



Employee Performance in Essential Public Services

Raiyan Ahmad^{1*}, Danial L. Asyhari², Supeno Joyo³
Magister Manajemen, Universitas Mataram, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Raiyan Ahmad ahmadraiyan134@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Employee Performance, Public Sector, Fire Department, Job Demands–Resources, Individual Performance

Received : 08, November

Revised : 29, November

Accepted: 28, December

©2025 Ahmad, Asyhari, Joyo: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

Essential public services are basic services that must be provided by the state to ensure the fulfillment of fundamental community needs, such as health, education, security, clean water, and population administration. The quality of essential public services is a key indicator of successful governance, as it is directly related to the welfare and protection of citizens' rights. This study aims to describe the concept and dimensions of employee performance relevant to essential public service organizations, identify and synthesize the determinants of employee performance in the fire department, hospital, and PDAM sectors based on a literature review, analyze the relevance and application of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) framework and the individual performance framework to explain employee performance in these sectors, and develop a cross-sector conceptual framework on the determinants of employee performance that can be used as a basis for empirical research and development of performance management policies. This study found that the main challenges lie in limited resources, inter-agency coordination, and low transparency and accountability. To address these issues, bureaucratic reform is needed that focuses on digitizing services, increasing the capacity of civil servants, and strengthening performance evaluation mechanisms. The results of this study are expected to become a reference for policy makers and managers in public service organizations in designing more targeted performance improvement interventions, for example related to workload design, provision of work resources, leadership patterns, reward systems, and performance measurement mechanisms.

INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a key determinant of organizational success, particularly in the public sector, which has a primary mandate to provide optimal service to the public. In public organizations such as fire departments, hospitals, and water utilities (PDAMs), employee performance effectiveness directly impacts public safety, health, and well-being. The vital, high-risk nature of services, often requiring rapid response, makes improving employee performance a strategic issue for the government.

In this context, the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) theory provides a relevant framework for understanding how job demands and job resources mutually influence employee performance. High job demands without adequate resource support can trigger work stress, burnout, and decreased productivity. Conversely, the availability of resources such as training, superior support, work facilities, and a conducive environment can increase employee motivation, work engagement, and performance.

Thus, it is important to examine how the factors in the JD–R model and the implementation of performance management contribute to improved employee performance in public organizations such as fire departments, hospitals, and water companies. This study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding and serve as a basis for improving human resource management policies in the public sector.

a. Formulation of the problem

Based on this background, the problem formulation in this paper is the concept and dimensions of employee performance that are relevant for public service organizations such as fire departments, hospitals, and PDAM?

1. What are the concepts and dimensions of employee performance that are relevant to public service organizations such as fire departments, hospitals, and PDAMs?
2. How do job demands influence on the individual performance of employees in the public sector?
3. What is the role of job resources?in improving employee motivation and individual performance?
4. What is the relationship between job demands, job resources, and performance management?in shaping the individual performance of employees in the public sector?
5. How can a cross-sector conceptual framework be designed that can form the basis for empirical research and the development of performance management policies in public service organizations?

b. Research purposes

The purpose of compiling this paper is to:

1. Describes the concepts and dimensions of employee performance relevant to essential public service organizations.
2. Identifying and synthesizing the determining factors of employee performance in the firefighting, hospital, and PDAM sectors based on a literature review.

3. Analyzing the role of job resources in improving employee motivation and individual performance.
 4. Analyzing the relationship between job demands, job resources, and performance management in shaping and improving individual employee performance in the public sector.
 5. Develop a cross-sector conceptual framework regarding the determinants of employee performance that can be used as a basis for empirical research and development of performance management policies.
- c. Benefits of research

Theoretically, this study is expected to strengthen the development of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory in the context of the public sector, especially in organizations with critical work characteristics such as fire departments, hospitals, and PDAMs. It can be a reference for further research in understanding the relationship between job demands, job resources, performance management, and individual employee performance in various public sectors. It can also contribute to the public sector performance management literature, especially regarding the determinants of cross-agency performance and how to optimize resources to improve employee performance. (Bakker et al., 2007)

In practice, the resulting conceptual framework is expected to be a reference for policy makers and managers in public service organizations in designing more targeted performance improvement interventions, for example related to workload design, provision of work resources, leadership patterns, reward systems, and performance measurement mechanisms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term "service" comes from the word "layan," which means helping provide everything another person needs for the act of serving. Essentially, every human being needs service; in fact, it can be said to be inseparable from human life (Sinambela, 2010:3).

Meanwhile, the term "public" comes from the English word "public," meaning general, society, or state. The word "public" has actually been adopted into Standard Indonesian as "publik," meaning "general," "many people," or "crowded."

