



The Role of the District Head in Improving the Performance of Civil Servants at the Office of the District Head of Galang, Deli Serdang Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of sub-district heads in improving the performance of Civil Servants (PNS) at the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency, and to identify inhibiting factors in the implementation of these roles. This study uses a qualitative approach with observation, interview, and documentation study methods. The results of the study indicate that the role of sub-district heads is divided into three categories based on Mintzberg's theory, namely interpersonal roles, informational roles, and decision-making roles. Active, participatory, and passive approaches are used synergistically in implementing these roles. The inhibiting factors found include limited human resources, minimal budget, unproductive work culture, and ineffective communication and supervision systems. This study concludes that the role of sub-district heads is very important in building an efficient and professional work environment through an adaptive and communicative leadership approach.

Introduction

Civil Servants (PNS) are the main element of the state apparatus that plays a vital role in the implementation of government and public services (Giroth et al., 2022; Hadiyantina, 2021; Madjid, 2024; Pantow & Lambelanova, 2023). At the sub-district level, the sub-district head as the head of the administrative area has a strategic responsibility to foster and improve the performance of PNS. However, at the Galang Sub-district Office, various problems were found such as low discipline, slow public services, and weak supervision and coordination. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the role of the sub-district head in this context and what obstacles hinder the optimization of this role (Suhardi, 2025).

To address this issue, it is important for the Galang Sub-district Office to improve the quality of employee training and coaching so that they have adequate knowledge and skills in serving the community (Ruslin, 2017; Aini & Asmara, 2021). In addition, the sub-district head must be more active in approaching employees, listening to complaints and providing appropriate solutions to the problems they face. With more coordinated implementation and tighter supervision, it is hoped that employee performance will improve, so that services to the community can run more effectively and efficiently (Jaskiewicz & Tulenko, 2012; Deussom et al., 2022; Mor et al., 2009).

Improving the quality of public services is very important to maintain public trust in government agencies and ensure that their needs are met properly and on time (Moon, 2003; Thomas, 1998; Zainal et al., 2018). According to Mintzberg, the role of a leader in an organization consists of three main dimensions: (1) interpersonal role; (2) informational role, and (3) decisional role. The sub-district head, as a regional leader, carries out these three roles in the context of public service and personnel development at the sub-district level.

Performance theory states that civil servant performance is influenced by internal factors (motivation, skills) and external factors (work environment, managerial system).

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach by collecting, recording, analyzing and providing a brief description and explanation of the existing data so that the conclusions drawn can approach the existing reality, this study uses data collection methods in the form of direct observation, in-depth interviews with 8 informants (consisting of sub-district heads, sub-district secretary, head of personnel sub-division, and staff), and documentation studies. This study focuses on the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency. Because the problem discussed in this study is to determine the role of sub-district heads in improving the performance of civil servants at the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency. The location of the study is the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency. Data analysis was carried out using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and drawing conclusions as developed by Miles and Huberman.

Results and Discussion

The Role of Sub-district Heads in Improving Civil Servant Performance

The sub-district head has a strategic role in ensuring that the performance of Civil Servants (PNS) in the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency, runs optimally. As the leader of the administrative area, the sub-district head is required to not only carry out managerial functions but also motivate, direct, and build a conducive work environment for PNS. The role of the sub-district head can be seen through an active, participatory, and passive approach that complement each other in an effort to improve the quality of PNS work (Nugroho et al., 2024). As an active leader figure, the sub-district head has the responsibility to provide clear direction, set performance standards, and supervise the implementation of civil servant tasks. In this case, the sub-district head can hold periodic evaluation meetings to monitor target achievement, resolve work obstacles, and provide awards for civil servants who demonstrate superior performance. This active role creates clarity in the division of tasks and improves discipline in the work environment.

Kwamie et al. (2015); Asamoah & Ile (2024); Panday & Chowdhury (2020); Wahyudy (2023) said that, the sub-district head also plays a participatory role by involving civil servants in the decision-making process and the formulation of relevant policies. Through this involvement, civil servants feel appreciated and motivated to make the best contribution. This role not only strengthens the sense of togetherness but also increases the creativity of civil servants in presenting innovative solutions to solve various problems in the field (Torfing et al., 2019). With a participatory approach, the sub-district head builds more open and effective communication with civil servants, thus creating a harmonious working relationship. On the other hand, the passive role of the sub-district head is also needed to provide space for civil servants to work independently. By giving civil servants the trust to complete their tasks without excessive supervision, the sub-district head helps to increase the sense of responsibility and self-confidence of employees.

