

Employee Competency Development Through Experience, Expertise, and Motivation at PT Pelindo Multi Terminal

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how employee experience, expertise, and motivation contribute to competency development in the PT Pelindo Multi Terminal work environment. A qualitative approach with a case study design was used to explore in-depth perspectives from employees through semi-structured interviews. The results showed that field work experience, continuously developed technical expertise, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play an important role in shaping employee competency. In addition, it was found that informal knowledge sharing processes also strengthen the transfer of experience and expertise between employees. These findings contribute to the development of human resource strategies based on experience and motivation as organizational resources.

Keywords: Employee Competency, Work Experience, Skills, Motivation

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2nd International Conference on the Epicentrum of Economic Global Framework (ICEEGLOF)

Theme: Navigating The Future: Business and Social Paradigms in a Transformative Era.

<https://proceeding.pancabudi.ac.id/index.php/>

Introduction

In facing the dynamics of global business and the transformation of port services, organizations are required to have employees who are not only technically skilled but also have comprehensive competencies. Employee competency is one of the key indicators in improving organizational performance in sustainable manner. This competency is formed from a combination of work experience, expertise, and motivation that are carried out consistently in a supportive work environment.

Work experience acts as a continuous learning process that forms practical skills and contextual understanding of tasks and responsibilities. According to [1], relevant and targeted work experience is an effective medium in forming employee core competencies, especially in operational-based organizations such as Pelindo. In addition to experience, expertise is an important element in supporting work quality. This expertise includes technical skills (hard skills) and social skills such as communication and teamwork (soft skills). Continuously developed expertise will strengthen employee flexibility and professionalism [15].

On the other hand, work motivation is the main driver of the emergence of initiative and enthusiasm for learning in employee. Motivation that comes from within and from the organizational system encourages individuals to achieve and contribute optimally. [1] explains that the combination of intrinsic motivation and a supportive work environment will accelerate the formation of competencies that are relevant to the needs of modern organizations.

However, these factors do not work in isolation. In the context of real work, employee competency development is also greatly influenced by the knowledge management system, both in formal forms such as training and SOP documentation, and informally through team discussions, mentoring, and direct work practices [10]. An organizational culture that encourages knowledge sharing also accelerates the competency transformation process.

Based on this background, this study aims to explore in depth how experience, expertise, and motivation can drive employee competency development at PT Pelindo Multi Terminal through a qualitative approach. The results of this study are expected to be input in developing effective and sustainable HR development strategies.

Literature Review

A. Work experience

Work experience is the accumulation of knowledge and skills acquired by individuals through direct involvement in specific work tasks and situations. Experience includes not only the length of time a person has worked, but also the type of work and challenges they have faced [1]. According to [11], work experience contributes to adaptability, better decision-making, and the formation of professional intuition in solving work problems. Experience is an important source in the formation of competence because it produces contextual learning that is not always obtained from formal education. "Systematic and reflective work experience enables individuals to develop core competencies continuously in dynamic organizations" [1].

B. Skills

Skills are an individual's capacity to carry out certain tasks effectively and efficiently, including hard skills (technical skills) and soft skills (interpersonal skills). Skills are an important part of human capital that greatly determines a person's productivity and competence [15]. According to [11], mastery of skills that are in accordance with job demands will increase employee self-confidence and work effectiveness. In modern organizations, skills must be continuously updated along with technological developments and market dynamics. "Continuously honed skills create competitive advantages, especially in the service sector which demands precision and excellent service" [15].

C. Work Motivation

Motivation is an internal or external force that drives individuals to act in achieving certain goals. According to [5], work motivation consists of two types: intrinsic motivation that comes from within (such as a sense of responsibility and personal satisfaction), and extrinsic motivation that comes from outside (such as rewards and promotions). High motivation will encourage employees to continue to develop themselves, take initiative, and improve their performance. [11] added that motivation plays an important role in shaping productive and consistent work behavior. "Motivated employees tend to demonstrate high commitment to self-development and the organization"[5].

