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Analysis of Principal Performance in Managing Human Resources at SD Negeri 17 Palu

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Historis:</i></p> <p>Submit 7 June 2024 Review 23 July 2024 Revision 21 August 2024 Accepted 15 September 2024 Publish 29 October 2024</p> <hr/> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Principal Performance, Human Resource Management, Recruitment and Selection, Performance Evaluation, Conflict Management</p> <hr/> <p><i>Corresponding Author:</i> Nurhabiba email: nrhibibaaa@gmail.com</p>	<p>This study aims to analyze the performance of the principal in managing human resources at SD Negeri 17 Palu. The primary focus of this study is on key aspects, including the recruitment and selection of educators, performance evaluation, interpersonal relationships among staff, conflict management, and parent involvement. The approach used in this study is qualitative, employing a case study method that collects data through in-depth interviews with teachers, the principal, and field observations. The results of the study indicate that the principal has not been fully effective in managing human resources, particularly in aspects such as recruitment and performance evaluation, which are less transparent and less than optimal in terms of conflict management.</p> <p>The principal's performance in managing human resources affects the working conditions in the school as well as the quality of education provided. Nepotism practices in teacher recruitment and selection, as well as a lack of transparency in performance evaluation, have eroded staff trust in the principal's leadership. Additionally, poor interpersonal relationships between the principal and staff have exacerbated the working environment. However, parental involvement in various school activities is considered positive. This study recommends that principals enhance their recruitment processes, performance evaluations, and conflict management strategies to create a fairer and more productive environment.</p>

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role as one of the main pillars of a country's development. In this context, the principal plays a vital role in managing human resources at the elementary school level. The principal's responsibilities are not only limited to administrative and academic aspects but also include the selection and management of quality human resources. The performance of the principal, which can be measured through strategies implemented in human resource management (HRD), is the focus of analysis because its success has direct implications for the effectiveness and efficiency of school operations (Kollo et al., 2024; Mahzum et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2022). As

expressed by Hasriyani, the performance of a leader has a significant influence on the achievement of organizational goals, including those in educational institutions (Mahzum et al., 2022).

In recent years, elementary schools have faced many challenges, including changes in educational regulations and rapid technological developments. Principals as leaders must be able to adapt to these innovations and dynamics and have greater responsibility in managing human resources, which are the backbone of the learning process also emphasized the importance of principals in designing and implementing effective HR management policies to achieve educational goals (Supartilah & Pardimin, 2021; Yustinus, 2023). In other words, analyzing the performance of principals is highly relevant to understanding how effective they are in managing educational human resources, which have a significant impact on teacher welfare and student learning outcomes (Rahayu et al., 2023; Supartilah & Pardimin, 2021).

Challenges in the modern era, such as increasing public expectations for the quality of education, require principals to act not only as visionary leaders but also to manage diverse teams effectively. Various factors, such as systematic training and human resource development, can improve the quality of individual performance (Nuraini, 2022; Pahira & Rinaldy, 2023). Research shows that high performance is highly dependent on work-oriented behavior and the individual's ability to complete their tasks (Husaini & Utama, 2021; Nuraini, 2022).

The role of HR management is very strategic in meeting the needs of educational workers, from planning to implementation (Husaini & Utama, 2021; Pahira & Rinaldy, 2023). Good support from management is key to creating a conducive and sustainable educational environment (Sawaluddin & Rustandi, 2020; Wulandami et al., 2023). Thus, principals need to enhance their managerial capacity and foster productive relationships with teachers, parents of students, and other stakeholders in order to create an integrated learning environment and support overall educational success (Abdullah & Burhanuddin, 2023; Priyatna, 2017).

Analyzing the principal's performance at SD Negeri 17 Palu can provide further insight into the impact of human resource management on school climate and student academic achievement. This study is expected to yield practical recommendations for enhancing and developing human resource management practices in elementary education environments, with the ultimate goal of improving the overall quality of education (Patras et al., 2019; Rahayu et al., 2023).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this article adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method to explore in-depth the principal's performance in managing human resources at SD Negeri 17 Palu. This research was conducted at the school location, which is located on Jl. Panglima Polem, Talise Village, Palu City. The primary focus of this research is on the object of the principal's performance, specifically human resource management, which encompasses aspects such as recruitment, interpersonal relationships, performance evaluation, conflict management, and parent involvement.

