

Affirmative Policy on the Recruitment of Civil Service Candidates with Disabilities: A Review of the Six Elements of Social Policy and the Capability Approach

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Keywords:

Affirmation Policy, CASN
Acceptance, Persons with
Disabilities, Social Policy
Elements, Capability Approach

ABSTRACT

This study examines the affirmative policy for the recruitment of State Civil Apparatus Candidates (CASN) with disabilities in Tangerang City, Indonesia. The background of this research is the persistent employment inequality experienced by persons with disabilities despite the existence of national regulations mandating equal employment opportunities and disability quotas in government institutions. The study aims to analyze the design and implementation of the affirmative recruitment policy using Chambers and Bonk's six elements of social policy and the Sen–Nussbaum capability approach. This research employed a qualitative case study method focusing on CASN recruitment periods in 2019, 2021, and 2023. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with government officials, civil servants with disabilities, and disability community representatives, as well as observation and document analysis. The findings show that the policy has successfully provided formal employment access through special quotas, lower examination thresholds, and accessible recruitment services. However, several limitations remain, including inadequate policy socialization, limited workplace accommodation, inaccessible information systems, and the persistence of social stigma in the work environment. These conditions narrow several capabilities of employees with disabilities, particularly bodily integrity and affiliation. The study concludes that affirmative recruitment policy should not only focus on quota fulfilment but also ensure inclusive workplace systems that expand the substantive freedom, dignity, and capabilities of persons with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

Employment opportunities for people with disabilities show significant gaps at the global and national levels. The Disability Employment Gap (DEG) in 19 European countries ranges from 10-42% (van der Zwan & de Beer, 2021), while in Indonesia, 78.35% of people with disabilities aged 15 years and older are unemployed (Central Statistics Agency, 2023). This gap is not caused by individual limitations, but rather by discrimination and structural barriers, which are institutional, social, and personal, including prejudice from employers, lack of accessible infrastructure, and systemic social stigma (Aroonsrimorakot et al., 2020; Barnes & Mercer, 2010; Wasserman & Aas, 2023)

In response to this, the Government of Indonesia, through Law No. 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities, mandates the obligation to employ persons with disabilities at least 2% of the total number of employees in government agencies and SOEs/BUMDs (Malik et al., 2021; Nurhayati, 2020; Pertiwi et al., 2020). This policy is a form of affirmative action that aims to expand access to formal employment and ultimately is expected to increase the capabilities (substitutive freedom) of persons with disabilities to participate in development and live economically independent (Fitria, 2024; PRAKASA Association, 2022).

The City of Tangerang has shown high compliance with this regulation, in every recruitment activity for State Civil Apparatus Candidates (CASN), the Tangerang City government has provided special formations for disabilities. However, based on preliminary research conducted by researchers, data shows that the 2% quota provided is often not met due to the lack of applicants (Górny & Napierała, 2016; Shaughnessy et al., 2016). In 2019, only 1 person was successfully accepted out of the 6 disability formations provided (16.7% of the quota); In 2021, there were 2 people with disabilities accepted from the 3 formations provided (67%); And in 2023, only 1 person with a disability applied and was accepted out of the 49 formations provided (2%). The contradiction between administrative compliance (provision of quotas in accordance with regulations) and implementation in the field (lack of applicants and low quota fulfillment) indicates that the policy is not sufficiently understood only as a matter of quota availability but also other obstacles that may occur after admission (De Silva et al., 2021; Olaniyan, 2025; Omeje et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti et al. (2022) in the BRIN Policy Paper identified four structural obstacles that have the potential to narrow the capabilities of post-placement workers with disabilities: (1) inadequacy of proper work facilities due to the assumption that the cost of workplace adjustment is too high; (2) stigma on productivity that prevents workers with disabilities from being given access to self-development; (3) the assumption that employees with disabilities will not last long, thus hindering long-term career planning; and (4) negative attitudes of colleagues that threaten social relations.

In the capability approach, these barriers show that negative conversion factors, both environmental (lack of work facilities) and social (negative stigma), can narrow central capabilities such as bodily integrity (body/health integrity), affiliation (social connectedness), sense, imagination, and thought (senses, imagination, and thought), practical reason (ability to plan one's own life), and control over one's environment (participating in decisions that are made by one's own people). affect work life) (Nussbaum, 2001).