D. Employee Competence

Competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that support individual success at work. Competence is not only related to what a person has, but also how those abilities are used in a work context [4]. According to [9], superior competence is determined by key behaviors that can be observed and measured consistently in various work situations. Employee competence is the foundation of HR management systems such as recruitment, training, promotion, and performance appraisals. "Competence is the differentiating factor between average and high-performing employees" [4].

Research Methodology

This type of research is qualitative with a case study approach. The research location is PT Pelindo Multi Terminal, a subsidiary of Subholding PT Pelindo. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews with 10 key informants from various divisions (operational, administration, and HR management). In addition, participant observation and internal documentation were also used as complementary data. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques as suggested by [3], with open coding, categorization, and theme extraction steps. Data validity was maintained through source and method triangulation techniques.

Results**Respondent Characteristics**

The respondents in this study consisted of 10 key informants who were selected purposively based on criteria of relevance to the focus of the study, namely employees who have worked for at least 3 years at PT Pelindo Multi Terminal, are directly involved in operational and managerial activities, and are considered to understand the dynamics of competency development in their work environment.

Based on the job background, respondents consist of employees from various divisions such as port operations, HR management, logistics, and terminal services. In terms of length of service, most respondents have had work experience between 5 to 15 years, either at PT Pelindo or previously at other port companies. In terms of education, the majority of respondents have a formal educational background of at least a Bachelor's degree (S1), with various fields of science, such as engineering, management, and marine transportation. This provides a diversity of perspectives on the meaning of competence in daily work practices.

Based on gender, there were 7 male respondents and 3 female respondents, which reflects the general distribution of employees in the port services sector which is still dominated by men, especially in the operational sector.

All informants showed active involvement in the workplace learning process, either through formal training, mentoring, or direct work experience. The diversity of these characteristics provides rich data to explore the factors that influence competency development in depth and contextually.

DISCUSSION

A. Work Experience as a Source of Competence

Most informants stated that direct experience in the field is the main shaper of work skills and quick decision-making. Previous work experience, either at other ports or across internal functions, provides contextual understanding that strengthens adaptation in the Pelindo environment. In line with that, [9] emphasized that experience is the foundation of behavioral-based competencies. The quality of human resources is a major factor in improving employee performance [13].

B. Technical and Adaptive Skills

The skills possessed by employees are not only technical (for example, operating heavy port equipment) but also adaptive such as communication skills, negotiation, and information technology. Continuous internal training is considered helpful in sharpening these skills. According to [11], consistent skill development will be directly proportional to the increase in individual performance in the organization.

C. Motivation as a Driver of Performance and Learning

Work motivation that arises both from within (intrinsic) such as pride in work, and from outside (extrinsic) such as incentives and career paths, has been shown to influence employee enthusiasm to continue learning and improving themselves. [5] Self-Determination Theory supports this, that employees who have autonomy and support tend to be more competent and involved in their work. According to [12], motivation and work discipline have a significant relationship to employee work performance.

D. Indirect Role of Knowledge Management System

Although the formal knowledge management system is not yet optimal, informal practices such as daily discussions, peer mentoring, and sharing experiences are considered to play a significant role in improving team competence. This reinforces the view of [10] that tacit knowledge is often more effectively transferred through social interactions than formal digital systems. In addition, work ability and welfare support have also been shown to influence employee work performance [14].

Conclusion

This study shows that employee competency development at PT Pelindo Multi Terminal is significantly influenced by work experience, mastery of skills, and work motivation. These three factors complement each other and are strengthened by knowledge sharing practices in the work environment. Therefore, strategic HR management needs to consider experience and motivation as the main aspects in forming employee competencies.

Suggestions

1. Company management is advised to create a documentation system for employee work experience so that it can be a source of learning for new employees.
2. Training and skills development need to be carried out in a targeted manner according to the needs of each work unit.
3. Motivation enhancement programs, such as awards and career development opportunities, need to be expanded so that employees remain enthusiastic about improving their competencies.
4. Facilitate informal knowledge sharing communities, such as discussion forums or peer coaching, to strengthen a culture of collaborative learning.

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