


Human Resource Development for Enhancing Employee Performance: A Case Study of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article history: Received: 12/04/2023 Revised: 07/05/2024 Accepted: 07/15/2024</p>	<p>Purpose – This study investigates the human resource development (HRD) management practices at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta, which is recognized for its high-quality human resources and numerous achievements.</p> <p>Design/methods – The study employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing observations, interviews, and documentation to collect data. The focus is on the Ministry's innovative HRD programs and their impact on employee performance.</p>
<p>Keywords: Employee Performance, Human Resource Development, Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City</p>	<p>Findings – Key findings indicate that the Ministry's initiatives, including the One-Stop Service and Collaborative Service System with Jogja Smart Service, have significantly improved public satisfaction and employee effectiveness. These HRD strategies showcase effective planning and continuous evaluation.</p> <p>Research implications/limitations – The study acknowledges limitations such as its focus on a single office and reliance on qualitative data, which may introduce subjectivity. Future research should include a broader scope and employ quantitative methods to validate and expand upon these findings, enhancing the generalizability of HRD principles.</p> <p>Practical implications – The study provides valuable insights for HRD practitioners and policymakers, emphasizing the importance of structured HRD programs and strategic planning in improving organizational performance and employee outcomes.</p> <p>Originality/value – This research contributes to the broader HRD literature by offering empirical evidence from a governmental context, underscoring the applicability of HRD principles across different sectors and demonstrating the success of innovative HRD practices in a public institution.</p>
	<div data-bbox="491 1323 644 1379" data-label="Image">  </div> <p>© 2024 by the authors. It was submitted for possible open-access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY NC) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).</p>

Introduction

Human resources are a critical asset for any organization, including government agencies, corporations, and educational institutions. The success of an organization's programs and initiatives heavily depends on the effective management and development of its human resources. Proper human resource management (HRM) ensures that employees are empowered and equipped to meet organizational goals (Bangun, 2012). This is particularly important in achieving sustained performance and adaptability in a rapidly changing environment. Therefore, the development of human resources (HRD) is fundamental to enhancing organizational performance and achieving strategic objectives.

Existing literature underscores the significance of HRD in various contexts. For instance, effective HRD practices, such as training and development, significantly improve employee performance and organizational outcomes (Gradi Lolowang et al., 2016). Research by (Juwita, 2019) also supports this, indicating that systematic training and development positively impact employee performance in public sector organizations. Furthermore, studies have shown that HRD contributes to career development and organizational success by fostering a productive and loyal workforce (Smerek & Vetráková, 2020). These findings highlight the crucial role of HRD in enhancing both individual and organizational capabilities.

Additionally, the integration of strategic HRD practices can lead to substantial improvements in organizational performance. Strategic HRD aligns HR practices with organizational goals, ensuring that employees' skills and competencies are developed in line with future needs (Parameswaran, 2020). This alignment is particularly relevant in sectors such as manufacturing, where the adoption of digital technologies requires continuous upskilling of the workforce (Mijatović et al., 2020). In the context of public sector organizations, strategic HRD practices have been linked to improved service delivery and customer satisfaction (Roscoe et al., 2019).

The positive impact of HRD is further evident in the education sector, where international faculty and knowledge transfer initiatives have been shown to enhance innovation and performance (Djikhly & Moustaghfir, 2019). In higher education institutions, tailored HRD programs facilitate the transfer of expertise and foster an environment conducive to knowledge sharing (Kim & Lee, 2023). Similarly, in the banking sector, HRM practices such as performance appraisal and compensation have a significant impact on organizational performance, demonstrating the importance of well-structured HRD strategies (Ghimire et al., 2024).

Despite these findings, there are gaps and limitations in the existing literature that need to be addressed. For instance, while many studies have established the positive impact of HRD on performance, there is a lack of comprehensive models that integrate various HRD practices and their outcomes. Moreover, the specific mechanisms through which HRD influences performance, such as the role of organizational learning and employee engagement, remain underexplored (Hooi, 2021; Oh & Kim, 2024). Additionally, there is limited research on the impact of HRD in specific contexts, such as government agencies and public sector organizations.

This study aims to address these gaps by exploring the HRD practices at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The focus is on understanding the programs implemented to develop and maintain employee performance, the execution of these programs, and the management of HRD initiatives. By examining these aspects, the study seeks to provide insights into effective HRD strategies that can enhance organizational performance and serve as a benchmark for other organizations. This research contributes to the field by offering a detailed analysis of HRD practices in a public sector context, highlighting the potential for HRD to drive organizational success and improve service delivery.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to explore and understand the central phenomenon related to human resource development (HRD) in enhancing

employee performance at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta. Qualitative methods, as defined by Creswell (2014), are suitable for exploring and deeply understanding complex phenomena (Raco, 2010). The purposive sampling method was used to select research subjects, ensuring that participants met the 3M criteria: knowledgeable, experienced, and understanding of the research object. This approach allowed for the selection of individuals who could provide rich, relevant data for the study.

