

Analysis of the Effect of Merit System Implementation in Realizing Sustainable Development in Malang City

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Abstract

Today, the goal of sustainable development is a global problem all countries face. Economic development does not pay attention to the environmental impacts, causing problems that occur today and risk future generations' survival. Governments in each country are expected to participate actively in achieving sustainable development goals. On the other hand, governments also face problems of poor performance, corruption, collusion, nepotism, and slow public services. Introducing a merit system is expected to improve the existing system of government. This article discusses the effect of implementing a merit system in realizing sustainable development. This research is located in the city of Malang. The sample comes from the State Civil Apparatus of Malang City Government consisting of structural officials, functional officials, and executive officials, with the Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Square (SEM PLS) analysis method. Results showed that applying the merit system in recruitment and replacement, including mutation and promotion, significantly affects sustainable development.

Keywords: recruitment, replacement, regional apparatus performance, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

Along with the times, human life has become easier with the increase in technology. Things that were once difficult to do are now easy to obtain. However, societal problems are also becoming more complex—the increase in population results in increased demand for basic needs. Competition for natural resources and economic needs has led to widespread environmental damage, climate change, depletion of natural resource reserves, disruption of ecosystems, increased use of hazardous chemicals, and other problems [1] [2].

The United Nations launched 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets in 2015 as part of the 2030 agenda to prepare future generations to carry out development for the welfare of society while preserving the planet. These sustainable development goals cover five important areas: planet, people, peace, partnership, and prosperity (UNDP, 2022).

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) are an extension of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Unlike the MDGs, which focus only on developing countries, the SDGs address

global issues by implementing appropriate sustainable development for countries worldwide [1]. The SDGs were presented to replace the MDGs with goals that better meet the challenges of the world's future.

Achieving sustainable development goals is not the responsibility of the government alone but also the responsibility of the private sector and society. However, the government has the most dominant responsibility because it is the government that has the power, has the authority to make regulations, controls and regulates natural resources, and can mobilize the community. A good government will be able to encourage the community and the private sector to continue to develop towards sustainable development in their country while maintaining the satisfaction of its population [3].

The government needs good human resources and governance to achieve sustainable development goals. Implementing a merit system in human resource management is expected to improve government performance [4]. In addition, to realize sustainable development, policy synergy between the Central Government, Provincial Government, and Regency/ City Government is also needed [5].

Bureaucratic reform is one of the main agendas of the Government of Indonesia. The

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State Civil Apparatus, as employees who carry out bureaucratic and governmental duties, need to be reformed to run a good government and carry out public services well [6]. One of the areas of change in the bureaucratic reform system in Indonesia is applying the merit system in structuring human resource management.

Meritocracy is a form of management of human resources that is not based on political, emotional, or family relationships but on the competencies, experience, skills, and insights employees offer. The application of the merit system requires all actors who play a role in the system's implementation of its performance to be professional, responsible, clean, and competent. Organizations that implement a merit system tend to attract professional and skilled people into the system. This happens because the application of the merit system provides opportunities for all employees to develop themselves according to their respective careers [4], [7], [8]. The application of the merit system also does not make differences in gender, race, culture, age, religion, and disability conditions as relevant variables.

The main focus of the merit system is to improve or enhance work performance. If the employee's work performance is considered good, the employee will be rewarded in the form of an increase in income or promotion. Meanwhile, suppose the employee's work

performance is considered poor. In that case, he/she will receive a penalty in the form of a decrease in income, a decrease in position, a transfer of position, or the termination of the employee's career. Employees will receive Rewards and punishments as feedback that will certainly affect all attitudes and work behavior in the future [9]. Implementing a merit system will improve employee quality and the performance of government and public services. The application of meritocracy has the most tangible impact on the recruitment and replacement process of the State Civil Apparatus, including mutations, promotions, and demotions.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The type of research used is descriptive quantitative. This study will use multivariate statistical analysis with the type of structural equation modeling partial least square (SEM PLS), where several research variables and complex research models will be analyzed and tested simultaneously or together using the SMARTPLS 4 program [10]. The research variables consist of Recruitment, Replacement, Individual performance, Regional Apparatus Performance, and Sustainable Development, with 35 research indicators. The SEM PLS model that describes the relationship between variables can be seen in the following figure:

