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Merit System Selection
for Pratama Senior Executive Service State Civil Apparatus in Central Java Provincial Government

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Abstract

The low quality of the Senior Executive Service Officials (SES) of the State Civil Apparatus (*Aparatur Sipil Negara*/ASN) was due its selection process which was highly political and lack in objectivity, fairness, and transparency. The low quality and competence impeded government activities and made them unable to compete with the private sector. The implementation of the merit system in the selection process of ASN Senior Executive Service (SES) which emphasizes the qualification, competency, performance, as well as fairness and openness, was needed to produce professional Pratama SES. The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the implementation of the merit system in the selection of SES in the Central Java Provincial Government. The research problem of this study was how the merit system was implemented in the selection process for the SES in the Central Java Provincial Government. The theory utilized in the study was the merit system, on the dimensions of competency, qualification, work performance, and fairness. A qualitative approach was used in this study to describe and analyze the results. The primary data was collected from interviews with the sources, while the secondary data was collected using literature reviews of relevant books, journals, documents, and regulations. The location of the study is the Regional Staffing Unit (*Badan Kepegawaian Daerah*/BKD) of Central Java Provincial Government. Data analysis was conducted by pattern determination, data reduction, data presentation, and verification/conclusion. The study showed that the merit system in the recruitment process of the Central Java Provincial Government's Pratama SES was not implemented fully. Some Pratama SES selected using the system were still unable to perform their duties optimally, especially in responding, analyzing, or taking decisions/policy related to their duties. The dimension of the merit system has not yet been fully grasped and carried out, such as qualifications, competencies, and performance assessment.

Keywords: State Civil Apparatus, Government Official's Selection Process, Merit System, Senior Executive Service.

I. Introduction

This study analyzed the merit system for the selection process of Senior Executive Service (SES) officials of the State Civil Apparatus (*Aparatur Sipil Negara*/ASN) in Central Java Provincial Government. ASN is the central issue in the bureaucracy reform, in addition to government institutions and governance. In general, the government bureaucracy reform was conducted by (1) Restructuring the organization, (2) Simplifying the governance processes, (3) Improving the ASN's competence. The ASN's competence, especially the ones holding the SES position, is a priority that needs to be improved. The SES positions are strategic positions in government agencies with a role and responsibility to lead and motivate every ASN employee through their leadership and action, as well as a unifying force of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Given its strategic role, its human resources management system for the promotion, transfer, and the placement need to be evaluated and improved. Promotion, transfer, and placement of SES officials using the merit system through the fair and open recruitment process are needed to produce professional SES officials. The merit system promotion process considers the

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continuity of employee career, and the recruitment was held with a transparent, objective, competitive and accountable selection process, monitored and evaluated openly (Meyrina, 2016, p. 179).

In government bureaucracy, promotion, transfer, and placement of ASN employees tend to be politically motivated, causing the failure of meritocracy system institutionalization in the ASN management. As a result, the promotions and the placement of officials are based on subjective considerations, such as political affiliation, relations, and bribes (Dwiyanto, 2015, pp. 146–147). The qualification, competency, and achievement of the state apparatus, which should be the main consideration in their promotion and placement, are set aside and affected by the politicized bureaucracy in some government agencies, especially in the regions. There are more and more assignment and selection of political and bureaucracy officials without considering the merit system, dismissal of officials in the government agencies without regards to the merit system, and more career-based positions, such as the Secretary-General, the Director General, the Head of Non-Department Government Institution (LPND) or others, were given due to political reasons, not based on the competence or the professionalism (Thoha, 2016, pp. 109–110).

On the other hand, ASN's integrity is in question, with the many ASN officials having problems with the law. In 2017 KPK investigated the bribery case related to the transfers and the promotions of officials in Nganjuk District Government that implicated, among others; Nganjuk District Head, Head of General Section of Nganjuk General Hospital, the Principle of the SMP 3 Nggrogot, and the Head of the Education and Culture of Nganjuk District (Mapuasari & Mahmudah, 2018, p. 167). A Secretary General in the Supreme Court was suspected of receiving bribes (corruption) over a Court Review (PK), the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) obtained the evidence of the alleged bribe of IDR1.7 M in his house (Gabrillin, 2016). The ASN official's promotion, selection, and appointment process are not objective, many are politically motivated, and some even illegally conducted such as in Klaten district where the ASN employees and the District Head involved in bribe. The Ministry of Home Affairs has fired approximately 200 civil servants in a bid to clean the ministry because they were involved in corruption and other misconduct (Apandi, 2016).

