

THE DILEMMA OF THE HONORARY EMPLOYEE ELIMINATION POLICY: AN ANALYSIS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON PUBLIC SERVICES IN SOUTH TANGERANG CITY

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Abstract

The policy on restructuring non-civil servant personnel as regulated in Law Number 20 of 2023 on State Civil Apparatus (ASN) has significant implications for public sector human resource governance at the local level. A case study in South Tangerang reveals that approximately 1,800 honorary workers were laid off and faced income uncertainty due to the absence of legal budgeting frameworks, failure in PPPK selection, and administrative constraints. This situation potentially disrupts public service delivery, particularly in the health sector. This study aims to analyze the governance of non-permanent employee restructuring from a public administration perspective and its impact on public services. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach using a case study method, based on policy document analysis and empirical observation. The analytical framework draws upon Good Governance, New Public Service, and Public Value theories. The findings indicate that policy implementation has not fully met Good Governance principles, particularly in transparency, accountability, and regulatory effectiveness. Consequently, public service disruption and declining public trust have emerged. The study recommends adaptive transition policies, strengthened intergovernmental coordination, and protection mechanisms for affected workers.

Keywords: Good Governance, Non-Permanent Employee, Public Governance, Public Service, Public Administration.

A. INTRODUCTION

Bureaucratic reform in Indonesia is a strategic agenda aimed at realizing professional, effective, and public service-oriented governance. One of the key policies in this reform is the restructuring of human resources within the state apparatus through Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus (ASN), which explicitly regulates the elimination of non-ASN personnel or honorary employees. This policy is designed to create a more standardized, transparent, and accountable civil service system, as well as to reduce informal recruitment practices that have long developed in various regions.

However, the implementation of this policy does not proceed without consequences. In

practice, the elimination of honorary employees has created a policy dilemma, particularly at the local government level, where many regional administrations still rely heavily on honorary workers as a key support for public service delivery. This dependency is especially evident in strategic sectors such as health, education, and government administration, where the limited number of civil servants has not yet been able to fully replace the role of honorary employees.

The case of South Tangerang City represents a concrete example of the complexity of implementing this policy. Based on national media reports, approximately 1,800 honorary employees were affected by the policy eliminating non-ASN personnel, causing some of them to be laid off and to face uncertainty regarding employment status and income. This condition occurred because not all honorary employees passed the selection process for Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK), while the local government had not yet established a clear policy transition scheme. A further impact of this situation is the potential disruption of public services, particularly in the health service sector, where workforce reductions may lead to a decline in the quality of services provided to the community.

From the theoretical perspective of Public Administration, this phenomenon can be analyzed through several main approaches. First, public policy implementation theory emphasizes that policy success is determined not only by the quality of regulation but also by resource readiness, policy communication, and the capacity of implementing institutions. Second, within the framework of Good Governance, public policy must fulfill the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness. Third, the New Public Service paradigm places citizens at the center of service delivery, meaning that public policy must consider its impact on service quality. Fourth, the concept of Public Value emphasizes that public policy must generate tangible benefits for society, including improved service quality and social welfare.

Based on this framework, a gap emerges in the implementation of the policy eliminating honorary employees. Normatively, this policy aims to create a professional, efficient, and accountable bureaucracy. Empirically, however, its implementation indicates regional unpreparedness, limited human resources, and potential disruption to public services. This gap reflects a problem in policy governance, particularly in the synchronization between national policy and regional conditions, or what may be referred to as a vertical governance gap.

Furthermore, in terms of research novelty, most previous studies have positioned honorary employees mainly as an administrative or employment issue, such as employment status and welfare. These studies tend not to examine in depth the relationship between the policy of eliminating honorary employees and public service quality from a governance perspective. In addition, empirical case-based studies at the regional level that directly link this policy to its impact on public services remain relatively limited.

Therefore, this study offers novelty by integrating an analysis of the policy eliminating honorary employees within the perspective of Good Governance and by empirically examining its impact on public service quality at the local level. This approach enables a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between policy, implementation, and public

impact. Based on the discussion above, the objectives of this study are:

- to analyze the policy dilemma of eliminating honorary employees from the perspective of Good Governance;
- to identify the gap between policy design and its implementation at the regional level; and
- to examine the impact of the policy on the quality of public services in South Tangerang City.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Good Governance Theory

Good Governance Theory explains that public administration should be conducted through transparent, accountable, participatory, effective, and responsive governance mechanisms. In the context of eliminating honorary employees, this theory is relevant because the policy does not only concern employment restructuring but also reflects how the government manages transition, communicates decisions, and protects affected actors. A good governance perspective emphasizes that policy implementation must consider institutional capacity, legal certainty, public accountability, and the involvement of stakeholders who are directly affected by policy changes. This theory is useful for assessing whether the elimination of honorary employees in South Tangerang City has been implemented through fair procedures, clear information, and adequate coordination between central and local governments. Therefore, Good Governance Theory provides an analytical basis for examining the governance gap between national policy design and local implementation realities (UNDP, 1997). Indicators:

