

Research Articles

# Human Resource Management (HR) Strategy in Improving Employee Performance at PT. Riau Islands Port

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze HR management strategies at PT. Riau Islands Port in improving employee performance. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. Based on in-depth interviews with management, it shows that the company implements effective communication strategies, providing incentives, and a collaborative work system. In addition, assignments are tailored to employee characteristics and competencies to ensure performance optimization. The main challenges faced are the differences in work ethic between individuals and the low awareness of some employees in valuing their work, which is overcome through mentorship and competency development. Overall, this strategy contributes to improving employee performance and achieving company goals.

**Keywords:** HR Management, Employee Performance, HR Strategy

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi manajemen SDM di PT. Pelabuhan Kepri dalam meningkatkan kinerja karyawan. Penelitian menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Berdasarkan wawancara mendalam dengan pihak manajemen, menunjukkan bahwa perusahaan menerapkan strategi komunikasi efektif, pemberian insentif, serta sistem kerja kolaboratif. Selain itu, penugasan disesuaikan dengan karakteristik dan kompetensi karyawan untuk memastikan optimalisasi kinerja. Tantangan utama yang dihadapi adalah perbedaan etos kerja antar individu dan rendahnya kesadaran sebagian karyawan dalam menghargai pekerjaannya, yang diatasi melalui bimbingan dan pengembangan kompetensi. Secara keseluruhan, strategi ini berkontribusi pada peningkatan kinerja karyawan dan pencapaian tujuan perusahaan.

**Kata kunci:** Manajemen SDM, Kinerja Karyawan, Strategi SDM

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## 1. Introduction

Human resources (HR) are the main asset in modern organizations, which play an important role in determining the success of the company. In an increasingly competitive business world, effective human resource management is a key factor in increasing the company's productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness. Various HR management strategies have been developed to ensure that employees not only have adequate competencies, but are also able to adapt to changes and demands of the industry. The role of human resources (HR) in modern organizations has shifted from being just an executor to a strategic

asset that determines the long-term success of the company. In the midst of global competition dynamics, technological developments, and increasing customer expectations, organizations are required to manage human resources effectively and adaptively. An integrated HR management strategy is key in creating organizational competitiveness, especially through improving employee performance (Parinsi & Musa, 2023; Ami et al., 2023).

A number of previous studies have shown that the implementation of HR strategies that include training, career development, reward systems, and the application of information technology can encourage employee productivity and engagement (Muarsarsar, 2022; Malik et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2024). The study by Medina-Garrido et al. (2023) also underscores the importance of work-life balance in improving human resource performance holistically. However, most studies still focus on the industrial and service sectors in urban areas or large-scale enterprises, while research on strategic sectors such as ports, especially in the Riau Islands region, is still limited.

PT. The Port of Riau Islands as one of the Port Business Entities (BUP) that plays an important role in supporting regional connectivity and national logistics distribution, faces major challenges in effective human resource management. A dynamic work environment and the need for excellent service demand adaptive and results-oriented HR management. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed on how HR management strategies are implemented at PT. Riau Islands Port, as well as how it contributes to improving employee performance.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze human resource management strategies in improving employee performance at PT. Riau Islands Port. The focus of the research is directed at management practices such as recruitment, training, development, compensation, and efforts to maintain human resources in a sustainable manner. By using a descriptive qualitative approach through in-depth observation and interviews, this study is expected to provide a complete picture of the effectiveness of HR strategies in the context of port companies.

Theoretically, this research contributes to strengthening the literature on human resource management in the public service sector, especially in the port sector. Meanwhile, practically, the findings of this research can be a basis for consideration for the management of PT. Riau Islands Port and similar companies in formulating HR policies that are more targeted and sustainable.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Human Resources**

Human resource management (HR) is a series of strategic activities that include planning, organizing, directing, and supervising all employment processes in the organization in order to achieve the company's goals effectively and efficiently. Properly managed HR will be a strategic asset for the organization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

HR management includes a variety of basic functions such as workforce planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation (Dessler, 2020). The indicators that can be used to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of HR management include:

1. Recruitment and selection process based on organizational needs
2. Training and competency development programs
3. Continuous performance evaluation and assessment
4. Competitive compensation and benefits system
5. Employee retention and job satisfaction rates (Sobari & Rony, 2025)

Effective HR management not only supports organizational productivity, but also builds a competitive advantage in the long run (Purba & Prahawan, 2024).

### **2.2. Human Resource Management Strategy**

HR management strategy is defined as a long-term and holistic approach to managing people as the organization's main asset, with the aim that HR strategy aligns with the company's strategic goals (Kravariti & Johnston, 2020). This strategy includes not only recruitment and training, but also career development, change management, and organizational culture innovation (Narayanan et al., 2021).