Earlier studies on the promotion, selection and the placement of the ASN Officials also have shown less than optimal results. First, Abdul Halim's study in 2002 "Promotion Policy in The Local Bureaucracy" concluded that in general, the promotion policy in the regions is in conflict with the principle of merit system (Halim, 2008). The ineffective implementation of the merit system influenced by the prevailing regulation, weak external control from the community, and the commitment of the stakeholders. Second, (Sute, 2015, p. 152) in "Placement of Officers in Echelon II and III Structural Positions in the Provincial Government of Central Sulawesi" concludes that the placement of employee in the Echelon II and Echelon III positions in Central Sulawesi Province is not based on the job requirements. The qualification assessment is based on the education background and ignoring the work performance track record; the competence assessment is based on the tenure of the candidate in their current rank and group; work performance is measured from the Employee Performance Assessment (DP3). All of which is a spoil system which does not represent the merit system. Third, (Tampongangoy, 2013, p. 163) "Influence of Promotion to the Performance of Structural Officials in the Government of the City of Manado" concluded that the influence of the promotion of structural positions in the government of the city of Manado is still low due to the dominance of *seniority-based promotion* and not the *merit-based promotion*. Tampongangoy (2013, p. 163) in "Influence of Promotion to the Performance of Structural Officials in the Government of the City of Manado" concludes that the influence of the structural positions' promotion in the government of the city of Manado is low due to the dominance of *seniority-based promotion* and not the *merit-based promotion*. The City uses the List of Rank (DUK), tenure, age, training, and education as the basis for the promotion of structural positions. The previous studies show that the merit system has not fully implemented objectively in the selection process for officials in the government agencies. The ASN career development management tends to use the closed career traditional approach, not the open career system in the modern approach. The close career system produces less competent, low performance, uncompetitive ASN employees. The new ASN career management paradigm should be one where the development of the ANS career started from the ASN themselves which would cause a change in government organizations. Clawson, Kotter, Faux, and Mc Arthur stated that career development cycle begins with the self-assessment as a Career Exploration Program (CEP) which consists of five steps that begin with a self-knowledge stage (Antika, Mappiare-AT, & Faridati Zen, 2018, p. 76). Unlike the previous studies, this study emphasizes and discusses the ASN

SES recruitment based on merit system (*merit-based promotion*) on the dimensions of appraisal, competency, qualification, performance as well as the principle of fairness and openness.

These dimensions refer to the Woodard Theory (2005, p. 15) which stated that various staffing decision, including selection, promotion, and compensation, should be based on the merit system and on other factors, especially competencies and individual values, that are useful for the organization. In other words, "The merit system included both institutional protections for civil servants to keep out corruption and abuse of "spoils" and focus on ability rather than politics as the basis for appointment". Woodard also stated that in the field of governance and law, fairness and equity are the main values in the HR merit system. Merit System refers to the principle that the employee's placement, promotion, and discharge is based on a standard and objective examination of the person's performance and ability (Prasojo & Rudita, 2014, pp. 14–15).

Woodard (2005, p. 109-110) summarizes that *the merit as a set of personnel policies and practices that focus on competence and ability in employment decisions to the exclusion of such non-job-related factors as patronage or other forms of favoritism or discrimination)*. The essence of the merit system is to enforce or implement the open selection procedure by combining job vacancy announcement with competitive and open evaluation on the applicant's performance to ensure that the potential candidates possessed the required knowledge and skills. A realistic job preview and role assessment during the recruitment and selection process can be utilized to increase the involvement by aligning the expectation of the candidates and the organization (Aziz, Maarif, & Sukmawati, 2017, p. 247).

