

THE EFFECT OF COMPETENCE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE PROTOCOL AND COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH LAMPUNG REGENCY LEADERSHIP

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Abstract. *Competence plays an important role in determining the quality of an employee's work and their understanding of their field of work. A professional must have academic qualifications and abilities that are appropriate to their field of work in order to make an optimal contribution to the organization. Competence is also a measure of individual behavior related to excellent performance at work. In the face of increasingly fierce competition, organizations need quality human resources as a key factor for success. Human resources with high competencies will support the smooth implementation of tasks and the achievement of organizational goals. Conversely, if the quality of human resources is low, the overall performance of the organization will decline.*

This study aims to examine the influence of competencies and career development on employee performance in the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency. Involving 53 respondents and using quantitative analysis methods through the SPSS program, the results showed that competence had a positive effect on performance with a contribution of 69.3%, while career development had a positive effect of 74.9%. Simultaneously, both variables had a positive effect on employee performance of 80.7%, while the remaining 19.3% was influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study.

Keywords: *Competency, Career Development, and Performance.*

PENGARUH KOMPETENSI DAN PENGEMBANGAN KARIR TERHADAP KINERJA PEGAWAI PADA BAGIAN PROTOKOL DAN KOMUNIKASI PIMPINAN KABUPATEN LAMPUNG SELATAN

Abstrak. Kompetensi memiliki peranan penting dalam menentukan kualitas kerja pegawai serta pemahaman terhadap bidang tugasnya. Seorang tenaga profesional harus memiliki kualifikasi akademik dan kemampuan yang sesuai dengan bidang kerjanya agar dapat memberikan kontribusi optimal bagi organisasi. Kompetensi juga menjadi tolok ukur perilaku individu yang berkaitan dengan kinerja unggul dalam pekerjaan. Dalam menghadapi persaingan yang semakin ketat, organisasi membutuhkan sumber daya manusia yang berkualitas sebagai faktor utama keberhasilan. SDM yang memiliki kompetensi tinggi akan mendukung kelancaran pelaksanaan tugas dan pencapaian tujuan organisasi. Sebaliknya, jika kualitas SDM rendah, maka kinerja organisasi secara keseluruhan akan menurun.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh kompetensi dan pengembangan karir terhadap kinerja pegawai pada Bagian Protokol dan Komunikasi Pimpinan Kabupaten Lampung Selatan. Dengan melibatkan 53 responden dan menggunakan metode analisis kuantitatif melalui program SPSS, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja dengan kontribusi 69,3%, sementara pengembangan karir memberikan pengaruh positif sebesar 74,9%. Secara simultan, kedua variabel tersebut berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja pegawai sebesar 80,7%, sedangkan 19,3% sisanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain di luar penelitian.

Kata kunci: *Kompetensi , Pengembangan karir dan Kinerja.*

INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) are the most important asset in an organization, both in the public and private sectors. The success

of an agency depends not only on technological sophistication or capital, but primarily on the quality and ability of its human resources in carrying out their duties. Competent, disciplined, and highly

motivated human resources will be the main driving force in achieving organizational goals. In today's increasingly competitive era, government organizations are required to work effectively, efficiently, and adaptively in response to change. Therefore, improving the quality of HR is fundamental for organizations to be able to provide optimal and high-performance public services.

Employee performance is a measure of success in carrying out organizational functions. Good performance reflects the extent to which employees are able to complete tasks with the quality and quantity in accordance with established standards. In the context of public organizations, employee performance not only affects internal productivity but also the satisfaction of the community as service recipients. Conversely, poor performance can damage the image of the institution and hinder the achievement of the government's vision and mission. Therefore, improving employee performance is a top priority that must be managed strategically through competency strengthening and career development.