This approach also allows civil servants to develop their personal abilities, such as taking initiative and managing time efficiently (Lumi et al., 2024; Mudhoffar & Frinaldi, 2024; Hamzah et al., 2024). The role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of civil servants at the Galang Sub-district Office includes the integration of the three approaches. A sub-district head who is able to balance active, participatory, and passive roles will create a dynamic work environment, where civil servants are motivated to provide optimal service to the community. This will not only have an impact on improving the quality of civil servant

work, but also on the success of the sub-district head in carrying out his duties as an effective and inspiring regional leader.

Interpersonal Roles

The sub-district head appears as an exemplary figure (figurehead) who represents the sub-district in official activities and becomes a symbol of professionalism in the eyes of the community and employees. The sub-district head must appear as a symbol of integrity and professionalism. This is where the importance of the sub-district head's role in building a positive image of the organization in the eyes of the community, both in official events and in resolving problems that arise. The success of the sub-district head in carrying out this role can create a sense of trust from the community and employees towards their leaders, which in turn can encourage employee performance to be more dedicated in their duties. positive image of the organization through integrity and professionalism, both in official events and daily interactions with the community. According to Perdana & Mukhsin (2025) and Hamzah & Mangarengi (2025), the Sub-district Head emphasized that right, fair, and transparent decisions are very important to increase public and employee trust, which will ultimately improve their performance.

This statement was reinforced by the Sub-district Secretary, who explained that the Sub-district Head always prioritizes integrity in every action, especially in solving community problems with a fair and transparent approach. The Sub-district Head's professional attitude and prioritizing public interests motivates employees to work better, thus creating a conducive work environment. As a leader, the sub-district head motivates, fosters, and builds interpersonal relationships with employees. The Sub-district Head actively builds good interpersonal relationships with employees, provides motivation that is tailored to the needs and potential of each, and encourages them to work better. Employees feel highly motivated by the Sub-district Head's approach which not only focuses on administrative tasks, but also provides space for them to develop through awards for achievements and opportunities to participate in training.

In addition, staff in the office also feel the positive impact of the Sub-district Head's leadership, which is able to create a productive and harmonious work atmosphere by providing clear direction and positive feedback, which improves employee performance and work enthusiasm. The role as a liaison is also seen in cross-agency coordination in the sub-district area. The sub-district head as a leader must also have the ability to control situations that may occur in the sub-district office. Good control includes monitoring employee activities, providing constructive feedback, and conducting regular evaluations of employee performance. Through open communication and effective interpersonal relationships, the sub-district head can obtain the information needed to make the right decisions. The sub-district head also functions as a liaison between the sub-district government and the community, which allows policies and decisions to be implemented smoothly. This not only improves employee performance, but also advances service to the community.

Roles Related to Information

The sub-district head must be able to carry out three main roles according to management theory, namely as a monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson. As a monitor, the sub-district head must ensure that information obtained regarding the implementation of employee duties and external developments that can affect employee performance can be processed properly. Strategic decision-making is based on five main categories of information, namely internal operations, external events, analysis results, public opinion, and pressure from external parties. For example, information regarding public complaints is used to understand obstacles in the field, while analysis of the effectiveness of government programs is the basis for formulating

better policies. This opinion was reinforced by the Sub-district Secretary who emphasized that he played a role in supporting the sub-district head's duties by ensuring that administration runs smoothly and providing relevant analysis reports.

The data is considered important for designing strategic steps, such as employee training and improving workflow. Acting as a monitor of internal and external information, absorbing various information from the community and regional apparatus. As a disseminator, the sub-district head conveys relevant information to employees and the public. Consistently conveys the latest developments, such as changes in government policies and public service regulations, in a clear and understandable manner for all employees. This helps employees understand the direction and priorities of work and ensures that the information is implemented properly in carrying out daily tasks. In addition, the sub-district head encourages employees to proactively provide input on policies, create an inclusive work atmosphere, and strengthen a sense of shared responsibility in supporting the success of the organization. This approach not only improves work efficiency but also motivates employees to contribute more optimally. As a spokesperson, the sub-district head represents the sub-district in conveying programs and achievements to the community and district government.

