

Staffing And The Psychology Of Leadership Power In Islamic Higher Education In Enhancing Human Resource Performance Management

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the power psychology of leaders in IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon in improving human resource performance management through staffing policies from 2015 to 2023. Through a Qualitative-Descriptive approach with a Case Study method, several data were obtained: (1) There were differences in the appointment of officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment between the initial period and the second period under the leadership of Rector S. In the first period, the appointment of officials was based on input from Baperjakat (Position and Rank Consideration Board) established by Rector's Decree No. 73/In.14/R/Kp.07.6/03/2015, while in the second period, the Rector relied more on the selection mechanism through the Selection Committee's decree; (2) The power psychology of leadership in higher education institutions plays a significant role in the appointment of officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment. As a result, there are several less positive tendencies in the appointment of officials in the environment as follows: (a) Placement of officials not based on qualifications, competencies, career experience, and human resource career levels; (b) Placement of officials violating applicable laws; (c) Lack of vigilance and precision in appointing officials; (d) Lack of appreciation for the performance of high-performing officials in previous periods; and (e) Potential nepotism in appointing employees; (3) Several proposed strategies and techniques to minimize the absolute power of management include: (a) Policies should be bottom-up, not top-down; (b) Top leadership's psychological control over policies that are not pro-quality; (c) conducting need assessment; (d) support from top leadership through other managerial education and training; and (e) improving the qualification system.

Keywords: Staffing, Psychology of Power, Management, Human Resources.

A. INTRODUCTION

As a higher education institution operating in the service industry, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon maintains a direct relationship with service utilization, facilitated through employees placed in their respective roles. This connection significantly impacts employee performance in delivering optimal service to both the institution and its users. The placement process, therefore, assumes critical importance in securing competent personnel necessary for meeting national and international higher education standards. Ideally, this process should adhere to established rules, guidelines, and institutional vision and mission.

Within the context of quality assurance, staffing emerges as a pivotal discourse. The term "staffing" entails the process of selecting suitable individuals to fill organizational positions. It encompasses a series of endeavors aimed at acquiring, developing, motivating, and evaluating all human resources essential for organizational goal attainment. Handoko (2003) defines staffing as the art of placing qualified individuals in job positions, a responsibility integral to organizational managers. At its core, staffing aims to align individuals' skills and expertise with their designated roles—a principle encapsulated in the notion of placing "the right man in the right place." This approach, as articulated by Peter F. Drucker (2020), fosters an effective and efficient workforce capable of fulfilling organizational objectives competently and productively. The employee placement process ideally matches individuals' specialization and expertise, harnessing their productivity and enthusiasm. Proper placement optimizes employees' abilities and skills, driving enhanced performance within the organization.

In practice, however, the employee placement process often diverges from the ideal framework of educational quality management. Political interests and leaders' psychology of power sometimes overshadow quality orientation and institutional performance. Absolute authority and personal interests may prioritize comfort, position, or kinship over service excellence and stakeholder satisfaction, deviating from the institution's visionary objectives.

In relation to this discourse, numerous researchers have conducted studies on issues that are nearly similar. For instance, Fadilah, A.N. (2013), investigates the influence of employee placement on performance within the Gresik Regency Regional Secretariat. The study underscores the pivotal role of employee placement in organizational activities and emphasizes the significance of placing employees in roles aligned with their competencies. Similarly, Poniem, S. (2013), examines the effectiveness of employee staffing in the Ogan Komering Ulu Regency government. Findings reveal challenges in achieving effective staffing due to subjective decision-making and inadequate input variables. Ronald Aprianto's dissertation (2016) delves into competency-based mechanisms for filling structural positions, highlighting challenges in achieving meritocratic staffing amidst power dynamics and bureaucratic complexities. In alignment with these dissertations, Arifuddin, S. (2017), stresses the importance of managerial knowledge and decision-making skills among higher education leaders, advocating for continuous educational management training. Pratiwi, A., & Gilang, A. (2015), explore the influence of employee placement on job performance dimensions within the BBC-ETS English language education institution, emphasizing the critical role of placement in shaping employee performance.

Various studies above can serve as a basis for comparison in this research, but should not be considered concrete references because the study areas differ. Moreover, theoretically, studies that emerge in different social and cultural environments are assumed to have different patterns and characteristics. This research aims to explore the psychology of Leadership Power in the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon institution in enhancing human resource performance management through staffing policies from 2015 to 2023. Academically, this study is a significant effort to complement the scientific treasury in the fields of Psychology, Politics, and institutional quality management, where it is expected to provide a distinctive perspective on the dynamics of modern political theory in professional,

accountable, and quality-oriented religious higher education institutions. Practically, the results of this research are expected to provide accurate data for policymakers to determine the appropriate strategies in establishing, nurturing, and developing human resources at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon.

B. METHOD

The research employs the descriptive analytical method with a case study approach. The descriptive method is chosen for its ability to systematically portray the facts and characteristics of the objects and subjects under investigation accurately. Moreover, the descriptive analytical method underscores the endeavor to acquire information about the status or phenomena during the study, offering insights into phenomena, elucidating relationships, and extracting meanings from a given issue (Robiansyah: 2010).

A specific type of descriptive analytical method is exemplified by the case study. This research delves intensively into a particular subject examined as a case. Data for the case study are sourced from various stakeholders, indicating that data collection encompasses diverse sources (Nawawi in Atmanto, 2008: 1). Furthermore, Arikunto (2006: 142) in Robiansyah (2010) outlines the case study method as an intensive, detailed, and profound investigation into a specific organism (individual), institution, or particular phenomena within a limited scope or subject area. In this study, the focus is on exploring the staffing mechanism and Leadership Power Psychology in enhancing human resource management at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. Thus, the research subject comprises all leadership/official elements within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment, encompassing both educational staff (lecturers with additional duties) and educational support staff.