This study utilizes two types of data sources: primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected through direct observation in the field over five months and in-depth interviews with the board of teachers and vice-principals. This process aims to gain a direct understanding of the leading actors regarding human resource management in schools. Secondary data were obtained from literature reviews, including books, scientific articles, and journals, that are relevant to the research topic. The use of diverse data sources aims to enrich perspectives and support the validity of research findings.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study employs the triangulation method, utilizing various data sources and data collection techniques to verify the consistency of the information. The collected data is then analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques. The analysis process begins by organizing the data, examining emerging patterns or themes, and presenting the results

in the form of structured descriptions. Conclusions are then drawn based on the findings that have been systematically processed and analyzed.

Through the qualitative approach of this case study, the study aims to reveal in detail how the principal at SD Negeri 17 Palu carries out human resource management tasks and identifies challenges and opportunities for improvement that can be done. This methodology is expected to yield in-depth insights that can serve as the basis for recommendations for more effective human resource management policies and practices in elementary schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The interview technique is one of the data collection methods that involves asking the informant directly to obtain relevant information (Nirmalasari, 2019). In this study, interviews were conducted with several teachers in the environment of SD Negeri 17 Palu to analyze the principal's performance in managing human resources. The informants interviewed included Mrs. Adriana S.Pd, a teacher and homeroom teacher in Class 2; Mrs. Nurriny Sy Latama, a teacher and homeroom teacher in Class 4; and Mr. Zubair Matamay, homeroom teacher in Class 6 and vice principal at SD Negeri 17 Palu.

Mrs. Adriana shared her views on the principal's performance: "In my opinion, the principal's performance is quite good, but in some aspects in the scope of human resources, guidance is still needed. In the process of recruiting prospective teachers, the principal plays an active role. Actually, it is flexible depending on the needs of the school. But in the selection process, the principal prioritizes the closest family without looking at prospective teachers who have competence."

Meanwhile, according to Mrs. Nurriny Sy Latama, the principal has not consistently carried out his duties. He stated: "I think the performance of the principal himself is not consistent. Consistent means that his performance is sometimes good and sometimes lacking. It depends on the situation and conditions."

Mr. Zubair Matamay, as the vice principal, gave his views on the transparency and fairness of the principal in evaluating teacher performance: "The principal is not yet fair and transparent in evaluating teacher performance in this school. Before conducting a performance evaluation, he should have provided direction on the instruments to be assessed so that they can be completed immediately. But the principal only informed certain people, perhaps because he did not interact enough with others."

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted, researchers used several assessment components to analyze the principal's performance in managing human resources. These components include teacher recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, interpersonal relationships between teachers, conflict management, and parent involvement.

Recruitment and Selection

Through an interview with one of the educators at SD Negeri 17 Palu, it was revealed that the principal plays an active role in the recruitment and selection process for workers. However, in its implementation, the principal often prioritizes or recommends his or her closest family members—such as children, nephews, in-laws, or grandchildren (especially if they are approaching retirement age)—without considering the competence and long-serving honorary workers who have served the school. This phenomenon does not only occur at SD Negeri 17 Palu but also in many other schools. Based on 2022 data, there were numerous complaints from honorary workers who felt disadvantaged by the principal's nepotistic practices.

Fair, transparent, and competency-based leader selection is key to an organization's success, including in the context of school education. When the principal prioritizes the closest family in the recruitment process without considering the competence and experience of honorary workers, the negative consequences that can arise include the following.

First, injustice in human resource management. Recommendations to immediate family without considering competence can create injustice among school staff. This practice harms employees who should get opportunities based on their abilities and experience.

Second, unprofessionalism and nepotism. The act of recommending close relatives without considering competence can be considered a form of nepotism. This creates an unprofessional work environment, harms staff morale, and damages the school's image in the eyes of the community.

Third, there is a potential for declining performance. Selecting leaders or staff based on family relationships rather than ability can lead to a decline in school performance and productivity. Leadership that is not based on competence will hinder the school's progress and development.

Fourth, loss of public trust. If the public discovers that the recruitment process is not conducted fairly and transparently, it can harm public trust in educational institutions. This loss of trust hurts the school's relationship with its community.

Fifth, missed opportunities. Promoting or recruiting based on family ties means missing out on opportunities to utilize the talents, skills, and competencies of more experienced and competent employees. As a solution, principals and related parties need to adopt fair and transparent competency-based recruitment policies. This policy aims to foster a professional work environment, support individual growth, and enhance the quality of education provided by the school.

