

## Assessing Policy Implementation: A Study of the Balikpapan Mayor Regulation No. 16/2015 on Civil Servant Work Area Transfers

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the implementation of Balikpapan Mayor Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the transfer of civil servant work areas and its implications for organizational effectiveness and apparatus performance as part of efforts to organize human resources for civil servants at the regional level. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis through data collection in the form of in-depth interviews, observations, and reviews of policy documents and related personnel documents. The results of the study indicate that normatively the regulation has provided quite clear guidelines regarding the procedures and mechanisms for transferring ASN work areas, however, in practice its implementation is still faced with various administrative and institutional challenges, such as limited institutional capacity, bureaucratic complexity, and suboptimal coordination between work units. The process of transferring work areas also requires employees to adapt to the new work environment which in the initial stages has the potential to affect the stability of individual and organizational performance. Nevertheless, in the long term, the policy of transferring work areas has positive implications, especially in the distribution of workloads, adjusting competencies to organizational needs, and increasing the effectiveness of work unit performance. The success of this policy is highly dependent on institutional support, clarity of assignments, and post-transfer development mechanisms, so that policy implementation is not only determined by regulatory clarity, but also by organizational capacity and the quality of sustainable administrative governance.

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### INTRODUCTION

Public policy implementation is a crucial stage in the policy process because it determines the extent to which established regulations can be translated into concrete actions and produce the desired impact. In the context of public administration, effective policy implementation is a crucial prerequisite for ensuring organizational efficiency, fairness, and accountability in government administration (Choi & Chun, 2021; Mamokhere et al., 2022; Waza & Ekambaker P.K, 2024). Policies governing the management of the state civil service, including the placement and transfer of civil servants, are highly significant because they directly impact bureaucratic performance, the quality of public services, and the level of public trust in the government. When personnel policies are not optimally implemented, various administrative problems can arise, such as workload imbalances, decreased employee motivation, and disruptions to institutional functions.

Civil servant transfers are a strategic instrument in public sector human resource management. This policy is designed to align employee competencies with organizational needs, address imbalances in employee distribution, prevent career stagnation, and support the professional development of civil servants (Lestari et al., 2021; Aslami et al., 2023; Mihaila, 2024). However, transfer policies are also sensitive because they involve individual interests, employee rights, and organizational dynamics. A transfer process that is not managed transparently and objectively has the potential to generate resistance, reduce morale, and negatively impact civil servant productivity. Therefore, employee transfer policies require a clear regulatory framework as well as consistent and fair implementation (Dalal, 2025; Diana Ussher-Eke, 2025; Etinosa Igbinenikaro & Adefolake Olachi Adewusi, 2024).

The implementation of decentralization in Indonesia has brought significant changes to the governance of civil servant management (Hidayat et al., 2025; Hutahaeen & Pasaribu, 2022; Setiawan et al., 2022). Regional governments are granted broader authority to manage civil servants according to local needs and characteristics, while still adhering to national standards and principles. This change places regional regulations, including mayoral regulations, as a crucial instrument in implementing personnel policies. Regional governments are required to balance administrative discretion with regulatory compliance, ensuring that implemented policies support government effectiveness and avoid creating new problems within the bureaucracy (Bertelli & Falletti, 2025; Saputra et al., 2023). In this context, the implementation of civil servant transfer policies serves as a crucial indicator in assessing the administrative capacity and quality of regional governance.

Balikpapan City, one of the main urban centers in East Kalimantan, provides a relevant context for examining policy implementation in the area of civil service management. As a continuously developing city with increasingly complex public service demands, Balikpapan relies heavily on the performance and effective distribution of civil servants (Grace Natalia Marpaung et al., 2025; Ulimaz et al., 2025; Wardiyanto et al., 2025). The arrangement of civil servant work areas is a key factor in maintaining service quality, effective coordination between regional agencies, and the responsiveness of government organizations. Therefore, the Balikpapan City Government established Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the Transfer of Civil Servant Work Areas as the legal basis for systematically and purposefully regulating civil servant mobility (Graaf et al., 2021; Ritz & Weißmüller, 2025; Wang & Ma, 2022).

