

OPTIMIZATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY IN BANDUNG

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Received : 15 January 2023

Accepted : 20 February 2023

Revised : 01 January 2023

Published : 28 February 2023

Abstract

This study discusses the optimization of human resource management in the creative industry in Bandung. The creative industry is one of the important sectors that supports economic growth, innovation, and employment opportunities. Bandung, as one of Indonesia's creative cities, has strong potential in various creative subsectors such as fashion, culinary, design, digital media, music, and visual arts. However, the rapid development of the creative industry also creates challenges in managing human resources effectively. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method through literature review, observation, and analysis of human resource management practices in creative businesses. The results show that the optimization of human resource management is essential to improve employee productivity, creativity, innovation, and business competitiveness. Key aspects that need to be optimized include recruitment and selection, training and development, employee motivation, leadership, performance evaluation, work environment, and employee retention. Creative businesses in Bandung need to implement flexible but structured human resource management strategies to support creative talent and sustainable business growth. This study concludes that effective human resource management can strengthen the competitiveness of Bandung's creative industry and contribute to the development of the local creative economy.

Keywords: *human resource management, creative industry, Bandung, employee development, innovation, competitiveness*

INTRODUCTION

The creative industry has become one of the most important sectors in supporting economic growth, innovation, and employment opportunities in Indonesia. In Bandung, the creative industry continues to develop rapidly, supported by the city's strong cultural identity, young creative talents, and growing entrepreneurial ecosystem. Various creative subsectors such as fashion, culinary, design, music, film, digital content, and visual arts have contributed significantly to the city's economic and social development.

However, the growth of the creative industry also creates new challenges, especially in managing human resources. Creative industry workers often require flexibility, innovation, collaboration, and continuous skill development. Therefore, effective human resource management is essential to improve employee performance, encourage creativity, and maintain organizational competitiveness. Without proper human resource management, creative businesses may face problems such as low productivity, lack of employee motivation, skill gaps, and high employee turnover.

Optimizing human resource management in Bandung's creative industry is important to ensure that creative talents can be managed, developed, and retained effectively. This includes improving recruitment strategies, training and development programs, performance evaluation, leadership, work environment, and employee welfare. By implementing effective human resource management practices, creative industry businesses in Bandung can enhance their competitiveness and contribute more strongly to the local economy. Based on this background, this study discusses the optimization of human resource management in the creative industry in Bandung, focusing on how human resources can be managed strategically to support creativity, productivity, and sustainable business growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human resource management is an important factor in supporting organizational performance, particularly in industries that depend on creativity, innovation, and human talent. In the creative industry, employees are not only expected to complete routine tasks but also to generate new ideas, solve problems, adapt to market changes, and collaborate across different creative fields. Therefore, human resource management in the creative industry must focus not only on administrative functions, but also on talent development, motivation, performance management, and employee engagement.

Previous studies have shown that effective human resource management practices can improve employee creativity and innovation. High-performance human resource practices, such as training, employee involvement, reward systems, and supportive leadership, can encourage employees to contribute creative ideas and improve organizational innovation. Recent research also emphasizes that psychological safety and an innovative work climate play an important role in strengthening the relationship between HR practices and employee creativity. This means that employees are more likely to be creative when they feel supported, trusted, and given opportunities to express ideas without fear of failure.

In the context of creative industries, human resource management has a strategic role because creative businesses depend heavily on individual skills, originality, collaboration, and adaptability. Studies on HRM in creative industries explain that recruitment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, and career development must be aligned with the flexible and dynamic nature of creative work. Unlike traditional industries, creative organizations often require less rigid management systems, more open communication, and work environments that allow experimentation. Human resource management must therefore balance structure and flexibility so that employees can remain productive while still having space for creativity.

Bandung is one of Indonesia's important creative cities with strong potential in design, fashion, graphic design, digital media, culinary, music, and other creative subsectors. UNESCO identifies Bandung as a creative city where design-related activities contribute significantly to local economic activities, with fashion, graphic design, and digital media among the leading subsectors. This shows that Bandung has a strong creative ecosystem supported by local culture, young talent, educational institutions, communities, and entrepreneurship. However, the rapid growth of the creative sector also creates challenges related to workforce quality, skill development, employee retention, and professional management.