Employee competence is closely related to performance. Competence reflects a person's ability to perform tasks based on knowledge, skills, and work attitudes that are in line with job requirements. Employees with high competence tend to be able to complete their work effectively and efficiently, as well as make a real contribution to the organization. Conversely, low competence will result in poor service quality and work productivity. In the context of government bureaucracy, competency is a key prerequisite for employees to carry out their roles as state officials, public servants, and implementers of public policy with a high level of professionalism.

In addition to competence, career development is also an important factor that affects employee performance. Career development is the process of planning and implementing steps to improve a

person's skills, knowledge, and work experience so that they can occupy higher positions and contribute more to the organization. Through career development, organizations are expected to motivate employees to continue learning, improve their capacity, and perform at their best. Well-designed career development will create a sense of fairness, satisfaction, and high loyalty among employees. Conversely, unclear and unplanned career development can lead to disappointment, decreased work motivation, and have a negative impact on individual and organizational performance.

In the context of the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency Secretariat, the role of employees is vital in supporting regional leadership activities, whether in the areas of protocol, publication, or government communication. Based on initial observations, it was found that the performance of some employees in this division was not yet optimal. There are still employees who are unable to carry out their duties in accordance with the set time targets, quality, and standards. This shows a gap between the organization's expectations and the actual capabilities of the employees. One of the main causes is the low level of employee competence, both in technical and managerial aspects. Some employees do not have an educational background relevant to their field of work, and others have not mastered the professional skills needed in modern public service.

Another problem identified is the weak implementation of career development. Most employees do not have strong motivation to participate in training, continuing education, or other self-development activities. Some employees show a lack of interest in improving their competencies through training, while promotion opportunities are still not distributed proportionally. There are also cases where employees who have participated in leadership training and met

the qualifications have not been promoted, while other employees who do not meet the requirements have been appointed to structural positions. This imbalance can create a perception of unfairness and reduce work morale.

This phenomenon is also reflected in the performance of work units. Based on data from the 2023 activity report, several reports, such as the annual report, financial report, and local government implementation report, have not been completed on time according to the set targets. This condition indicates inefficiency in the implementation of tasks and shows that employee performance still needs significant improvement. Competency and career development factors that are not yet optimal are suspected to contribute greatly to delays and low work productivity.

In facing increasingly complex public service challenges, improving the performance of employees in the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency is a must. These improvement efforts cannot be separated from strengthening employee competencies, which include knowledge, skills, professional attitudes, and understanding of their duties and responsibilities. On the other hand, career development must be designed as a system that is integrated with HR management policies, so that it provides space for each employee to develop according to their potential and achievements. Thus, employees will feel appreciated and motivated to give their best performance.

This research is important because the results are expected to provide an empirical picture of the extent to which competence and career development influence employee performance, particularly in the local government environment. Theoretically, this research enriches the study of human resource management in the public sector by highlighting the role of competence and career development as determinants of

performance. Practically, the results of this study can be used as a reference for regional leaders in formulating policies to increase the capacity of the civil service, a fair promotion system, and more effective and results-oriented training programs.

Considering the above description, it can be concluded that there is still a gap between the organization's expectations of employee performance and the actual conditions in the field. The suboptimal performance of employees indicates the need for serious attention to improving competencies and implementing more planned and transparent career development.

THEORETICAL BASIS

competence

Competence is a basic characteristic possessed by a person that is related to effectiveness and success in performing certain tasks. According to Wibowo, competence is the ability to perform or carry out a task based on the skills, knowledge, and work attitude required by that task. (Geopani et al. 2024). Competence encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes that every employee must possess in order to perform their duties in accordance with their responsibilities. In the context of public organizations, competence is the main foundation for producing professional and high-quality services.

Competencies are divided into two main categories: threshold competencies (basic competencies) and differentiating competencies (distinguishing competencies) (Wijayanto et al. 2011). Core competencies are the minimum abilities that an employee must possess in order to perform their job well. Meanwhile, differentiating competencies are abilities that distinguish between high-performing and low-performing employees. In a government bureaucracy, these differences in competency levels often determine variations in employee

performance.

