

Human Resource Management Strategy in Early Childhood Education Institutions

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ABSTRAK

Manajemen sumber daya manusia memiliki peran strategis dalam menentukan kualitas pengelolaan lembaga Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD). Pendidik sebagai ujung tombak layanan pendidikan perlu dikelola secara sistematis agar mampu memberikan pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan karakteristik perkembangan anak usia dini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi manajemen sumber daya manusia pada lembaga PAUD dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran dan layanan pendidikan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (library research). Data diperoleh melalui kajian terhadap buku, artikel jurnal ilmiah, dan hasil penelitian terdahulu yang relevan dengan manajemen sumber daya manusia dan pendidikan anak usia dini. Teknik analisis data dilakukan melalui analisis isi dengan mengelompokkan temuan berdasarkan tema strategi manajemen SDM. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa strategi manajemen sumber daya manusia pada lembaga PAUD meliputi perencanaan kebutuhan SDM, rekrutmen dan seleksi pendidik, pengembangan dan pelatihan, penilaian kinerja, serta pemberian penghargaan dan motivasi. Penerapan strategi tersebut secara terintegrasi dan berkelanjutan dapat meningkatkan profesionalisme pendidik, stabilitas tenaga kerja, dan kualitas pembelajaran PAUD.

ABSTRACT

Human resource management plays a strategic role in determining the quality of management in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) institutions. Educators, as the frontline of educational services, need to be managed systematically to ensure the delivery of learning that aligns with the developmental characteristics of early childhood. This study aims to analyze human resource management strategies in PAUD institutions to improve the quality of learning and educational services. The research employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. Data were collected through a review of books, scholarly journal articles, and previous research relevant to human resource management and early childhood education. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis by categorizing findings based on human resource management strategy themes. The results indicate that human resource management strategies in PAUD institutions include human resource planning, recruitment and selection of educators, development and training, performance appraisal, as well as the provision of rewards and motivation. The integrated and sustainable implementation of these strategies can enhance educator professionalism, workforce stability, and the quality of PAUD learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is an educational level that plays a strategic role in establishing the foundation of children's holistic development (Apriyansyah et al., 2024; Shah et al., 2024). The success of ECE implementation is strongly influenced by the quality of human resources involved, particularly educators and educational staff (Cumming et al., 2021; Farewell et al., 2022; Puspitasari et al., 2024). Human resources serve as the main actors in designing, implementing, and evaluating early childhood learning processes (Mumtazah et al., 2023; Rokhim, 2025). Therefore, human resource management in ECE institutions must be conducted professionally and sustainably. Effective human resource management is able to improve educators' performance and the quality of educational services. Moreover, competent human resources contribute to the creation of a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable learning environment for children. Thus, human resource management strategies are a crucial aspect of delivering high-quality ECE institutions.

Human resource management in ECE institutions encompasses various activities, including workforce planning, educator recruitment, competency development, performance appraisal, and reward systems (Alam, 2022; Malik et al., 2022). Each of these stages is interrelated and directly influences the quality of early childhood learning. Human resource management strategies are required to enable ECE institutions to manage educators and educational staff effectively and efficiently. Proper management allows institutions to optimize the potential of their human resources (Hikmayana, 2025; Jenita et al., 2022; Olga, 2023). In addition, well-designed strategies can enhance educators' motivation and professionalism. Without clear management strategies, human resource management tends to be unstructured and ineffective. Therefore, ECE institutions are required to implement systematic and contextual human resource management strategies.

In practice, many ECE institutions continue to face various challenges in managing human resources. One of the primary issues is the low competency level of some ECE educators, which does not yet meet established standards. Furthermore, educator recruitment processes are often not conducted selectively or professionally. The lack of training and competency development programs also hinders the improvement of human resource quality. Another recurring problem is low educator motivation and performance due to inadequate reward systems. These conditions directly affect the quality of learning and educational services in ECE institutions. Therefore, human resource management issues represent an important area that requires in-depth investigation.

