories. As a system of service, local government is conducted through a combination of *service operating system* and *service delivery system* (Lovell, 1991:290). Services are provided by putting an emphasis on *service delivery system*, that is, how bureaucratic serves public well. Local government's strategies for providing services determine the quality of its services and this can be measured through *service performance* or *perceived service* and *consumer expectations*.

Empirically speaking, Tjiptono (2006: 14) quotes Zeithmal, Berry and Parasuraman to propose some parameters for measuring the quality of public services, which include: (1) *tangibility*, which includes physical facilities, staff equipment, and tools of communication; (2) *reliability*, which refers to ability to provided promised services immediately, accurately, and satisfactorily; (3) *responsiveness*, which is related to staff willingness to assist clients and to provide responsive actions; (4) *assurance*, which covers knowledge, ability, politeness, trustworthiness possessed by staff; free from danger, risks, or uncertainty; (5) *empathy*, which concerns with the ease with which good communication can be conducted, personal attention, and understanding of clients' needs. Bringing the abovementioned statement into the contexts of local government and developmental management would clearly indicate that the quality of human resources, i.e., the apparatus of bureaucracy, is a crucial key to success.

There are several important reasons why it is urgent to increase the capacity of local government bureaucratic apparatus. First off, apparatus of local government are not only supposed to serve their own organization. Secondly, apparatus of local government are not change-proof. Thirdly, governmental tasks are designed to be

executed by professionally competent persons, so that in practice they are not to be interchangeably assigned to those who hold different organizational functions. (Zauhar, 2003 : 2).

Given the general phenomenon taking place in the provincial government of Southeast Sulawesi, this study was set out to look at the related issues and it was entitled “Factors Affecting the Capacity of Bureaucracy Apparatus in Providing Public Services in the Province of Southeast Sulawesi”.

The purpose of this study was: (1) To study and analyze the factors influencing bureaucratic apparatus capacity of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation and their separate impact on public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. (2) To study and analyze the simultaneous impact of bureaucratic apparatus capacity of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation on public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. (3) To study and analyze qualitatively whether political factor support or hinder the capacity and professionalism of bureaucratic apparatus in the provision of public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

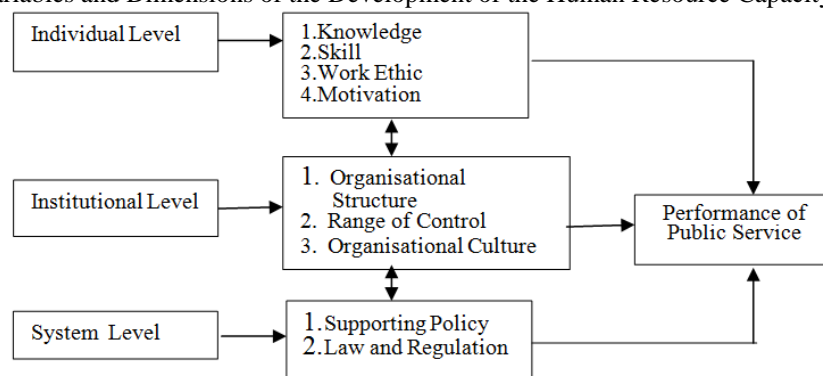
Bureaucracy, as a form of organization with special characteristics, has long been attracting attention of experts from various disciplines in social sciences. Crediting to Max Weber in his work “The Theory of Economic and Social Organization”, Weber puts forward his concept of The Ideal Type of Bureaucracy by identifying some key characteristics of organization which are deemed more compatible with modern people. These are summarized by Albrow, (1989:18-31) into four main characteristics: (1) a hierarchy involving delegations of authority from the top to the bottom of an organization. (2) a series of official positions or official, each having prescribed responsibilities. (3) Formal rules, regulations and standards governing operations of the organization and behavior of its members. (4) Technically qualified personal employed on qualifications and performance.

A more detailed description is provided by Luthans (1989: 13) who summarizes the specific principles of bureaucratic organization into five aspects: (1) clearly identified and highly specialized administrative rules. (2) Recruitment merely on the basis of achievement measured by examinations, not on favoritism. (3) Work placement, transfer, and promotion on the basis of general criteria rather than particular ones. (4) Administrative who are salaried as professional who view their work as a career. (5) Administrative decision making within a rational and readily understood context of hierarchy, responsibility and discipline)

Tjokrowinoto (1989 : 2) asserts that “an aspired quality of modern bureaucracy should be pursued by organizing the structure of authority hierarchy, job division, competence and professionalism, work mechanism, and waging system - all must be based on formal regulation.”

