
IMPROVING BUREAUCRATIC PROFESSIONALISM THROUGH THE RETIREMENT POLICY OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

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Abstract. *The aim of this article is to describe problems in the formulation of policy to increase the professionalism of the Indonesian bureaucracy. These problems derive from the retirement policy of civil servants in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The findings show that the level of substantive acceptability of regulation on the retirement age of civil servants is very high, but this is not necessarily the most effective impetus for increasing bureaucratic professionalism in Indonesia. The retirement age means that every civil servant must leave the bureaucratic structure at a certain point, even though their competence, commitment and enthusiasm to continue their work may remain very high, and the state may still need their services. The enactment of a retirement age law that is too strict has inhibited the possibility of considering other variables to support the increase in the professionalism of bureaucracy. The consistent implementation of the retirement age actually hinders the increase of bureaucratic professionalism in Indonesia.*

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Background

The retirement issue is critical in the career path of every civil servant, and each civil servant has their own impression of entering retirement. Most civil servants think that the pre-retirement age is the peak of their career in their position. If this perception dominates, various problems will gradually arise. Meanwhile, if viewed from the point of view of state interests, the total amount of resources bestowed for the training of civil servants concerned is also at its peak effectiveness. Thus, civil servant retirement decisions that refer singularly to the norms of the retirement age face the risk of losing the effectiveness of training these civil servants, and a situation can emerge as if their training was in vain. In fact, in the moments before retirement, civil servants' experience, insight, mental maturity, and many other aspects of the results of various types of training are at their peak effectiveness. All of these, of course, are still highly required by the state. On the other hand, there are plenty of civil servants who do not necessarily want to retire immediately. This condition alone is not enough to boost the achievements of civil servants at the end of their tenure. The decision to retire based on age standards is definitely detrimental to the bureaucracy.

The following is an illustration of the rate of civil servants who are entering retirement age in Indonesia. Currently, 13.71% of Indonesia's 4.2 million civil servants are over the age of 55. In the 2016–2020 period, 752,271 civil servants entered retirement age.

The law regulating the retirement age for civil servants in Indonesia is stipulated in Article 90 of Law Number 5 of 2014. This law stipulates that the retirement age limit is: (a) 58 years for Administrative Officials; (b) 60 years for a High Management Officer; and (c) in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations for Functional Officials. Those civil servants who are classified as bureaucrats are Administrative Officials and High Leadership Officials. The findings of a study conducted in Yogyakarta in 2015 demonstrated that the level of substantive acceptability of the 58- and 60-year retirement age regulations is high. However, this does not necessarily provide an impetus for the intensification of civil servants who are still productive in the bureaucratic structure (Pambudi and Kumoro 2015). This regulation has failed to prevent civil servants who are still productive and who still want to work from leaving the bureaucratic structure. When they exceed the stipulated retirement age limit, every civil servant must leave bureaucratic structures that still need them. On the other hand, the reality of bureaucratic needs does not always require such retirement decisions. The results of the research findings demonstrated that many civil servants who are entering retirement age actually still want to serve longer. At the same time, the power, thoughts, experiences, insights and personal maturity of these civil servants are still needed by the state. Of course, these conditions can bring momentum and the potential to increase the professionalism of the bureaucracy. The authority of the bureaucracy to overcome this problem is hampered by Law Number 5 of 2014 concerning the State Civil Apparatus. Therefore, a comprehensive

formulation of the problem is needed as a basis for forming policy to improve bureaucratic professionalism through the implementation of Law Number 5 of 2014. This paper aims to present the formulation of the problem by combining research findings from 2015 enhanced with the latest relevant literature studies.