Data sources are categorized into primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered through direct interviews with educational and non-educational staff, regardless of additional duties. Conversely, secondary data is obtained indirectly by the researcher and includes supporting data from secondary sources, such as interpretations, rebuttals, comments, and quotations related to primary sources pertinent to the research theme. Secondary sources encompass literature from three disciplines: Psychology, Politics, and management quality education, serving as analytical tools for understanding the factual reality of the staffing process within the context of institutional performance and enhancing human resource performance management at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. While efforts are made to primarily collect data, secondary sources are also considered. Subsequently, the collected data are analyzed and interpreted to uphold the research's validity and reliability. All data are cross-checked with their sources through retesting techniques to ensure validity and reliability.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background of Staffing Policy Establishment for Human Resources at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon Environment:

The regulations governing the appointment, transfer, and termination of Civil Servants (PNS) within the confines of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon primarily adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia's decree number 9 of 2007. Within this regulatory framework lies the establishment of a body tasked with assisting leadership by providing assessments and considerations concerning the appointment, transfer, and termination of Civil Servants from and to structural positions, the bestowal of special promotions, and the selection for Education and Training (Diklat) programs for civil servants within the Ministry of Religion. This body is known as *Baperjakat*.

Baperjakat, an acronym for the Advisory Board for Job and Rank Placement, operates within the Ministry of Religion and encompasses several levels: (1) Ministry of Religion-

level Baperjakat; (2) Baperjakat at the organizational unit level of the Ministry of Religion's central headquarters; (3) Provincial-level Ministry of Religion Baperjakat; (4) IAIN-level Baperjakat; (5) PTA-level Baperjakat; (6) STAIN-level Baperjakat; (7) District/City Ministry of Religion-level Baperjakat; and (8) Religious Court-level Baperjakat.

In the realm of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, these regulations are translated into action through Rector's Decree Number: 73/In.14/R/Kp.07.6/03/2015, which outlines the Advisory and Rank Placement Board of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. This decree explicitly delineates the responsibilities of Baperjakat in providing guidance to leadership regarding: (1) the appointment, transfer, and dismissal of Civil Servants from and to structural positions; (2) the granting of special promotions to exceptionally meritorious civil servants or those whose discoveries benefit the State; and (3) the selection of civil servants to participate in structural job education and training.

The decree also enumerates the names appointed as members of Baperjakat, including the Rector of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, who serves as the responsible party, the Vice Rector for General Administration, Planning, and Finance, who serves as both the Chairman and a member, the Head of the AUAK Bureau as a member, and the Deans of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK), the Faculty of Sharia and Economics (FSEI), and the Faculty of Ushuluddin, Adab, and Da'wah (FUAD) as members. This composition adheres to the specifications outlined in Article 12 of the provisions contained within the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia No. 9 of 2007, comprising the Vice Rector 2, the bureau chief, and the deans from each Faculty.

In utilizing *Baperjakat* for staffing processes, interviews and document studies have revealed significant disparities between the initial and subsequent periods of appointing officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment under the leadership of Mr. S. Initially, appointments were made based on recommendations from Baperjakat, established through Rector's Decree No. 73/In.14/R/Kp.07.6/03/2015. However, in subsequent periods, the Rector relied more on selection committee mechanisms for appointing officials, bypassing the formal establishment of Baperjakat through a decree. Nevertheless, the Rector continued to seek input from various administrative figures, albeit in the form of leadership meetings rather than through the official Baperjakat body.

Comparing the two periods reveals a growing irony, as the assurance of staffing quality, appointments, and placements within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment demonstrates a decline in quality. This trend primarily stems from the fact that, despite its absence in the Rector's Decree during the second period, the Baperjakat team established in the initial period still allowed authoritarianism by the highest leadership, particularly during the second period, which lacked formal recognition in the Rector's Decree. This absence was expected to serve as a guiding framework that could reinforce leadership in this context. Ultimately, all decisions were left to the discretion of the Rector.

As the establishment of staffing policies falls entirely within the purview and prerogative rights of the Rector, the Psychology of the Rector's Power inevitably comes into play. Consequently, the Rector, in exercising this authority, often disregarded the input or proposed processes of Baperjakat, opting instead for 'specific' interests, such as seniority, familial relationships, and coalitions of interests among officials. Consequently, sometimes candidates proposed by Baperjakat were overlooked, and others were appointed instead.

In this context, the role of *Baperjakat* is confined to discussing potential candidates for structural positions, with the final decision resting largely with the Rector. Given the dominant role of the Rector as the top leader and a political figure, recruitment decisions for structural positions or PNS and non-PNS lecturers heavily rely on the Rector's discretion. Consequently, Baperjakat, in various government contexts, often serves as a political instrument for leaders to maintain or perpetuate their power by dictating Baperjakat meeting outcomes. The recruitment mechanism for structural positions, where the names of candidate

officials are submitted to policy makers (the Rector), with Baperjakat merely serving as a pseudo-democratic facade, aims to project a sense of accommodation and democratic decision-making by leadership.

