

## **The Role of Human Resource Competence in Supporting the Performance of Public Sector Organizations in Palu City**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research originates from the role of human resource competence within an institution being crucial, as it acts as the driving force and manager of the system. To ensure smooth functioning, its handling must consider important aspects such as training, development, and motivation. The purpose of this research is to understand the role of human resource competence in supporting the performance of the public sector organization. The objectives of this research are (1) to understand and analyze the Role of Human Resource Competence in Supporting the Performance of Public Sector Organizations in Palu City. The qualitative method, which is based on data and information from informants using a phenomenological pattern, was employed. The research findings indicate that both supportive and hindering factors play a crucial role in the development of human resource competence in the public sector of Palu City. There is a positive impact of training access, management support, and performance assessment on employee motivation. However, hindering factors such as excessive workload, dynamic demands, and limited access to new information can constrain competence development efforts due to the rapid changes in the public sector environment.

**Keywords:** Digitalization; public service; digital technology

### **INTRODUCTION**

Human resources are the only resource that possesses emotions, desires, skills, knowledge, beliefs, strengths, and work (Heslina & Syahrini, 2021; Russell et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2018; Wright et al., 1994). All these potentials of human resources have an impact on an organization's efforts to achieve its goals. No matter how advanced the technology, information systems, or the availability of adequate capital and materials are, without human resources, it is difficult for an organization to achieve its objectives (S. M. Ahmad & Mir, 2012; Barney & Wright, 1998; Circle et al., 2012; Jumady & Lilla, 2021).

Human resources are an extremely important element in an organization, both in the public and private sectors (Nugroho et al., 2021). Human resources are the determinants of an organization's success; without them, the organization will not function, and conversely, the organization needs human resources to carry out its activities. Human resources play a significant role in determining an organization's progress. Competent human resources contribute best to achieving organizational goals, thus maximizing benefits, as humans create thoughts, works, or products that ultimately develop a group.

The need for employee development is crucial due to the complexity of job demands resulting from technological advancements and competition. Each employee is encouraged to

work effectively and efficiently, both in terms of quantity and quality. In general, the goal of human resource development is to ensure that the institution has quality employees to achieve its goals, thereby enhancing merit and growth.

This goal is achieved by ensuring that employees in the institution have the knowledge and skills to reach the required level of competence to perform their tasks effectively. Human resource development is a necessity for every organization, as the success of achieving goals effectively and efficiently is greatly determined by the human resources themselves. The effectiveness and efficiency of an organization depend heavily on the quality of human resource development. This implies that human resources within an institution must receive the best education and training proportionally.

An organization aiming to produce goods or services has a good chance of surviving and prospering if composed of the right people. This applies to all institutions, whether private or public, or established by the government to serve the community.

Likewise, people need organizations. Most people need to work to meet their own and their families' needs. However, people work for reasons beyond economic security. For instance, many individuals choose to work to keep themselves busy and feel useful, to be creative and achieve, to gain recognition and status, or to test and develop their abilities.

Each individual brings a unique blend of attributes to each organization. According to (Gassing et al., 2015; Jackson et al., 2009; Nugroho et al., 2021), certain personal characteristics lead individuals to succeed or fail in a job, including abilities, knowledge, personality, values, and expectations. Abilities and knowledge determine an employee's potential for successfully performing a particular job. Personality, values, and expectations are associated with individual preferences for various types of work and institutions, and therefore determine choices of specific jobs or employers.

Human resource competence within an institution is crucial as it serves as the driver and manager of the system. To function effectively, its handling must consider important aspects such as training, development, and motivation. In this context, human resources are considered a critical indicator for achieving organizational goals effectively and efficiently. Human resources are a vital organizational asset, hence their role and function cannot be replaced by other resources. Human resources within an organization should always be oriented towards the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the organization they are a part of. To achieve these visions, missions, and goals, individuals must possess competencies and characteristics. The role of human resources has been extensively studied by previous researchers, yet there is no clear research that describes the role of human resources in supporting public organizations. Most writings focus on human resource management.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method supported by a quantitative research approach. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects, including perceptions, behaviors, actions, and motivations. Participants were recruited during the Employee Engagement survey in government offices located in Palu City, Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. To mitigate common method bias, data were collected from various government agencies in Palu City. The informants in this study included staff members, department heads, and sub-department heads who understand the

conditions of human resources in supporting organizational performance in the city government of Palu. Based on the issues identified during initial observations, the researcher focused the study on causal relationships, reducing phenomena into simpler components, and conceptual operationalization. The researcher's focus was on human resources in supporting organizational performance.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

This study is grounded in the urgency of the highly strategic role played by human resource competencies in fortifying organizational performance in the public sector in Palu City. Amidst an increasingly complex and dynamic landscape, this research strongly asserts that the competencies possessed by members of an organization's team significantly influence the level of efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out tasks within the public sector. The concept of competencies encompasses a broad spectrum, including aspects of formal qualifications, knowledge, and practical skills aligned with the requirements they face in their work. These skills enable employees to make valuable contributions to achieving organizational targets, adapting to rapid changes in the operational environment, and addressing the complex challenges that often arise in delivering public services.

This study reveals that employees with relevant competencies have the capacity to act as a primary pillar in advancing the public sector organization. With a deep understanding of current principles and practices, they can formulate creative solutions to overcome existing obstacles and capitalize on emerging opportunities. When these competencies align with the organization's vision and mission, the organization becomes more adept at navigating the uncertainties that frequently affect the public sector.