Literature Review

The term bureaucracy is commonly used to describe a type of management where profit orientation is not considered important. Bureaucrats are not just government employees – they are part of political power. The bureaucracy is in a unique position as both employer and employee, and is completely dependent on the legal authority of the state. Therefore, assessing the professionalism of the bureaucracy must be measured by the success of the public policies that it handles. The indicators of the success of public policy are non-profit oriented and multi-dimensional. Bureaucracy is absolutely different from private management or business organizations, whose achievement is measured solely by how much profit they achieve. To achieve the success of a bureaucratic organization there must be other dimensions that need to be considered wisely, including effectiveness, equity, adequacy, appropriateness, and responsibility. Because of the difficulty of implementing multi-dimensional indicators of success, it is difficult for the public sector to create vigorous professionalism in an instant way. However, the public sector consistently continues to strive for professionalism. The goal of a state is to create people's welfare and social justice that is carried out by the bureaucracy. However, there are always questions about what professionalism is. What is meant by professionalism? How does one control professionalism in job domains that are ambiguous or have multiple success criteria? What happens when different types of job control are mixed together? Noordegraaf (2007) offers several professional bureaucratic prescriptions, the first of which is described as classic professionalism with controlled content. The second is described as a bureaucratic transition from pure to hybrid professionalism. The third is described as contemporary professionalism combined with content in control.

With regard to the goal of creating social welfare and fighting for social justice, the question arises as to whether the regulation on the retirement age for civil servants, which is set at 58 years old in the form of a law, can have an impact on increasing bureaucratic professionalism. Undoubtedly, the professionalism of civil servants does not necessarily increase over time. Based on the findings of previous research concerning the civil servant retirement age (Pambudi and Kumoro 2015), to improve the professionalism of civil servants, a precise strategy is required to include other variables in the context of implementing the regulation. With this strategy, it is hoped that an increase in the professionalism of civil servants in Indonesia will be achieved.

The Retirement Desire Factor

Bureaucratic professionalism is commonly defined as the high productivity of the bureaucracy, according to its capacity and authority. However, as it is composed of in-

stitutions financed by public funds (state budget), today the bureaucracy is not only required to be productive in accordance with the applicable formal rules but must also have great moral responsibility for the use of public funds (accountability). Therefore, the bureaucracy must also be effective, efficient, creative, innovative, and adaptive and so on – exceeding the standards of expectations that are formally determined in statutory regulations (beyond the limits specified by the law).

A bureaucracy is an institution that is mandated by the state to carry out state duties and fight for the interests of the people (public). Bureaucratic building blocks are civil servants who are appointed, employed and dismissed by authorized officials. Authorized officials can be bureaucratic officials at the superior level or political officials who have legal authority in accordance with statutory regulations. Usually, bureaucratic officials pursue careers from the lower level and are then appointed, employed and dismissed from their positions – not on the basis of a certain term of office, but on the basis of appointment according to applicable regulations. On the other hand, this is very different from political officials. To occupy a certain political position, a candidate does not have to pursue a career from the lower level, but must go through a process of election by the public for a certain term or period. This period can be 5 years, 8 years, and so on in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, as long as one is elected by the people, a candidate can directly occupy a relatively high political position without having to first occupy a position below it as a career path.

Efforts to improve the professionalism of bureaucrats related to the regulation of the retirement age in Indonesia face many obstacles due to the fact that the current regulation is considered unfair. The retirement age regulation for bureaucratic civil servants in Indonesia is set at 58 years old. In fact, there are many civil servants who still want to work even though they have exceeded the retirement age. However, this high acceptability does not necessarily provide the best impetus for increasing the quality of the bureaucracy. The single norm of retirement age limits for civil servants in the law is considered too simple for the reality of the problems faced by the bureaucracy today. It is only because they exceed the stipulated retirement age limit that every civil servant must leave the bureaucratic structure at some point – even though the competence, potential, commitment and enthusiasm to continue their service period are still very high and they are still needed by the state. The concept of the retirement age limit, which is too strict and which is enforced as a single standard, has disregarded the use of other considerations which are also variables to increase the professionalism of the current government bureaucracy.

A literature review of research findings on retirement age limits across countries indicates that they vary widely. Most doctors in Australia want to retire by the age of 65. However, there are many factors that encourage them to want to retire early, including work pressure, fatigue and burnout. Meanwhile, better remuneration, better conditions of employment, and job support are generally incentives to make them continue working. Furthermore, more flexible working hours, part-time work and reduced workloads are also additional incentives for them. However, the bureaucratic order, low job satisfaction and disillusionment with the medical system are also obstacles to their continued

work. In conclusion, the number of physicians planning to retire early reflects a trend among professionals in general. Decreased job satisfaction, excessive workload and increased bureaucratic barriers are recurring factors for the consideration of early retirement (Brett et al. 2009). We hope that lessons can be learned from the case of retirement in Australia to improve the professionalism of the bureaucracy in Indonesia. If nothing else, one lesson is that the use of the retirement age limit of 58 years as a single standard will not solve the problems related to bureaucratic policy in Indonesia.