The Psychology of Institutional Leaders in Human Resource Performance Management Processes at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon

Drawing from the context of staffing practices at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, the psychology of institutional leadership emerges as profoundly influential. The highest echelons of leadership wield unequivocal authority in appointing subordinates. Empowered with this prerogative, they exercise complete discretion through their policies to designate individuals according to their preferences. While the ideal process ostensibly involves deliberations within Baperjakat, it often serves as a mere facade. Rather than being a genuine platform for consideration, decisions invariably revert to the highest leadership, which retains the authority to select individuals who resonate with its vision. These appointed officials subsequently assume their roles following inauguration. This dynamic is illuminated through insights shared by a Dean during an interview:

"The appointment process does not solely rely on recommendations from the Dean's office; the Rector's policy also holds sway. During my tenure as Dean, certain appointments were directly made by the Rector. Despite proposing 3 vice deans, only 1 was approved. The rationale behind this decision remains unclear to me... One of the vice deans from the previous term had a subpar academic track record, while the other was senior but unable to perform optimally. Moreover, the positions assigned by the Rector were strategically important. Consequently, managing the faculty became quite challenging. However, in the current term, I am grateful that my proposed appointments were accepted, significantly aiding the performance of my vice deans" (Interview conducted at the FSEI building in November 2019).

From the above statement, it appears that although the Deans and bureau chiefs are part of the Baperjakat structure, they are only in the position of providing considerations. The absolute determinant of who holds office largely depends on the policy of the top leadership, namely the Rector of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. This condition is reinforced by a member of Baperjakat who stated: *"My book is full of leadership meeting notes, whether related to Baperjakat deliberations or others. But honestly, internal leadership meetings are often just a facade because what often appears in the appointment decree are things and names of people that were not agreed upon in the Baperjakat meetings. So, what's the point of the leadership meetings. That's why I'm a bit lazy to attend meetings. What is discussed and executed often differ"* (Interview with the bureau chief for the 2015-2019 period at his office, March 2019).

From the explanations above, there seem to be several less positive trends in the appointment of officials at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. A real picture of the condition of the mechanism for filling structural positions at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon impacts the emergence of several problems:

Placement of Officials are not based on Qualifications, Competencies, Experience, Career Progression of Human Resources; Qualification Basis

When discussing qualifications, it pertains to the educational level, rank, or group of an individual deemed suitable and authorized to hold a specific position based on existing regulations. Ideally, the appointment process for officials at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon should adhere to established rules; however, in reality, not all appointments comply with the regulations set by the central government. This is evident from the numerous officials occupying departmental positions, heads of centers, and other roles who, in terms of norms and qualifications, are not suitable.

According to regulations, department heads and department secretaries must hold at least the rank or group of Lecturer. However, in practice, the secretary of the Islamic Early Childhood Education Department still holds the rank of assistant lecturer, persisting for almost two leadership periods. Similarly, the position of center head, which should be held by officials with at least the rank or group of Lecturer, is occupied by individuals appointed between 2015 and 2019 who were recently transferred from educational roles, have not completed a year in their new positions, do not meet administrative requirements, and have not attained the minimum required rank.

Another observation in the field is the presence of leaders in certain units whose rank qualifications are lower than those they lead. This insight stems from interviews with a former head of an office within the Postgraduate department.

“In the current context of placements, there are indeed discrepancies based on our experiences. In some units, particularly, there are instances where officials, upon receiving their positions, find themselves in roles lower than those they supervise. This highlights the need for a systematic approach. Therefore, in the General Section, measures have been taken to ensure that subordinates can progress smoothly in their careers. Evaluations and promotions should be conducted by supervisors with higher ranks, not by those being evaluated. Consequently, subordinates with higher ranks are transferred to units where their superiors hold higher ranks, facilitating performance evaluations. All employees are required to submit their performance reports, known as the Daily Work Report, signed by their superiors each month. However, if a superior's rank is lower than that of their subordinates, it poses challenges in evaluating their performance effectively. This misalignment undermines the evaluation process and requires attention” (Interview at the office of the Postgraduate department, October 2019).

From the above exposition, it is evident that the placement of officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment inadequately considers the qualification levels of both the officials and the subordinates to be led by the appointed official, whether they hold higher positions than their leaders or not within a particular work unit. Ideally, a leader is expected to possess higher qualifications than those they lead, including in the context of higher education institutions, such as the rank of educational personnel (Hunter and Jordan, 1939; Rimmelin, 1938; Sward, 1933, cited in Bass, 1990). A leader in a specific unit should not have a lower rank than those they lead, as they have the authority to evaluate the performance of their subordinates. If this occurs, it undoubtedly has a significant impact on an employee's career advancement opportunities.

Competency Basis

The process of appointing structural officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment ideally extends beyond considering rank alone. In the regulations, it is stipulated that, in addition to rank, competencies should also be taken into account. Based on on-site studies, the implementation of the recruitment of structural officials at IAIN SNJ Cirebon seems to lean more towards political nuances than adhering to established rules. Supporting the views of Islamy (2002) and Asnawaty (2003), who suggest that the phenomenon of appointing or selecting bureaucratic officials seems to have overridden the merit system principle, it is necessary to end the habit of appointing individuals without a basis in their career record.

An individual's abilities/competencies ideally serve as the primary consideration for occupying a position. This is because, technically and in terms of specific capabilities, an official will be able to understand and carry out their duties effectively. According to Asnawaty (2003), this emphasis is crucial to ensure that employee placements do not encounter issues and do not violate regulations.