Research conducted by Mumtazah, Durrotun, et al. indicates that the management of human resource development at Platinum Qur'an Kindergarten is implemented through continuous training strategies, the strengthening of 21st-century educator competencies, and the

internalization of Islamic values in learning practices. The findings emphasize that the application of adaptive and integrated human resource management strategies is able to enhance educator professionalism as well as the quality of early childhood education services in the context of 21st-century education (Mumtazah et al., 2023). The research conducted by Sukawati, Nadya Nanda, et al. reveals that effective human resources management in basic education schools is implemented through systematic planning, recruitment, development, and evaluation of educators to support institutional goals. The findings indicate that well-managed human resources contribute significantly to improving teacher performance and the overall quality of educational services (Sukawati et al., 2020).

The research conducted by Karoso, Subianto, et al. demonstrates that human resource management strategies play a crucial role in shaping educators' professionalism through structured planning, continuous development, and performance-based evaluation. The study concludes that the implementation of effective HRM strategies significantly contributes to the creation of superior-quality educators and the improvement of educational institution performance (Karoso et al., 2024). The research conducted by Akmaluddin et al. highlights that effective human resource management strategies, including systematic planning, professional development, and performance evaluation, are essential for improving educational quality. The study emphasizes that well-managed human resources positively influence teacher performance and contribute significantly to achieving institutional educational goals. (Akmaluddin et al., 2025).

Based on a review of previous studies, several research gaps remain to be addressed. Most existing studies focus on only one or two aspects of human resource management. Comprehensive studies that examine human resource management strategies in ECE institutions are still relatively limited. In addition, the diverse contexts and characteristics of ECE institutions have not been sufficiently explored in prior research. Strategic approaches to human resource management have also not been examined in depth. Yet, appropriate management strategies are essential for addressing the challenges faced by ECE institutions. These gaps form the basis for conducting the present study.

Based on the background described above, this study aims to examine human resource management strategies in Early Childhood Education institutions. Specifically, this study seeks to analyze how planning, recruitment, development, and performance appraisal of human resources are implemented in ECE institutions. In addition, the study aims to explore the role of human resource management strategies in improving the quality of ECE educators. This research also seeks to identify the challenges faced by ECE institutions in managing human resources. The findings are expected to provide empirical insights into human resource management practices in ECE institutions. Furthermore, the results are expected to serve as evaluative input for ECE

administrators. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of human resource management in Early Childhood Education institutions.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design (Adlini et al., 2022; Majid, 2017). Operationally, the research was conducted by identifying, collecting, and reviewing various written sources relevant to human resource management strategies in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions. Data sources consisted of reference books, scholarly journal articles, previous research findings, and policy documents related to human resource management and early childhood education. The literature search was carried out through national and international journal databases, both in print and online formats. Each source was selected based on topic relevance, author credibility, and alignment with the research objectives. The selected data were then recorded and classified according to the focus of the study. This process was conducted systematically to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis of the collected literature. The researcher examined each source in depth to identify human resource management strategies implemented in ECE institutions. Relevant data were summarized, compared, and categorized into major themes, including human resource planning, recruitment, competency development, and performance appraisal. Subsequently, the results of the analysis were presented in the form of systematic and structured narrative descriptions. Data validity was ensured by comparing findings from various literature sources (Setiawan, 2018). Finally, the results of the analysis were synthesized to address the research objectives in a comprehensive and contextual manner.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a strategic and systematic approach to managing people within an organization to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently (Rustiawan et al., 2023). Human resources are considered the most valuable asset of an organization because they directly influence productivity, innovation, and organizational sustainability. Unlike other resources, human resources possess knowledge, skills, attitudes, and creativity that require proper management and continuous development. HRM focuses not only on administrative functions but also on strategic roles that align human potential with organizational vision and mission. Through effective HRM, organizations can ensure that their workforce contributes optimally to organizational performance and long-term success.

One of the core functions of Human Resource Management is human resource planning, which involves forecasting workforce needs in terms of quantity, quality, and competency. Proper

planning enables organizations to anticipate future demands, manage workforce gaps, and avoid inefficiencies such as staff shortages or surplus. HR planning also considers organizational growth, technological changes, and workforce demographics. By conducting job analysis and competency mapping, organizations can place the right individuals in the right positions. Effective planning serves as the foundation for other HRM functions, ensuring that recruitment, development, and performance management are conducted systematically and purposefully.