This regulation is intended to provide clear procedures, criteria, and division of authority for implementing civil servant transfers within the Balikpapan City Government (Arifin, 2024; Fadlan et al., 2023; Nasir, 2021; Putra & Suwadi, 2024). Normatively, this regulation reflects the local government's efforts to implement principles of good public administration, such as transparency, objectivity, and professionalism in civil servant management. However, the existence of formal regulations does not automatically guarantee the achievement of policy objectives. The success of a policy is largely determined by how the regulations are understood, implemented, and monitored by the implementing actors in the bureaucratic system (Herd et al., 2023; Hinterleitner et al., 2024; Knill et al., 2024).

An evaluation of the implementation of Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation No. 16 of 2015 is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of how the policy is implemented in practice within the regional bureaucracy. Although this regulation formally establishes procedures and criteria for civil servant transfers, its effectiveness depends heavily on how these provisions are interpreted and applied by implementing actors (Braams et al., 2024; RICH, 2023). Evaluations focused on implementation allow researchers to go beyond normative assumptions and examine the realities of administrative practice, thus determining whether the policy is functioning as intended or encountering obstacles that limit its impact.

Through implementation analysis, researchers can assess the extent to which the procedures stipulated in the regulation have been consistently implemented across organizational units (Dunbar et al., 2023; Iranmanesh et al., 2021; Mökander & Floridi, 2023). This includes reviewing compliance with transfer criteria, the timeliness of administrative processes, and the completeness and clarity of documentation used. Such analysis is crucial for identifying gaps between formal procedures and implementation, which may reflect limited institutional capacity, weak coordination, or a lack of oversight mechanisms within the city government administration (Boufounou et al., 2024).

Evaluation of policy implementation provides insight into the decision-making process for civil servant transfers (J. Sánchez Elvira & Bruno-Faria, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2023). Decision-making processes involving multiple actors and levels of authority can potentially open up space for administrative discretion and informal practices. By examining how decisions are made, who is involved, and the extent to which the principles of transparency and accountability are applied, implementation evaluation can explain whether the policy promotes administrative justice and

equal treatment for officials or actually creates perceptions of injustice (Davidovitz & Cohen, 2023; House-Niamke & Eckerd, 2021; Stivers et al., 2023).

This research begins with a study of policy implementation and public sector human resource management. The implementation perspective emphasizes that policies are not implemented in a vacuum but are influenced by implementing actors, organizational structures, communication mechanisms, and institutional and political contexts (Giest & Klievink, 2024; Shawoo et al., 2023; Spanuth & Urbano, 2024). Using this framework, research on civil servant relocation can provide a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the success or failure of policies at the local level.

Some studies such as Kusmiati et al., (2021) who also discussed the pensions of civil servants in Bandung Regency, made a suggestion that civil servants who have reached retirement age should be given more priority through the Retirement Fund.. Meanwhile in Rahman et al., (2024) seeing that there are still civil servants who do not have adequate qualities so they can be transferred to several services or regions to suit their capabilities.

Based on the background and previous literature, this study aims to assess the implementation of Balikpapan Mayor Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the Transfer of Civil Servant Work Areas by examining the policy implementation process and the factors that influence its effectiveness. By placing policy implementation as the focus of analysis, this study is expected to provide empirical contributions to public administration studies and provide practical recommendations for improving the governance of apparatus management at the local government level.

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis to deeply understand the implementation of Balikpapan Mayor Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the transfer of civil servants' work areas (Villamin et al., 2025). A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the policy process, institutional dynamics, and the experiences and perceptions of actors involved in the implementation of the policy. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants consisting of local government officials and civil servants affected by the policy, accompanied by observations of administrative practices and analysis of related policy and regulatory documents. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively by organizing, categorizing, and interpreting the findings based on themes relevant to the research focus. The analysis process was carried out iteratively to ensure consistency and depth of interpretation, so that the research results can comprehensively describe how the policy is implemented and the factors that influence its effectiveness in the context of local government (Lilly et al., 2023).