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Participation
- Effectiveness
- Responsiveness
- Rule of law
- Coordination between government levels

New Public Service Theory

New Public Service Theory views public administration as a process of serving citizens rather than merely steering or controlling them through bureaucratic authority. This theory is relevant to the policy of eliminating honorary employees because public policy should not only prioritize administrative efficiency but also consider its impact on citizens, public servants, and service recipients. In this perspective, the government must place citizens at the center of public service delivery and ensure that policy decisions do not reduce access, quality, or fairness in public services. The reduction of honorary employees may create service disruption when local governments still depend on them in strategic sectors such as health, education, and administrative services. Therefore, New Public Service Theory helps analyze whether the policy has been implemented in a citizen-centered manner and whether it protects the continuity of public services for the community (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

Indicators:

- Citizen-centered service
- Democratic participation
- Public interest orientation
- Service fairness
- Responsiveness to community needs
- Ethical public administration
- Collaboration between government and citizens

Public Value Theory

Public Value Theory explains that public policy should generate meaningful value for society, not only through legal compliance but also through improved welfare, service quality, public trust, and institutional legitimacy. In the context of honorary employee elimination, this theory is relevant because the success of the policy cannot be measured only by administrative restructuring or budget efficiency. The policy must also be assessed based on whether it creates positive outcomes for public service users, affected workers, and local government institutions. If the policy reduces service capacity, creates employment uncertainty, and weakens public trust, then the public value produced by the policy becomes questionable. Therefore, Public Value Theory provides a strong framework for evaluating whether the policy contributes to broader social benefits or instead creates new risks for public service quality and social welfare (Moore, 1995). Indicators:

- Public service quality
- Public trust
- Social welfare
- Institutional legitimacy
- Policy benefits for citizens
- Protection of affected groups
- Balance between efficiency and public interest

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the policy dilemma surrounding the elimination of honorary employees and its impact on public services in South Tangerang City as the research locus. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative, focusing on policy analysis from the perspective of Good Governance. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with three main groups of informants: local government officials as policy implementers, to examine aspects of transparency, accountability, participation, and policy effectiveness; honorary employees as affected parties, to identify the gap between policy design and field implementation; and community members as service recipients, to assess the impact of the policy on the quality of public services.

Data collection was also supported by documentation studies of regulations, policy reports, and relevant secondary sources in order to compare normative conditions with empirical realities. Data analysis was conducted thematically through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify policy dilemmas, governance gaps, and their implications for public services within the framework of Good Governance,

New Public Service, and Public Value.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Policy Dilemma of Eliminating Honorary Employees from the Perspective of Good Governance

The research findings show that the policy of eliminating honorary employees creates a significant dilemma in local governance. On the one hand, this policy is designed to improve the professionalism of the apparatus and strengthen the merit system within the bureaucracy. On the other hand, its implementation at the local level reveals a high dependency on honorary employees as a key support for public service delivery. This condition creates a dilemma for local governments between implementing national policy and maintaining the stability of public services.

From the perspective of Good Governance, the research findings indicate that policy implementation has not fully fulfilled the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness. In terms of transparency, information regarding the status of honorary employees and the policy transition mechanism has not been clearly communicated to the affected parties. This creates uncertainty that affects the psychological and social conditions of honorary employees. From the aspect of accountability, there is still no clear division of responsibility between the central and local governments in resolving problems related to honorary employees, particularly regarding their employment status and income.

In addition, the participation of honorary employees in the policy process remains relatively limited, causing the policy to be largely top-down without sufficiently considering empirical conditions in the field. In terms of effectiveness, the policy has not fully achieved its objectives without causing disruption to public services. This condition reflects weaknesses in policy governance and indicates that the principles of Good Governance have not been implemented optimally.

The Gap Between Policy Design and Local Implementation: Governance Gap

The research findings also show a clear gap between policy design, or *das sollen*, and its implementation at the local level, or *das sein*. Normatively, the policy of eliminating honorary employees aims to create a more efficient and professional bureaucratic system. Empirically, however, the implementation of the policy in South Tangerang City indicates limitations in human resources and institutional unpreparedness in responding to the change.

This gap can be seen in the condition where some honorary employees who did not pass the PPPK selection process had to be laid off without an adequate transition solution. This situation shows that the policy has not been supported by comprehensive implementation planning, particularly in terms of resource readiness and impact mitigation strategies. In addition, the lack of synchronization between central government policy and local conditions reinforces the existence of a vertical governance gap, in which nationally designed policies do not fully correspond to local needs and capacities.