Woodard theory is in line with the spirit of the bureaucracy reform to improve the quality of the ASN SES, where the values of the qualification, competency, work performance, and fairness stipulated in Law Number 5 of 2014 on State Civil Apparatus (ASN Law). The issuance of the ASN LAW is the base of bureaucracy reform in ASN management. The ASN LAW emphasized the improvement in administrative management to improve the quality of ASN. One of the important points in the ASN LAW is that it abolished the Echelon system and replaced it with ASN profession positions which are Senior Executive Service (SES), Administrative Service (AS), and Functional Service (FS). SES is a group of the highest positions in the government institutions consists of Pratama SES, Madya SES, and Utama SES. Recruitment and selection of SES through the merit system as regulated in the ASN LAW on Chapter IX on open recruitment of SES and the Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus and Bureaucracy Reform No. 13 of 2014 (Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014) on Procedures for Open Recruitment for Senior Executive Services Officials in Government Agencies.

The Central Java Provincial Government is one of the earliest government agencies applying the merit system on the open recruitment of the SES in 2014. Prior to the open selection policy, the Central Java Provincial Government's promotion process used the talent scouting system to close the competency gap (Tutiyani & Djumiarti, 2018). The talent scouting system used a talent pool and was quite different from the previous system where the promotion of officials was subject to a proposal by higher-ranking officials. The talent scouting program from 2015 to 2016 produced 865 talents consisted of 335 for administrator and

Table 1.
The ASN Talent Pool of the Government of the Central Java Province 2013-2016

No.	Year	Title		Total	Title		Total
		Administration	Supervisor		Administration	Supervisor	
1	2013	375	443	818			
2	2015	95	194	289	38	117	115
3	2016	100	212	312	29	81	110
4	continue 2016	140	124	264	0	0	0
	Total	**335**	**530**	**865**	**67**	**198**	**265**

Source: Tutiyani & Djumiarti, 2018

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530 for supervisors. Most of the talent pool (818 persons in 2013) had not received any promotion because there are no regulations on talent scouting and by 2015 the talents were no longer eligible to be promoted since the validity period of the talent pool is only two years. Table 1 shows that there are many people in the talent pool that have not yet been promoted. This is the problem in the talent scouting promotion system in the government of the province of Central Java.

The recruitment and selection of the SES in Central Java Provincial Government were for the Head of the Health Office; the Head of Manpower, Transmigration, and Population; the Head of the Regional Revenue and Asset Management; the Vice Director of Administration and the Vice Director of Service of the Regional Public Hospital of dr. Moewardi. The announcement number: 01/Pansel/XI/2014 on 5 November 2014 by the selection committees on the recruitment for the Pratama SES position in Central Java Province. The selection for the Pratama SES positions in the Central Java Provincial Government was conducted by open recruitment in accordance with Woodard Theory, Law No. 5 of 2014, and Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014 prior to the issuance of the Presidential Regulation on the Civil Service Management, which was based on the fairness principle and the assessment of qualification, competency and work performance. The research problem of this study is the implementation of the merit system in the selection of Pratama SES by the Central Java Provincial Government. The objective of this study is to identify and analyze the implementation of the merit system in the selection of Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government.

II. METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach to describe and analyze the results. Primary data was obtained through interviews. Secondary data was obtained through literature reviews from related journals, books, executive reports, documents, and existing legislation. The sources of the study were the Head of BKD, the Secretary of BKD, the Head of Staffing Planning and Development of BKD, the Head of the Subunit of structural positions of BKD, a member of the selection committees and a Commissioner of the KASN. The sources were selected for their knowledge and direct involvement in the selection process of the Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government. The focus of the study was on the implementation of the merit system on the selection process for Pratama SES officials. The study was conducted in 6 (six) months,

from May to October 2017. The location of the study was in the Central Java Provincial Government BKD as the earliest adopter of the merit system in the selection process for the Pratama SES officials. The object of analysis was all stages in the selection process. The Analysis units were on the dimensions of the merit system (qualification, competency, work performance, and the fairness principle). The data analysis techniques used the techniques developed by Miles & Huberman (2007, p. 16), which used three stages of activities: First, data reduction is conducted by processing the notes written in the field (by selection, simplification, abstraction, and transformation); Second, data is presented to organize or compress an assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action; Third, the conclusion drawing/verification by connecting the main problem, theory, and data analysis to test the validity of the study data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The merit system started to be used in the middle of the nineteenth century as the main principles in the management system of the USA public service officials. Merit system in the USA was used as a counter to various patronage practices to develop a purely competence-based federal officials. The merit concept can be traced to the 28th US president, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, which highlights the need for bureaucracy neutrality. President Wilson's push to institutionalize the meritocracy in the US government bureaucracy put the bureaucracy neutrality from politics into focus. The neutrality followed by competency requirement for the career bureaucrats and transparency that enable the community to openly monitor and control (Thoha, 2017, p. 63). The implementation of the merit system in President Wilson's era was through the promulgation of Federal Pendleton Service Act in 1883. The merit system was conducted through various staffing practices such as a competitive and open test and preventing the control of public officials by political influence.