Competency management is necessary to ensure that an organization has human resources capable of supporting the implementation of its strategies. According to Zwell in Wibowo, competency management consists of three main stages: competency acquisition, competency development, and competency dissemination. Acquisition includes competency-based recruitment and selection processes; development includes training, education, and coaching; while competency dissemination focuses on the application and replication of skills across all organizational work units (Triana 2022). With the implementation of good competency management, organizations can systematically map the strengths and weaknesses of their human resources.

Factors that influence a person's level of competency include beliefs and values, work experience, technical skills, motivation, and organizational culture (Santi Yusneli and Hery Bachrizal Tanjung 2021). In addition, personality traits and emotional intelligence also influence an individual's ability to adapt to job demands. In the context of government organizations, it is important for leaders to foster a work culture that encourages competency mastery through training and continuous learning.

According to Gordon, competency indicators consist of six aspects, namely: knowledge, understanding, ability or skill, values, attitudes, and interests (Heri and Andayani 2021). These six aspects are used to assess the extent to which an employee is considered competent in performing their duties. Thus, competence is not only a matter of technical ability, but also reflects a person's integrity, responsibility, and dedication to their profession. In this study, competence is assumed to have a direct influence on employee performance because competent employees tend to be able to work more effectively, efficiently, and productively.

Career Development

Career development is the process of improving an individual's work skills to reach a higher career level within an organization. According to Marwansyah, career development is a series of activities carried out by individuals and organizations to improve work skills and achieve personal and institutional career plans (Yolinza 2023). Career development is also defined as a condition that indicates an increase in a person's status, responsibilities, or position within an organizational structure. In the context of civil servants, career development is part of the ASN management system to ensure the professionalism of the apparatus and the effectiveness of the bureaucracy.

The main objective of career development, according to Handoko, is to provide opportunities for employees to develop their potential, improve their competencies, and achieve greater job satisfaction (et al. 2018). In addition, career development also aims to ensure the availability of quality workers to support the organization's future needs. Good career development is not only beneficial for individuals, but also increases the stability, loyalty, and productivity of the organization as a whole. Therefore, public organizations need to design a career system that is fair, transparent, and performance-based.

Career development can take the form of education and training, job transfers, promotions, and coaching from leaders. Education and training play a role in improving employees' technical knowledge and skills; promotions provide motivation and rewards for achievements; transfers allow employees to broaden their work experience and insights; while coaching from leaders encourages performance improvement through supervision and guidance. Systematic career development will create employees who are adaptive, competent, and ready to face organizational changes.

According to Siagian, there are five main indicators of career development,

namely: fair treatment in one's career, concern from immediate superiors, information on promotion opportunities, employee interest in being promoted, and level of satisfaction with career development. (Gaho 2023). If all five aspects are fulfilled, employees will feel valued and motivated to improve their performance. Conversely, an unclear career system can cause disappointment and reduce work enthusiasm. Therefore, transparency and consistency in career policies are key factors in modern HR management.

In government organizations, career development often faces challenges such as limited promotion opportunities, lengthy bureaucracy, and differences in perception between performance and seniority. This requires objective and competency-based career management policies. With a well-planned and fair career development system, employees will have a strong incentive to improve their skills and perform at their best. Therefore, in this study, career development is assumed to have a positive effect on employee performance, both directly and through increased work motivation.

Employee Performance

Performance is the quality and quantity of work achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties in accordance with their assigned responsibilities. According to Mangkunegara, performance is the result of work produced by an individual based on their skills, experience, and diligence in carrying out their work (Permadi 2017). Meanwhile, according to Wibowo, performance is about what is done and how it is done (Wibowo 2017). Thus, performance is not only measured by the end result, but also by the work process and individual behavior in achieving organizational goals.