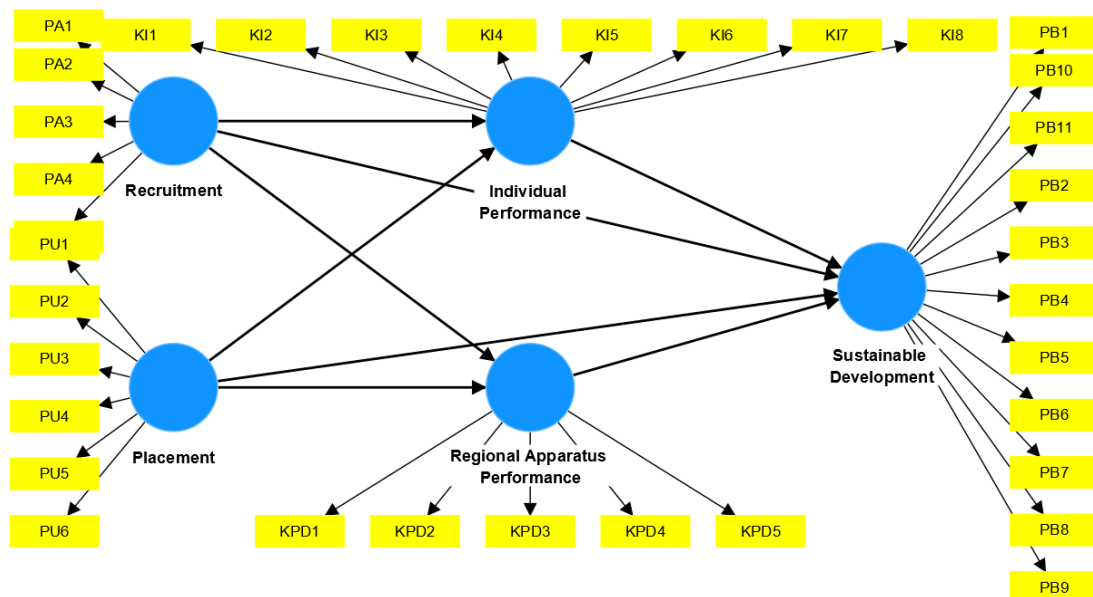


Figure 1. SEM PLS Model of Relationship Between Variables

The research location is in Malang City Government, with a population of all State Civil Apparatus of Malang City Government totaling

6,947 people. The sample used is a representative of structural officials, functional officials, and executive officials of the Malang

City Government, totaling 265 people with probability sampling techniques, where all members of the population have the same opportunity to be selected as a sample and specifically using simple random sampling, namely from the existing population a random sample is taken without regard to the categories or classes in the population. The number of

samples met the requirements because the minimum sample in PLS-SEM was 100 samples [11] or 5 times the number of indicators for all variables [12]. Data collection techniques using questionnaires and formula calculations using a Likert scale.

The sample data used is as follows:

Table 1. List of Respondents by Type of Position and Last Education

No	Position	Educational Qualification					Amount
		elementary-high school	Diploma	bachelor's degree	master's degree	doctoral degree	
1	Structural	3		34	32	1	70
2	Functional	0	4	89	21		114
3	Technical	21		50	9	1	81
Total number							265

Source: Author, 2023

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In SEM PLS, the term outer model is known. The Outer Model explains the relationship of the endogenous and exogenous latent variables to the indicators or the measurements in the given variable. The reliability and validity analysis value is obtained based on testing the outer model [13].

Convergent Validity Test

Validity test measurement is a method used to measure how well the value of an instrument is developed in quantifying a study. If the instrument's value is high, it shows that the

research statement used is improving. The convergent validity value shows the validity of the measurement indicators. The loading factor value on endogenous and exogenous variables is used to obtain the convergent validity value. The recommended value for convergent validity is > 0.7. If the model in the study is a newly developed model or the first research, the loading factor value that can be tolerated is 0.5 [14].