Within the framework of policy implementation theory, this condition shows that the factors of communication, resources, and organizational readiness have not been optimally fulfilled. Uneven policy information, the limited number of civil servants, and the unpreparedness of the bureaucratic structure are the main factors causing the emergence of

this gap. This confirms that the success of public policy depends heavily on implementation readiness at the local level.

The Impact of the Policy on Public Service Quality

The impact of the policy eliminating honorary employees on public service quality is a key finding of this study. The analysis shows that the reduction of honorary employees has the potential to decrease the quality of public services, particularly in sectors that have long depended heavily on honorary workers, such as health services and government administration.

From the perspective of New Public Service, the government should place citizens at the center of service delivery. In this case, however, the policy adopted has the potential to reduce the quality of services received by the public. This can be seen from the increased workload of the remaining civil servants and the reduced service capacity in several public service units.

Furthermore, within the framework of Public Value, public policy should generate added value for society, whether in the form of improved service quality, public trust, or social welfare. However, the research findings show that this policy has the potential to reduce public value because it leads to a decline in service quality and increases social uncertainty among affected honorary employees.

Overall, the impact of this policy is not only administrative but also extends to social and public service dimensions. Therefore, a more adaptive and contextual policy approach is needed so that the goals of bureaucratic reform can be achieved without sacrificing the quality of public services.

To strengthen the analysis of policy impact, data show that the number of honorary employees in South Tangerang City reached approximately 9,800 people in 2023, most of whom were distributed across various Regional Apparatus Organizations and played a direct role in public service delivery (Source: Jawa Pos Tangsel, 2026). Of this number, around 6,177 honorary employees passed the initial PPPK selection stage, but approximately 2,602 honorary employees still had no clear employment status (Source: Radar Banten, 2026).

Furthermore, in 2026, around 1,800 honorary employees were directly affected by the policy, including those who experienced delayed salary payments and uncertainty regarding employment status (Source: SINDOnews, 2026). This condition indicates that policy implementation has not fully accommodated the reality of human resource needs at the local level, thereby potentially reducing the quality of public services.

Table 1. The Impact of the Policy Eliminating Honorary Employees in South Tangerang City

Indicators	Empirical Data	Implications for Public Services
Number of Honorary Workers (2023)	± 9,800 people	High dependence on contract workers
Passed PPPK Phase 1	± 6,177 people	Some accommodated in the ASN system

Remaining Honorary Workers Not Yet Appointed	± 2,602 people	Risk of losing service workers
Honorary Workers Directly Affected (2026)	± 1,800 people	Decreased service capacity and increased workload

Source: BKPSDM South Tangerang City (processed from various media reports and government data, 2023–2026)

The data demonstrates that the impact of the policy on eliminating contract workers is not marginal, but rather structural, on the public service system. From a Good Governance perspective, this situation demonstrates weak policy effectiveness and accountability, as planning does not fully consider the real needs of the regions. Furthermore, within the New Public Service framework, the reduction in service personnel directly has the potential to reduce the quality of services to the public. Meanwhile, from a Public Value perspective, this policy risks reducing the public value generated by the government, particularly in the form of service quality and the social welfare of the workforce.

Synthesis of Discussion from a Public Administration Perspective

Comprehensively, the research results indicate that the policy on eliminating contract workers is a complex and multidimensional public governance issue. The emerging policy dilemma reflects the conflict between the goals of bureaucratic reform and the reality of public service needs in the regions. The gap between policy design and implementation demonstrates the importance of a more contextual, regionally-based policy approach.

From a Public Administration perspective, these findings reinforce that policy success is determined not only by policy design, but also by the quality of governance and readiness for implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the principles of Good Governance, improve coordination between central and regional governments, and adopt a more inclusive and participatory policy approach so that public policies can produce optimal public value.

E. CONCLUSION

The policy of eliminating honorary employees presents a dilemma in regional governance, between efforts to realize professional bureaucratic reform and the real needs of public services that still rely on honorary workers. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of this policy does not fully reflect the principles of Good Governance, particularly in the aspects of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness, thus creating a gap between the policy design and empirical conditions in the regions. This gap has resulted in the emergence of a governance gap that demonstrates the unpreparedness of regional institutions to manage the policy transition optimally. Furthermore, this policy also has implications for the decline in the quality of public services due to reduced human resource capacity and an increased workload for the remaining apparatus. From a Public Administration perspective, these findings confirm that the success of a policy is determined not only by normative objectives, but also by the quality of implementation and governance readiness at the regional level. Therefore, a more adaptive, participatory, and contextual

policy approach is needed so that bureaucratic reform can proceed in line with improving the quality of public services.

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