Woodard (2000, p. 12) analyzed President Wilson's policy. Woodard stated that in public service management, the merit system serves as the value or principle which connotes fairness, equity, and respect in public employment, which are based on performance, not on the basis of politic, discrimination or other favoritism actions. The merit system is used in the tradition of public service or as a theme and implemented in human resource management in the public sector. With the merit system, the civil servants or the people

involved in the government able to perform their duty skillfully and professionally. The merit system in the public management practices of the Central Java Provincial Government is based on the ASN Law where the principles of qualification, competency, work performance, and fairness are used in the promotion process. Article 1 of ASN Law states that the merit system is the policy and management of ASN based on the qualification, competency, and performance in a fair and reasonable manner without discrimination on the political background, race, color, religion, the origins, sex, marital status, age, or the disabilities.
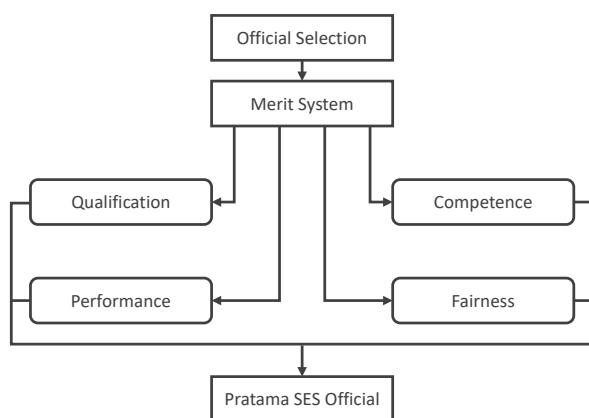
Figure 1. The Merit System for the Selection of the Pratama SES Officials

The merit-based selection process of the Pratama SES in Central Java Provincial Government followed the prescribed terms and procedures, where the assessment of qualification, competency, and work performance, and the principles of fairness and openness were implemented in the stages of the selection process. Prior to the start of the selection process, the Central Java Provincial Government formed a Selection Committee which consists of 9 (nine) members. This is in accordance with Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014 and PP 11 on the Civil Servants Management that the selection committee shall have an odd number of members, at least 5 (five) and at most 9 (nine).

The selection committee also carried out their assigned duties (plans and issues the schedule and the stages, determines the selection method and creates the selection material, determines the system to be used in every stage, determines the administrative and competence assessment criteria, announce the recruitment opening and the requirements, performs the administration and competence assessment, writes and delivers the assessment report to the Staffing Monitoring Officer (*Pejabat Pembina Kepegawaian*/PPK).

A. The Qualification

The qualification in the selection process for Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government was based on the education level and the studies program of the participants. It was compared with the education requirements indicated by the job qualifications in the job analysis. The education qualification was determined as one of the qualifying points in the selection process. This requirement was made to obtain a suitable candidate for the position. These requirements are in accordance with Government Regulation on Civil Servants Management Article 169 that *qualification is defined as formal education from its lowest level to the highest level*. The education qualifications serve as a reference to ensure the suitability of the knowledge and expertise of the applicants and the required qualification of the position applied. Qualification is the skills needed to do something or to hold a specific position, in other words, the qualification is defined as the academic and technical requirements needed to perform certain work (Jahidi, 2014, p. 24).

In addition to the education qualification, the Central Java Provincial Government also required a track record of the applicant's career to assess the suitability of the applicant's previous jobs to the requirements of the position applied by the applicant. The assessment of the track records was conducted to select the most qualified applicant by reviewing all of the track records submitted by the applicants to the selection committee. Cascio (2003, p. 37) stated that the most common way of the merits system is that the position is awarded to the candidate with the best qualifications in accordance with the predetermined qualification for that position.

