

The Influence of Human Resource Management on Teacher Work Motivation

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ABSTRACT

Effective human resource management contributes significantly to enhancing teachers' motivation and improving the quality of learning. This study aims to examine the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) work on the motivation of junior high school teachers. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study focuses on an in-depth understanding of HRM practices in schools and teachers' perceptions of their influence on work motivation. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with principals and teachers, direct observation in the school environment, and documentation studies related to HRM policies and practices. Data analysis was carried out using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of HRM including recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and rewarding in general has a positive contribution to teacher work motivation, especially in terms of teaching enthusiasm, loyalty, and sense of responsibility. However, several obstacles were also found such as limited ongoing training and the lack of a fair reward system. This study recommends the need to strengthen HRM strategies based on teacher needs in order to improve the quality and work enthusiasm sustainably.

Keywords: Educational Management, Human Resource Management, Junior High Schools, Teacher Motivation, Work Motivation.

ABSTRAK

Manajemen sumber daya manusia yang efektif memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan motivasi guru dan peningkatan mutu pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dampak Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia (MSDM) terhadap motivasi kerja guru SMP. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini berfokus pada pemahaman mendalam tentang praktik MSDM di sekolah dan persepsi guru tentang pengaruhnya terhadap motivasi kerja. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan kepala sekolah dan guru, observasi langsung di lingkungan sekolah, dan studi dokumentasi terkait kebijakan dan praktik MSDM. Analisis data dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknik reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan MSDM yang meliputi rekrutmen, pelatihan, evaluasi kinerja, dan pemberian penghargaan secara umum memiliki kontribusi positif terhadap motivasi kerja guru, terutama dalam hal semangat

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mengajar, loyalitas, dan rasa tanggung jawab. Namun, ditemukan pula beberapa kendala seperti terbatasnya pelatihan berkelanjutan dan belum adanya sistem penghargaan yang adil. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan perlunya penguatan strategi MSDM yang berbasis pada kebutuhan guru guna meningkatkan mutu dan semangat kerja secara berkelanjutan..

Kata kunci: *Manajemen Pendidikan, Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia, Motivasi Guru, Kota Motivasi Kerja, SMP.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the main pillar in developing quality human resources. In this context, the role of teachers is very central as the main implementers of the learning process in schools. The quality and enthusiasm of teachers are greatly influenced by various factors, one of which is Human Resource Management (HR) in the school environment (Rasheed et al., 2016; Runhaar, 2017; Sukawati et al., 2020; Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023). Effective HR can create a positive work climate, improve teacher performance, and build high work motivation (Eppich et al., 2019; Dekawati et al., 2021; Muazza, 2021). HR that is planned and integrated into the school system not only focuses on administrative aspects but also touches on the dimensions of continuous teacher professional development (Reina & Scarozza, 2021). Such a work environment creates a sense of belonging and commitment to the institution, which ultimately has an impact on improving the quality of learning.

The implementation of good human resource management can be seen in schools that are able to maintain the stability of teacher performance through a participatory and collaborative leadership approach. The principal not only acts as a manager, but also as a leader of change who encourages teacher innovation and self-development (Steinert et al., 2016; Stringer & Hourani, 2016; Wiyono, 2018). Therefore, investment in strengthening human resources in the education sector is not only important, but is a strategic key in forming quality, competitive teachers who are oriented towards achieving optimal student learning outcomes. However, in reality, many schools still face challenges in managing human resources optimally. In several Junior High Schools (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama/SMP*) in Tebing Tinggi City, for example, human resource development practices were found to be not fully structured and oriented towards teacher development. Problems such as lack of continuous training, a performance appraisal system that is not yet transparent, and unequal rewards often trigger low teacher work motivation (Narenji et al., 2022; Lenning et al., 2023; Tuytens et al., 2023; Mikelsone et al., 2024). In addition, not all educational units are able to manage their human resources optimally.