Studies on policies for people with disabilities related to employment, especially in CASN admission, have also been carried out in several previous studies. The results of the study show that the implementation of policies in various local governments still faces challenges in the form of limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and unclear derivative rules (Rohmah et al., 2023; Sadri & Muchtar, 2021), formation quotas are still small, there is less socialization (Aji, 2021), and unequal access to jobs for people with disabilities (Annur et al., 2023).

Based on these previous studies, the research gap lies in the limited analysis of how quota-based affirmative policy affects the actual capabilities and quality of life of persons with disabilities after they become civil servants. Most earlier studies emphasize administrative

implementation, quota fulfillment, policy compliance, or general employment barriers. Few studies connect the design of social policy with the lived experiences of civil servants with disabilities, particularly in relation to whether employment status truly expands their substantive freedom, dignity, participation, and control over their work environment. Therefore, this research seeks to fill that gap by combining the six elements of social policy proposed by Chambers and Bonk with the capability approach developed by Sen and Nussbaum (Alexander, 2016; Assaduzzaman, 2023; Biswas, 2025).

The urgency of this research is strengthened by the fact that affirmative policy may become symbolic if it only provides formal access without ensuring adequate conversion factors. In the capability approach, employment, salary, and facilities are only means; they do not automatically become real freedom unless supported by personal, social, and environmental conditions. For persons with disabilities, these conversion factors include accessible infrastructure, inclusive workplace culture, reasonable accommodation, supportive leadership, clear complaint mechanisms, and opportunities for career development. Without these supports, civil servants with disabilities may obtain employment status but still experience narrowed capabilities, such as reduced bodily integrity, limited affiliation, weak participation, and restricted ability to plan their own professional lives.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrated analytical framework. Chambers and Bonk's six elements of social policy are used to examine the design of the CASN affirmative policy, including goals and objectives, benefits and services, eligibility rules, administration and service delivery, financing, and interaction among policy elements. These elements are then evaluated through the critical values of adequacy, equity, and efficiency. Furthermore, the Sen–Nussbaum capability approach is used to analyze how policy implementation influences the real opportunities of civil servants with disabilities. This combination enables the research to move beyond administrative assessment and reveal whether quota-based affirmative policy genuinely expands the substantive freedom of persons with disabilities.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze the design and implementation of the affirmative policy for the recruitment of State Civil Apparatus Candidates with disabilities in Tangerang City using the Chambers–Bonk social policy framework and the capability approach. The purpose of this study is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the policy, evaluate its adequacy, equity, and efficiency, and examine the conversion factors experienced by civil servants with disabilities after recruitment. The study contributes theoretically by enriching the analysis of affirmative policy through the integration of social policy elements and capability theory. Practically, it provides recommendations for local governments, the central government, disability organizations, and the social work profession to improve CASN recruitment policies so that they do not merely fulfill quotas, but also create inclusive, dignified, and capability-enhancing employment for persons with disabilities.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study type. Case studies are a type of research that investigates specific cases to answer specific research questions (Gillham, 2000). In this study, the "cases" studied are the policy design, implementation process, and its impact on the capabilities of persons with disabilities in the context of the policy of accepting State Civil Apparatus Candidates (CASN) for persons with disabilities in the Tangerang City

Government for the 2019, 2021 and 2023 Fiscal Years. In 2020 and 2022, they were excluded from the focus of the research, because in that year the City of Tangerang did not recruit CASN

This year was chosen because it was the year that the Tangerang City Government held CASN recruitment in the last five years. Data was collected through triangulation of sources and methods, namely in-depth interviews with relevant sources, namely three personnel management officials at BKPSDM as policy implementers, two civil servants with disabilities as beneficiaries, and two members of the disability community in Tangerang City. In addition, the research method was also carried out by observing the work environment in the Tangerang City Government, and a documentation study that included regulations from the central government and regional archives related to the implementation of the selection. The technique used to analyze the data in this study is qualitative analysis. This technique has 3 (three) stages, namely data collection and reduction, data presentation and the last stage, namely drawing conclusions and verifying (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rita Fiantika et al., 2022).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Policy Design Analysis

The CASN admission policy for people with disabilities in the Tangerang City Government is designed to refer to the Ministerial Regulation of PAN RB No. 23/2019, No. 27/2021, and No.14/2023 based on legal obligations regulated in the Ministerial Regulation of PAN RB No. 23/2019, No. 27/2021, and No.14/2023 with the ultimate goal of realizing equality of employment rights in accordance with Law No. 8/2016 through the provision of a minimum quota of 2% of special disability formations. This quota functions as a measurable performance standard, but its realization has not been consistent due to the low number of applicants. In terms of adequacy, the socialization of this policy is still considered weak and has not directly targeted potential beneficiaries. In terms of equity, not all people with disabilities have the same access and support to apply.