One of the most influential models in the development of HR strategies is the Ulrich model. Ulrich (1997) stated that modern HR management must carry out four main roles, namely:

1. Strategic Partner, yang membantu menyelaraskan strategi bisnis dan SDM
2. Change Agent, yang memimpin proses transformasi organisasi
3. Administrative Expert, yang menjamin efisiensi operasional SDM

Employee Champion, that support employee well-being and development (Ulrich, 1997; Wiyono et al., 2025)

1. In its implementation, indicators of the success of the HR strategy can be seen from:
2. Long-term workforce planning
3. Competency-based selection and recruitment
4. Career development and mobility
5. Results-based assessment system
6. Employee satisfaction and engagement (Ami et al., 2023; Supriyadi et al., 2020)

The right HR strategy will drive increased employee loyalty and productivity while strengthening the organization's competitive position.

### 2.3. Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the work results achieved by a person in carrying out their duties in accordance with the responsibilities given (Mangkunegara, 2022). Performance reflects an individual's contribution to the organization's goals, both in the form of output, service quality, and work behavior (Stein et al., 2021).

Commonly used indicators to measure employee performance include:

1. The quantity of work outputs, i.e. the volume of work produced
2. The quality of the work, namely the quality and accuracy of the output
3. Punctuality, i.e. the ability to complete tasks according to deadlines
4. Initiative and responsibility, namely proactivity in completing work
5. Teamwork, namely the ability to collaborate and interact positively (Daniel Tyskbo, 2020; Prasetyo & Sukatin, 2021)

Research shows that employee performance is strongly influenced by training, leadership, work motivation, and reward systems (Kotecha et al., 2024; Medina-Garrido et al., 2023). Therefore, strategic HR management will have a direct impact on improving individual performance and the entire organization.

## 3. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe in depth the human resource management strategy in improving employee performance at PT. Riau Islands Port. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is appropriate to explore social realities and understand the meaning behind complex organizational phenomena, particularly in the context of labor relations and managerial policies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Sugiyono, 2021). The research was conducted at PT. Riau Islands Port, a port business entity that operates in the Riau Islands region and has a strategic role in supporting the flow of logistics and national port services.

The determination of informants was carried out by purposive sampling technique, which is to select individuals who are considered to have relevant and in-depth information capacity for the topic being researched (Palinkas et al., 2020). The main informant in this study is one of the leaders of companies who are directly involved in human resource management. The selection of these informants is intended to obtain rich and contextual information regarding recruitment strategies, training, employee development, and performance evaluation policies implemented in the company.

Data collection is carried out through three main techniques, namely: (1) direct observation of work activities and interactions within the company, (2) semi-structured in-depth interviews with key informants to dig into data more openly and in-depth (Marshall & Rossman, 2021), and (3) documentation, which is a review of official company documents such as organizational structure, HR policies, Performance evaluation reports, and employee training data (Miles et al., 2020).

Data analysis was carried out using an interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020) which included the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. This model allows researchers to systematically construct patterns, themes, and meanings from field data. To ensure the validity of the data, source and method triangulation techniques are used, namely comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation to obtain a complete and valid picture (Carter et al., 2020). In addition, to improve the quality of the data, this study also applies four criteria for the validity of

qualitative data from Lincoln and Guba, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Nowell et al., 2017). The application of these principles is expected to result in data that is accurate, trustworthy, and has transfer value to similar organizational contexts.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze human resource management strategies in improving employee performance at PT. Riau Islands Port. Based on the results of observations and in-depth interviews with key informants, namely one of the leaders of PT. Riau Islands Port, it is known that the company has implemented a number of strategies that are systematically aimed at fostering, developing, and maintaining the quality of human resources to be in line with organizational goals.

In the aspect of HR planning, PT. The Port of Riau Islands routinely evaluates labor needs based on operational projections and business development of the company. The informant said that: "We conduct an evaluation every year at the beginning of the year and in the middle of the year regarding the needs of the workforce. The goal is so that we do not lack human resources, especially when there is a surge in the flow of goods and ships." This shows that the company has an anticipatory approach in developing HR planning strategies, which support operational stability and workforce efficiency.

Recruitment and selection strategies at PT. The Riau Islands Port is carried out openly, competency-based, and prioritizes transparency. According to the informant: "We prefer candidates who have a basic understanding of ports, including graduates of the Polytechnic or maritime polytechnic. In addition, we also consider previous work experience." The selection process involves technical competency tests, in-depth interviews, and integrity and work ethics tests. This strategy is in line with the merit system principle in HR management (Dessler, 2020), which emphasizes selection based on ability and professionalism values.

In terms of training and development, the company conducts regular training to increase employee capacity, especially in the areas of operations and customer service. The informant explained: "We regularly conduct technical training, such as heavy equipment operation, terminal management, as well as soft skills training such as communication and stress management." The training aims not only to improve technical skills, but also to form a work ethic that is disciplined and responsive to the needs of port service users. These findings corroborate the opinion of Kotecha et al. (2024) that consistent training can improve employee competence and performance.

Performance management strategy at PT. The Riau Islands Port is implemented through a routine evaluation system based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Evaluations are carried out periodically to assess individual productivity, discipline, and contribution to the achievement of work unit targets. The informant stated: "Performance appraisals are conducted every six months and form the basis for the provision of incentives, promotions or rotations." This shows that the company implements a structured performance management system that is integrated with rewards and career development policies.