However, based on the identification of our sources and our observations, the qualification
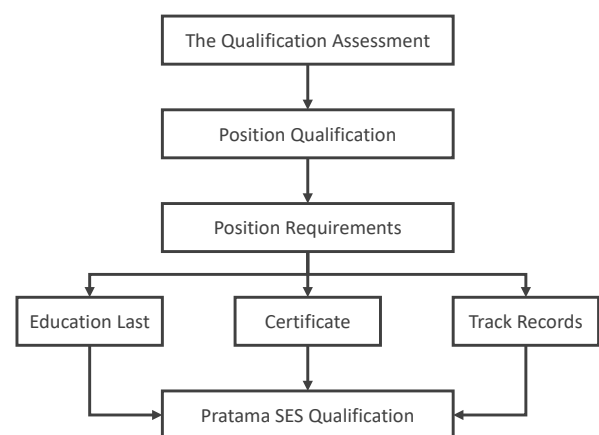
Figure 2. The Qualification Assessment on the Selection of the Pratama SES Officials

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dimension has not been properly implemented. Review of an applicant's qualification should not only be conducted based on the educational background and track record but should also consider another important indicator, which is training or course. The training certification was overlooked and was not part of the requirement in the selection of the ASN position in Central Java Provincial Government. This weakness is also noted by Cascio (2003, pp. 37–38), which stated that there are three major issues related to the implementation of the merit system, namely; (1) the issue of the qualification criteria (what the qualification criteria should be); (2) the issue on job requirements (what the exact job requirements are) ; (3) what is the weight of each qualification criteria (Herman, 2012, pp. 40–41).

B. Competency Assessment Test

The Government of Central Java Province used an assessment center to conduct a series of competence assessment test to the applicants. According to Noe competency is the cluster of abilities, encompassing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, value or personal characteristics that enable a person to be successful in completing their work through the delivery of results or the success in completing tasks (Winanti, 2011, p. 250). The competency assessment test was conducted by a third party (an assessment center). The Competency Assessment Test was testing the managerial and technical competency. The socio-cultural competency assessment was not conducted since the majority of the participants hailed from Central Java and was considered to understand the Central Java culture. The managerial competence is very significant, strategic and crucial to understanding the skills and behavior of the participants in managing a government institution. While the technical competency is required to understand the technical skills of the candidates to perform the duties. The competencies being tested include the knowledge, skills, and integrity to understand the applicants' behavior including their motivation, attitudes, skills, knowledge, characteristics, and other personal values. The Central Java Government competency assessment is in line with (Zwell, 2000, pp. 56–68) which stated that there are several factors to understand a person's competency skills, including; (1) Beliefs and values; (2) Skills; (3) the Experience; (4) Personality characteristics; (5) Motivation; (6) Emotional Issues; (7) Intellectual Ability; and (8) Organization Culture.

The use of the assessment center method in the selection Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government is in line with Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014. The Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014 stated that the assessment of managerial competence for ASN SES is required: (1) For Pratama, Madya and Utama SES positions, by using the assessment center method; (2) In the event that the assessment center method is not feasible in the regions, a psychometric tests method, interview, case analysis, or presentation method may be used; (3) the standard managerial competence is developed and issued by each institution in accordance with the requirements of the positions and can be assisted by assessors; (4) The interview points is prepared by the Selection Committee. The regulation also stated that the technical/field competency assessment is conducted as follows: (1) using written, interview and other methods; (2) the standard competence is developed and issued by each institution in accordance with the requirements of the position and can be assisted by assessors; (3) the standard managerial and technical competence issued by each institution shall refers to the existing requirements, if it is not available, the standard shall be issued in accordance with the needs of their respective institutions; (4) The evaluation result shall be submitted by the competency assessment team to the Selection Committee.
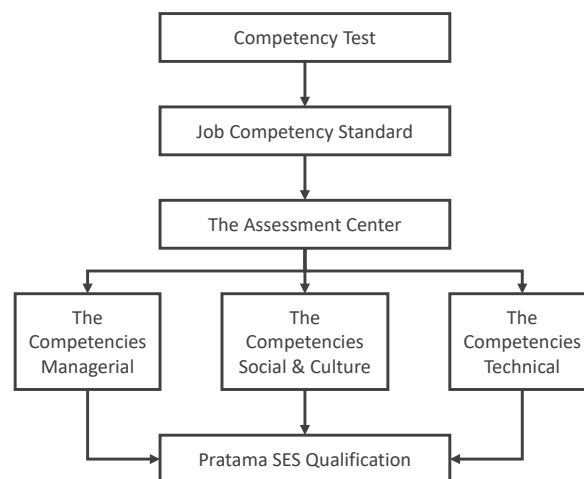
Figure 3. The Qualification Assessment on the Selection of the Pratama SES Officials