A governmental organization is a system of public service provider that combines *service operating system* and *service delivery system* (Loveluck, 1991:14). Since the emphasis is on the *service system*, it is imperative that a bureaucracy provide services all components of society. Emmerij (Zauhar, 2005: 20) formulates a concept of developing apparatus capacity through formal education and training, as well as its utilization. One theoretical model for human resource development within a framework of increasing organizational performance is offered by Sluyter (1998:14). The model, which features interlinks of variables, is presented in the following figure:

Figure 1: Variables and Dimensions of the Development of the Human Resource Capacity of Apparatus,



Source: Gunawan, (2012: 58)

Public service is the key to success of every bureaucratic servicing activity. In line with this, a decree of the Minister of State Apparatus Utilization Number: 63/ Decree of the Minister of Administrative Reform /7/2003 concerning the provision of public service has been issued and placed an emphasis on the need to provide prime services to people, which is basically an implementation of bureaucratic apparatus’ obligation as civil servant, by following the guiding principles of service provision below: (1) Transparency, which means that a service needs to be open, easy, accessible to all needing parties, properly available, and easily understood; (2) Accountability, which means that a service must be accountable according to prevailing laws and regulation. (3)

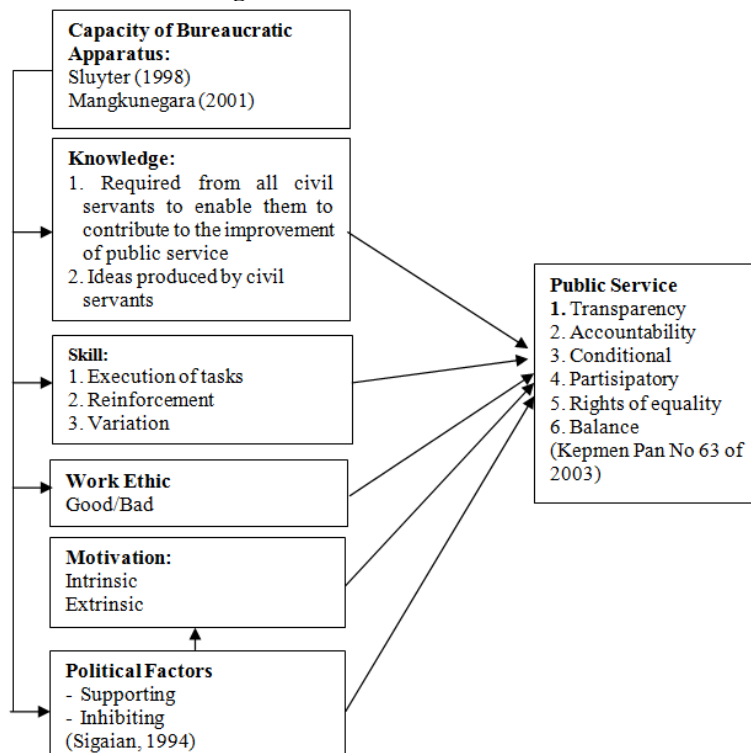
Conditional, which means that a service needs to be adaptive to a condition and ability of the service’s provider and recipient, while maintaining the principles of efficiency and effectiveness. (4)Participatory, which implies the need to encourage public participation in the provision of public service, taking into account people aspirations, needs and expectations? (5) Rights of Equality, which suggests that a service must be non-discriminative in terms of ethnic, race, religion, group, gender, and economic status. (6)Balance, which refers to the need for a balance of the rights and obligation to the part of both the provider and recipients of public service. The abovementioned principles must be carefully observed by any bureaucratic apparatus when doing their jobs to provide public service.

Theories of public administration strongly assert that governmental bureaucracy must demonstrate impartial attitudes, that is, it must function as professional service provider, and keeps itself from any influence or interventions effected by political parties which currently reigning the government. To put it bluntly, governmental bureaucracy must not let itself to become affiliated to any political power.