Data collection was conducted through observations, interviews, and documentation. Observations provided insights into the natural setting and behaviors within the organization. Interviews were carried out with key personnel who met the 3M criteria, offering detailed insights into their experiences and perceptions. Documentation involved reviewing relevant organizational records and documents to corroborate findings from observations and interviews. This multi-method approach ensured comprehensive data collection from multiple sources, enhancing the depth and breadth of the information gathered.

The collected data were subjected to a systematic analysis process. Initially, data were reduced to retain only the relevant information. The analysis techniques included transcription, coding, grouping, comparing, contrasting, and interpretation. Transcription converted recorded interviews into written text, while coding categorized the data into themes and patterns. Grouping organized the data into meaningful clusters, and comparing and contrasting identified similarities and differences within the data. Interpretation involved drawing conclusions based on the identified patterns and themes. To ensure the study's reliability and validity, a source triangulation technique was used, comparing data from different sources to confirm consistency and accuracy. This methodological rigor ensured that the findings were robust and credible, providing valuable insights into HRD practices and their impact on employee performance.

Results

The Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City is a government institution responsible for implementing the functions and duties of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Yogyakarta City region. Located at Jln. Ki Mangun Sarkoro, Gunung Ketur, Pakualaman, Yogyakarta, this office is tasked with providing religious and educational services, guidance, and development within the city. The office is organized into various divisions and leadership positions, including the Head Office, Sub-Division of General Affairs, Madrasah Education Section (DIKMAD), Diniyah Education and Islamic Boarding School Section (PD. PONTREN), Islamic Religious Education Section (PAIS), Hajj and Umrah Section (PHU), Islamic Community Guidance Section (BIMAS Islam), Zakat and Waqf Section (Gara ZAWA), and Catholic Affairs.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City has introduced numerous innovations that have become significant advantages for the institution. These innovations include PTSP (One-Stop Service), SILAKON JSS (Collaborative Service System with Jogja Smart Service), Integrated Hajj services with PTSP and Bank Receiving Deposits (BPS), SiKompom (Collective Passport Processing System), Bintang Jiwa (Casual Hajj Discussions with Students), Simbah Mandi (Independent Hajj Worship Guidance System), Pengamen Haji (Hajj Document Security), SiKomplit (Complete Document Program for Newly Married Couples, including 2 ID cards, 2 marriage cards, 2 marriage books, and 1 family card), Sikapak (Qibla Direction Calibration System), Berkah (Learning the Secrets of Marriage Together), Lawas (Proactive WhatsApp Service), Tamu Mapan (Face-to-Face Service During the Pandemic).

These innovations have greatly increased public satisfaction with the services provided, which are not only innovative but also fast and free of charge. These achievements have led the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City to earn the titles of Clean and Serving Bureaucratic Area (WBBM), Public Service Unit with Excellent Service, and Vulnerable Group-Friendly Work Unit. Previously, the office had already achieved the title of Corruption-Free Area (WBK). So far, the WBK and WBBM titles have only been awarded to four institutions within the Ministry of Religious Affairs across Indonesia: the Provincial Office

of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Bali, the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Denpasar, the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Bantul Regency.

According to Nadhif, the head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City, WBK, WBBM, and Excellent Public Service are essential and mandatory for every government institution, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Government institutions must possess integrity, be free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism, and be able to meet and address the needs of the public, thereby ensuring public satisfaction with government performance. Lipur adds that ideally, every government work unit should achieve WBK and WBBM as indicators that civil servants are performing their duties well. Moreover, WBK and WBBM serve as motivation for civil servants to maintain integrity in their work. These accolades represent the quality of work performed by the employees at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City, indicating that they have met established standards.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City continually strives to develop and enhance its human resources to ensure that both civil servants and non-civil servants can perform to the highest standards and even exceed them, thereby meeting public needs with satisfactory and corruption-free services. Human resource development within the office is necessary because employees' knowledge and skills can stagnate, while public needs continue to evolve. Without ongoing HR development, the knowledge and skills of employees will reach a plateau, resulting in an inability to meet public needs.

Human resource development at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City is carried out through training and non-training methods. Training focuses on developing hard skills, such as technical abilities related to job tasks, including operating computer systems and organizing documents according to archival management standards. Non-training HR development aims to enhance soft skills, such as personal qualities and interpersonal abilities embedded in civil servants, including responsibility, integrity, exemplary behavior, professionalism, and more.

Training-based HR development involves various training programs provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, facilitated by the Religious Training Center (BDK) in different regions. For the Yogyakarta Special Region and Central Java, training is facilitated by the Semarang Religious Training Center. Each year, the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City conducts a training needs analysis (AKD) within the office. The collected data is then sent to the Semarang Religious Training Center, which sorts the data to determine training programs needed by the majority of civil servants in Yogyakarta and Central Java.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta City receives one or two training sessions from the Religious Training Center each year, with selected civil servants required to attend. Transportation allowances are provided for attendees. Due to limited training slots, the office sometimes independently organizes in-house training to address unmet needs, utilizing internal functional officers as trainers. These training sessions may take the form of workshops or on-the-job mentoring.