The Form of Benefit and Services of this policy is an affirmative action of a 2% quota accompanied by a lower exam threshold score and accessible space for all applicants for disability-specific formations as well as additional exam time for the blind. Meanwhile, after graduating as a CASN, people with disabilities will get the same rights to salaries and benefits. In equity, this policy reflects vertical equality through different treatment as needed during selection, but post-placement implementation, the work facilities provided are not adequate to meet the needs of all advanced types of disabilities. When viewed in terms of efficiency, the placement of people with disabilities in administrative work is considered efficient because it does not require large investment for modification of field work.

Eligibility Rules are set in accordance with the Ministerial Regulation of PANRB, including the general requirements of CASN and disability certificates. In 2019, the committee verified the condition of applicants by asking applicants to come to the BKPSDM office. In 2021 and 2023, applicants with disabilities are required to upload videos of daily activities as a way for the committee to verify. BKPSDM as the committee revealed that they limit the type of disability that is "not disturbed in daily activities" so that they can easily adjust to the working conditions in the Tangerang City Government. However, when viewed from the equity side, this has the potential to cause indirect discrimination because it benefits people with disabilities more than sensory ones. When viewed from an efficiency perspective,

verification in the form of videos is more cost-effective and time-efficient than direct verification, but the adequacy of the eligibility rules remains low because the 2% quota is not met.

In terms of administration and service delivery, the policy combines the design of centralization (rules and registration systems and exams provided by the central government) and federation (verification of applicant files and services at the exam location provided by the Tangerang City Panselda). The services during the exam were adequate and professional (high adequacy), but the absence of policy socialization to the disability community and text-only information without an accessible format for the blind reduced equity. The absence of SOPs for handling ASN with disabilities after placement makes the sustainability of services highly dependent on the initiative of each OPD occupied.

Financing of this policy uses a cost-sharing scheme: the central government finances the selection infrastructure (registration system, exam system, exam facilities for the blind), while the Tangerang City government bears the cost of administrative selection and the provision of post-inauguration work facilities through the APBD without a special budget post for disability formations. This scheme is considered efficient at the selection stage, but results in inadequacy for important needs such as the cost of policy socialization and the provision of sustainable work facilities after admission. This also has the potential to cause inequity because the needs of employees with disabilities are equated with non-disabled employees.

Overall, the interaction between elements shows that the central mandate encourages local governments, including Tangerang City, to open formal access to jobs for people with disabilities. The existence of special formations and quotas has increased equity at the initial selection stage, but the absence of derivative policies on placement, SOPs for handling employees with disabilities, and sustainable accommodation for various types of disabilities creates a contrary effect at the post-placement stage. There is a strong trade-off between cost efficiency and adequacy and equity, making implementation more focused on fulfilling administrative quotas rather than transforming an inclusive staffing system.

2. Capability Analysis

Within the framework of the capability approach, the quota policy is just an instrument; The ultimate goal is to expand the individual's capabilities to become or do something worthwhile. A person's ability to convert resources into capabilities is influenced by conversion factors that are classified into three types: personal, social, and environmental.

a. Personal Conversion Factors

This factor refers to a person's personal characteristics. The results of the study show that all people with disabilities who are accepted as CASN of Tangerang City through this policy are homeless with a mild degree. The BKPSDM argues that the lack of applicants is due to a lack of confidence and educational qualifications that may not be suitable. However, informants from the hearing disability community revealed that they were less interested, one of which was because there was no sign language interpreter (JBI) facility in the workplace which made it difficult for them to socialize at work. This condition illustrates that the type of disability that requires higher accommodation faces a greater conversion factor. However, due to the absence of a form of benefit in the form of sustainable work facilities for them, it has led to a narrowing of the ability of practical reason (the ability to plan their own lives) at work.

b. Social Conversion Factors

Social conversion factors include the attitude and treatment received by ASN with disabilities in the work environment. In the selection process, all ASN informants with disabilities stated that the Tangerang City Panselda provided inclusive treatment by prioritizing their queue when entering the test room. Administration and Service Delivery in the form of professional treatment from the Tangerang City Panselda expands the capabilities of bodily integrity because participants with disabilities can access the exam room comfortably without the risk of fatigue due to long queues if they are treated the same as other test takers.