Subrahmanyam (2017), Mahaputra and Farhan (2021), and Amini et al. (2022) stated that low teacher work motivation can have a direct impact on the quality of learning, discipline, and loyalty to educational institutions. Therefore, it is important to understand how HR practices are implemented in schools and to what extent these practices affect teacher work motivation. Pelletier and Rocchi (2016) and Viseu et al. (2017) Teacher work motivation is a very important psychological aspect in the learning process in schools. When work motivation is low, teachers tend to show symptoms such as reduced initiative in developing teaching materials, reduced positive interactions with students, and increased levels of absenteeism or lateness in carrying out tasks (Bjekić et al., 2014). In the context of Human Resource Management (HRM), practices such as rewarding, clear career paths, ongoing coaching, and open and supportive communication have been shown to play an important role in maintaining and improving teacher work motivation.

The human resource development approach that includes workforce planning, training, performance evaluation, and fair rewards can be the key to building teacher work motivation sustainably (Mulang, 2021; Munawar et al., 2022; Khaeruman et al., 2024; Al-Sabi et al., 2024). Therefore, this study is important to conduct in order to examine in more depth how human resource development practices in the junior high school environment are implemented and how they impact teacher work motivation. This study

aims to describe and analyze the influence of Human Resource Management (HRM) on the work motivation of junior high school teachers. Through a deeper understanding, it is hoped that this study can contribute to developing a more appropriate and relevant human resource development strategy to increase teacher work motivation in junior high schools, especially in Tebing Tinggi City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a strategic role in enhancing education quality, particularly through managing teachers as key actors in the learning process. According to Mathis and Jackson (2011), HRM encompasses workforce planning, recruitment, training and development, performance evaluation, and reward systems. Díez et al. (2020) emphasized that effective HRM implementation directly improves teaching quality and student outcomes. At the school level, HRM policies are operationalized through professional development programs, academic supervision, performance-based incentives, and clear career pathways. The principal serves as an educational leader, fostering a supportive and motivating work environment. A participatory leadership approach is essential to promoting teacher motivation and commitment to continuous improvement.

According to Abbaspour et al. (2024), an effective principal not only focuses on administrative aspects, but also actively builds a collaborative work culture, provides constructive performance feedback, and supports teacher competency improvement through workshops, training, and self-development programs. When teachers feel appreciated and supported, they tend to show high loyalty, strong motivation, and commitment to improving the quality of learning. On the other hand, the Education Office also plays an important role in setting teacher competency standards, formulating incentive policies, and monitoring and evaluating teacher performance periodically. Targeted and continuous intervention from the office can strengthen the implementation of human resource management at the school level, and ensure the suitability between central policies and practices in the field. Thus, synergy between the principal and the Education Office in planning and implementing teacher development policies is key to creating a productive and motivating work environment. This is in line with the strategic human resource management approach that places teachers as the main asset in improving the quality of education.

Work Motivation

Work motivation is an internal or external drive that influences an individual's desire to carry out tasks optimally. Bassett-Jones and Lloyd (2005) divides motivation into two factors, namely motivator factors and hygiene factors. In the context of teachers, work motivation is influenced by satisfaction with school policies, performance rewards, and career development opportunities (Forson et al., 2021). Satisfaction with school policies reflects the extent to which teachers feel that the policies implemented support their professional needs and well-being. Policies that are fair, transparent, and involve teacher participation in decision-making tend to increase a sense of ownership and responsibility for their work. For example, a flexible scheduling system, transparency in assignments, and open communication between teachers and school management contribute greatly to work comfort.

Performance rewards are a key component of Human Resource Management (HRM) that directly impact teacher motivation, both intrinsically and extrinsically. Teachers who feel recognized for their contributions whether through financial incentives, symbolic awards, job promotions, or opportunities to present in professional forums tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment, loyalty, and job satisfaction. This finding aligns with Turabik and Baskan's (2015) motivation theory, which emphasizes that motivation is influenced by an individual's perception of the relationship between effort, performance, and rewards.