Regarding teacher selection by the principal, often, the principal only considers the rank or job category without examining the teacher's competency. This results in the selection being carried out without considering whether the teacher meets the requirements for the position. Principals often rely on luck or family connections to help with the selection process, which reinforces the dominance of the family system in decision-making. As a result, more deserving people are often overlooked, and the great potential of educators is not optimally utilized.

Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluation is a systematic process for assessing the achievement of goals, behavior, and contributions of individuals or groups within the context of their work or tasks. Organizations conduct this evaluation to measure the success of employees in carrying out their duties by comparing work standards and the results achieved (Bakri Hasanuddin & Wiri Wirastuti, 2018). This evaluation aims to assess the extent to which individuals or groups have succeeded in achieving the set targets, including work results, skill development, productivity enhancement, and contributions to the organization's vision.

Performance appraisal should be based on clear and measurable criteria. These criteria may include achievement of quantitative targets, quality of work, interpersonal skills, initiative, and compliance with organizational policies and procedures. Various methods can be employed in performance evaluation, including assessment by direct superiors, self-assessment, peer assessment, and data-driven measurement. The choice of method must be adjusted to the purpose of the evaluation and the characteristics of the work being assessed. Performance evaluation does not only focus on giving ratings or scores but also provides constructive feedback that identifies strengths, weaknesses, and development opportunities. This feedback becomes the basis for future improvement and development.

Performance evaluation results are often used to identify training and development needs, helping individuals achieve their career goals. The evaluation process should be conducted with integrity and fairness, avoiding discrimination. Transparency is crucial, with a clear understanding of the assessment criteria used. The feedback provided should also be aimed at the individual's development without creating discomfort or unfairness. Fair and well-planned performance evaluations can be an effective tool for increasing productivity, motivation, and human resource development in an organization. With the right approach, performance evaluations can serve as the basis not only for individual growth but also for the organization's overall success.

However, based on 2023 data from SD Negeri 17 Palu, the performance evaluation conducted by the principal was considered not transparent and fair. Before the assessment was conducted, the principal should have provided clear directions regarding the assessment instrument, allowing teachers to prepare the necessary files. Unfortunately, this assessment instrument was only communicated to a select group of people, which was likely due to a lack of effective communication between the principal and staff. As a leader, the principal should provide directions to all subordinates without exception.

Additionally, principals tend to rely solely on previous track records when conducting evaluations without considering current activities. In terms of fairness, assessments are often conducted from a single perspective without considering broader viewpoints. This kind of situation often occurs repeatedly, indicating the need for improvements in the performance evaluation system to be more fair and transparent.

Conflict Management

Conflict management is a process used to resolve or manage conflict effectively and efficiently with various appropriate strategies and techniques. Within the organization, conflict management holds significant importance as it facilitates the resolution of conflicts that arise. Effective conflict management can have a profoundly positive impact on productivity, work quality, relationships among team members, organizational skills, negotiation skills, emotional management, organizational adaptability, decision-making, creativity, innovation, work safety, and the organization's reputation.

However, in SD Negeri 17 Palu, the principal has not been fully able to manage conflicts correctly and adequately. This can be seen from the principal's dependence on third parties to resolve conflicts that occur in the school environment. Conflict management should encompass efforts to prevent and mitigate conflicts, as well as mitigate risks that can disrupt organizational performance. Effective conflict management requires the right skills and approaches to minimize the impact of conflict and ensure the organization continues to run optimally.

Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships are broadly defined as interactions between two people in various life situations that result in happiness and satisfaction for both parties (Andini & Adhrianti, 2022). In the context of schools, the principal, as the highest position holder in the educational environment, certainly has an important role in establishing effective communication with teachers as work partners. Maintaining good interpersonal relationships in the school environment is very crucial to creating a harmonious and productive work atmosphere.

However, in SD Negeri 17 Palu, the interpersonal relationship between the principal and the teachers is still considered less than good. This is evident from the lack of communication between them, which even led to a conflict between the principal and the teachers. The conflict created an atmosphere of hostility that hurt the work environment at the school. This incident highlights the importance of interpersonal relationships and effective communication in the school environment, as they support the creation of healthy collaboration and a conducive work atmosphere.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

SD Negeri 17 Palu actively involves parents and guardians of students in various school activities, such as the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday, report card acceptance, class promotion, and other events. The principal also plays an active role in involving parents and guardians of students in making important decisions at school. The collaboration between the school and the surrounding community is considered successful, reflecting good synergy in supporting educational progress. The success of an educational institution is indeed inseparable from the role of a leader. The principal is responsible for ensuring that school goals are achieved through effective direction and management. However, success does not depend solely on the performance of a leader; the contributions of all school components also greatly determine the achievement of the school's vision and mission.