The Central Java Provincial Government had a talent pool for consideration and comparison in the competency assessment. The Central Java Provincial Government's BKD conducted the ASN employees mapping test every year to understand the competencies and talent in each Unit/Body/Office. The majority of the competence mapping was for the Administrator position, while a

small number was for the SES and Supervisors position. The Central Java Provincial Government's BKD allocated the program and budget for ASN competence mapping activities every year. Other than the routine BKD program, the competence mapping was also conducted in cooperation with other agencies which also have an ASN mapping program such as BKN and LAN. The data from the competence mapping also serve as the consideration basis in the competency assessment of the Pratama SES applicants.

The absence of a standard job competency in the Central Java Provincial Government, including one for the Pratama SES positions, is one of the weaknesses in the competency assessment process. Competency standards are the minimum requirements for an employee to do a certain job to enable the person to carry out the job well. The competency standard is the reference to measure each competency unit for an ASN officer in each government institution. The competency standard should be used to ensure the comprehensiveness and the quality of the competency assessment on the selection of the Pratama SES officials. A formal Competency standard for Central Java Provincial Government in the form of regional regulations or Governor Regulation was not available. The competency standard used to measure the competence of the participants the selection of Pratama SES officials in the Central Java Provincial Government was made by the assessment center.

C. Performance Assessment

The Performance assessment of the participants of the Pratama SES selection in the Central Java Provincial Government selection were as follows: first, an administrative assessment, where the applicants were required to submit/ collect the Employee Performance Goal (SKP); second, the committee reviewed the track records of participants with a coordination with the BKD. The SKP required was the last year SKP, with a minimum value of "good" for all of the items. Failure of any participants to submit their last year SKP with the required minimum value would eliminate the participants from the next selection stage. The selection committees worked together with BKD for the review of the work performance track record, tracking the applicant's performance throughout their work. These two assessment points show the performance assessment components was done by considering both administrative means (through the assessment of the SKP) and fact (through the review of the participants track record).

The performance assessment was conducted to assess the applicants' prior performance, to assess the suitability and performance that may support the applicants in performing the Pratama SES official's tasks. As stated by Rivai, performance is the real behavior of each person in performing their work in accordance with their role in the organization (Massie, Tewal, & Sendow, 2015, p. 637). The performance assessment of the applicants of the selection of Pratama SES was used to understand their work performance from the perspective of a government organization. The performance assessment was focused on measuring the extent to which the applicants can fulfill the competency requirements for the Pratama SES position. An objective performance assessment was the emphasis in determining the performance assessment points for each Regional Units Organization (OPD) of the government institutions in the Central Java Provincial Government. One of the main priorities for the Central Java Provincial Government to ensure the success of ASN employee was by applying consistent performance management in accordance with the existing regulations. The performance assessment in Central Java Provincial Government Pratama SES selection involved an intense two-way communication between the Selection Committee and the selection secretariat (BKD).
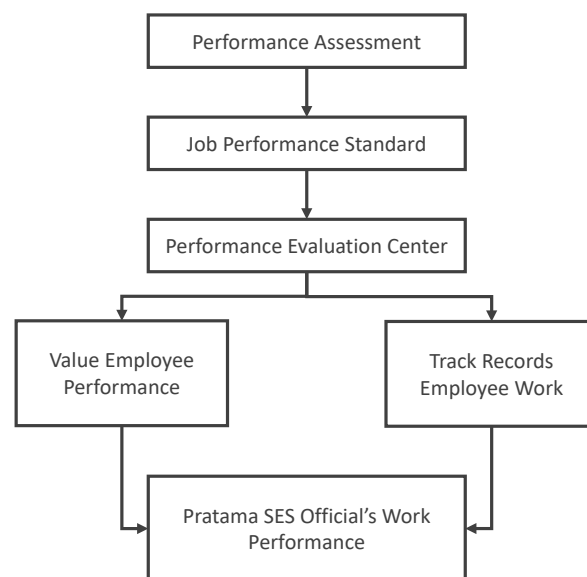
Figure 4. The Performance Assessment in the Selection of the Pratama SES Officials