Recruitment and selection are critical components of HRM that determine the quality of human resources within an organization (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2002). Recruitment aims to attract qualified candidates, while selection focuses on identifying individuals who best match organizational needs and culture. A transparent and objective recruitment process enhances organizational credibility and ensures fairness. Selection methods such as interviews, competency tests, and psychological assessments help organizations evaluate candidates' abilities, attitudes, and potential. Effective recruitment and selection not only improve individual performance but also contribute to organizational stability by reducing turnover and increasing employee commitment.

Human Resource Management also emphasizes employee development and training as a means of enhancing competencies and adapting to changing environments. Continuous learning is essential in response to technological advancements, globalization, and evolving organizational demands. Training programs improve employees' technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and professional attitudes. Development initiatives such as mentoring, coaching, and career planning help employees grow and prepare for future leadership roles. By investing in employee development, organizations strengthen their internal capacity, increase job satisfaction, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Another essential aspect of HRM is performance management, motivation, and employee retention. Performance appraisal systems enable organizations to evaluate employee contributions, provide constructive feedback, and support professional growth. Fair evaluation practices encourage accountability and continuous improvement. Additionally, motivation strategies including rewards, recognition, career advancement, and a supportive work environment play a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement and loyalty. Effective HRM creates a positive organizational climate where employees feel valued, motivated, and committed. Ultimately, well-managed human resources contribute significantly to organizational effectiveness, service quality, and sustainable development.

Human Resource Management Strategies in Early Childhood Education Institutions

1. Human Resource Planning Strategy

Human resource planning is the initial and most fundamental strategy in human resource management within Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions. This strategy aims to ensure that the number, qualifications, and competencies of educators and educational staff align with institutional needs. In the context of ECE, human resource planning is not solely oriented toward fulfilling staffing requirements but also toward ensuring the quality of educational services provided to young children. Effective planning enables ECE institutions to distribute educators' workloads proportionally. Furthermore, human resource planning helps institutions anticipate future changes in staffing needs. Without careful planning, ECE institutions risk experiencing staff shortages or surpluses, which may lead to ineffective learning processes. Therefore, human resource planning serves as the primary foundation for managing ECE institutions.

In practice, human resource planning is conducted through an analysis of teacher-student ratios in accordance with established standards. ECE institutions must consider the number of learning groups, the ages of learners, and children's developmental characteristics. This analysis assists institutions in determining educator needs more accurately. In addition, human resource planning includes identifying the roles of non-teaching educational staff. With proper planning, each staff member can perform duties according to their respective functions and responsibilities. This improves work efficiency within the ECE environment. Systematic planning also prevents imbalanced workloads. Consequently, the quality of educational services can be optimally maintained.

Human resource planning strategies also include competency mapping of existing educators. This mapping aims to identify the abilities, skills, and potential of each educator. Through competency mapping, institutions can recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their human resources. This information serves as the basis for designing human resource development programs. Moreover, competency mapping assists institutions in placing educators according to their expertise. Appropriate placement enhances educator performance and positively affects early childhood learning processes. Thus, competency mapping constitutes an essential component of human resource planning in ECE institutions.

Human resource planning in ECE institutions must also consider academic qualifications and professional standards (Igbinomwanhia et al., 2021). Ideally, ECE educators possess relevant educational backgrounds and a solid understanding of child development. Effective planning enables institutions to identify the need for upgrading educators' qualifications. In addition, institutions can plan professional training or further education programs. Through such planning, human resource quality improvement can be implemented gradually and systematically. Proper planning also prevents reliance on underqualified

educators, which is crucial for maintaining ECE quality standards. Hence, human resource planning plays a vital role in enhancing educator professionalism.