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results section of this study begins with a presentation of empirical findings related to the implementation of the policy on relocation of civil servants' work areas, as stipulated in Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation Number 16 of 2015. These findings provide an overview of how the policy is implemented in regional bureaucratic practice, including the administrative procedures followed, implementation stages, and coordination mechanisms between work units (Budinarsih et al., 2022; Njuguna et al., 2023). This introduction is important to place the research findings within the context of the applicable policy, so that readers can understand the relationship between normative provisions in the regulation and the reality of implementation on the ground.

The research findings detail the implementation mechanisms used by the regional government in managing the relocation process for civil servants. These mechanisms encompass planning, organizational needs assessment, and decision-making, involving various bureaucratic actors. These findings demonstrate that policy implementation does not proceed linearly but is influenced by internal organizational dynamics, the level of discretion of the apparatus, and communication patterns that develop within the regional government structure. Thus, the

implementation mechanisms reflect the administrative governance capacity of the city government (Haque et al., 2021; Noring et al., 2021, 2021).

In addition to the implementation mechanisms, the research findings also highlight the institutional capacity and administrative challenges faced in implementing the relocation policy. The findings in this section demonstrate how the availability of human resources, staff competency, and administrative support systems influence policy effectiveness. On the other hand, various challenges such as limited coordination, high administrative burdens, and inconsistent understanding of regulations contribute to varying implementation patterns across work units (Ajakaye & Lawal, 2020; Olakojo, 2025). This situation demonstrates that institutional capacity is a key factor in determining policy success.

The research findings also link the implementation of the work area transfer policy with its implications for organizational effectiveness and civil servant performance. Empirical findings indicate that work area transfer can have positive impacts in the form of equitable distribution of staff resources and improved organizational performance, but it also has the potential to pose adaptation challenges for transferred employees. These impacts are highly dependent on the alignment between employee placement and organizational needs, as well as the extent of institutional support provided during the transition process (Chowdhury et al., 2024; Donald et al., 2022; Hanelt et al., 2021). Thus, the work area transfer policy is not merely administrative but also has strategic consequences for civil servant human resource management.

The introduction to this research confirms the link between implementation mechanisms, institutional capacity, and policy implications for organizational and employee performance. The findings presented in the following section not only explain how the work area transfer policy is implemented but also reveal the factors influencing its success and the resulting impact (Mitropoulos et al., 2021; Zarrouk et al., 2021). With this approach, the research results are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of personnel policies at the regional level and become the basis for formulating more effective and equitable policy recommendations.

### **Implementation Mechanisms of Civil Servant Work Area Transfers under Balikpapan Mayor Regulation No. 16/2015**

The implementation mechanism for civil servant work area transfers based on Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation Number 16 of 2015 provides an initial overview of how the policy's provisions are translated into administrative practice within the local government. This section focuses on the stages of policy implementation, from organizational needs planning, through the proposal and assessment process, to the decision-making process for employee transfers. By examining the mechanisms in place, this study attempts to demonstrate the extent to which formal procedures in the regulation are consistently and systematically implemented by implementing officials (Dyreborg et al., 2022; Haggerty & Bucerius, 2021; Siegel et al., 2024).

This introduction positions the implementation mechanism as a space for interaction between formal rules and bureaucratic practices that develop in the field. The research findings indicate that the work area transfer process is influenced not only by normative provisions in the mayoral regulation, but also by contextual factors such as coordination patterns between work units, the level of discretion of authorized officials, and the dynamics of organizational needs (Došek & Eaton, 2025; Hanhörster & Toppel, 2024). Therefore, the implementation mechanism reflects the administrative capacity and flexibility of the bureaucracy in responding to personnel policy demands.