The Central Java Government observe the merit system in the selection of its Pratama SES because the dimension of the performance assessment was used as one of its assessment. By

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using the performance assessment, candidates who passed the selection process for the Pratama SES position is expected to have the good quality and performance, which would support them to perform optimally in their position as Pratama SES officials. The merit system values the ASN employee's work performance since only employees who previously deliver good performance are qualified to have the job. Prasojo stated that the open and competitive selection for the Pratama SES position reduced the political intervention in the bureaucracy, and also improve the productivity of the bureaucracy (Sakinah, 2017, p. 33). The implementation of the merits system on the dimensions of work performance requires a standard performance to assess the performance of the employees. A job performance standard must be met by the holder of the job in accordance with the tasks and responsibilities of the office. The Selection Committee must review the job performance of each participant to ensure that their performance is suitable the job that they applied for (especially the job descriptions and specifications), the target performance, and the performance assessment. This is to ensure the suitability of the potential candidate with the duties of Pratama SES official.

However, based on the analysis of the collected data, there was a weakness in the measurement/assessment of the work performed using the Employee Work Performance (SKP). The SKP assessment was less objective due to the absence of the job performance standard as a benchmark. The legal basis for the job performance standard as a benchmark for assessing the performance was not available. Ideally, the performance assessment should refer to the performance standard for the position specified by the government agencies. The Provincial Government of Central Java is required to have a performance benchmark for all the ASN positions on all OPD. The lack of benchmark is not in line with the opinion of Werther and Davis which stated that that in essence, there are four requirements needed in performance assessment: (1) must be linked with job-related process analysis, (2) it should be practical (the measurement tools can be applied and understood by the appraisers), (3) have a job performance standard (there must be a uniform standard for a benchmark), (4) use an accountable measurement tool (the measurement tools must be easy, reliable, and report the real work performance) (Sirait, 2006, p. 128).

D. The Principle of Fairness and Openness

It is an interesting phenomenon that the selection of the Pratama SES in the Provincial Government of Central Java enforced the fairness and openness principle in every step of the selection process, starting from the announcement of vacancies for the Pratama SES officials until the announcement of the result. Fairness is a condition in which government's programs and policies are applied fairly for all without discrimination (without considering their status, racial background, beliefs affiliation, or sex) (Ubaidillah, 2017, p. 18). The selection of Pratama SES Officials in the Central Java Provincial Government was conducted openly for anyone, applicants from within as well as outside the Central Java Provincial Government was allowed to apply and go through the selection process. The open selection for the Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government was conducted to recruit competent, professional, and competitive ASN officers with a high level of integrity as required in Law No. 5 of 2014 and Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014. Information regarding the selection process for the Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government was widely accessible, which provide an opportunity to all ASN employee to apply for the Pratama SES position. The vacancies for the Pratama SES positions are publicly available and all employees were given the opportunity to apply without any hidden information regarding the requirements, stages, and selection system.

The fairness and openness policy were implemented to provide a sense of justice for all applicants who participate in the recruitment and selection process for the position. It was applied to all the participants which fulfill the requirements by not discriminating assessment of the applicants. It was is also provided by giving the same opportunities for all ASN employees who fulfill the requirements of position without any discrimination. The vacancies for the Pratama SES positions was announced to the public through the web/official site of the Central Java Provincial Government's BKD. It was also distributed in the form of circular letters to all the OPD/Regional Units in Central Java. The announcement stated the number of job vacancies and its requirements and criteria. Which were: qualification (education, experience), competency (expertise, knowledge, skills, integrity), work performance (quantity, quality), as well as the fairness and openness principle. This policy is in line with Thoha (2010, p. 60) that to achieve objectivity and fairness the appointment of an official must be based on impersonal values and openness.