According to Siagian (1994: 7), the main goal of governmental bureaucracy is “to assure that it works only for shake of the nation, the country, and the people”. It is fundamental that, in serving their functions, bureaucrats carefully observe any prevailing rules and regulations. In the process of promoting official positions and placement of staff, apolitically-intervened government can easily overlook professionalism and undermine professional capability, which in turn can severely affect the whole process of providing public service. It is therefore clear that political interventions on bureaucracy can seriously inflict a threat to bureaucratic functions. This statement gains support from the result of Local Government Performance Evaluation (LGPE) of Southeast Sulawesi (2008 and 2009) conducted by Banga, et al., (a cooperation of National Development Planning Agency and Halu Oleo University), which reveals that: “The performance of the local government bureaucracy in Southeast Sulawesi has not been able to meet people’s level of satisfaction. This is, among others, caused by political intervention from the ruling power which has just won election. Bureaucratic officials are given positions not on the basis of their competence, but on what is dictated by the ruling parties, the supporting team, and those who are in close relationship with the governing power (cronies, relatives, and those took part in winning the election). This phenomenon exists almost everywhere. Some school teachers turned up to become heads of sub district, even though they hold no competence whatsoever to work in the bureaucracy. This is an example of how a ruling power imposes its political intervention on the bureaucracy”,

The result of the evaluation clearly shows that a political intervention on the bureaucracy in the region where the study was conducted is not merely public assumption – it is an undeniable fact which has been uncovered by a methodologically-accountable field-study. Based on the discussion above, the theoretical framework of this study was outlined in the following figure:

Figure 2: Theoretical framework



III. METHOD

This study employed a design that combined a quantitative approach (as the primary approach) and a qualitative approach (as the secondary one). It targeted on the bureaucratic apparatus in all municipalities within the province of Southeast Sulawesi. To limit the scope of the study yet still maintaining the representativeness of each region, two municipalities (a main and an extension municipality) were selected as the representatives of the island region of the province, and two other municipalities (a main and an extension municipality) were representing the land region. A total of 266 respondents, all of which were bureaucratic apparatus that directly involve in public service, were then determined from these four municipalities. In addition, eight bureaucratic leaders and eight service-recipients were interviewed.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The factors influencing the capacity of bureaucratic apparatus in the provision of public service in Southeast Sulawesi.

In this part, a series of hypothesis testing was conducted. Prior to the analysis, the data were first converted into interval scale by using the *Method of Successive Interval*, utilizing the Likert program. To analyze the data, a technique of *path analysis* was applied.

Based on the results of the analysis, the value of path *R-square* coefficient indicated an impact of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation on public service, with 52.2% (small correlation) or within the category of medium correlation, according to Guilford's (Al-Rasjid, 1994:40) classification. The value of path analysis, which explains the impact of other variables beyond this study, was 48.8%. This result indicated that knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation did have a simultaneous impact on the delivery of public service in Southeast Sulawesi.

Further analysis showed that each variable affected at a different degree: the variable of knowledge (X_1) was 33.0 %, the variable of skill (X_2) 24.0 %, the variable of work ethic (X_3) 28.3 %, and the variable of motivation (X_4) 28.8%. Among the four variables under investigation, knowledge variable appeared to have the most powerful influence (33.0%), motivation and work ethic had a quite similar impact (28,8 % and 28,3%), whereas the variable of skill had the lowest impact (24,0%). Based on these results, it seems that the factors influencing the capacity of bureaucratic apparatus are interacting (knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation).

The size of correlation between the four variables was as follows: the correlation between knowledge and was 41.1%; skill the correlation between skill and work ethic was 8.9 %; the correlation between work ethic and motivation was 18.4 %; the correlation between knowledge and work ethic was 32.3 %; the correlation between skill and motivation was 6.9%; and the correlation between knowledge and motivation was 49.9%. It is therefore obvious that the strongest correlation (49.9 %) existed between the variables of knowledge (X_1) and motivation (X_4), whereas the weakest correlation (6.9 %) occurred between the variable of skill (X_2) and motivation (X_4).

Description of the Results of an Investigation into Public Service in Southeast Sulawesi

In this study, public service refers to any activities of public service delivered by bureaucratic apparatus. What follows is the result of the analysis on the respondents' opinions:

a. Dimension of Transparency

Based on the result of distributing the answers of 266 respondents, the average score of the respondents' answers to this first dimension was 21.72%, which falls within the category of "poor", indicating that the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi was generally not transparent.

b. Dimension of Accountability

The average score of the respondents' answers to this question was 29,18%, which falls within the category of "poor", thus indicating that the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi was generally not accountable.

c. Dimension of Conditionality

The average score of the respondents' answers to this dimension was 44.24%, which falls within the category of "good enough", indicating that the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi was quite conditional.

d. Dimension of Partisipation

The average score of the respondents' answers to this dimension was 21.89%, which falls within the category of "poor", indicating the less participatory nature of the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi.

e. Dimension of Rights of Equality

The average score of the respondents' answers to this dimension was 14.24%, which falls within the category of "bad", indicating that the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi is still discriminative.

f. Dimension of Balance

The average score of the respondents' answers to this dimension was 26.82%, which falls within the category of "poor", indicating that the public service provided by the bureaucratic apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi still fails to keep the balance.