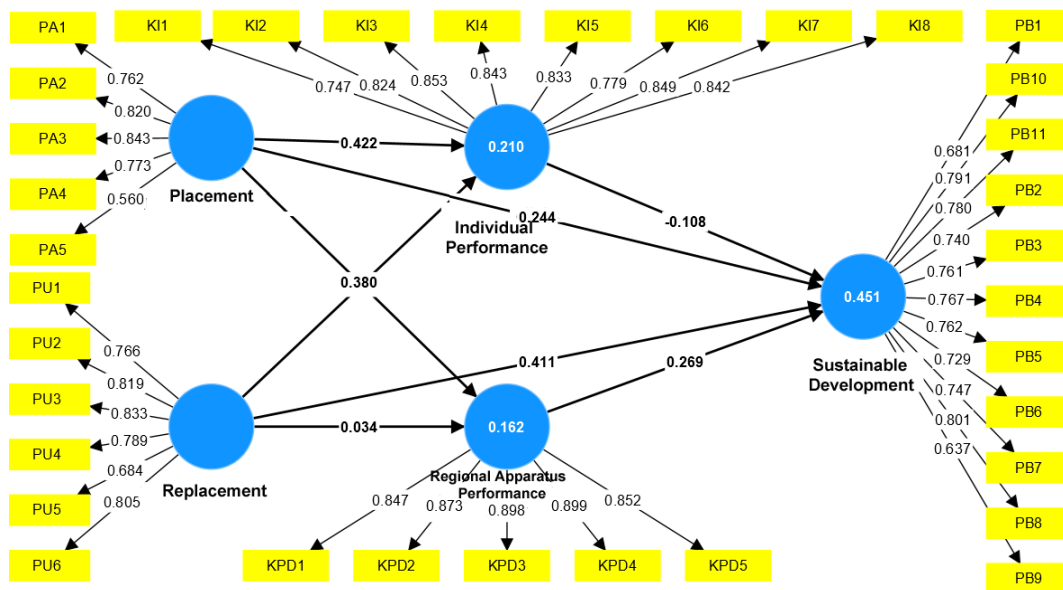


Figure 2. Model SEM PLS Convergent Validity Test

Table 2. Outer Loading

Individual Performance	Performance of Regional Apparatus	Sustainable Development	Recruitment	Replacement
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KI1	0,747		
KI2	0,824		
KI3	0,853		
KI4	0,843		
KI5	0,833		
KI6	0,779		
KI7	0,849		
KI8	0,842		
KPD1	0,847		
KPD2	0,873		
KPD3	0,898		
KPD4	0,899		
KPD5	0,852		
PB1	0,681		
PB2	0,740		
PB3	0,761		
PB4	0,767		
PB5	0,762		
PB6	0,729		
PB7	0,747		
PB8	0,801		
PB9	0,637		
PB10	0,791		
PB11	0,780		
PA1		0,762	
PA2		0,820	
PA3		0,843	
PA4		0,773	
PA5		0,560	
PU1			0,766
PU2			0,819
PU3			0,833
PU4			0,789
PU5			0,684
PU6			0,805

Source: Data processed, 2024

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the convergent validity value based on the loading factor value, the majority, is > 0.7. The moral indicator gets a value of 0.560, employee work performance gets a value of 0.684, without poverty gets a value of 0.681, and the city and community sustainability indicator gets a value of 0.637, which means < 0.7. Based on another opinion, the tolerable loading factor value is 0.5 [14]. Thus, it can be interpreted that all variable indicators are valid, and all statement items used can represent or reflect each variable measurement.

Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity value is the cross-loading factor value used to determine the discriminant in a research construct. Whether or not a research construct is adequate can be seen by comparing the loading value of the intended construct with the loading value of other constructs to produce a larger number [13]. The discriminant validity test is assessed based on cross-loading by showing that the indicator value must be higher than each construct compared to indicators on other constructs.

Table 3. Cross loading

	Individual Performance	Performance of Regional Apparatus	Sustainable Development	Recruitment	Replacement
KI1	0,747	0,501	0,241	0,342	0,245