Analyzing the implementation mechanism is crucial for a more comprehensive understanding of the performance of the civil servant work area transfer policy. By presenting the research results in this section, it is hoped that readers can gain a complete understanding of how the policy is implemented, the challenges faced in the implementation process, and the initial implications for the management of human resources of the apparatus in the Balikpapan City Government.



Figure 1. Implementation Mechanism for the Transfer of Civil Servant Work Areas Based on Balikpapan Mayor Regulation No. 16/2015 in the form of a flow diagram

Figure 1 illustrates the implementation mechanism for the civil servant transfer policy, based on Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation Number 16 of 2015, as a multi-stage and interconnected administrative process. The process begins with identifying organizational needs, which serves as the initial foundation for determining the urgency and rationality of employee transfers. This stage reflects the regional government's efforts to align human resource allocation with the organization's real needs, ensuring that transfer policies are not implemented ad hoc but are based on institutional considerations.

The next stage is the proposal for civil servant transfers, typically conducted by work units or regional government officials. This proposal process demonstrates a bottom-up mechanism in policy implementation, where organizational-level needs form the basis for subsequent administrative processes. At this stage, considerations of performance, length of service, and public service needs often influence the proposed transfer (Agostino et al., 2021; Ferlie & Ongaro, 2022; Kravariti et al., 2023).

After the proposal is submitted, the transfer file enters the administrative review stage by the Regional Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency. This stage serves as a control mechanism to ensure that the transfer proposal complies with regulatory provisions, administrative requirements, and procedures stipulated in the mayoral regulation. Administrative review is important to maintain consistency in policy implementation and prevent deviations in the employee transfer process (Al-Hashimi et al., 2022; Bashir et al., 2023; Demircioglu, 2021).

The competency and job suitability assessment stage is a crucial part of the implementation mechanism for the work area transfer policy. At this stage, the employee's competency, educational background, work experience, and technical abilities are more thoroughly considered to ensure the fit between the transferred employee and the new position or work area. This stage reflects the local government's efforts to implement the merit principle in the management of civil servants.

Based on the assessment results, the transfer decision is made by the authorized official. This decision-making marks a shift from a technocratic process to an authoritative one in policy implementation. The decisions made not only have administrative consequences but also strategic implications for the organization's performance and the employee's career, thus demanding accountability and careful consideration.

The next stage is the issuance of the transfer decision letter and the implementation of the employee's placement in the new work area. In this phase, the policy, previously at the planning and decision-making level, begins to be concretely realized in bureaucratic practice (Nani et al., 2025). This implementation process often involves employee adaptation to the new work environment and organizational adjustments to accepting the transferred employee.

The final stage in the flowchart is monitoring and evaluation, which serves to assess the impact and effectiveness of the work area relocation policy. Through monitoring and evaluation activities, local governments can identify various obstacles that arise during the implementation process and assess the extent to which employee relocation contributes to improving organizational effectiveness and apparatus performance. This stage demonstrates the cyclical and sustainable nature of policy implementation, opening up opportunities for future policy improvements.

## Institutional Capacity and Administrative Challenges in Implementing Civil Servant Transfer Policies

The research findings in this sub-topic focus on the institutional capacity and administrative challenges faced in implementing the civil servant relocation policy. This introduction aims to provide an initial overview of the institutional conditions that support policy implementation, including organizational structure, allocation of authority, and the availability of resources to support the employee relocation process. By understanding existing institutional capacity, this research findings position policy implementation not merely as a procedural matter, but as a reflection of the local government organization's ability to effectively carry out its personnel management function.

This research highlights how administrative challenges arise as a consequence of these limited institutional capacity. The research findings indicate that the relocation process often faces coordination issues between work units, high administrative burdens, and differences in staff understanding of policy provisions. These challenges impact the smooth implementation process and potentially lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation at the organizational level. Therefore, analyzing administrative challenges is crucial to identifying structural and operational inhibiting factors (Gamidullaeva & Agamagomedova, 2023; Ghadge et al., 2021; Hasan et al., 2024).