Pit and Hansen's (2014) study concluded that from the perspective of health policy reform, the biggest factors in reducing the intention to retire early among doctors were intervention factors in the area of working hours, fatigue and lack of sleep related to work, job satisfaction and psychological stress, work ability, and mental and physical health.

Among psychology consultants, the reasons for early retirement are extremely complicated. The factors driving early retirement include too much work in the bureaucracy, lack of free time and heavy workload. Meanwhile, the factors that prevent the early retirement of these consultants are that they are able to enjoy their work, work in a good team, and make a lot of money (Mears et al. 2004). On the other hand, the factors that influence the desire among school teachers to postpone retirement are those aspects of work that they actually enjoy. It is said that the place they feel they are happiest in is in the classroom with their group of students, and a particular source of enjoyment is when they teach students their favorite subject (Treasure 2016). These are the factors that encourage them to postpone retirement and extend their tenure. Once again, from the research findings above, lessons can be learned to improve the professionalism of the bureaucracy in Indonesia. The use of a single standard regardless of job satisfaction variables and remuneration systems, and disregarding other considerations that also have the effect of increasing bureaucratic professionalism in Indonesia, will not solve problems.

Psychologically, the meaning of work can be a form of self-identity, a marker of one's social status. The longer a person works, the more attached that identity will become. However, physical conditions for work have limitations; this is in line with decreased work productivity. In turn, each person will be asked to stop working when they enter their retirement period. There is a significant relationship between employee attitudes and employee turnover. The relationship between them is strongest at the point in time closest to when the person leaves their organization or enters retirement (Porter et al. 1974).

Entering retirement can create severe problems, because not everyone is ready for it. Retirement will cut off routine activities and existing social and economic relationships with colleagues, and, most importantly, will eliminate one's role and identity in society. As a result, the source of economic income will be threatened. Generally, this unpreparedness for retirement arises because of the fear of not being able to meet one's needs in the future.

Although the reaction to retirement varies, the most obvious general impact in everyday life is a reduction in the amount of income for the family. Thus, it can be concluded that the problem of decreasing bureaucratic professionalism will inevitably arise when,

on the one hand, civil servants are still able to and want to work, but on the other hand they have reached the age of 58 years and must stop working only because of regulations that have nothing to do with the substance of their work.

Li et al. found that job satisfaction and job attachment strongly influence workers' intention to leave the organization. A multitude of preferences, job satisfaction variables, job attachment, and intention to leave are bad variables of job turnover behavior (Li et al. 2016).

The article written by Griffeth and colleagues concluded that the variables that affect employee turnover consist of job satisfaction, commitment to organization, ease of finding work, comparison of other job alternatives, and intention to quit work. Furthermore, hidden determinants include work environment characteristics, job content, stress, work group cohesion, autonomy, leadership, distributive justice, promotion opportunities and alternative employment opportunities. However, the demographic and background characteristics of employees can also effectively influence resignation (Griffeth et al. 2000).

The findings of Griffeth et al. (2000) study require further discussion. First, this meta-analysis found that job search methods can also influence employees' intentions to quit. It is very likely that employees follow a more general logical structure. The intention to leave the organization is related to the decision to find another job and having another job offer as an option (Sager et al. 1998; Tubbs and Ekeberg 1991). That is, the decision to leave is triggered by job dissatisfaction, which leads to preparation for a new job hunt. Employees see the availability of greener pastures elsewhere, and at a certain date they then make the concrete decision to resign.

Women are more likely than men to remain in employment with older age. Perhaps in some societies traditional household and childcare responsibilities for women decline with age; conversely, childbirth or childcare often force young women to leave work.

In military and non-military circles the role of leadership in the intention to leave the organization is quite interesting. Civil (bureaucratic) employers may be able to adopt employment contracts similar to those of the military, which require employees to remain employed for a specified period of time. Professional sports clubs and universities ask their employees to sign contracts for a certain period to prevent resignation at inopportune times. Likewise, fast food restaurants combine these contractual obligations with bonus payments if employees continue to work for a specified period of time. Obviously, there are benefits to this approach as it can make employee turnover more predictable, can improve the quality of human resources planning, and can provide a more stable workforce.