In the Decree of the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment Number 63 of 2003 (STATE, 2003) It has been explained that the definition of public service is all service activities carried out by public service providers as an effort to fulfill the needs of service recipients and the implementation of statutory regulations. While the public service providers in the Decree of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 63 of 2003 are described that Government Agencies are a collective term that includes Work Units/organizational units of Ministries, Departments, Non-Departmental Government Institutions, Secretariats of the Highest and Highest State Institutions, and other Government Agencies, both central and regional, including BUMN, BUMD, Become public service providers. While users of

public service services are people, communities, government agencies and legal entities that receive services from government agencies.

Several experts have provided an understanding of public services, including Agung Kurniawan (2005:6), who said that public services are providing services (serving) the needs of other people or the community who have an interest in the organization in accordance with the basic rules and procedures that have been established.

Arifin (2012) Public service is a systematic and planned process, in which the government or public institutions provide services needed by the community by prioritizing efficiency, effectiveness and justice.

Ratminto (2005) defines that public services or general services can be defined as all forms of service, both in the form of public goods and public services which in principle are the responsibility and are implemented by government agencies at the central, regional and state-owned enterprises or regional-owned enterprises, in the context of efforts to fulfill the needs of the community and in the context of implementing the provisions of laws and regulations.

From the various definitions of public services outlined above, in the context of regional government, public services can be concluded as providing services or serving the needs of people or the community and/or other organizations that have an interest in that organization, in accordance with the basic rules and procedures determined and aimed at providing satisfaction to the recipients of the services.

METHODOLOGY

a. Types and Approaches to Research

This research uses a descriptive-analytical literature review approach. The focus of the research is not on collecting primary data in the field, but rather on collecting, reviewing, and synthesizing the results of previous research relevant to employee performance in essential public service organizations, particularly fire departments, hospitals, and PDAMs.

b. Data source

The data sources in this study are secondary data obtained from national and international journal articles, textbooks, research reports, and policy documents discussing employee performance, the Job Demands-Resources model, and public sector performance measurement. The selected articles focus on individual performance in the public sector or public service organizations and contain information on performance determinants.

c. Library Data Collection Techniques

Library data collection was carried out through several stages, namely: (1) determining relevant search keywords, such as "employee performance", "individual work performance", "public sector", "firefighters", "hospital employees", "water utilities", and "Job Demands-Resources"; (2) searching for articles through journal databases; (3) selecting articles based on inclusion criteria; and (4) recording the main findings of each selected article, including the sector context, variables studied, research methods, and conclusions.

d. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed qualitatively using a thematic synthesis approach. Findings from various sources were grouped based on the performance dimensions measured, types of job demands and resources, motivational and leadership factors, and sector context. Next, patterns of relationships between variables were developed, which were then formulated into a cross-sectoral conceptual framework.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Performance Dimensions in Fire Departments, Hospitals, and PDAMs

The study results show that although the task characteristics of fire departments, hospitals, and PDAMs differ, the patterns of employee performance dimensions are relatively similar when analyzed using an individual performance framework. In fire departments, task performance is manifested in the speed and accuracy of response, adherence to safety procedures, and the success of rescue operations (Dan, 2020). In hospitals, task performance includes adherence to clinical standards, appropriateness of nursing procedures, and accuracy of documentation (Salim & Kusumapradja, 2021) At PDAM, task performance relates to the reliability of network operations, continuity of supply, and handling of disruptions.

Contextual performance across all three sectors is evident in teamwork, willingness to help coworkers, and support for change. Adaptive performance is crucial in dealing with emergencies, policy changes, and service disruptions. Counterproductive behaviors such as ignoring (Koopmans, 2014) in Safety SOPs, unethical behavior towards patients or customers, and misuse of public facilities are factors that have the potential to reduce overall organizational performance.

Job Demands and Job Resources

Within the Job Demands–Resources framework, fire departments, hospitals, and water utilities (PDAMs) are all characterized by high job demands. In fire departments, job demands include physical risks, exposure to traumatic events, and time pressure. In hospitals, employees face high patient loads, case complexity, emotional demands, and administrative pressures. In PDAMs, employees are responsible for maintaining the continuity and quality of water services amidst limited infrastructure and customer pressures. Available job resources, such as supervisor support, teamwork, equipment and technology, training, role clarity, and reward systems, act as protective factors that can mitigate the negative impact of job demands and simultaneously promote work engagement. When resources are strong, high demands can be perceived as motivating challenges, rather than burdens, thus positively impacting performance (Koopmans, 2014).