Career development opportunities, such as training, advanced certification, and opportunities for further study, also play a major role in maintaining high teacher work motivation. When teachers see a clear and open career path, they are more motivated to improve their competence and contribute optimally. In addition, systematic career development provides long-term hope, which can reduce work boredom and increase professional satisfaction. Thus, these three aspects - fair policies, appropriate rewards, and structured career development - are an integral part of human resource management strategies that can be used to increase teacher work motivation sustainably.

Human Resource and Work Motivation

Several studies have shown that effective HR practices have a positive correlation with teacher work motivation. Elrayah and Semlali's (2023) study found that continuous training, fair performance evaluation, and rewards can significantly improve teacher motivation and performance. Another study by Tafonao et al. (2024) in several public schools in North Sumatra concluded that the better the HR planning and implementation, the higher the level of teacher satisfaction and work motivation. The results of Tafonao et al.'s (2024) study strengthen the view that a strategic approach to human resource management has a direct impact on the quality of the teacher's work environment. Good HR planning includes the process of identifying educator needs based on competency, proportional distribution of workload, and mapping of teacher potential and career levels. When teachers feel that their roles and potential are appreciated from the planning stage, this creates a sense of fairness and increases work commitment.

Effective HR implementation, such as the implementation of a competency-based performance evaluation system, transparent absence management, and providing constructive feedback, has been shown to foster a sense of satisfaction in carrying out tasks. This shows that managerial and psychological factors in human resource management cannot be ignored; teachers not only need a neat work system, but also recognition and trust from the leadership. Thus, the findings are empirical evidence that planned and integrated human resource management practices with teacher needs play an important role in forming positive work motivation. In this context, school principals and education offices need to review the human resource management approach that has been implemented so far, in order to be able to create a productive, fair, and motivating work environment.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to deeply understand the practice of Human Resource Management (HRM) in schools and how teachers interpret its influence on their work motivation. This approach was chosen because it is considered capable of capturing social dynamics and subjective meanings that cannot be explained quantitatively, especially in the context of the interaction between management policies and individual teacher experiences. This research was conducted in several junior high schools in Tebing Tinggi City, North Sumatra Province. The data collection process was carried out through a combination of three main methods, namely in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with principals and teachers in several junior high schools, allowing researchers to dig deeper into their experiences and perceptions of HRM aspects such as recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and reward systems.

Direct observation was conducted in the school environment to record real practices that occur in daily interactions between management and teachers, as well as to capture nuances of the work atmosphere that may not be expressed verbally. The documentation method complements the two previous techniques by reviewing school policy archives such as SOPs, teacher performance reports, and training records that provide an administrative framework for existing HRM practices. The data obtained were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction was carried out to filter relevant and important

information, which was then arranged in the form of narratives, thematic tables, and matrices to facilitate the identification of emerging patterns. The conclusions obtained were not only temporary but were continuously verified through a triangulation process between data sources, techniques, and time, as well as reconfirmation to informants through a member checking mechanism. Thus, the methodological approach in this study not only aims to describe the empirical reality in the field, but also to reconstruct the social meaning contained in the teacher's experience in the HR system run by the school.

RESULTS

Human Resource Management (HRM)

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic approach to managing people who work in an organization so that they can contribute optimally to achieving the organization's goals (Agustian et al., 2023). In the context of education, HRM is very important because teachers and education personnel are the main elements that determine the success of the teaching and learning process (Rasheed et al., 2016; Cobanoglu et al., 2018; Sukawati et al., 2020). In the context of education, the implementation of effective Human Resource Management (HRM) does not only focus on administrative aspects, but also includes planning, developing, and maintaining professional and dedicated educators (Sušanj et al., 2020). Teachers as the main actors in the learning process must be managed systematically so that their potential can be maximized, both in terms of pedagogical, professional, personality, and social competence.