The principal must possess the competence and expertise to effectively manage the school organization, including the management of human resources and other resources. However, if a principal prioritizes or recommends family members in the recruitment and selection process of workers, this can create serious problems. Recommendations based solely on family relationships can lead to injustice, disadvantage more qualified individuals, and undermine the professionalism of human resource management in schools. Therefore, the principal must ensure that the recruitment process is transparent and provides equal opportunities for all qualified candidates.

Additionally, the principal's ability to manage conflict is crucial in maintaining a harmonious school environment. A lack of skills or knowledge in conflict management can hurt school performance and interpersonal relationships among staff members. The principal's inability to handle conflict well can worsen the situation and create tension in the workplace. To overcome this, steps such as training and skills development, encouraging open communication, implementing a conflict management system, facilitating group discussions, and involving third parties can be effective solutions to improve conflict management skills. With the right approach, the principal can create a harmonious and productive work environment.

Discussion

This study focuses on several aspects of human resource management at SD Negeri 17 Palu, particularly in the context of the principal's performance, as observed through interviews with teachers. One of the issues raised is the principal's role in the recruitment and selection of educators. Teachers consider that recruitment practices have not been carried out fairly and based on actual competence. Nepotism, where the principal prioritizes immediate family members, is not uncommon and can create injustice within the institution, which in turn reduces public trust in educational institutions (A'yun, 2022; Hakim et al., 2024). Research by Hakim et al. (2024) also confirms that the application of transparent and fair management principles is crucial for having a positive influence on public trust and staff morale.

In terms of performance evaluation, principals tend to be considered less transparent, as evaluation criteria are often not conveyed evenly to all teachers (Devi & Wiyasa, 2021). The importance of clear communication in the evaluation process to create an objective and inclusive assessment system is also emphasized in the literature (Herman, 2020; Wakini et al., 2021). Without fair performance-based assessments, the quality of education in schools can be threatened. Jatmika (2023) notes that evaluations carried out without considering the current achievements of teachers can hinder the goal of improving the quality of education. For this reason, a more careful and objective evaluation system needs to be developed (Ihsan & Soleha, 2024; Jatmika, 2023).

Conflict management in schools is also a challenge for principals. In many cases, dependence on third parties to resolve internal problems indicates a lack of managerial ability to resolve conflicts independently (Solehudin, 2021). Previous research shows that principals who can handle conflict proactively can promote a more positive work environment, leading to increased productivity and more harmonious interpersonal relationships (Herlambang, 2023; Solehudin, 2021). Therefore, improving communication and managerial skills for principals is very important (Herman, 2020).

Parental involvement in school activities, on the other hand, received a positive assessment. The principal was considered capable of encouraging collaboration between the school and the community, which is a determining factor in the success of the education program (A'yun, 2022; Herman, 2020). This finding aligns with the research of Devi and Wiyasa, who emphasized the importance of leaders in fostering a collaborative work culture in schools (Devi & Wiyasa, 2021).

To enhance leadership effectiveness, principals are expected to refine further aspects of human resource management, including recruitment, evaluation, and conflict management. These steps are balanced with strengthening communication between principals and staff, which is expected to create a more productive and fair work environment. Strengthening interpersonal

relationships and implementing a more effective evaluation system will significantly contribute to improving the quality of education at SD Negeri 17 Palu (Fauzi, 2021; Hanim et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on this study, the principal's performance in managing human resources at SD Negeri 17 Palu still faces several significant challenges. One of them is the lack of transparency in the teacher recruitment and selection process, which prioritizes family relationships over the required competencies. This creates injustice and has the potential to damage the morale and professionalism of staff. This practice of nepotism also contributes to the decline in the quality of education and erodes public trust in schools. Principals need to ensure that the selection process is carried out fairly and based on competencies to improve the quality of human resources in schools.

In addition, the performance evaluation conducted by the principal is also considered non-transparent and unfair. Most teachers feel that they do not receive clear direction on the assessment criteria used, which leads to an imbalance in their performance assessments. Ineffective conflict management is also a significant problem, with a reliance on third parties to resolve issues in the school environment. To improve the quality of human resource management, the principal needs to enhance communication with staff and develop a more fair and objective evaluation system. This will create a more harmonious and productive work environment and can improve the quality of education at SD Negeri 17 Palu.

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