Taken together, the above research findings suggest two recommendations. First, the management of the turnover of employees who will retire must be sensitive to various variables that exist in the organization. Second, studies on employee turnover must be carried out continuously over the long term in order to generate benefits for the organization. Through these two recommendations, it can be concluded that the decision to retire civil servants on the basis of the age limit of 58 years as the only law-based standard is detrimental to the professional development of governmental organizations and the Indonesian bureaucracy.

Research Method

The research method applied in this research is descriptive-qualitative, through prioritizing the logic of general scientific thinking (dialectic, logical, analytical, and systematic) combined with empirical knowledge from the latest relevant literature studies. The dialectic method was employed to carefully study the results of previous studies related to regulations on the retirement of civil servants and the relationship of this requirement to aspects of bureaucratic professionalism. The systems analysis and content analysis methods link the structure of the cause-and-effect relationship between the problem of implementing regulation on the retirement age and bureaucratic professionalism both individually and institutionally, and do so in both a legal-formalist and empirical manner. The results of this analysis are then identified and classified as advantages and disadvantages. All of these methods are used together, either simultaneously or alternately according to the need for a comprehensive understanding.

This qualitative research analysis method is open and exploratory, as suggested by Pope et al. (2002). Exploratory questions like this are commonly employed when: (a) there is little knowledge in a particular area of research; (b) existing research is confusing, contradictory, or stagnant; or (c) the topic is very complex.

Results and Discussion

This paper intends to follow up on the findings of research on the retirement age in 2015 in the aim of creating a professional bureaucracy. Therefore, enrichment must first be carried out through the development of insights, literature study and the relevant findings of previous research. The works of von Misses (1944), Dunn (1981), Brett et al. (2009), Pit and Hansen (2014), Mears et. al. (2004), Treasure (2016), Noordegraaf (2007), Porter et al. (1974), Li et al. (2016), Griffith et al. (2000), Sager et al. (1998); Tubbs and Ekeberg (1991) enriched the analysis of this paper.

The following is a summary of the findings of aspects of civil servant retirement regulations in Law Number 5 of 2014 that do not support increasing bureaucratic professionalism. These findings became the inspiration and trigger for the emergence of ideas for formulating strategies for implementing the regulation.

1. The definition the retirement age limit as stipulated in Law Number 5 of 2014 is too operational and is very rigid. In fact, this is the key word for establishing a national retirement norm for civil servants, where the conditions of bureaucratic personnel problems throughout Indonesia are of course very diverse. Moreover, in the last few decades the application of technology has been massive. Therefore, the dynamics and diversity of society are also increasing. This means that variations in the form and intensity of bureaucratic problems are likewise growing. Therefore, the factors that affect the desire of civil servants to retire are much more complex, beyond just a matter of turning 58 years of age.
2. The second finding is the problem of enforcing the age of 58 as a single condition for retirement. It is not clear that other alternatives are formulated when the implementa-

tion of this single condition encounters obstacles and creates new problems in the field that are unpredictable as a consequence of the above diversity. This problem becomes counterproductive for increasing the professionalism of the bureaucracy when carrying out its functions in the field.