Good HRM implementation in a school environment includes a selective and needs-based recruitment process, ongoing training that is tailored to the challenges and dynamics of learning, objective and constructive performance assessments, and a fair and transparent reward and promotion system. When all these processes run in an integrated manner, a conducive working atmosphere will be created and motivate teachers to continue to develop and provide their best contribution. Thus, human resource management in the world of education is not just about regulating the number of teachers available, but how to create a system that allows each individual to grow professionally and contribute maximally to the progress of the school. The implementation of strategic and sustainable HR principles is very important to improve teacher performance and ensure the achievement of national education goals.

Human Resource Management (HRM) implementation in schools still varies. Schools with strong leadership and structured management tend to apply HRM more effectively, especially in coaching, competency development, and performance evaluation. In this case, teachers are positioned not only as task executors, but as strategic assets that must be managed with a humane approach and based on capacity development. The HR approach in education can also be associated with Gary Becker's Human Capital theory which emphasizes that investment in human resource development, through education and training, will result in increased work productivity. When applied in the context of schools, investment in teacher training, providing appropriate incentives, and creating a supportive work climate will have a direct impact on teacher performance and indirectly improve the quality of student learning outcomes.

However, there are still obstacles in the optimal implementation of HR, such as budget limitations, the absence of a performance-based reward system, and the unequal understanding of the principals about the importance of strategic HR management. This shows that managerial training for principals and education personnel is needed so that HR principles are not just discourse, but are truly implemented in the school environment. HR in the school environment includes various activities, such as teacher needs planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation management, and awarding. The main objective of HR is to ensure that human resources in this case teachers and education personnel—have adequate competence, motivation, and welfare to carry out their roles and responsibilities such as Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation and Awards, and Work Environment and Interpersonal Relationships.

Good implementation of HR will have a positive impact on teacher work motivation. Teachers who feel cared for and appreciated will show high loyalty, consistent work enthusiasm, and better teaching quality. Conversely, poor human resource management will lead to job dissatisfaction, internal conflict, and decreased quality of education. Therefore, HR must be viewed as an integral part of overall school management. Principals need to have a good understanding of HR principles and be able to implement them effectively and sustainably.

Teacher Work Motivation

Teacher work motivation is an internal and external drive that influences the enthusiasm, commitment, and productivity of teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in the school environment (Sariakin et al., 2025). Work motivation is an important aspect that determines the quality of learning, teacher professionalism, and overall educational success. In general, teacher work motivation can be influenced by various factors, both from within the teacher himself (intrinsic) and from outside. Intrinsic motivation includes love for the profession, a calling to educate, and personal satisfaction when seeing the progress of students. While extrinsic motivation includes aspects such as salary, benefits, awards, work environment, support from superiors, and school policies. Teachers who have high intrinsic motivation usually show dedication, integrity, and consistent work enthusiasm. They do not only teach to fulfill their obligations, but really try to inspire and shape the character of students. A sense of pride in their profession, a desire to contribute to national development, and a love of the teaching and learning process are factors that encourage teachers to remain enthusiastic despite facing various challenges.

A supportive work environment, participatory leadership, fair rewards, and welfare guarantees are key factors in fostering teachers' extrinsic motivation. When these needs are met, teachers feel valued and supported, which drives them to improve their performance. Conversely, lack of recognition can reduce motivation. Motivated teachers tend to be more creative in designing learning strategies, actively engage in training, build positive relationships, and manage classrooms more effectively.

Therefore, teacher work motivation has a direct influence on the quality of education in schools. Motivation Improvement Strategy To improve teacher work motivation, schools need to create a positive work atmosphere, provide opportunities for professional development, provide appropriate rewards, and build open communication. The role of the principal is very important as a leader who is able to inspire, guide, and support teachers in carrying out their duties. By understanding the importance of teacher work motivation, various school management policies and practices, especially in terms of human resource management, need to be directed to create working conditions that support teacher professional growth and job satisfaction. In the long term, this will contribute to improving the overall quality of education.