An Analysis of the Role of Political Factors in Supporting or Inhibiting the Capacity and Professionalism of Bureaucratic Apparatus in Southeast Sulawesi

Theories of public administration strongly assert that governmental bureaucracy must adopt a "neutral" position. Theoretically, this principle implies that governmental bureaucracy must serve their functions professionally, without being intervened or influenced by the ruling political parties.

Unfortunately, the social reality and phenomenon nowadays apparent in the local bureaucracy of Southeast Sulawesi show that political factors have an enormous influence on the bureaucracy. This was revealed, for example, during an interview with an informant that represents the group of bureaucratic leaders in the sample regions. The informant related that: "In my experience, since the new system of direct election was implemented, the reign of a new regent in this region has always been followed by a large-scale reshuffle or promotion of civil servants and high echelon officials. Rather than being based on rational considerations, the whole process of the reshuffle was done on the basis of political matters/intervention, such as: (1) special orders from coalition parties; (2) special orders from supporting teams; (3) orders from campaign funders; (4) affordability to pay the high price for particular high echelon positions; (5) personal relationship with the regent/vice regent; (6) relation to the regent's/vice regent's wife or their other relatives; (7) special order from other parties that have helped the regent/vice regent win the election (A result of interview conducted in June 12th 2013) "

Similarly, in an interview with a representative of the service recipients, an informant admitted that: "We are still deeply disappointed with the public service provided by the government, which seemed to purposely: (a) delay the service, (b) postpone the service time, (c) be unpunctual although the public has been standing in queue, and (d) set non-transparent service rate/cost. These problems should not be difficult to deal with, as long as the commitment of bureaucratic leaders was also supported by their staff. (Interview on June 16th, 2013)".

What can be learned from the interviews is that the governmental bureaucracy in Southeast Sulawesi has not yet fully serves their functions as the public servants and has been lack of competence and professionalism needed to optimally function as the *provider* of service to the people.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusions

The factors that affect the capacity of bureaucracy apparatus are: knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation – all of them have a *moderate correlation* with the delivery of public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. This means that these factors will exert a more significant influence if they can be simultaneously optimized, without over looking any one of them. (2) The factors that affect the capacity of bureaucracy apparatus in the province of Southeast Sulawesi are: knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation – separately each of them has a significant effect on the delivery of public service in the province of Southeast Sulawesi. However, the partial impact of every single factor minimum, rendering it to fall into "low" category (*small correlation*). This means the insignificant impact of these factors has contributed to the low capacity of the apparatus of the Southeast Sulawesi government in providing public service. (3) It turned out that politic is a factor which inhibits, rather than supports, the development of the capacity of bureaucratic apparatus in providing public service. The result of analysis indicated that political interventions to the governmental bureaucracy have severely affect the competence and professionalism of the apparatus of government, causing it to fail to provide public service in ways that fulfill people's expectation and satisfaction.

Implications

The government of Southeast Sulawesi should make any efforts to promote the capacity of the apparatus of bureaucracy. This can be done by simultaneously address all of the contributing factors (i.e., knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation), without favoring one over the others. These efforts need to be prioritized on those who are directly involving in any tasks related to the provision of public service, in particular in the newly-formed municipalities, which must gradually improve their delivery of public service. (2) The capacity of the apparatus of the provincial government of Southeast Sulawesi still needs improvement through well-planned and sustainable ways which put an emphasis on the factors of knowledge, skill, work ethic, and motivation. Any strategies for developing the capacity of governmental apparatus must be supported the heads of municipality in the form of their commitment to allocate sufficient annual budget, to develop more effective coordination between *BKD* and Regional Finance Division, and to take a strict control of the whole aspects of public service. (3) Political commitment from all ruling parties that have helped the current regents to win election is needed to

put an end to any political interventions to the local government bureaucracy. Interventions of this kind have seriously negative impacts on the competence and professionalism of the apparatus of the government tasked to provide public service. In a similar vein, a reformation is needed in the government bureaucracy to ensure that the bureaucracy does not involve itself in politics, so that it can be politically-sterile and adopt a neutral position, and then focus to serve its main function as public servants.

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