Beyond internal considerations, human resource planning is closely related to institutional sustainability. ECE institutions must consider factors such as educators' age, retirement potential, and staff turnover rates. Visionary planning enables institutions to anticipate staffing vacancies and avoid disruptions in the learning process. Effective human resource planning also supports institutional development in the future, allowing ECE institutions to expand educational services with adequate human resource readiness. This demonstrates that human resource planning is strategic in nature. With appropriate strategies, ECE institutions can achieve sustainable growth.

2. Recruitment and Selection Strategy for ECE Educators

Recruitment and selection strategies are essential components of human resource management in ECE institutions (Sukawati et al., 2020). Recruitment aims to obtain educators who possess both competence and commitment to early childhood education. A well-designed recruitment process determines the quality of human resources within an institution. Therefore, ECE institutions must implement professional and well-planned recruitment systems. Recruitment is not merely intended to fill staffing vacancies; rather, it seeks to ensure alignment between educators and the institution's vision and mission. Through appropriate strategies, ECE institutions can acquire qualified and dedicated educators.

In implementation, recruitment strategies begin with establishing clear criteria for prospective educators. These criteria include educational background, pedagogical competence, attitudes, and personality traits. The selection process may involve administrative screening to verify document suitability, followed by interviews to explore candidates' motivation and commitment. Additionally, competency tests or microteaching sessions may be conducted to assess teaching skills. Through systematic selection stages, institutions can recruit educators who meet established standards. Rigorous selection helps maintain the quality of ECE educational services and highlights the importance of professionalism in recruitment practices.

Recruitment strategies must also consider the psychological and emotional aspects of prospective educators. ECE educators are required to demonstrate patience, empathy, and effective interaction skills with young children. Therefore, personality assessment is an integral part of the selection strategy. Institutions must ensure that candidates possess mental readiness to work with early childhood learners. Moreover, educators must be capable of collaborating with colleagues and parents. Attention to these aspects helps prevent workplace

conflicts and promotes adaptability. Educators with suitable personalities contribute positively to the learning environment.

Effective recruitment strategies also influence educator stability within ECE institutions. Educators recruited in alignment with institutional needs and culture tend to demonstrate higher loyalty. Loyalty is essential for maintaining continuity in children's learning experiences. Low educator turnover fosters a stable learning environment, which is particularly important for early childhood learners who require consistency. Consequently, appropriate recruitment has long-term implications for children's development and institutional planning. Thus, recruitment functions as a strategic element in ECE human resource management.

Literature reviews indicate that many challenges in ECE institutions stem from unselective recruitment practices. Educators who do not meet qualification standards may reduce learning quality, while lack of commitment affects service delivery. Therefore, recruitment and selection should be prioritized within ECE management. Professional recruitment processes result in competent and dedicated educators, enabling early childhood education objectives to be effectively achieved. This underscores the critical role of recruitment strategies in managing ECE human resources.

3. Human Resource Development and Training Strategy

Human resource development and training constitute vital strategies for improving the quality of human resources in ECE institutions (Aina & Bipath, 2022). These strategies aim to enhance educators' competencies in response to evolving trends in early childhood education. The ECE field continuously develops in terms of curriculum and learning approaches, requiring educators to continuously update their knowledge and skills. Human resource development represents a long-term investment for ECE institutions. Institutions that prioritize educator development tend to achieve higher learning quality. Therefore, this strategy is a core component of ECE human resource management.

In practice, human resource development may be implemented through various training programs. Internal training may include regular discussions, academic supervision, and workshops, while external training may involve seminars, professional development programs, or further education. Through these activities, educators gain updated insights into ECE learning practices and enhance classroom skills. Well-trained educators demonstrate greater confidence in teaching, which positively influences interactions with children. Thus, training serves as an effective means of improving human resource quality.

Human resource development strategies should be tailored to individual educator needs, recognizing differences in background and potential. ECE institutions must conduct training needs analyses to identify relevant programs. This approach ensures that

development initiatives are effective and efficient. Educators receive training aligned with their professional responsibilities, leading to optimal performance improvement. Hence, targeted development strategies enhance human resource effectiveness.

In addition to competency enhancement, human resource development positively affects educator motivation. Opportunities for professional growth foster a sense of appreciation, increasing job satisfaction and loyalty. This contributes to a positive work atmosphere within ECE institutions, supporting high-quality learning environments. Motivated educators are more creative and innovative in teaching, further improving educational quality. Thus, human resource development contributes comprehensively to ECE quality improvement.