Junior High School Teacher Performance

The performance of junior high school teachers in Tebing Tinggi City shows a positive tendency influenced by various internal and external factors. At SMP Negeri 7 Tebing Tinggi, the results of the study showed that peer relationship orientation and task orientation play an important role in driving teacher performance. According to Silalahi (2022), as many as 27.85% of respondents stated that the relationship between teachers was in the active category, while 29.6% of respondents stated that the implementation of tasks was often carried out. Silalahi (2022) also noted that fostering discipline through exemplary attitudes and effective use of study time was carried out by the principal, including checking teacher attendance and implementing regular supervision, which had an impact on improving teacher performance.

Meanwhile, at SMP Negeri 5 Tebing Tinggi, the results of the study showed that the principal played an active role in creating a conducive work environment, by involving teachers in coordinating tasks and conducting regular monitoring and evaluation. These

efforts have proven effective in maintaining and improving teacher performance which is considered quite high based on internal assessment indicators (Siahaan & Prasetya, 2023). In addition, research in Rambutan Regency explained by Jayanti et al. (2024) on the influence of salary and organizational culture on teacher performance also provides additional insight that welfare and work culture values contribute to teacher productivity in the school environment.

Table 1. Junior High School Teacher Performance Data in Tebing Tinggi City, North Sumatra

School	Number of Teachers	Percentage of Certified Teachers	Percentage of Educational Qualifications (S1/D4)	Student to Teacher Ratio	Additional Notes
State Junior High School 1 Tebing Tinggi	69	55.07%	75.36%	19.1	The majority of teachers have civil servant status (57.97%)
State Junior High School 3 Tebing Tinggi	62	51.61%	87.10%	15.02	The student/teacher ratio is better than State Junior High School 1 Tebing Tinggi
State Junior High School 5 Tebing Tinggi	44	70.45%	95.45%	14.84	The highest percentage of certification and qualifications among the schools surveyed apart from State Junior High School 7 Tebing Tinggi
State Junior High School 7 Tebing Tinggi	54	72.22%	100 %	12.77	The principal's leadership is participatory, the relationship between teachers is quite active

Based on Table 1 it shows that, schools with low student-to-teacher ratios and high certification levels show the potential for more optimal teacher performance. Principal leadership and teacher personal competence have been shown to have a significant influence on performance, although not always reflected in formal statistics. Schools such as SMP Negeri 5 Tebing Tinggi which have a low student-to-teacher ratio and high teacher certification and qualification levels tend to be able to create a more conducive and personal learning atmosphere. This has a direct impact on the effectiveness of material delivery, attention to student development, and improved learning outcomes. Research at SMP Negeri 7 shows the importance of harmonious relationships between teachers and clear work orientation as factors that strengthen enthusiasm and motivation in carrying out teaching duties. Findings in Padang Hulu Regency strengthen that the development of teacher competence, both pedagogical, professional, and social competence, has a close relationship with improving teacher performance.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of teacher performance in Tebing Tinggi City highlights the important role of effective Human Resource Management (HRM) in improving the quality of education. Although policies such as ongoing training, principal supervision, and career development programs have been introduced, their implementation is still inconsistent across schools. This is in line with research by Amini et al. (2022) and Agustian et al. (2023) states that this inconsistency reflects weak coordination and planning in some

educational units. According to Mathis and Jackson (2011) and Khoei and Singh (2024), successful HRM requires systemic integration of planning, development, performance evaluation, and compensation. When these components are not implemented properly, teacher motivation tends to decline, especially when individuals feel unrecognized or treated unfairly, as described in the Turabik and Baskan (2015) and Asipi et al. (2022) motivation model. These findings indicate the need for data-driven HRM policies and adaptive monitoring systems to ensure consistent implementation. However, challenges such as limited resources remain and rigid bureaucratic structures are major barriers to responsive and equitable HRM practices.