In reality, within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment, this has not been fully observed. Many positions are occupied by officials whose competencies do not match. Especially positions in departments and deanships, which are key positions in safeguarding the academic achievements of their users. In department positions, officials with the same scholarly qualifications should hold the same positions because they will formulate the curriculum for each program. How can they contribute to the academic field of the program if their officials do not have the required qualifications and competencies in that field? Therefore, ideally, officials at the department and dean levels should have backgrounds that match the academic field of their department/program. Unfortunately, many department heads and secretaries do not match. Some examples include: (1) officials with Hadith expertise hold the position of secretary in Department of Islamic Creed and Philosophy (AFI); (2) officials with Indonesian language expertise are placed in the Islamic Elementary School Teacher Education (PGMI) Department; (3) Officials with Sociology expertise are placed in the Early Childhood Islamic Education (PIAUD) Department; (4) officials with expertise in the History of Islamic Education and Philosophy of Science are placed in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) department in the Doctoral Program; (5) officials with expertise in General Law are placed in the Ahwal Syakhsiyah department in the Master's program; (6) officials with expertise in Sharia Law and Economics are placed in WD 2 of the Faculty of Ushuludin, Adab, and Dakwah; (7) and so forth.

This condition is complained about by the officials themselves, as follows: *"Don't blame us, because as civil servants, we only follow orders. Our backgrounds are certainly not maximally adequate, especially regarding the academic fields of the programs to manage the department/program, especially in compiling the program curriculum, which certainly requires experts in the field of the program/department's expertise, especially now with KKNi."* (Interview results in the postgraduate building, on Monday, October 28, 2019).

Similarly, one of the secretaries at FUAD complained: *"It's a position after all, not always academic, but has a political element, I just accepted this position, which I initially refused because there were problems before in AFI. But because it was uncomfortable, the Rector even asked me, so let it be... at least it helps with the program's administration."* (Interview results at the AFI department office, on Monday, October 28, 2019).

The new leaders raise doubts for one of the lecturers who previously held a leadership position. Because, according to him, the position does not match his competencies and educational background. Moreover, he has never had experience leading in that position, so there is minimal belief that he will succeed in maintaining the achievements made by the department before his leadership term.

"I'm not sure, why am I not sure? I see, for example, the AFI department. It's now led by someone who's not an expert. And the department secretary is from IAT. Then the Chairman of Tarbiyah. Tarbiyah is not linear. Not linear and inexperienced. Even though AFI has come a long way, it's just booming. And now it's led by someone very new. If the Prodi Head has a background that's a mix of tarbiyah and Ushuluddin, but inexperienced. Being inexperienced should not directly lead the department, which has been booming. It's starting from scratch again." (Interview on October 28, 2019).

From the above interviews, doubts about backgrounds, even by the educational backgrounds of the current AFI leaders, where there is a lack of educational background among the officials, can be seen. Thus, it is imperative for top leaders not to place someone in a leadership position, especially in departments/programs if it does not align with the academic field of the program/department. Because if this happens, the quality improvement process will either be stagnant or just starting again. Although the department has developed and is just waiting for its boom.

Every leader must also have a vision, something dreamed of, what they want to achieve in the future (Wirawan, 2013). In this case, a leader must have a strategy to realize the

predetermined vision and mission together. This strategy certainly requires an understanding of the scope of the department or faculty they lead. Returning to the issue above, if a leader has an educational background and experience different from the department or faculty they lead, then it is not unlikely to raise doubts from other parties. As experienced and felt by one of the officials who previously led the current leadership position.

"It requires individuals with innovative thinking and seasoned expertise, ready to take action once the opportunity arises. It's about starting afresh. The issue isn't about distrusting new leadership; rather, it highlights the importance of preparing leaders in departments that have already established their direction. This prevents a regression to square one. In other contexts, such as within different faculties, particularly in the field of Tarbiyah, the significance is immense. It's not just about trust; it's about emphasizing that leaders, as I've emphasized repeatedly, must possess visionary ideas coupled with practical experience. Visionary ideas, well-thought-out strategies, and hands-on experience. That's the crux of it." (Interview conducted on October 28, 2019)

In reality, at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, this perspective alone cannot fully determine who should assume leadership roles. It's crucial to recognize that educational background remains a primary consideration when evaluating someone's potential for leadership. *"Yes, that's a given. However, it all hinges on one's competencies. We undergo assessments at the center. Previously, I was compared with several others by a psychologist."* (Interview conducted on November 1, 2019)

Moreover, it's essential to reconsider the reliance solely on an individual's experience as a measure of leadership ability. We must also consider the type of education an individual has, as it plays a significant role in shaping their leadership acumen through life experiences. Therefore, certain learning opportunities or training programs can significantly enhance an individual's ability to draw critical leadership insights from their experiences. Furthermore, Hughes (2007) suggests that formal education offers diverse perspectives for analyzing leadership situations. By exploring different viewpoints, individuals can apply theoretical frameworks to understand the dynamics of various leadership scenarios. While it may be challenging for emerging leaders to grasp complex leadership situations, formal education equips them with the tools to navigate diverse perspectives effectively (Ika and Unika, 2015).

Professional Experience and Leadership

Genuine leadership evolves through experience. Experience, in this context, denotes the path of leadership that one has traversed. Leadership is not an instantaneous skill; rather, it is acquired through the journey of being led. This perspective also suggests that individuals lacking leadership experience cast doubts on their competency to effectively guide the organizations they lead. This scenario is particularly apparent in certain departmental leadership roles within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, where a recently appointed leader has assumed a pivotal position.

The appointment of this new leader has sparked scepticism among some faculty members who have previously held leadership positions. They argue that the individual's qualifications and educational background do not align with the requirements of the position. Furthermore, the lack of prior leadership experience in this specific role diminishes confidence in their ability to maintain or elevate the department's achievements.