Institutional capacity and administrative challenges are interrelated aspects in determining the success of the civil servant relocation policy. Through the presentation of research results in this section, it is hoped that readers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how institutional limitations and strengths influence the policy implementation process, as well as how emerging administrative challenges can become the basis for efforts to improve personnel governance within the Balikpapan City Government (Dharma Mulyawati et al., 2024; Handritha et al., 2025).



Figure 2. The Relationship Between Institutional Capacity and Administrative Challenges

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between institutional capacity and administrative challenges in implementing the civil servant transfer policy. This diagram positions institutional capacity as the primary foundation determining how policies can be implemented effectively at the local government level. Institutional capacity encompasses the quality of human resources within the civil service, a clear organizational structure, and the distribution of authority that supports the decision-making process. Without adequate institutional capacity, policy implementation tends to be suboptimal and vulnerable to various administrative obstacles.

In addition to institutional capacity, the diagram also highlights the role of administrative resources, including work procedures, budget support, and personnel information systems. These administrative resources serve as a crucial bridge between normative policies and practical implementation on the ground. When procedures are unclear, budgets are limited, or information systems are not well integrated, the employee transfer process can potentially experience delays and inefficiencies. Therefore, the existence of adequate administrative resources is a prerequisite for consistent and accountable policy implementation (Kitsios et al., 2023; Lourenço, 2023).

This conceptual also positions inter-agency coordination as a key element linking institutional capacity and administrative resources to implementation challenges. Effective coordination allows for the exchange of information, alignment of interests, and clear division of

roles between work units involved in the employee transfer process. Conversely, weak coordination can increase the potential for overlapping authority and miscommunication, ultimately complicating the policy administration process.

The administrative challenges in the diagram are depicted as a consequence of the interaction between institutional capacity, administrative resources, and the quality of coordination. These challenges can include bureaucratic complexity, high staff workloads, and complicated and time-consuming procedures (Dwi Wahyuni & Eko Prasoj, 2025; Goiana-da-Silva et al., 2025; Sunarto & Mustofa, 2025). In the context of implementing a policy on relocation of work areas, administrative challenges are often the most obvious inhibiting factor felt by both implementing officials and employees targeted by the policy.

The diagram shows that administrative challenges have a direct impact on the quality of policy implementation. The quality of implementation reflects the extent to which a policy is implemented in accordance with applicable regulations, in a timely manner, and oriented towards organizational goals. When administrative challenges are not managed properly, the quality of implementation tends to decline, characterized by procedural inconsistencies, delays in decision-making, and reduced transparency in the employee relocation process (Ibrahim & Hassanain, 2022; Khahro et al., 2023).

The low quality of policy implementation ultimately impacts the effectiveness of the policy on relocation of civil servants. Policy effectiveness is measured not only by the administrative implementation of the relocation but also by its impact on organizational performance and the optimization of human resource allocation. This diagram emphasizes that the success of a relocation policy depends heavily on the institution's ability to systematically and sustainably manage administrative challenges (BASIT O. SANUSI, 2024; UI-Durar et al., 2023).

This conceptual diagram provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the dynamics of civil servant relocation policy implementation. This diagram helps explain that policy implementation is the result of a complex interaction between institutional capacity, administrative support, and the quality of inter-agency coordination. Therefore, policy improvement efforts cannot focus solely on regulatory aspects but must also be directed at strengthening institutions and simplifying administrative processes to achieve policy objectives more effectively.

### **Implications of Work Area Transfers for Organizational Effectiveness and Civil Servant Performance**

The implications of relocating civil servants' work areas for organizational effectiveness and apparatus performance are a direct consequence of policy implementation (Widarko & Anwarodin, 2022). This positioning of relocation of work areas is not merely an administrative process, but rather a strategic instrument in human resource management for civil servants. Through this policy, local governments strive to align organizational needs with employee competencies to improve public service performance and strengthen overall institutional capacity.