The quality of human resource competencies has also proven to be key in managing dynamic changes in the public sector environment. Employees with a strong competency foundation are mentally and practically better prepared to face the turbulence of changes occurring around them. As task demands and environments change rapidly, the adaptability provided by good competencies allows organizations to remain agile and relevant.

Moreover, the research findings highlight the crucial connection between human resource competencies and the delivery of quality public services. Employees with adequate competencies are likely to provide better, more accurate, and more responsive services to meet the needs of the community. The ability to understand the complexity of situations and respond quickly and accurately becomes a valuable asset in enhancing public satisfaction with the services provided by the public sector.

Human resource competencies play a critical role in realizing quality public service. Employees supported by adequate competencies are more capable of delivering services that are not only better but also more accurate and responsive to the needs faced by the community. Their ability to tackle various complex situations with deep understanding and respond quickly and accurately becomes a valuable asset in increasing community satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the public sector. In this context, employees with suitable competencies can articulate more effective and innovative solutions, accommodating diverse needs and expectations of the heterogeneous community. Expertise in managing interactions with the public, carefully categorizing and analyzing information, and taking accurate actions all collaborate to

form a solid foundation in building a positive relationship between the public sector and the served community.

The incredibly important role of human resource competencies in delivering quality public service emerges as a determinant factor in the success of public sector organizations. In an increasingly complex dynamic context, employees supported by adequate competencies present the potential to deliver services that are not only better but also more accurate and responsive to the diverse needs of the community. Their ability to navigate situations of complexity with deep understanding and skillful responses becomes a valuable resource in enhancing community satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the public sector.

When faced with a rapidly changing environment, mature competencies equip employees with effective tools to tackle new challenges. This expertise becomes the foundation for intelligent decision-making and innovative solutions, allowing the public sector to continuously move forward in meeting the evolving demands of the community. Moreover, employees with appropriate competencies are better equipped to adapt to changes, avoid unnecessary errors, and optimize existing resources.

Not only that, human resource competencies also play a pivotal role in fostering harmonious relationships between the public sector and the community being served. Skilled employees adept at managing interactions with various stakeholders can build a solid foundation of trust and convincing transparency. Consequently, the community not only feels heard but also valued in every interaction with the public sector entity.

Employees with extraordinary abilities to align communication approaches with the characteristics of diverse community groups can provide the important sense of inclusiveness in public service. Proficiency in understanding the different needs, concerns, and aspirations of community segments builds the impression that the government or public institutions have a holistic view of existing social dynamics.

Furthermore, expertise in collecting, analyzing, and processing information meticulously also plays a central role in enhancing the services provided by the public sector. A thorough process of categorization and analysis can yield deep insights into community needs. This allows for the formulation and implementation of more focused policies in alignment with public aspirations. The ability to carefully process data also provides a strong foundation for monitoring the impact of implemented policies, allowing for more accurate and efficient adjustments in a shorter timeframe.

## **Discussion**

This study aims to investigate the crucial role played by human resource competencies in supporting the performance of the public sector organization. Alongside the ongoing dynamics of change within the public sector environment, the importance of having human resources with relevant qualifications, knowledge, and skills to tackle complex challenges becomes increasingly pronounced (Bek Yağmur & Aydıntuğ Myrvang, 2023; Bercu & Grigoruță, 2012; Do et al., 2022; Sakib et al., 2023). In line with similar findings in previous research (R. Ahmad & Imam, 2022; Gu et al., 2023; Hoai et al., 2022; Srirahayu et al., 2023; Tataw & Stokes, 2023), the results of this study affirm that human resource competencies have a significant impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of public sector organizational performance.

In this context, employees with competencies aligned with job demands have the potential to make valuable contributions to achieving organizational goals and providing better public services (Bertello et al., 2022; Connors et al., 2023; Desjardins et al., 2022). Through a deep

understanding of their tasks and responsibilities, they are capable of facing rapid environmental changes and overcoming challenges that frequently arise in the provision of public services (Ahmed et al., 2023). Employees with relevant qualifications and strong competencies can establish a solid foundation for innovation and adaptation amidst the competition and changes occurring in the public sector (Jackson & Adams, 2019).

However, challenges are also identified in the journey of developing human resource competencies in the public sector. Some studies (Panagiotopoulos et al., 2023) indicate that budget constraints and resource limitations can hinder the provision of adequate training and development. Lack of support from management and an organizational culture that does not foster learning and innovation can also impede the development of human resource competencies (Gu et al., 2023; Hoai et al., 2022).

In order to maximize the role of human resource competencies in supporting the performance of the public sector organization, it is important for management to ensure adequate access to relevant training and development, as well as to create an environment that encourages continuous learning (R. Ahmad & Imam, 2022; Bertello et al., 2022). Developing policies that support the enhancement of human resource competencies, backed by sufficient budget and commitment from management, will help the public sector organizations in Palu City to remain adaptive, responsive, and competitive in the face of evolving changes and demands within the dynamic public sector environment.

## CONCLUSION

This research has shed clear light on the fact that a set of factors, both supportive and inhibiting, holds a crucial sway over the cultivation of human resource competencies. These competencies, in turn, wield significant implications for the overall performance of the public sector organization in Palu City. The intricate interplay between these opposing forces has emerged as a critical determinant in shaping the trajectory of competency enhancement and, subsequently, its impact on the organization's operational efficiency, effectiveness, and achievements within the unique context of Palu City's public sector.

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