Literature indicates that ECE institutions actively engaged in training initiatives demonstrate higher learning quality, while limited training hinders educators' ability to adapt to educational advancements. Therefore, human resource development should remain a central agenda in ECE management. Continuous development ensures educator professionalism, supports high-quality educational services, and enhances institutional competitiveness. Human resource development thus represents a key determinant of ECE success.

4. Human Resource Performance Appraisal Strategy

Performance appraisal is a crucial strategy in human resource management within ECE institutions. It aims to assess the extent to which educators effectively fulfill their professional responsibilities. Through performance appraisal, institutions can measure educator work quality and implement continuous improvement. Performance appraisal also serves as a foundation for managerial decision-making, highlighting its importance in ECE management.

In implementation, performance appraisal is conducted through classroom observations and administrative evaluations. Institutional leaders or ECE administrators play key roles in this process, which should be conducted periodically and continuously. Appraisal results provide insights into educator performance and identify challenges faced. These findings serve as a basis for providing targeted support and professional guidance. Thus, performance appraisal functions as a developmental tool that enhances ECE educational quality.

Performance appraisal strategies must be objective and transparent. Educators should clearly understand appraisal indicators and criteria. Transparency fosters trust and enhances motivation, while fair assessment encourages openness to feedback. Rather than generating

fear, appraisal should function as a learning and development mechanism, fostering a positive work culture.

Performance appraisal outcomes may inform human resource development initiatives. Educators requiring improvement can receive targeted training, while high-performing educators may receive recognition. Consequently, performance appraisal aligns closely with other human resource management strategies, supporting sustainable quality enhancement and informed policy formulation within ECE institutions.

Literature suggests that unsystematic performance appraisal negatively affects educator motivation. Therefore, ECE institutions must implement professional appraisal systems. Effective appraisal improves educator quality, maintains educational standards, and supports institutional sustainability. Performance appraisal thus constitutes a critical factor in ECE human resource management success.

5. Reward and Motivation Strategy for ECE Educators

Reward and motivation strategies represent essential components of human resource management in ECE institutions. Rewards function as recognition for educator performance and aim to enhance motivation and job satisfaction. Motivated educators demonstrate optimal performance and increased institutional loyalty. Thus, rewards play a vital role in ECE human resource management.

In practice, rewards may be non-material, such as recognition, training opportunities, or increased responsibilities. Institutions must adapt reward forms to contextual conditions. Appropriate rewards boost morale, foster positive work climates, and encourage sustained performance improvement. Educators who feel valued are more committed to their professional roles.

Motivation strategies also involve meeting educators' professional and psychological needs. Supportive work environments, effective communication, and educator involvement in decision-making enhance motivation. Such environments promote staff retention and stability, positively influencing ECE institutional performance.

Consistent reward and motivation strategies strengthen educator loyalty, ensuring learning continuity. Low educator turnover fosters stable learning environments essential for young children's development. Retaining high-quality educators supports educational program success and institutional effectiveness.

Literature indicates that insufficient rewards often result in low educator motivation. Therefore, systematic reward strategies are necessary. Appropriate rewards improve educator performance, enhance educational quality, and contribute to positive work environments. Reward and motivation strategies complement other human resource

management approaches, underscoring the importance of holistic management in ECE institutions.

CONCLUSION

Human resource management strategies play a very important role in improving the quality of PAUD (Early Childhood Education) institution management. The implementation of strategies related to human resource planning, recruitment and selection of educators, development and training, performance appraisal, as well as the provision of rewards and motivation must be carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner. Effective human resource management enables PAUD institutions to have educators who are competent, professional, and committed to supporting early childhood development. In addition, appropriate human resource management strategies can create a conducive and stable working environment for educators. This condition has a direct impact on improving the quality of learning processes and early childhood education services. Therefore, the success of PAUD institutions in achieving educational goals is largely determined by the effectiveness of implementing comprehensive and systematic human resource management strategies.

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