KI2	0,824	0,552	0,224	0,413	0,273
KI3	0,853	0,572	0,209	0,394	0,235
KI4	0,843	0,567	0,238	0,358	0,244
KI5	0,833	0,569	0,235	0,357	0,245
KI6	0,779	0,547	0,304	0,364	0,306
KI7	0,849	0,733	0,341	0,397	0,268
KI8	0,842	0,719	0,338	0,368	0,234
KPD1	0,627	0,847	0,281	0,321	0,178
KPD2	0,625	0,873	0,399	0,353	0,277
KPD3	0,636	0,898	0,367	0,355	0,263
KPD4	0,639	0,899	0,379	0,369	0,217
KPD5	0,671	0,852	0,289	0,353	0,211
PB1	0,232	0,249	0,681	0,408	0,399
PB2	0,189	0,245	0,740	0,321	0,308
PB3	0,296	0,364	0,761	0,411	0,423
PB4	0,255	0,310	0,767	0,461	0,461
PB5	0,293	0,366	0,762	0,421	0,449
PB6	0,371	0,379	0,729	0,461	0,426
PB7	0,117	0,201	0,747	0,321	0,431
PB8	0,215	0,222	0,801	0,418	0,536
PB9	0,027	0,121	0,637	0,318	0,443
PB10	0,251	0,300	0,791	0,436	0,474
PB11	0,363	0,427	0,780	0,496	0,500
PA1	0,271	0,258	0,477	0,762	0,539
PA2	0,346	0,316	0,483	0,820	0,470
PA3	0,331	0,311	0,481	0,843	0,513
PA4	0,250	0,211	0,408	0,773	0,419
PA5	0,502	0,396	0,220	0,560	0,332
PU1	0,181	0,147	0,561	0,488	0,766
PU2	0,143	0,168	0,510	0,461	0,819
PU3	0,228	0,194	0,543	0,574	0,833
PU4	0,345	0,290	0,393	0,414	0,789
PU5	0,388	0,311	0,317	0,418	0,684
PU6	0,181	0,131	0,465	0,481	0,805

Source: Data processing, 2023

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that each indicator has a greater cross-loading value for its construct than the cross-loading value with other constructs. Thus, it can be deduced that these results have fulfilled the requirements of discriminant validity.

A reliability test is conducted to measure the consistency of a measuring instrument

(questionnaire) in a study. The reliability test uses the Composite Reliability value > 0.7, Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.6, and AVE value > 0.5. The Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values in this study can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Individual Performance	0,931	0,933	0,943	0,676
Performance of Regional Apparatus	0,923	0,928	0,942	0,764
Sustainable Development	0,920	0,924	0,932	0,557
Recruitment	0,808	0,812	0,869	0,575
Replacement	0,874	0,876	0,905	0,615

Source: Data processing, 2023

Table 4 shows that the Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, and AVE values can be said to be reliable because they have a Composite

Reliability value > 0.7, Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6, and AVE > 0.5 [15].

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were formulated in this research to determine the relationships among the exogenous latent variables of recruitment and replacement to the endogenous variables of individual performance and Regional Apparatus performance and the correlation between individual performance and Regional Apparatus

performance. Hypothesis testing is done by looking at the p-value. If the p-value is below 0.05, the relationship between the two is significant, with a tolerance value of 0.1, meaning that if the p-value is > 0.1, the relationship between the two variables is insignificant.

Table 5. Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Recruitment -> Individual Performance	0,422	0,425	0,077	5,467	0,000
Replacement -> Individual Performance	0,057	0,058	0,078	0,736	0,462
Recruitment -> Performance of Regional Apparatus	0,380	0,381	0,080	4,730	0,000
Replacement -> Performance of Regional Apparatus	0,034	0,038	0,082	0,419	0,675
Recruitment -> Sustainable Development	0,244	0,239	0,088	2,779	0,005
Replacement -> Sustainable Development	0,411	0,418	0,063	6,572	0,000
Individual Performance -> Sustainable Development	-0,108	-0,109	0,064	1,691	0,091
Performance of Regional Apparatus -> Sustainable Development	0,269	0,273	0,071	3,788	0,000

Source: Data processed, 2024

Based on the table 5, it can be seen that:

1. The results of hypothesis testing of the independent variable recruitment (X1) on individual performance (Y1) resulted in a P value of 0.000, which means that hypothesis H1 is accepted or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H1: Recruitment of employees has a significant effect on individual performance.
2. The results of testing the hypothesis of the independent variable replacement (X2) on individual performance (Y1) resulted in a P value of 0.462, meaning that the H2 hypothesis is rejected or the relationship between the two is insignificant. Hypothesis H2: Employee replacement has no significant effect on individual performance.
3. The results of testing the hypothesis of the independent variable recruitment (X1) on the performance of the Regional Apparatus (Y2) resulted in a P value of 0.000, which means that hypothesis H3 is accepted or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H3: Recruitment of employees significantly affects the performance of Regional Apparatus.
4. The results of hypothesis testing of the independent variable replacement (X2) on the performance of Regional Apparatus (Y2) resulted in a P value of 0.675, meaning that hypothesis H4 is rejected or the relationship

between the two is insignificant. Hypothesis H4: Employee replacement has no significant effect on the performance of Regional Apparatus.