How relocation of work areas can impact organizational effectiveness in the short and long term. Organizational effectiveness is reflected in the ability of work units to achieve goals, carry out functions efficiently, and respond to public service demands (Sugiarti et al., 2021). The research findings in this section provide an overview of the extent to which employee relocation contributes to equitable workload distribution, improved internal coordination, and optimized utilization of employee competencies within the Balikpapan City Government.

In addition to the impact on the organization, these results also position civil servant performance as a critical aspect in assessing the success of the relocation policy. Employee relocation can bring opportunities for competency development, increased work experience, and broadened bureaucratic horizons, but it also has the potential to pose challenges in adapting to a new work environment. Therefore, civil servant performance is influenced not only by the relocation policy itself, but also by institutional support, clarity of duties, and the coaching mechanisms that accompany the relocation process (Farrell, 2024; Irawanto et al., 2023).

This confirms that analyzing the implications of relocation on organizational effectiveness and employee performance is an integral part of evaluating personnel policies. The research findings in this section are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the policy's concrete impact on organizational and civil servant dynamics, while also providing a basis for formulating human resource management strategies that are more adaptive, equitable, and oriented toward improving local government performance.

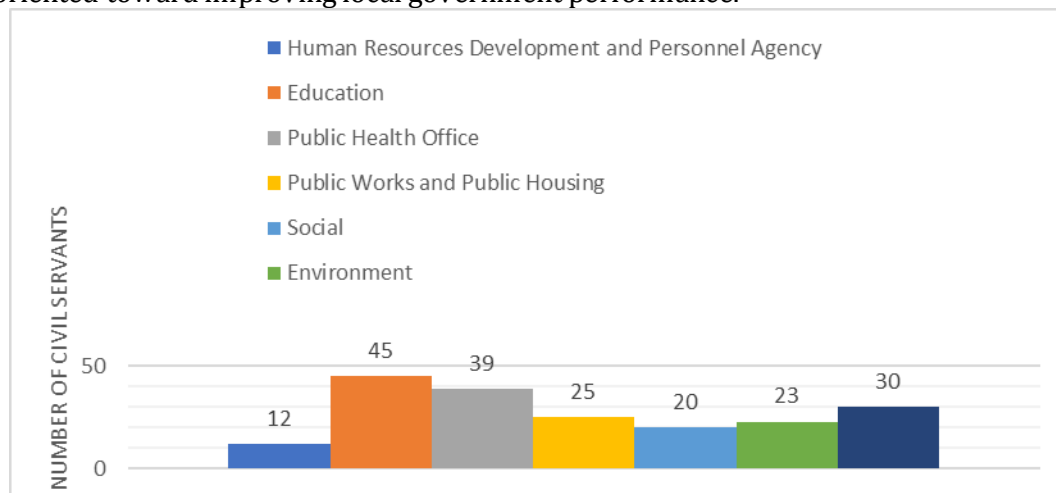


Figure 3. Distribution of the Number of ASN Who Experienced a Change of Work Area  
Source: Data Processed by the Author 2026

Figure 3 is a bar chart showing the distribution of civil servants who have experienced transfers of work areas, based on each agency in Bontang City. This chart provides a descriptive overview of the intensity of ASN transfers across various regional government agencies as part of the implementation of the civil service human resource management policy. The variation in the number of transfers between agencies indicates that the transfer policy is not implemented uniformly, but rather adapted to organizational needs and the dynamics of the workload within each agency.

The differences in the number of ASN transferred within each agency reflect their differing institutional characteristics and functions. Agencies with a broad scope of public service duties, such as the education and health agencies, tend to exhibit higher rates of ASN transfers than agencies with more specific functions (Thottadi & Singh, 2024; Zuhakim & Yogopriyatno, 2025). This indicates that the need for equitable distribution of civil servants and competency adjustments are key considerations in implementing transfers within these agencies.