The public announcement of the job vacancy for the Pratama SES position in the Central Java Provincial Government by the selection committees was in accordance with Permenpan RB No. 13

of 2014, which stipulates that the vacancies announcement of ASN SES should be conducted via the national print media and the electronic media and the job vacancy should be announced at least 15 (fifteen) calendar days before the end of the submission date. The Central Java Provincial Government is committed to upholding the openness of information in the recruitment of its Pratama SES officials. The announcement was no later than 15 days before the end of the submission period. The vacancy was also publicly announced in accordance with the provisions and requirements for the selection of the Pratama SES officials. The commitment of the Central Java Provincial Government in implementing the fairness principle is shown from the transparency and accountability of the process. Transparency of the process can be seen from the disclosure of the open selection mechanism, Transparency is shown by the use of an open selection mechanism, starting from the public announcement of the vacant positions, registration, assessment, the announcement of the result, the inauguration/swearing in, and the placement of the official. Accountability is shown from the documentation in all stages of the selection process that was conducted in accordance with applicable provisions, although there was still some weakness. These principles were adopted as the accountability to the public for all actions, efforts, behaviors, and activities on the selection of the Pratama SES in the Central Java Provincial Government.
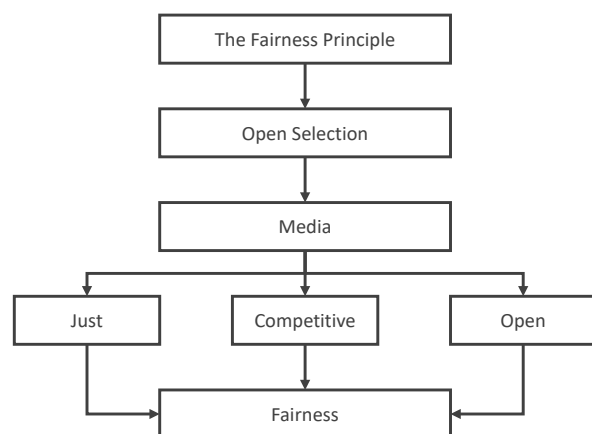
Figure 5. The Fairness Principle on the Selection of the Pratama SES Officials

The objective, competitive, merit-based selection of the Pratama SES officials in Central Java Provincial Government was conducted to produce professional ASN officials. Woodard (2005, p. 09-110) stated that the merit system is a series of staffing policies and practices that put the focus on the competencies, capabilities, qualifications, and performance in various decisions, including fairness and equity as the main values guiding the various policies and practices of human resources management. This is also in accordance with the Article 108 Paragraph (3) of ASN Law states that the recruitment for the Pratama SES officials shall be conducted openly and competitively among the civil servants, by considering the competencies, qualifications, ranks, education, training, track records, integrity, and other requirements of the position in accordance with the prevailing legislation. Article (4) of the Law states that the recruitment for the Pratama SES officials shall be conducted openly and competitively at the national level or in Districts/Cities in 1 (one) Province. The open selection for the Pratama SES officials is a positive move for the ASN management bureaucracy reform. It recruited and placed the ASN officials in accordance with their competency.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, the study concluded that the implementation and stages of the selection process for the Pratama SES officials in the Central Java Provincial Government followed the prescribed procedures specified in Law No. 5 of 2014 on ASN and Permenpan RB No. 13 of 2014 on the Procedures for Open Recruitment of the Senior Executive Service Officials in Government Agencies. This conclusion was drawn due to the fact that in the stages of the selection process a selection committee was established; the Pratama SES vacancy was announced; there was an administration selection process, there was assessment on qualification, competency, work performance, track records, interview, health and psychology test; the result of the selection was announced, and the fairness and openness principles were observed.

However, the study also showed that the recruitment of the Central Java Provincial Government's Pratama SES officials did not fully implement the merit system. Some Pratama SES Officials selected using the system were still unable to perform their duties optimally, especially in responding, analyzing, or taking decisions/policy related to their duties. In the selection of Pratama SES, the merit dimensions have not fully implemented on the aspects of qualification, competency assessment, and performance evaluation, only the principle of fairness that was well implemented. This is shown by; (1) the qualification requirement was only on education and track record, no requirement for

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any certification that can support the Pratama SES function; (2) the competency test is not based on standard competency since it was no regulation on it; (3) the performance assessment was limited on the assessment of SKP, while the assessment of SKP did not refer to the standard performance since there was no standard performance regulation in Central Java Government.

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V. References

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