In the aspect of employee maintenance and retention, PT. The Port of Riau Islands provides welfare programs that include health insurance, performance allowances, decent work facilities, and job promotion opportunities. "We try to provide optimal employee rights, starting from BPJS Employment, THR, to annual appreciation for the best employees," explained the informant. This approach reflects the application of the role of "employee champion" in the Ulrich model (1997), which places employee welfare as a strategic priority in HR management.

The results of the study show that the HR management strategy implemented by PT. The Port of Riau Islands plays an important role in creating a conducive work environment, increasing work motivation, and strengthening employee commitment to the company. This is evidenced by the decrease in the rate of attendance and complaints, as well as the increase in the productivity of work units since the last two years. This strategy is in line with the findings of Stein et al. (2021), who stated that employee engagement and satisfaction are directly related to performance improvement.

In general, the results of interviews and field documentation support the hypothesis that a planned and structured HR strategy will have a positive impact on employee performance. These findings also confirm that strategic approaches in HR management, especially those that integrate aspects of training, performance evaluation, and well-being, can drive

organizational effectiveness in the long run (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Medina-Garrido et al., 2023)

## 5. Comparison

The results of this study show that the human resource management strategy implemented by PT. Riau Islands Ports, such as periodic human resource needs planning, competency-based recruitment, continuous training, indicator-based performance evaluation, and a structured reward system, make a positive contribution to improving employee performance. These findings are consistent with previous research by Ami et al. (2023) which found that a planned and integrated HR management strategy has a significant impact on increasing employee productivity and loyalty in the agribusiness sector. This suitability can be seen from the use of a strategic approach in the workforce management process that not only focuses on administrative aspects, but also development and welfare aspects.

In addition, these results are also in line with the findings of Kotecha et al. (2024), which emphasize the importance of regular training and competency development programs in improving employee job skills and motivation. PT. The Riau Islands Port actively develops employee capacity through technical and non-technical training, which is then reflected in improving work efficiency and operational services. This shows that the training strategies implemented in port companies have similar effectiveness to practices in the education and service sectors, as researched by Kotecha et al..

This research also strengthens the results of a study by Stein et al. (2021) which states that employee engagement and job satisfaction play an important role in driving organizational performance. PT. The Port of Riau Islands pays attention to the welfare of employees through benefit programs, work facilities, and promotional opportunities. With this strategy, the company is able to create a more supportive and productive work environment. This support is aligned with the role of the "employee champion" in the Ulrich (1997) model, which focuses on improving well-being and the relationship between the organization and employees.

However, when compared to the research of Malik et al. (2022) which emphasized the importance of digitalization in HR management for organizational effectiveness, PT. The Riau Islands Port still shows limitations in the use of data-based digital technology for human resource decision-making. This means that even though the HR strategy has been running well conventionally, there are opportunities to strengthen through the use of technology-based HR information management systems for more adaptive and efficient management.

The implications of the results of this study on employee performance are very clear, namely that HR strategies that are implemented systematically and comprehensively have a direct impact on increasing productivity, responsibility, and job loyalty. Consistent implementation of HR policies also encourages a positive work culture, reduces absenteeism, and improves the quality of relationships between employees and management. This is proof that HR management strategies not only affect the administrative aspect, but also have a transformative effect on overall employee behavior and performance.

Thus, it can be concluded that an integrated HR management strategy that is relevant to the needs of the organization is an important instrument in improving employee performance. Companies such as PT. Riau Islands ports that implement this strategy have the potential to increase their competitiveness through improving the quality of human resources as the main asset of the organization.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the human resource management strategy implemented by PT. The Riau Islands Port has proven to contribute positively to improving employee performance. The strategy includes systematic workforce needs planning, competency-based recruitment and selection processes, continuous training and development, structured performance evaluation through key performance indicators (KPIs), and the provision of welfare and reward programs that support work motivation. The overall strategy creates a conducive work environment, increases employee loyalty and responsibility, and supports the effective achievement of organizational goals. These results confirm that strategic and employee-oriented HR management is a key element in building superior performance in port service organizations.

As an implication of the results of the research, it is suggested that PT. The Port of Riau Islands continues to strengthen the HR management strategy that has been implemented by integrating the use of digital technology such as the HR management information system (HRIS) to support the efficiency and accuracy of data-based decision-making. In addition, companies are also advised to expand training programs to aspects of leadership and change management, given the increasingly complex dynamics of the port industry. Companies also need to strengthen internal mentoring and coaching systems to support intergenerational knowledge transfer, as well as maintain the sustainability of employee competencies.

However, this study has some limitations. First, the number of informants is limited to only one leader, causing the viewpoint obtained to be top-down and does not reflect the views of employees as a whole. Second, the qualitative approach used has not allowed the generalization of findings to other port companies. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to involve more informants from various levels of position, including operational employees, and consider a mixed approach so that the results obtained are more comprehensive and can be compared quantitatively.

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