This bar chart also reveals the role of technical and supporting agencies in the dynamics of ASN transfers. Agencies such as the Public Works and Public Housing (PUPR) and the Industry and Trade Cooperatives (Perindagkop) have shown a relatively significant number of transfers, which can be attributed to project demands, changes in work programs, and the need for specific technical expertise. This situation demonstrates that ASN transfers serve not only administrative purposes but also serve as a management tool to support the implementation of regional development programs.

Agencies with a lower number of transfers indicate a relatively higher level of staff stability. This stability may be influenced by a more established organizational structure, relatively constant workforce needs, or limited room for staff redistribution. However, a low number of transfers does not necessarily reflect organizational effectiveness; rather, it must be understood within the context of each agency's functions and workload (BANDURA, 2023; Ndimbo & Nkwabi, 2025).

The bar chart also provides an indication of the role of supporting regional agencies, such as the Civil Service Agency and the Regional Secretariat, in the ASN transfer process. The number of transfers recorded in these units reflects both internal rotation and strategic assignments related to coordinating and administrative functions. This confirms that the ASN transfer policy

impacts not only technical agencies but also units that play a role in managing the bureaucracy as a whole.

From a policy implementation perspective, this chart shows how the policy on work area transfers is translated operationally at the regional apparatus level (Arthur et al., 2023; Hossain, 2025)s. The distribution of transfers between agencies demonstrates that the regional government strives to adapt the policy to the specific needs of the organization, although this also potentially poses adaptation challenges for the transferred staff. Therefore, the figures in this diagram need to be understood as part of the dynamic process of apparatus restructuring, not merely as administrative results.

## DISCUSSION

This discussion positions the implementation of Balikpapan Mayoral Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the Transfer of Civil Servant Work Areas as a policy process that is not merely administrative in nature but also reflects the institutional dynamics, power relations, and bureaucratic practices that have developed at the regional government level. This regulation is essentially designed to create a more orderly, equitable, and organizationally focused human resource management system for civil servants. However, as demonstrated by research findings, the existence of formal regulations does not necessarily guarantee the achievement of policy objectives if they are not supported by institutional capacity and effective implementation mechanisms. This reinforces the view in policy implementation studies that the success of public policy is largely determined by the implementation stage, where policies are tested in complex social and organizational realities (Hill & Varone, 2021).

The implementation mechanism for transferring civil servant work areas identified in this study demonstrates a relatively systematic formal process, starting from identifying organizational needs, through the proposal process from work units, through administrative and competency assessments, and finally through the decision-making process by authorized officials. Normatively, this mechanism reflects the basic principles of good civil service governance, such as objectivity, accountability, and regulatory compliance. However, in practice, the policy implementation process does not always proceed linearly and uniformly across all regional apparatuses (Xiao et al., 2023). Official discretion, differing organizational interests, and the dynamics of public service needs influence how policies are translated and implemented in the field. This situation demonstrates that policy implementation is an arena of interaction between formal rules and contextual bureaucratic practices.

The findings of this study align with the perspective of policy implementation, which emphasizes that policies are never completely neutral or mechanical, but are always influenced by implementing actors and the organizational environment. The discretion of authorized officials, while necessary to respond to specific situations, has the potential to generate variation in policy implementation (Davidovitz et al., 2021). In the context of relocating civil servants, this discretion can have a positive impact if used to appropriately align employee placement with organizational needs. However, it also has the potential to create perceptions of unfairness if not accompanied by adequate transparency and communication. Therefore, the policy implementation mechanism cannot be separated from the issue of legitimacy and civil servant trust in the applicable civil service system.

In terms of institutional capacity, this study shows that the quality of policy implementation is significantly influenced by the availability of human resources, the competence of implementing officials, and the administrative support systems in place by local governments. Work units with officials who understand regulations well, supported by adequate personnel information systems, tend to be able to carry out the ASN transfer process in a more orderly and consistent manner (Otong Rosadi et al., 2024). Conversely, limited institutional capacity, whether in the form of a lack of human resources or a weak administrative system, is a major factor in the emergence of various problems in policy implementation. This situation emphasizes that personnel policies require strong institutional support for effective implementation.