5. The results of hypothesis testing of the independent variable of recruitment (X1) on sustainable development (Z) resulted in a P value of 0.000, which means that hypothesis H5 is accepted or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H5: Recruitment has a significant effect on sustainable development.
6. testing the hypothesis of the independent variable replacement (X2) on sustainable development (Z) resulted in a P value of 0.000, which means that hypothesis H6 is accepted or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H6: Replacement has a significant effect on sustainable development.
7. testing the hypothesis of the independent variable of individual performance (Y1) on sustainable development (Z) resulted in a P value of 0.091, with a tolerance limit of 0.1, so the hypothesis H7 is accepted, or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H7: Individual performance has a significant effect on sustainable development.
8. The results of hypothesis testing of the independent variable of Regional Apparatus performance (Y2) on sustainable development (Z) resulted in a P value of

0.000, which means that hypothesis H8 is accepted or the relationship between the two is significant. Hypothesis H8: Regional Apparatus Performance has a significant effect on sustainable development.

Indirect Effect Testing

Indirect effect testing is carried out to test whether exogenous variables have an indirect

effect on endogenous variables through other exogenous variables or mediating variables. The mediating variable serves to see the indirect effect on a variable. The requirement for a variable relationship through mediation can be significant if the p-value ≤ 0.05 . The results of the indirect effect test can be seen as follows:

Table 6. Indirect Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Recruitment -> Performance of Regional Apparatus -> Sustainable Development	0,102	0,105	0,038	2,709	0,007
Replacement -> Performance of Regional Apparatus -> Sustainable Development	0,009	0,010	0,023	0,403	0,687
Replacement -> Individual Performance -> Sustainable Development	-0,006	-0,006	0,011	0,579	0,563
Recruitment -> Individual Performance -> Sustainable Development	-0,046	-0,046	0,029	1,596	0,111

Source: Data processed, 2024

Based on Table 6, it can be seen that there is an indirect effect of the recruitment variable on the sustainable development variable through the Regional Apparatus performance variable by paying attention to the P values, which have a value of 0.007 (<0.05). The recruitment variable does not indirectly affect sustainable development variables through Regional Apparatus performance or individual performance. The P values can see this of both, which are 0.687 and 0.563, which means >0.05 . The recruitment variable does not indirectly affect sustainable development through individual performance variables. This can be seen from the P values of 0.111, >0.05 .

Direct Influence

Recruitment has a positive and significant impact on individual performance. This can be seen in Table 5 Path Coefficients, where the P values are 0.000 <0.05 . The parameter coefficient for the recruitment variable on individual performance is 0.422, which implies that recruitment positively affects individual performance. Or it could be assumed that the better the recruitment, the more individual performance will increase. An increase of one recruitment unit will increase individual performance by 42%. The outcome of this research is in alignment with the study of [16], [17], [18], [19], [20], [21], [22], [23], [24], [25], and [26].

Recruitment has a positive and significant impact on the performance of Regional Apparatus. This can be seen in Table 5 Path

Coefficients, where the P value is 0.000 <0.05 . The parameter coefficient for the recruitment variable on the performance of the Regional Apparatus is 0.380, which implies that recruitment has a positive effect on the performance of the Regional Apparatus. It could also be assumed that the better the employee recruitment is, the better the Regional Apparatus will also improve. An increase of one recruitment unit will increase Regional Apparatus's performance by 38%. The outcome of this research is in alignment with the study of [27], [28], [29], and [30].

Recruitment has a positive and significant impact on sustainable development. This can be seen in Table 5 Path Coefficients, where the P value is 0.005 <0.05 . The parameter coefficient for the recruitment variable on sustainable development is 0.244, which implies that recruitment positively affects sustainable development. It could also be assumed that the better the employee recruitment, the more sustainable development will be. An increase of one unit of employee recruitment will increase sustainable development by 24%. This study's results align with the research before [31] [32].

Replacement has a positive and significant impact on sustainable development. This can be seen in Table 5 Path Coefficients, where the P value is 0.000 <0.05 . The parameter coefficient for the replacement variable on sustainable development is 0.411, which implies that replacement positively affects sustainable development. Or it could be assumed that the

better the employee's replacement, the more sustainable development will increase. An increase of one unit of employee replacement will increase sustainable development by 41%.