"The Rector ought to assess an individual's career trajectory and leadership experience before assigning them to strategic roles. Ideally, the Rector should adhere to the same standards outlined in the regulations, which dictate that individuals lacking leadership experience in roles such as Vice Rector, Dean, or department head should not hold such positions. What does this imply? It underscores the significance of leadership experience. Leadership experience shapes an individual's understanding of the tasks at hand in their new role. The same principle applies to positions subordinate to them. However, given the current

scenario, many officials appear uncertain about their course of action; some are content with maintaining the status quo. While maintaining existing achievements is commendable, the focus should be on continuous improvement rather than mere preservation of quality." (Interview conducted on October 28, 2019)

The above statement highlights a phenomenon where the assignment of leadership positions fails to consider the professional experience of the appointed individuals. This circumstance inevitably disrupts the continuity of programs emphasized in previous periods.

Misplacement of Officials Contravening Applicable Laws;

Numerous regulations stipulate that official ideally should not hold the same position for more than 2 terms. However, the reality of appointing officials within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon environment reveals that one leader has held the same position, the secretary of the PIAUD Department, for 3 consecutive terms. The secretary of the PIAUD Department has served beyond the specified time limit in the regulations, as they have held the position for more than two terms: initially with AY, then with S, and currently with AM.

When questioned, the department head seemed unaware of this situation and did not acknowledge it, attributing it to a lack of carefulness in appointing officials, as per the following interview: *"Indeed, the matter requires thorough examination and immediate attention. My apologies for not having addressed it sooner. This underscores the significance of examining the nomination process, particularly by the Dean. We must ascertain how the Dean is addressing this issue. Is it due to staffing constraints? I need to consult the statute to confirm that it is indeed limited to one term. We should revisit this matter later for clarification and resolution"* (Interview conducted on November 1, 2019)

The lack of awareness regarding the conditions or circumstances of those under their leadership is indicative of a deficiency in the leadership's diligence in evaluating their subordinates. This situation not only contravenes applicable legislation but also adversely affects the morale of the officials themselves, who experience a sense of ennui and stagnation in executing their duties within the same role. However, paradoxically, this phenomenon is often attributed to other leaders because, according to the department head, this oversight does not fall under the purview of the top leadership (the Rector). The authority and full responsibility for the department rest with the Dean or the Faculty.

"In principle, the faculty submits proposals. Departmental matters are not within the rector's jurisdiction; they belong to the faculty. From whom? From where, you inquire? If it originates from the rector, it ascends to the head of the institution. The head of the center. Yes, correct? The proposals still emanate from the faculty. They are formulated while considering the input of the faculty, particularly the Dean. Although, in reality, it is the Dean who holds full authority. The Dean, along with the three vice-deans" (Interview conducted on November 1, 2019).

Lack of Vigilance and Precision in Appointing Officials;

A leader must possess vigilance and precision regarding everything happening around them. They should be able to evaluate situations, have social insight, and demonstrate sympathetic understanding. By evaluating circumstances, a leader can make appropriate decisions according to environmental conditions (Enceng and Lilik, n.d.). In reality, there was a lack of precision in appointing officials during the 2019-2023 period, where a department head in the Ahwal al-Syakhsyah PPs program was inaugurated but replaced by someone else after 2 months without prior notice. Communication with the personnel department revealed that the decision was revoked due to negligence in considering the age of the appointed official. Ideally, before making decisions, the qualifications of officials from

various aspects should have been thoroughly observed, so that the Rector's decree is something respected and not perceived as rushed or without consideration.

Furthermore, there are still vacant positions in certain areas, such as the Head of the PAI S-2 Master's Program and the secretary of the Ekos S-2 Master's Program. From the beginning of the 2019-2023 Rector's tenure until now, these positions have remained unfilled. Additionally, while the PSGA chairperson was inaugurated, due to illness from September 2019 to November, no replacement has been found. Whether intentional or not, this situation has been allowed to persist. While the Rector, WR, and Kabiro likely comprehend the situation, the reasons behind allowing this condition to endure for almost a year have not been revisited. Is it due to a lack of qualified individuals or other interests from top leadership that have resulted in this matter being disregarded for months?

This reality undoubtedly has a significant impact on the quality journey of the department/program/unit experiencing vacancies. This is as complained by the department secretary where their department head has yet to materialize at the time of this interview. *"I really hope that there will be a program chair as soon as possible. For instance, in the PAI department, there is no program chair yet, and in the Islamic Economics department, there is no program secretary. So far, there are still vacancies, and no appointments have been made. Even though it has been said that the director has proposed it. However, until now, there has been no appointment. Clearly, there is an imbalance in the organization's functioning, right? And I have to cover the activities that should be carried out by the program chair and myself as the program secretary"* (interview at Postgraduate building on November 1, 2019).

Lack of Appreciation for High-Performing Officials in the Previous Period

Appreciation for employee performance is something important to do in order to strengthen the work psychology of employees. In some educational institutions, appreciation is evident from the higher career advancements of employees compared to their previous positions. Unfortunately, this appreciation is not apparent in the environment of IAIN Syekh Nurati Cirebon. Consequently, complaints arise as follows: "I, who have served as Vice Dean twice, successfully supervised the accreditation of AFI A. Initially, the AFI department was relatively unknown and had few students. However, with the joint efforts of the Department Chair and Secretary, we managed to obtain accreditation A. Currently, the department has experienced an increase in the number of classes. I hope that new colleagues in AFI can follow this example. I must not be arrogant, as this is the result of teamwork" (interview at the postgraduate building on Monday, October 18, 2019).