The Role of Decision Makers

The Sub-district Head is very focused on strategic decision-making aimed at improving organizational performance, including the performance of Civil Servants (PNS) at the Galang Sub-district Office. In carrying out his role, the Sub-district Head strives to design strategic steps that are in accordance with the organization's vision and mission, by utilizing relevant and current information. This is done to ensure that every strategic decision taken can have a positive impact on the efficiency and quality of public services (Waldi et al., 2024). The sub-district head makes strategic decisions related to human resource management, activity planning, and personnel problem solving. The sub-district head also sets performance targets and sets public service priorities according to community needs. as the main controller who ensures that every strategic decision is implemented consistently through good coordination between the Sub-Division Head, staff, and employees. Support from various parties is the key to the successful implementation of policies that not only increase internal efficiency, but also ensure that public services run according to community needs. With the ability to listen to community aspirations, understand developing trends, and anticipate challenges, the sub-district head is able to bridge the internal needs of the organization with external demands, so that the policies taken are relevant, focused, and have a positive impact. The combination of centralized control, careful planning, and effective implementation creates a strong foundation for responsive and accountable governance.

Sub-district Head Leadership Approach

Active Approach, Sub-district Head initiates routine evaluation activities, gives awards to high performing employees, and encourages service innovation. Participatory Approach, Employees are involved in work discussions and program formulation, increasing a sense of shared responsibility. Passive Approach, Sub-district Heads provide space for civil servants to complete tasks independently, encouraging creativity and self-confidence.

Inhibiting Factors

Inadequate Human Resources: Many employees do not have the skills required for modern public services, and there is a lack of adequate civil servants to handle various administrative and public service tasks and responsibilities. Many sub-districts, including Galang Sub-district, have difficulty meeting the number of employees needed for the existing workload. **Budgetary Constraints:** Minimal operational funds limit the space for service innovation. This has a broad

impact and affects various important aspects of sub-district office operations. One of the most visible impacts is the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure. Supporting facilities such as information technology devices, office stationery, decent workspaces, and operational vehicles are often not available in sufficient quantity or quality. These limitations certainly affect the productivity and efficiency of civil servants. Unproductive Work Culture: Indiscipline, lateness, and passive attitudes are still widely found, low work discipline makes civil servants often late in completing tasks, have unclear absences, and are less obedient to existing rules creating an unproductive work environment. The sub-district head as a leader in the sub-district faces a major challenge in rebuilding discipline awareness among civil servants (Seran et al., 2021). The lack of supervision and evaluation of civil servants is influenced by several main factors. The sub-district head highlighted the limited human resources as the main problem, where the number of supervisory officials is not comparable to the number of civil servants who must be supervised, so that many aspects of civil servant performance are not properly monitored.

A work culture that is permissive of less than satisfactory performance is also considered to hinder change and progress. Meanwhile, the Head of the General and Personnel Sub-Division added that limited technological facilities and lack of training are other significant obstacles. Technology that should facilitate supervision has not been utilized optimally due to minimal budget and expertise, while supervisors often work without adequate guidance and training, so that the evaluation process is less effective. Ineffective Communication: Information is often not conveyed clearly from management to staff. The sub-district head must be able to build a relationship of mutual trust with civil servants. This trust is created when the sub-district head shows empathy and listens carefully to every complaint or suggestion from his subordinates.

Conclusion

The role of the sub-district head is very influential in improving the performance of civil servants through three main role dimensions (interpersonal, informational, and decision-making). With an active, participatory, and passive leadership approach, the sub-district head is able to create a conducive and productive work atmosphere. However, the success of this role is still limited by structural and cultural constraints in the sub-district office environment. The role of the sub-district head in improving the performance of Civil Servants (PNS) at the Galang Sub-district Office, Deli Serdang Regency, includes various strategic aspects, such as active, participatory, and passive leadership. As a leader, the sub-district head is tasked with providing direction, motivating, and creating a harmonious work atmosphere. This approach is strengthened by the role as a monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson who ensures that information is managed properly, so that the policies taken are relevant to the needs of the organization and the community. By integrating centralized control, employee training, and workflow reform, the sub-district head has succeeded in creating synergy between internal and external needs, making public services more effective and responsive. This professional and integrative approach encourages improved performance of civil servants and public trust in the sub-district government. The main obstacles to the role of sub-district heads in improving the performance of civil servants at the Galang Sub-district Office include limited human resources, minimal budget, less productive work culture, weak supervision, and ineffective communication. The limited number and competence of employees causes an uneven workload, while the minimal budget hinders training, facilities, and innovation. Low work ethic and discipline worsen the condition, coupled with the lack of supervision and coordination hampered by poor communication. Strategic solutions are needed, such as increasing human resource capacity, improving budget, work culture, communication, and supervision, to improve the quality of public services sustainably.

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