The administrative challenges identified in this study, particularly those related to coordination between work units and procedural complexity, reflect a gap between policy design and bureaucratic reality (Jalonen, 2025; Røiseland & Vedeld, 2024). Suboptimal coordination often results in the ASN transfer process being lengthy and involving multiple procedures. As a result, transferred employees face uncertainty regarding the timing of their placement, their duties, and the implications for their careers. This situation not only impacts individual performance but also has the potential to disrupt the stability of the organization as a whole. These findings reinforce the argument in the public policy literature that coordination and communication are key factors in successful policy implementation.

In addition to coordination issues, differences in civil servants' understanding of the substance of the regulations also pose a significant challenge. This study found that not all civil servants share the same level of understanding regarding the objectives, principles, and procedures for ASN work area transfers. This difference in understanding contributes to variations in implementation practices at the work unit level, ultimately affecting policy consistency. This situation highlights the importance of ongoing socialization and coaching efforts as an integral part of policy implementation. Without systematic capacity building for civil servants, policies risk remaining merely normative documents that are not fully understood and internalized by implementers (Marienfeldt, 2024).

The implications of the work area transfer policy for organizational effectiveness and ASN performance are one of the central findings of this study. The results indicate that ASN transfers have the potential to have long-term positive impacts, particularly in terms of equalizing workloads and optimizing the utilization of civil servant competencies. Placing employees more aligned with organizational needs can improve work efficiency and support the achievement of work unit goals. However, these positive impacts do not appear instantly. In the initial stages of implementation, work area transfers often pose adaptation challenges for employees, both related to the new work environment, coordination patterns, and different task demands (Grasmo et al., 2021; van Zoonen et al., 2021).

The employee adaptation process after a transfer is a crucial factor influencing individual and organizational performance. Transferred employees need time to understand new tasks, build working relationships, and adjust to the organizational culture of the receiving work unit. If this adaptation process is not supported by adequate coaching and mentoring, employee performance can potentially decline in the short term. Therefore, the policy of transferring civil servants' work areas cannot be understood solely as an administrative process, but also as a change management process that requires a sensitive approach to the human aspects of bureaucracy.

The distribution of civil servants who experience transfers between regional government agencies, as shown in the bar chart, shows significant variation in the intensity of transfers. This variation reflects differences in organizational needs, task characteristics, and workload dynamics within each agency. Agencies with extensive public service functions and direct contact with the public tend to experience higher rates of civil servant transfers. This indicates that the policy of transferring work areas is used as an instrument to align staff capacity with evolving service demands. These findings confirm that civil servant transfer policies are contextual and must consider the specific circumstances of each organization.

The varying intensity of civil servant transfers between agencies also demonstrates that personnel policies cannot be applied uniformly without considering organizational characteristics. Overly uniform policy implementation has the potential to ignore specific work unit needs and create inefficiencies. Therefore, flexibility in policy implementation, while remaining within the regulatory framework, is crucial to ensure that policy objectives are optimally achieved. However, this flexibility needs to be balanced with oversight and accountability mechanisms to prevent deviations in implementation practices.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of Balikpapan Mayor Regulation Number 16 of 2015 concerning the transfer of civil servant work areas has provided a fairly clear regulatory framework in regulating the ASN mutation process, but the effectiveness of its implementation is greatly influenced by institutional capacity, the quality of coordination between work units, and available administrative support. The implementation mechanism has generally followed established formal procedures, but in practice it still faces various challenges such as bureaucratic complexity, differences in apparatus understanding of policies, and the need for employee adaptation after the transfer. Nevertheless, the policy of transferring work areas has the potential to improve organizational effectiveness and apparatus performance if supported by competency-based employee placement, more effective coordination, and ongoing coaching and evaluation mechanisms.

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