This reality is also evident from document studies, where several study programs guided by several heads and vice-heads to obtain an A accreditation, have not yet received adequate appreciation. Like DN, who previously served as the Chair of the Islamic Education Department, where during her tenure she successfully guided the accreditation of the Islamic Education Department to an A. However, she is currently demoted to the Department Secretary position. The same situation is also experienced by WH, who previously held the position as the Chair of the AFI Department, where during his tenure he was able to guide the accreditation of the Islamic Education Department to an A. However, in the period 2019-2023, he does not hold any position. In the Faculty of Islamic Education, there is also N, who previously served as the Vice Dean 3 of the Faculty of Islamic Education and Teacher Training (FITK), where during his tenure he created the FITK Mars and several academic and non-academic achievements for his students, but in the current period, his position was downgraded to the Chair of the IPS Teaching Department.

From the above conditions, many officials from the previous period, who have achieved accomplishments, feel underappreciated for their performance.

"From the top leaders, only congratulations were given, there was no other appreciation. There was no direct acknowledgment from the Rectorate. Perhaps, as the Head

of the Department, advancing the department is considered their responsibility, so appreciation is not deemed obligatory. I don't expect too much and have already tried my best” (interview at TIPS Department building, on Monday, October 18, 2019).

The form of appreciation given by top management to officials who have performed well or have made positive contributions to the department, often comes in the form of certificates. As for material rewards, the top management itself acknowledges that they have not seen any efforts to give such rewards. Even for positions or career advancements, it is the responsibility of each individual. Not based on achievements or contributions given to the department, because contribution is a mandatory thing that must be done or given by a leader.

The top leadership's appreciation for the performance of officials under them is extremely minimal, to the point of being virtually non-existent. Why is it said so? Because in Management Science, Reward and Punishment are essential practices. Reward is given when an employee achieves success and contributes positively to the institution's reputation. Conversely, punishment is administered when an employee engages in activities that tarnish the institution's reputation.

Based on the narrative above, it appears that the officials who have achieved success (such as overseeing the accreditation of their departments to A status during their leadership) have not received rewards. Instead, some officials who were initially department heads have been demoted to department secretaries, and some have been asked not to resume their positions. In Management Science, this condition signifies not reward but punishment. The demotion and deactivation of positions are forms of punishment bestowed by leadership for the exemplary performance delivered by their employees.

Potential Nepotism in Employee Appointments.

It is undeniable that nepotism is a product of the personalization of power by leaders who believe that their authority can be used relatively freely according to their personal desires. Nepotism is an action based solely on instinct and emotional ties due to blood relations or kinship. According to Surbakti (1992: 44), indications of nepotistic actions are evident in whether or not employees have kinship relations with leaders at the time of their appointment.

Building upon Surbakti's statement above, there appears to be potential nepotism in the policy of appointing permanent non-civil servant lecturers within the environment of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. Based on Decree 0994/In.08/R/Kp.00.3/04/2017, several names of permanent non-civil servant lecturers are related by blood and kinship (siblings, relatives, and even family members) to the leaders of the Rectorate. Although the recruitment and placement process may seem to follow procedures set by institutional guidelines, and perhaps even national regulations, these appointments still cannot avoid personal/family interests.

The above facts indicate that the management of employee recruitment and staff still has the potential for nepotism based on family and kinship interests of institutional leaders. This reality is part of the bureaucratic tradition within the institution that has been ongoing for quite some time, and until now, has not been able to be ended. This should be a priority for leaders who are currently and will lead the institution in the future because this reality also slows down the institution and lags behind others, being held hostage by nepotism-based interests, which are laden with conflicts of interest.

Management Strategies and Techniques in Overcoming Competency, Knowledge, Experience, and Personal Attribute Constraints of Human Resources Present in the Established Staffing Process

The main idea in managing bureaucratic reform is the systematic, comprehensive, and rapid improvement of services provided to the public so that the public feels satisfied with the services provided to them. This implies the need for systematic changes within the

bureaucracy regarding resource management. Quality Human Resources (HR), especially at the officer level, are essential to ensure that the bureaucratic machine operates optimally in carrying out its primary mission in higher education provision and community service.

The availability of competent and professional officer HR is undoubtedly inseparable from the effectiveness of the recruitment mechanisms employed internally to ensure the right placement of employees in the right positions. Therefore, restructuring efforts (rightsizing) are urgently needed. In response to these needs and to address several issues arising from political tendencies in the appointment mechanism, several strategies and techniques are expected to be implemented by management with a high commitment to improving HR performance quality. These include:

Policies Should Be Bottom-Up, Not Top-Down;

As previously mentioned, what each department needs are individuals within the department who precisely understand what is required. Essentially, they are the ones who experience and understand the situation at their home base. Thus, every policy, especially in the staffing process, must accommodate the needs and input from below (bottom-up) rather than being imposed from the top down.

"In developing educators at IAIN, it's crucial that educator development clearly addresses the needs identified. These needs, you see, they come from below. So, it's not a top-down approach but rather a bottom-up one. In the past, faculties, like when I was with Dean Ilman, played a key role. We proposed the needs of the study programs to the faculties, and then the faculties forwarded them to the institution for recruitment purposes. But, you know, reality doesn't always match expectations. We might need 4 educators, but only 1 is available, for example. And sometimes, we need an English teacher, but we get someone else. It's the same situation in the postgraduate programs. We still lack enough educational personnel and staff. Although, most study programs have a program chair, a secretary, and staff. That's been the structure across various study programs so far." (Interview conducted on October 28, 2019)

The bottom-up mechanism, rather than top-down, has indeed been implemented by leaders in implementing policies within the IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. This can be seen from the process of proposing needs through departments to the faculty leadership, and then from the faculty leadership back to the top leadership. However, what actually happens may not fully align with this.