3. The decision to retire or leave the bureaucratic structure for civil servants based on law has consistently led to the emergence of ambiguous attitudes and behaviors of bureaucratic accountability. The convergence between legal responsibility and moral accountability in the form of solving real problems at hand has not been realized. This means that when civil servants comply with legal norms, they must legally relinquish all their duties, responsibilities and authority at that time. There is no demand for the accountability to complete all the work that a civil servant is handling completely in advance of retiring. In short, the decision to retire for each civil servant is not based on the need for real work completion within the bureaucracy. The findings of this study suggest that this is one of the obstacles to the development of bureaucratic professionalism in Indonesia so far.
4. The productivity and desire of civil servants to stop working or retire do not always have a direct correlation with age. Many other variables may affect this, such as excessive workload, work pressure, fatigue or boredom, the remuneration system, job satisfaction, disappointment, health factors, motivation, morale factors, cohesion with coworkers, other job preferences, work environment, job offers elsewhere, and so forth. Therefore, it is possible that a civil servant may reach the Retirement Age Limit (BUP) according to the law but remain productive and willing to work, and is in fact still needed by the state. Therefore, the turnover of civil servants within the bureaucracy is contrary to the outcomes of work productivity. The productivity of new civil servants does not automatically replace those who are retiring, as each civil servant runs independently on their respective tracks. Therefore, there can be a decrease in the quality of the bureaucracy whenever an employee reaches the retirement age. Faced with this problem, the implementation of BUP Law Number 5 of 2014 will not be effective. In the end, the consistent implementation of BUP regulations will not have an impact on increasing the professionalism of the bureaucracy; on the contrary, it could actually reduce the professionalism of the bureaucracy. Therefore, an increase in bureaucratic professionalism cannot be expected here.
5. In fact, there is no compelling reason to set age-based retirement as a single standard; it should also simultaneously consider other influential factors as mentioned above. There is no urgency to establish a definitive retirement age limit in the form of a law. It can even be said that the stipulation of BUP as a single law standard does not have a strong logical basis for a cause-and-effect relationship in order to improve bureaucratic professionalism.
6. The civil servant retirement law is less responsive to the dynamics of internal bureaucratic problems and problems that develop in society that require intensive handling by the bureaucracy. The format of a law is difficult to amend if necessary. In fact, the condition of society today is very dynamic, in line with the rapid development of information and communication technology.

7. Finally, apart from the research findings above, the regulatory retirement norms for civil servants that are stipulated in Law Number 5 of 2014 are not compatible with the system of civil servant retirement policy in Indonesia. There are several other laws that also regulate the retirement age limit for certain civil servants, such as retirement regulations for judges, prosecutors, lecturers, and so on. However, the respective regulations are not interconnected, often overlapping so that they do not form a single comprehensive regulatory system.

Conclusion

The following are the conclusions of this research:

1. From the point of view of increasing bureaucratic professionalism, it is concluded that there is no urgency to set a retirement age limit that must be formulated definitively in the form of a law. Definitive formulation in the form of a law can create difficulties rather than bring benefits when it comes to increasing bureaucratic professionalism.
2. The second conclusion is that the other variables that influence the desire of civil servants to retire are very diverse, consisting of individual variables, internal variables of bureaucratic organizations, and environmental variables. All of these variables must be taken into consideration in making retirement decisions for every civil servant who is part of the bureaucracy.
3. It is predicted that the singular application of civil servant retirement age limit norms will create excess in the form of counterproductive problems that will hamper the increase in professionalism of the bureaucracy. Therefore, it is urgently necessary to formulate other alternatives, such as transitional regulations, in order to avoid the singular norm.

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Conflict of Interest

In writing this paper, the authors have no conflict of interest with the material of this paper, either individually or institutionally.

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VALDININKŲ PROFESIONALUMO TOBULINIMO POLITIKA: ĮGYVENDINIMO PROBLEMOS INDONEZIJOS RESPUBLIKOS VALSTYBĖS TARNYBOJE

Anotacija. Šio straipsnio tikslas – išanalizuoti Indonezijos valstybės tarnautojų profesionalumą jų išėjimo į pensiją kontekste. Tyrimas atliktas Džogjakartos mieste, Javos saloje, Indonezijoje. Šio mokslinio straipsnio išvados parodo, kad griežtas valstybės tarnautojų pensinio amžiaus reguliavimas nebūtinai yra geriausias postūmis Indonezijoje didinti valstybės tarnautojų profesionalumą. Išėjimo į pensiją amžiaus ribos verčia kiekvieną valdininką palikti valstybės tarnybos struktūrą, nors kompetencija, įsipareigojimas ir entuziazmas tęsti darbą vis dar išlieka labai aktyvus, o tarnautojų paslaugų valstybei vis dar reikia. Įstatymiškai per griežtos pensinio amžiaus normos įteisinimas sustabdė galimybę išlaikyti darbo rinkoje profesionalius ir patyrusius tarnauto-

jus. Nuoseklus pensinio amžiaus ribos reguliavimo įgyvendinimas iš tikrųjų trukdo didinti valstybės tarnybos darbuotojų profesionalumą Indonezijoje.

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