Regional Apparatus Performance has a positive and significant impact on sustainable development. This can be seen in Table 5 Path Coefficients, where the P value is $0.000 < 0.05$. The parameter coefficient for the Regional Apparatus performance variable on sustainable development is 0.269, which implies that regional apparatus performance positively affects sustainable development. It could also be assumed that the better the performance of the regional apparatus, the more sustainable development will increase. Increasing one unit of Regional Apparatus performance will increase sustainable development by 27%. The outcome of this research aligns with the study of [32] [34].

Individual Performance has a positive and significant impact on sustainable development. This can be seen in Table 5 Path Coefficients, where the P value is $0.091 < 0.1$. The parameter coefficient for the individual performance variable on sustainable development is 0.108, which implies that individual performance positively affects sustainable development. It could also be assumed that the better the individual's performance is, the more sustainable development will increase. Increasing one unit of individual employee performance will increase sustainable development by 10%.

The relationship between the replacement variable and individual performance and the relationship between the replacement variable and the performance of Regional Apparatus have no statistically significant effect. Based on Table 5 Path Coefficients, an increase of one unit of employee replacement will only increase individual performance by 0.5%, and an increase of one unit of replacement will only increase the performance of Regional Apparatus by 0.3%. This differs from the research results by [33], which states that job rotation/replacement is a tool used to improve employee skills and organizational performance.

Indirect Effect

Based on Table 6 Indirect Effects, it can be seen that the parameter coefficient for the recruitment variable on sustainable development through the performance of Regional Apparatus is 0.102, which implies a positive indirect effect of employee recruitment on sustainable development through the performance of Regional Apparatus. It could also be assumed

that the better the employee recruitment, the more sustainable development through the performance of Regional Apparatus will increase. An increase of one unit of employee recruitment will increase sustainable development through the performance of Regional Apparatus by 10.2%. When viewed from the P values, which have a value of $0.007 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that the indirect effect of recruitment on sustainable development through the performance of Regional Apparatus is meaningful or statistically significant.

The parameter coefficients for the replacement variable on sustainable development through Regional Apparatus performance, replacement on sustainable development through individual performance, and recruitment on sustainable development through individual performance are 0.009, 0.006, and 0.046, implying a positive indirect effect of these variables. However, the effect is too small to be statistically significant, as evidenced by the P values of $0.687 > 0.05$, $0.563 > 0.05$, and $0.111 > 0.05$.

The recruitment of the State Civil Apparatus in Malang City Government is carried out using the Computer Assisted Test (CAT) system, where selection participants will carry out the exam together. After the exam, the public can see the results directly and openly. This shows that the recruitment has been done properly and away from fraud. State Civil Apparatus, which passes the recruitment, is placed in appropriate jobs and positions. This results in good performance and satisfactory public services. With this good employee performance, the performance of the Malang City Regional Apparatus has increased. This is evidenced by the increasing value of the Malang City Government Agency Performance Accountability System (SAKIP) every year, namely, with a value of 67.00 in 2017, a value of 80.05 in 2020, and a value of 81.80 in 2023.

Although not yet optimal, sustainable development in Malang City has been well implemented due to good employee performance and the performance of the Regional Apparatus. For example, the poverty rate in Malang City, which in 2013 was 4.85%, in 2022 decreased to 4.37%. The number of cases of malnourished infants has also been successfully reduced, namely in 2014, with 119 cases down to 33 cases in 2022. Another example is the increase in the primary education participation rate, which 2014 was 97.29%; by 2022, it will be 108.75%.

This is evidence that implementing a merit system will improve employee performance and the performance of Regional Apparatus and affect the achievement of sustainable development goals.

CONCLUSION

The research that has been conducted shows that the application of the merit system in employee recruitment and placement, including mutations and promotions, has a significant effect on sustainable development. Good recruitment will also produce a good State Civil Apparatus so that sustainable development goals can be achieved more effectively and efficiently. Similarly, a good employee mutation and promotion system will foster work motivation, give birth to innovations, and improve individual performance and government budget efficiency so that the performance of Regional Apparatus will also increase, which has an impact on sustainable development goals that can be achieved more easily.

Conversely, poor recruitment of employees and inappropriate placement, mutation, and promotion will result in employees who perform poorly, like abuse of authority, high corruption, and waste of government budgets so that the performance of Regional Apparatus will stagnate and even decline, which has an impact on the difficulty of achieving sustainable development.

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