For example, in the case of recruiting education personnel at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, there is already a directive from the leadership for each department to propose additional education personnel needs at their respective home bases. The departments submit their lists of needs to the dean's office, which then forwards them to the rectorate. Unfortunately, the execution of this good mechanism (bottom-up) does not always match what is proposed and needed by the relevant departments. Personnel who are not needed are appointed and officially assigned, resulting in some home bases being overstaffed, while others experience shortages. Similarly, for the lack of computer experts, the leadership appointed individuals who could only use computers. In other words, employees who were officially assigned were graduates who did not specialize in computer science.

From this reality, it is evident that the top-down system still heavily influences decisions. Therefore, moving forward, it is hoped that the bottom-up mechanism can provide perspectives for leaders in establishing procurement policies and staff placements that align with grassroots needs.

Control of Top Leadership's Psychological Power over Non-Quality-Pro Policies

To confine the authoritarian sway of leadership, which occasionally strays from quality assurance norms, a redefinition of the term "power or prerogative" of the Rector is necessary.

This ensures a clear distinction from the "prerogative" held by the president as the head of state. Explicit elucidation concerning relevant articles in the legislation governing the position of the Rector as the personnel supervisor and his authority is essential. This elucidation guarantees alignment between the local government's authority and the meritocratic principle in the recruitment of structural officials.

The asserted prerogative by top leadership, widely acknowledged, often leads to recruitment outcomes bereft of objectivity. This assertion may facilitate the infiltration of various external factors like nepotism, primordialism, and patrimonialism, considered by leaders on a personal basis to determine appointments. Consequently, appointments are no longer solely merit-based but may incline towards loyalty to the ruling figure.

The recruitment system involving the Rector as the sole authority, coupled with the claim of "prerogative" and inherent motives, is suspected as the root cause of suboptimal recruitment outcomes. Unfortunately, substantiating these suspicions proves challenging as local leaders may justify their actions with normative rules and claims of "prerogative." This is exemplified in the following interview excerpt: *"Yes, indeed. It's my prerogative. Hence, there's no room for discussion or the development of pertinent issues. The risks are considerable, as it jeopardizes program sustainability. For instance, one administration sets goals, but subsequent administrations might alter them entirely. That's the risk inherent in a power-based management system."* (Interview, October 28, 2019)

The existence of a leadership system characterized by centralized authority indicates a management ethos grounded in power dynamics. Programs are subject to change based on incumbent leadership, rendering previously implemented programs unsustainable. *"The evidence suggests a lack of open recruitment and consultation regarding position appointments and challenges. The prevailing organizational tradition fails to uphold institutional visions, leading to a bureaucratic tendency where personal preference supersedes institutional needs. While quality assurance mechanisms exist, they have yet to mitigate personal biases in decision-making."* (Interview, October 28, 2019).

Conducting Need Assessment.

Need assessment is an evaluative activity that measures a candidate's competencies based on specific psychological standards and procedures. The objective of this need assessment is to ensure that prospective officials who will occupy certain positions are effectively screened, thus ensuring accurate placement according to their competencies. Accuracy in this context refers to the alignment between the competencies or abilities of prospective officials and the positions they are required to fill.

The urgency of the need assessment program is articulated in the following interview excerpt: *"I believe that every employee should undergo a need assessment for career evaluation, including assessing their knowledge and performance levels. Leaders will then review the results to ensure proper placement according to each individual's competencies, aiming for clear career progression and employee satisfaction."* (Interview, October 28, 2019)

From the statement above, it is evident that the need assessment aims to evaluate the career progress of employees, considering their knowledge levels and performance. By conducting a need assessment, leaders can make informed decisions about the placement of prospective employees.

Furthermore, the need assessment also facilitates the career development process for officials or lecturers, who are considered supporting agents towards the department's vision. Thus, if leaders conduct need assessments, they can address every requirement, as highlighted in the following interview excerpt: *"Lecturers play a crucial role as supporting agents for the department's academic goals and development. The expertise needed depends on the department's focus; for instance, if it emphasizes social philosophy to address modern*

societal issues, deep insight into the criticized society is essential. Hiring a Sufism expert wouldn't align with the department's needs. Therefore, the department's vision and strategy dictate the required expertise for both lecturers and staff." (Interview, October 28, 2019)

Real-world conditions indicate that not every official placement undergoes a need assessment or fit and proper test. Moreover, the reality reveals that the model is not as pure as commonly perceived; its practice often refers to a process where the Rector calls and interviews civil servants individually for nomination as officials. Thus, there is no significant distinction from the recruitment mechanism in Baperjakat, where subjectivity remains a contaminating factor affecting the outcome.

While adhering to regulation-compliant staffing mechanisms is an aspirational goal, consistent and periodic progress towards that aim requires considerable time. Nonetheless, campus leaders have made efforts to implement staffing mechanisms effectively using need assessments and fit and proper tests. However, these processes are not consistently applied to every recruitment and placement procedure. As expressed in the following interview excerpt: *"Progress has been made, but implementation takes time. Personnel, including administrative staff, should ideally have relevant backgrounds. For instance, finance officers should hold economics degrees. Achieving professionalism is a gradual process."* (Interview, October 28, 2019)

Efforts to ensure position placement according to needs are acknowledged by other officials. They emphasize the professionalism required of prospective officials. For instance, when there's a need for an Arabic Language Lecturer, leaders ensure they appoint someone with a background in Arabic language education and experience in the field. This requirement extends to other positions as well.

The need assessment also applies to prospective educational staff. In the context of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, educational staff are often assigned roles that do not match their educational backgrounds. For example, when a department or campus requires computer experts, leaders sometimes appoint individuals who are only proficient in using computers but lack formal education in computer science.

In summary, the need assessment process during official placements at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon has been initiated. However, in reality, human resources are lacking. To ensure effective staffing mechanisms, assessments should be conducted bottom-up, not top-down. This approach would enable staffing mechanisms to function properly.