Factors that influence performance include ability, motivation, and opportunity (Judanto n.d.). Ability refers

to an individual's capacity to perform tasks; motivation relates to internal drive to achieve results; while opportunity refers to workplace support such as facilities, supervision, and organizational policies. These three factors are interrelated and determine a person's performance level. In public organizations, performance is also greatly influenced by leadership, work culture, and reward and discipline systems.

According to Edison, Anwar, and Komariyah, performance indicators can be seen from four main dimensions, namely: work quality, work quantity, utilization of working time, and cooperation. Quality relates to the accuracy, precision, and thoroughness of work results; quantity measures the volume of work completed; time utilization reflects discipline and efficiency; while cooperation demonstrates the ability to interact productively with colleagues. kerja (Ela 2023). These four dimensions are important measures in assessing the success of employees in carrying out their duties.

Efforts to improve employee performance can be made through strengthening competencies, increasing motivation, providing a conducive work environment, and a results-based assessment system. Schaffer emphasizes the importance of setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) work targets to increase productivity. (Nurgaida Yutia et al. 2024). Leaders also need to communicate clearly, assign responsibilities proportionally, and provide regular feedback so that employees can continuously improve their performance.

Conceptually, employee performance is a reflection of an organization's ability to manage its human resources. Employees who have high competence and receive adequate career development will demonstrate better performance levels. Therefore, in this study,

performance is used as a dependent variable that is influenced by competence and career development. The higher the competence and the better the career development system, the more optimal the performance of employees in supporting the success of the organization.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach, as it aims to determine the relationship and influence between the variables under study, namely competence and career development on employee performance. The quantitative approach emphasizes objective measurement of numerical data and statistical analysis in drawing conclusions. According to Sugiyono, quantitative research is a scientific method used to study a specific population or sample, collect data using research instruments, and analyze data statistically to test predetermined hypotheses.

This type of research is descriptive-verificative. Descriptive research is used to describe the conditions of the variables of competency, career development, and employee performance as they are, while verifiable research aims to test the proposed hypothesis to determine the extent of the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. Thus, the results of the study not only explain the phenomena that occur but also confirm the causal relationship between variables based on empirical data.

This research was conducted at the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency Secretariat, located in the South Lampung Regency Government Office Complex, Kalianda. This location was chosen because it is a work unit that plays a strategic role in organizing protocol and communication activities for regional leaders, and has issues related to competence and career development that impact employee performance.

The population is the entire subject of

the study that has certain characteristics in accordance with the objectives of the study. The population in this study was all employees working in the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency Secretariat, totaling 61 employees.

Because the population size is relatively small and it is still possible to study a portion of it, this study uses a sampling method. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula. Therefore, the sample size in this study is 53 respondents. The sample was taken using saturated sampling, in which all members of the population who met the criteria were made respondents because the population size was relatively small and homogeneous.

Data analysis in this study was conducted in several stages, namely:

Descriptive Analysis: used to describe the characteristics of respondents and the conditions of each research variable based on the average value, percentage, and distribution of respondents' answers.

Classical Assumption Test: includes tests of normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity to ensure that the data meets the requirements of the multiple linear regression model.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: used to determine the effect of competence (X_1) and career development (X_2) on employee performance (Y).

Partial Test (t-test) to test the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable separately, **Simultaneous Test (F-test):** to determine the combined effect of competency and career development on employee performance, **Coefficient of Determination (R^2)** to determine the contribution of competency and career development variables to overall employee performance.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency

is one of the divisions under the Regional Secretariat that has the main task of supporting the smooth running of regional leadership activities, both in terms of protocol, publication, and government communication. This work unit plays an important role in building a positive image of the regional government through the dissemination of public policy information and coordination of official leadership activities. There are 61 employees working in this division, with various educational backgrounds and work experience.

In carrying out their duties, employee performance is influenced by various internal and external factors, including individual competence, career development systems, leadership, and work motivation. Based on initial observations, there are indications that differences in competence and career opportunities among employees have an impact on the variation in performance that occurs in the field.