The Role of Motivation, Leadership, and Performance Measurement Systems

Work motivation, leadership, and performance measurement systems consistently emerge as important determinants of employee performance across studies. Intrinsic motivation—such as a sense of meaningful work and a

commitment to public service—drives employees to perform at their best. Extrinsic motivation through reward systems also contributes, as long as they are designed fairly and transparently. Supportive and transformational leadership styles boost employee engagement and performance, whether in fire departments, hospitals, or water utilities. Conversely, clear, measurable, and well-communicated performance measurement systems help clarify expectations, provide feedback, and serve as a basis for rewards and coaching. Unbalanced or overly bureaucratic performance measurement systems can actually reduce motivation and encourage symbolic behavior (simply chasing numbers without substantial improvement) (Pidd, 2012).

The Relationship between Job Demands, Job Resources, and Performance Management on Individual Performance

The discussion shows that job demands and job resources have a complementary relationship in influencing performance. High job demands tend to decrease performance, but this negative impact can be minimized if employees have strong job resources. Performance management acts as an organizational mechanism that optimizes the relationship between demands and resources by ensuring employees receive the support, training, and evaluation necessary to meet job demands. Thus, improving individual performance in the public sector depends not only on employees' personal abilities but also on the balance between job demands, organizational support, and the implementation of effective performance management.

Cross-Sectoral Conceptual Framework

Synthesis of the literature review yielded a cross-sector conceptual framework that positions employee performance as the result of the interaction between job demands, job resources, and organizational/psychosocial factors. Sector-specific job demands (fire risk, patient load, water supply continuity responsibilities) converge with job resources (supervisor support, equipment, training, autonomy, reward systems). Motivational factors, leadership, organizational culture, and performance measurement systems act as reinforcers or buffers in this relationship.

Within this framework, a balance of demands and resources supported by positive leadership and culture will increase work engagement and satisfaction, reduce burnout, and encourage increased task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance, while suppressing counterproductive behavior. This conceptual framework can be empirically tested through quantitative cross-sector research and used as a basis for designing organizational interventions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Employee performance in the public sector—including fire departments, hospitals, and water utilities—is influenced by the balance between job demands and job resources, as described in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework. When organizations are able to provide adequate resources such as

managerial support, training, infrastructure, and a conducive work environment, employees can better manage work pressure, thereby improving individual performance. Conversely, high work demands without commensurate support can reduce motivation, effectiveness, and the quality of public services. Therefore, implementing systematic performance management oriented toward improving employee capacity is key for public sector organizations to ensure responsive, professional, and sustainable services.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Theoretically, this study is expected to strengthen the development of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory in the context of the public sector, especially in organizations with critical work characteristics such as fire departments, hospitals, and PDAMs. It can be a reference for further research in understanding the relationship between job demands, job resources, performance management, and individual employee performance in various public sectors. It can also contribute to the public sector performance management literature, especially regarding the determinants of cross-agency performance and how to optimize resources to improve employee performance.

In practice, the resulting conceptual framework is expected to be a reference for policy makers and managers in public service organizations in designing more targeted performance improvement interventions, for example related to workload design, provision of work resources, leadership patterns, reward systems, and performance measurement mechanisms (Bakker & Demerouti, 1980).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank all parties who have helped in the preparation of this journal.

REFERENCES

- Agung, Kurniawan 2005. *Transformasi Pelayanan Publik*. Pembaruan, Yogyakarta.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (1980). *Job Demands - Resources Theory*. III. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118539415.wbwell019>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Bakker, A. B. (2007). *The Job Demands-Resources model : state of the art*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Dan, C. (2020). *Job Crafting and Performance in Firefighters: The Role of Work Meaning and Work Engagement*. 11(May), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00894>
- Koopmans, L. (2014). Measuring individual work performance. In *Measuring Individual Work Performance*.
- NEGARA, M. P. A. (2003). *Keputusan Menteri Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara Nomor_63_2003.pdf*.
- Pidd, M. (2012). Measuring the performance of public services: Principles and practice. *Measuring the Performing of Public Services: Principles and Practice*, 1-316. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511791550>

- Ratminto, Winarsih A. S. 2015. Manajemen pelayanan: pengembangan model konseptual, penerapan citizen's charter dan standar pelayanan minimal, 979-3721-69-3, Pustaka Pelajar.
- Salim, T. G., & Kusumapradja, R. (2021). *IJNHS Determinants Factors Associated with Working Performance among Employment at Tamansari Public Hospital*. 4(6), 637-646.
- Widyastuti, T., & Hidayat, R. (2024). *Indonesian version of the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ)*. *Psychology Research and Intervention*, 6(1).