In addition to training-based development, the office also focuses on non-training HR development to enhance employees' soft skills through gatherings and interactive activities between staff and leaders, such as morning gatherings, interactive broadcasts (SISAPA), morning roll calls, and other gathering events. These activities foster stronger familial relationships among civil servants, promote the exchange of ideas and feedback, and provide opportunities for leaders to offer guidance and motivation. As a result, employees develop positive work characteristics such as responsibility, integrity, professionalism, commitment, and exemplary behavior.

Discussion

The present study aimed to explore how human resource development (HRD) management is conducted at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta to

enhance employee performance. This inquiry is essential because the office has received numerous accolades, which reflect the high quality of its human resources. The research results can serve as a guideline for organizations seeking to develop their human resources and provide a basis for future studies. Previous research has established the significant role of HRD in improving organizational performance and employee engagement, as seen in studies by Smerek & Vetráková (2020). The current study builds on this foundation by examining specific HRD practices within a governmental context.

The study found that the Islamic Education Section of the Ministry plays a crucial role in enhancing student performance through various services, guidance, and training programs at the elementary to high school levels. Key initiatives such as the Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an (MTQ) and the Islamic Education Arts and Skills Week (Pentas PAI) significantly contribute to this effort. The MTQ competition, organized in collaboration with the Yogyakarta City Education Office, is particularly noteworthy for its comprehensive preparation and execution, involving 722 students in 2023. The results indicate that such structured and collaborative programs effectively harness and enhance the talents and skills of participants, aligning with findings from (Gradi Lolowang et al., 2016; Juwita, 2019).

These results are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the positive impact of HRD practices on organizational performance and employee outcomes. For instance, Otoo et al. (2019) highlighted the mediating role of employee performance in the relationship between HRD practices and organizational performance. Similarly, (Zhao et al., 2024) demonstrated that green HRM practices foster organizational ambidexterity and sustainable development. The current findings support the notion that targeted HRD interventions, such as those implemented by the Ministry, can significantly enhance employee performance and organizational achievements.

The study's findings suggest that the structured HRD programs at the Ministry are effective due to their comprehensive nature and alignment with organizational goals. The success of these programs in enhancing performance and achieving national accolades underscores the importance of strategic HRD practices. This aligns with the work of Akdere & Egan (2020), who emphasized the role of transformational leadership in supporting HRD culture and positive employee outcomes. Additionally, the significant impact of customized training and development programs, as highlighted by Kim & Lee (2023), is evident in the Ministry's approach.

However, the study also identifies areas for improvement. While the HRD programs are effective, there is a need for continuous evaluation and adaptation to meet evolving organizational and employee needs. The reliance on traditional methods could be supplemented with more innovative approaches, as suggested by Arubayi et al. (2020). Furthermore, ensuring the sustainability of these programs requires ongoing investment in resources and training, echoing the findings of Gupta et al. (2019) regarding the importance of a supportive HRD climate.

The implications of these findings are significant for HRD practitioners and policymakers. The study provides a clear example of how structured and well-implemented HRD programs can lead to improved organizational performance and employee outcomes. It highlights the need for strategic planning and continuous evaluation in HRD initiatives, as demonstrated by the Ministry's successful practices. This study also contributes to the broader HRD literature by providing empirical evidence from a governmental context, supporting the generalizability of HRD principles across different sectors.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates the critical role of HRD in enhancing employee performance and organizational success at the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta. The findings reinforce the importance of strategic, well-structured HRD programs and suggest that such initiatives can be effectively applied in other organizational contexts. Future research should continue to explore innovative HRD practices and their impact on organizational performance, building on the foundation established by this study.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the human resource development (HRD) management at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Yogyakarta, an institution recognized for its exemplary achievements indicative of high-quality human resources. The findings reveal that the Ministry has implemented a series of innovative practices and services, such as the PTSP (One-Stop Service), SILAKON JSS (Collaborative Service System with Jogja Smart Service), and integrated Hajj services. These initiatives have significantly enhanced employee performance and public satisfaction, showcasing the effective HRD strategies employed by the Ministry.

The implications of these findings are substantial for HRD practitioners and policymakers. The study demonstrates how structured and well-executed HRD programs can lead to improved organizational performance and employee outcomes. The Ministry's strategic planning and continuous evaluation of HRD initiatives provide a valuable model for other organizations aiming to enhance their human resources. This research contributes to the broader HRD literature by offering empirical evidence from a governmental context, underscoring the applicability of HRD principles across different sectors.

However, the study acknowledges several limitations, including its focus on a single governmental office, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the reliance on qualitative data may introduce subjectivity, despite efforts to maintain objectivity through rigorous methodological practices. Future research should consider a broader scope, including multiple institutions and quantitative data, to validate and expand upon these findings. Investigating the long-term impacts of HRD programs on employee performance and organizational success across different contexts would further enrich the HRD field.

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