This study involved 53 respondents as samples taken using saturated sampling techniques. Data were obtained through questionnaires using a 1–5 Likert scale, which included statements about employee competence, career development, and performance. Data processing was performed using SPSS version 25 through validity, reliability, and multiple regression analysis tests.

The validity test results showed that all statement items on the variables of competence, career development, and employee performance had a correlation value > 0.30 , so they were declared valid.

The reliability test results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable was > 0.70 , which means that all research instruments were reliable and could be used for further analysis.

Regression analysis was performed to determine the effect of the competency variable (X_1) and career development (X_2) on employee performance (Y). The analysis results show: Competency

coefficient (b_1) = 0.693 \rightarrow meaning that every one-unit increase in competency will increase employee performance by 69.3%. Career development coefficient (b_2) = 0.749 \rightarrow every one-unit increase in career development will increase employee performance by 74.9%. The coefficient of determination (R^2) = 0.807 \rightarrow indicating that 80.7% of the variation in employee performance is influenced by competence and career development together, while the remaining 19.3% is influenced by other factors outside this study, such as motivation, leadership, and work environment.

The partial test results show: The t-value for competency (8.416) $>$ t-table (2.004) with sig. 0.000 $<$ 0.05 \rightarrow meaning that competency has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The t-value for career development (9.127) $>$ t-table (2.004) with sig. 0.000 $<$ 0.05 \rightarrow meaning that career development has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. These results indicate that the higher the competency and the better the career development applied, the more significantly employee performance will increase.

The F-value (59.512) $>$ F-table (3.18) with a significance level of 0.000 $<$ 0.05, indicating that simultaneously, competence and career development have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Thus, the research hypothesis stating that “competence and career development have a significant effect on employee performance” is accepted.

The results of this study prove that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Employees who have high levels of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes tend to be able to carry out tasks more effectively, on time, and in accordance with predetermined standards. This is in line with Wibowo's (2019) theory, which states that competence is a

combination of abilities and behaviors that determine the effectiveness of individual performance in an organization. Thus, improving competency through training, education, and work experience will have a direct impact on improving performance quality.

In addition, the results also show that career development has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Employees who feel they have opportunities for growth, promotion, or guidance from their leaders will show higher loyalty and work enthusiasm. These results support Handoko's (2017) theory, which explains that good career development can increase motivation and work commitment because employees feel valued and have clear future prospects within the organization.

Simultaneously, competence and career development have a very strong influence on employee performance, namely 80.7%. This shows that these two factors are key components in building effective public organization performance. The remaining 19.3% is influenced by other factors such as leadership, work discipline, compensation, and work environment. These results reinforce the view that improving employee competency and implementing a transparent career development system are key to an organization's success in achieving optimal performance.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn:

Competence has a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees in the Protocol and Communication Division of the South Lampung Regency. This means that the higher the competence of employees in terms of knowledge, skills, and professional attitude, the better their performance will be.

Career development has a positive and

significant effect on employee performance. Employees who are given opportunities for promotion, guidance, and adequate training will show higher work motivation and responsibility in completing their tasks.

Simultaneously, competence and career development have a significant effect on employee performance with a contribution of 80.7%. This shows that these two factors play a dominant role in increasing productivity and work effectiveness in the local government organization environment.

IMPLICATION

For Agency Leaders: It is hoped that you can strengthen the employee competency development system through continuous training, workshops, and skills improvement programs in accordance with job requirements. In addition, the promotion system should be implemented transparently and based on performance so that employees feel valued and motivated to achieve.

For Employees: Employees are expected to be more proactive in developing their competencies through training, reading professional literature, and sharing work experiences with colleagues. Awareness of the need to continue learning will help improve performance and readiness to face the challenges of a dynamic organization.

For Further Research: It is recommended to add other variables such as motivation, work discipline, or leadership in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the factors that influence employee performance.

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