The results of the study show that a collaborative work atmosphere and participatory principal leadership are the main drivers of improving teacher performance. Principals who are able to build positive interpersonal relationships, provide clear direction, and encourage innovation in the school environment will create a healthy and productive work climate. Teachers who feel appreciated, given space to develop, and receive support will be more motivated to give their best performance (Burhan et al., 2024). The findings of this study indicate that the effectiveness of principal leadership in supervising teacher performance is not optimal due to dependence on physical presence which causes inconsistency. These results are in line with the studies of Cobanoglu et al. (2018), Dekawati et al. (2021), and Burhan et al. (2024) which highlight the weakness of individual-based supervision without a structured system. According to Mathis and Jackson (2011), effective supervision requires a sustainable system that does not only depend on certain figures. Turabik and Baskan's (2015) motivational model also emphasizes the importance of consistent support and feedback in maintaining teacher motivation. This study strengthens previous findings while offering new contributions through the proposal to utilize technology and digital monitoring systems so that supervision is more consistent, measurable, and does not depend on the presence of the principal. Challenges such as technological limitations and resistance to digital change must still be overcome.

The principal's efforts to improve teacher performance are also seen through the implementation of teacher capacity building programs (Rasheed et al., 2016; Muazza, 2021; Narenji et al., 2022). This program includes providing motivation to continue education, rewards for performance, and recognition of individual achievements. These steps contribute to improving teacher professionalism. The findings also confirm that the quality of education at the junior high school level in Tebing Tinggi City is not only determined by the number of teachers and formal qualifications, but also by the quality of teacher professionalism and a supportive work environment. Numerical indicators such as the student-to-teacher ratio are important, but not enough to explain the overall performance of teachers (Silalahi, 2022; Lenning et al., 2023). Investment in continuous training and development is also essential to maintain consistency and improve teacher performance (Rasheed et al., 2016; Runhaar, 2017). The performance of junior high school teachers in Tebing Tinggi City is the result of a combination of factors, including the leadership of the principal, the work environment, individual competencies, and the welfare and culture of the organization. Therefore, an integrated strategy is needed that considers all of these aspects to improve the quality of education sustainably.

CONCLUSION

The performance of Junior High School teachers shows positive developments, influenced by the synergy between individual teacher quality, principal leadership, and a supportive work environment. Improved teacher performance is not only determined by formal aspects such as certification and academic qualifications, but also by the principal's ability to build a collaborative work atmosphere and a participatory human resource management system. Schools with a balanced student-to-teacher ratio and high teacher qualification levels—such as SMP Negeri 5 and SMP Negeri 7 show a tendency for more consistent, professional, and highly motivated teacher performance. Principals who carry out leadership functions in a transformative manner, conduct regular supervision, and

involve teachers in decision-making help create a productive and quality-oriented work culture.

Teacher well-being and organizational culture factors have also been shown to play an important role. When teachers feel valued, facilitated to develop, and work in a supportive environment, their professional commitment and responsibility increase significantly. Human Resource Management (HRM) principles that are applied fairly and transparently strengthen the stability and sustainability of performance. There are still problems related to equal access to training, inequality of facilities and infrastructure, and managerial gaps between schools. The effective implementation of fair and transparent Human Resource Management (HRM) principles contributes to maintaining teacher performance stability across schools. The findings reinforce the importance of aligning HRM strategies with teacher support systems to enhance motivation and instructional quality.

For future research, it is recommended to explore the link between teachers' psychological well-being and their capacity for innovative learning. In addition, longitudinal studies are needed to examine the long-term effects of principal leadership practices across different regional and institutional contexts. These directions would provide deeper insights into sustaining teacher performance and advancing educational outcomes.

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