But after placement, there was a difference in experience. Actually, all ASN informants with disabilities feel positive support from their colleagues and superiors. One of the informants said, "My ideas are accommodated. What I feel is that if I have an idea, my participation as a disability is channeled." This condition expands the capabilities of practical reason and control over the environment because it can influence decisions in their work units. However, he also received a negative stigma from some of his colleagues because he rarely participated in Monday's apple because his body condition was not possible. One of the superiors also gave a negative stigma, "'I was stigmatized by my superiors... 'How did you get into the NHL?' How much do you come in here?'" This stigma narrows affiliation capabilities because it undermines the foundation of self-esteem and leads to a sense of alienation in the work environment.

In addition, the existence of a form of benefit in the form of ASN status with salaries and allowances provided has also affected the social attitude of the family to one of the ASN informants with disabilities. As the head of the family, he used to be underestimated by his in-laws because of his minimal salary. However, after becoming an ASN with a fixed salary, the family's attitude changed for the better. This expands the capabilities of affiliation with increased self-esteem in front of the family.

c. Environmental Conversion Factors

Environmental conversion factors include support systems and infrastructure in the workplace. Judging from the elements of Administration and Service Delivery related to policy socialization, policy announcements are only made through a website without a digital sound feature, making it difficult for blind people to access. This narrows the sense, imagination, and thought capabilities for blind people who have difficulty accessing the website view independently. Socialization is also not carried out specifically to the disability community. This practice is systemic discrimination that inadvertently restricts their freedom to access information.

In the form of benefits element in the form of providing work infrastructure, all ASN informants with disabilities stated that the Tangerang City Government has provided basic facilities such as elevators and ramps, however, the available toilets are still inadequate for wheelchair users. The informants of ASN with disabilities, who incidentally are homeless with a degree of mild disability, also revealed that work facilities in the Tangerang City Government are still very minimal for various types of advanced disabilities.

In terms of job placement, one of the informants of ASN with disabilities who used prosthetic legs stated that the placement of the position was not in accordance with the promised form of benefit. Even though his position is in the field of administration, some of his work still has to go to the field. To survive, he had to make painful physical efforts such as

plastering his legs while working on the field. This has an impact on his physical health which begins to experience significant disturbances. The absence of SOPs for handling ASN with disabilities and a special complaint mechanism has become an inhibiting practice of Administration and Service Delivery. In the end, he chose to remain silent because he felt a minority and was afraid to show his weaknesses.

This condition shows that the ASN has narrowed his bodily integrity and affiliation capabilities because he has sacrificed his physical health and also feels a feeling of isolation so that he does not dare to tell his condition to his superiors.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the affirmative policy for the recruitment of State Civil Apparatus Candidates with disabilities in Tangerang City has formally reflected the principles of equality and inclusion through the provision of special quotas, accessible selection services, and supportive recruitment accommodations. The policy has successfully opened opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter formal public employment and improve their economic stability, self-esteem, and participation in government institutions. However, the implementation of the policy still demonstrates a significant gap between administrative compliance and substantive inclusion. From the perspective of Chambers and Bonk's social policy elements, the policy continues to face limitations in adequacy, equity, and sustainability, particularly regarding policy socialization, accessible information, workplace accommodation, post-placement support, and disability-sensitive administrative procedures. Furthermore, the capability approach reveals that although several civil servants with disabilities experience expanded capabilities in terms of participation and practical reasoning, others still encounter narrowed bodily integrity and affiliation capabilities due to stigma, inaccessible facilities, inappropriate job placement, and the absence of structured complaint and support mechanisms. Therefore, the effectiveness of affirmative policy should not only be measured through quota fulfilment but also through its ability to create inclusive working environments that genuinely expand the substantive freedom and dignity of persons with disabilities. Based on these findings, future research is recommended to explore disability employment policy from broader institutional and comparative perspectives. Further studies may examine the implementation of affirmative CASN recruitment policies in different local governments to identify variations in policy effectiveness, organizational culture, and accessibility practices across regions. Future researchers are also encouraged to use mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to assess the long-term impact of employment policies on career development, psychological well-being, social participation, and professional advancement of civil servants with disabilities. In addition, future studies should investigate the perspectives of supervisors, co-workers, and policymakers to better understand organizational readiness and social attitudes toward disability inclusion in public institutions. Research focusing on digital accessibility, inclusive human resource management, and workplace accommodation systems is also important to strengthen evidence-based policy reform. Through broader and more comprehensive studies, affirmative employment policy can be continuously improved to ensure that persons with disabilities not only gain access to employment, but also experience equal opportunities, meaningful participation, and sustainable capability development in the workplace.

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