Supporting System from Top Leadership through Education and Other Managerial Training

One of the efforts for advancing the careers of lecturers or officials is through Education and Training programs. These programs are designed to enrich the skills required by employees. In this context, learning signifies a shift in behavior, a lasting transformation derived from experience or practice. Conversely, training is defined as an endeavor to enhance employees' performance in their current or prospective roles. It correlates with the skills and competencies necessary for the tasks at hand and is geared towards the present, aiding employees in honing their skills and responsibilities.

IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon's leadership must persistently pursue education and training programs to bolster the minimal capabilities and qualifications of its officials, as previously mentioned. The leadership must consistently optimize the execution of the PIM III and IV training initiatives. Moreover, opportunities for further studies should be maximized for interested employees, with a focus on reducing political influences in job placements, particularly in structural roles for all current employees. The Top Leadership must take several measures in recruiting structural officials to enhance the quality of the institution's human resources, including: (1) enhancing work productivity: Training can enhance job performance in current roles, potentially leading to increased productivity and profits for the

institution; (b) improving work quality: This entails augmenting both quality and quantity. Well-informed workers tend to perform better and commit fewer errors in their tasks; (c) enhancing accuracy in HR planning: Effective training can equip workers to meet future demands, making it easier to fill vacancies internally when they arise; (d) boosting work morale: Training programs foster an improved organizational climate and atmosphere, thereby enhancing overall morale among employees; and (e) supporting personal growth: Appropriate training programs benefit both the institution and its workforce. For employees, participation in such programs enhances their personality, intellect, and skill set.

Access to education and training (DIKLAT) facilitated by the leadership of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon for campus employees is evidenced by the following interview results: *"My hope is for employee placements to align with their competencies and for career development to proceed according to regulations. Employees lacking knowledge for their positions should undergo gradual training and obtain certification, especially for levels 4 and 3. Training for level 4 usually takes place in Bandung, while for level 3, it's in Jakarta. Currently, career training lasts for three months, with one month on campus and two months at the workplace. During training, a change project must be implemented, as I did by designing IT-based academic services to address departmental challenges. Although the project was previously initiated, it still faces obstacles."* (Interview on October 28, 2019).

Improving the Qualification System.

Another suggestion offered is to improve the qualification system for prospective officials before the leadership decides to place them in the required positions. This is because the qualification system is crucial to ensure that the leadership's decisions are accurate according to the needs. This aligns with Jeddawi's statement (2010: 71) that the appropriate placement of employees means there is a match between the employees' competencies and the position, which indicates their tasks, responsibilities, authority, and rights within the state organizational unit (Jeddawi, 2010: 71). The positions referred to are career positions in the bureaucratic organizational structure that can only be held by employees who meet the qualifications. The reality to date is that the placement of civil servants in bureaucratic structural positions, although carried out according to normative procedures designed as ideally as possible, has not been fully able to meet the expectation of the availability of officials who can move the bureaucracy out of the negative stigma zone.

In line with this, in one of his writings, Cornelis Lay said: "normatively, the Indonesian bureaucracy is designed according to the merit system model, assuming that the bureaucracy appointment process is carried out according to professional and non-political standards. However, in practice, the criteria for appointing bureaucrats, especially at the elite bureaucracy level, are closer to patronage practices (patrimonialism) and heavily influenced by political considerations." (Lay, 2003: 59). Therefore, the idea offered by an educational practitioner is as follows: *"The system needs to be improved so that colleagues at the employee level can have smooth careers without hindrance in their progress. Development tailored to their skills is necessary to facilitate them"* (Interview on October 28, 2019).

The process in the qualification system should avoid discrepancies between the abilities or competencies possessed by prospective officials and the position. Thus, it can avoid chaos due to inaccuracies in the qualification system.

"I once declined an offer for a position in the financial planning department due to my awareness that my competencies did not align with the tasks there. My educational background, including my master's degree, does not focus on finance. Therefore, I felt it would be better if the position were filled by someone with relevant expertise. Furthermore, I emphasize the importance of top management carefully considering suggestions and feedback, although the final decision rests with the rector's prerogative" (Interview on October 28, 2019).

Improvements to the qualification process will also impact the suitability between prospective officials and the positions they are required to fill. In other words, someone who will occupy the position truly matches their educational background, experience background, and matches their abilities and field. If someone is placed not in their field, then the department or faculty may experience destruction. This is as per the interview results with a department head: "*Put people in their respective fields. Otherwise, there will be chaos.*" (October 30, 2019).

D. CONCLUSION

This study reveals the following key points: (1) Appointment Process: There is a notable difference in how officials are appointed at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon between Rector S's initial and subsequent leadership periods. Initially, appointments were based on input from Baperjakat, established by the Rector's Decree No. 73/In.14/R/Kp.07.6/03/2015. However, in later periods, the Rector relied more on the Committee Selection Decree. Despite the absence of the Baperjakat Appointment Decree, the Rector still sought advice from WR 2, department heads, and the postgraduate director, albeit through leadership meetings rather than Baperjakat; (2) Staffing Background: the psychology of authority among university leaders significantly influences staffing at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. Top leaders' authority leads to negative trends in appointments, including those not based on qualifications, competency, or career experience, violations of laws, lack of vigilance, minimal appreciation for past performance, and potential nepotism; and (3) Addressing Issues: to tackle problems stemming from political tendencies in appointments, management should adopt strategies to improve human resource performance. These strategies include implementing bottom-up policies, controlling top leadership's power over non-supportive policies, conducting needs assessments, providing additional managerial education and training, and enhancing the qualification system.

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