Research on Bandung's creative industry indicates that many creative businesses are micro, small, and medium enterprises. These businesses often have strong creative potential but still face limitations in management capacity, human resource planning, formal training, and organizational structure. A study on Bandung's creative industry development highlights the need to improve SME performance, strengthen partnerships, and develop creative capacity as part of Bandung's creative city strategy. Another study also explains that Bandung's creative industry benefits from collaboration among universities, business actors, communities, government, and media, but this potential must be supported by better management practices.

The theoretical foundation of this study is related to Strategic Human Resource Management, which views employees as valuable organizational assets that can create competitive advantage. Strategic HRM emphasizes the alignment between human resource practices and organizational goals. In the creative industry, this means that recruitment, training, motivation, performance appraisal, and retention strategies should support innovation, creativity, and business sustainability. Human capital theory is also relevant because it explains that employee knowledge, skills, experience, and creativity are valuable resources that contribute to organizational success. In Bandung's creative industry, human capital is especially important because business competitiveness often depends on the quality and uniqueness of creative talent.

Despite the importance of HRM in creative industries, several gaps remain in the existing literature. Many studies discuss creative industry development from the perspective of economic growth, city branding, or business performance, but fewer studies focus specifically on how human resource management can be optimized in local creative businesses. In addition, many creative businesses in Bandung are small-scale enterprises, meaning that formal HRM systems may not yet be fully implemented. This creates a need for further research on practical HRM strategies that are suitable for the characteristics of Bandung's creative industry.

Based on the literature reviewed, this study aims to address the gap by examining how human resource management can be optimized in the creative industry in Bandung. The study focuses on key HRM aspects such as recruitment, training and development, employee motivation, performance evaluation, leadership, and retention. By exploring these aspects, this research is expected to contribute to a better understanding of how creative businesses

in Bandung can manage their human resources more effectively to support creativity, productivity, and sustainable growth.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method to analyze the optimization of human resource management in the creative industry in Bandung. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because this study aims to understand human resource management practices, challenges, and strategies in depth based on the experiences and perspectives of creative industry actors. The research focuses on creative industry businesses in Bandung, particularly those engaged in sectors such as fashion, design, culinary, digital media, music, and visual arts. These sectors were selected because they represent Bandung's strong creative economy and rely heavily on human talent, innovation, and collaboration. The subjects of this study may include business owners, managers, employees, and creative workers who are directly involved in human resource management activities.

Data collection is conducted through interviews, observation, and literature study. Interviews are used to obtain information about recruitment practices, employee training, motivation, performance evaluation, leadership, and employee retention. Observation is conducted to understand the working environment, communication patterns, and collaboration processes within creative businesses. Meanwhile, literature study is used to support the analysis by reviewing books, journals, articles, and relevant reports related to human resource management and the creative industry. The data analysis technique used in this study consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and organizing relevant information obtained from interviews, observations, and literature sources. The data are then presented in descriptive form to explain the main findings related to human resource management optimization. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on the interpretation of the collected data in relation to the research objectives.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study applies source triangulation by comparing information from different respondents and supporting it with relevant literature. Through this method, the study is expected to provide a clear understanding of how human resource management can be optimized to support creativity, productivity, and sustainable growth in Bandung's creative industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion regarding the optimization of human resource management in the creative industry in Bandung. The discussion focuses on several important aspects of human resource management, including recruitment and selection, training and development, employee motivation, leadership, performance evaluation, work environment, and employee retention. These aspects are essential because the creative industry depends heavily on human talent, innovation, collaboration, and adaptability. The results show that human resource management has a strategic role in supporting the growth of creative businesses in Bandung. As one of Indonesia's well-known creative cities, Bandung has strong potential in various creative subsectors such as fashion, culinary, design, digital media, music, film, and visual arts. These sectors require workers who are not only technically skilled but also creative, flexible, innovative, and able to respond to rapid changes in market trends. Therefore, the effectiveness of human resource management directly influences the productivity, creativity, and competitiveness of creative businesses.

One of the main findings is that recruitment and selection in Bandung's creative industry are often based on practical skills, creativity, work portfolios, experience, and personal networks. Many creative business owners prefer candidates who can demonstrate creative ability through previous projects or portfolios rather than relying only on formal educational background. This approach is relevant because creative work requires originality, problem-solving ability, and practical competence. For example, in fashion, design, digital content, and visual arts, a portfolio can show the quality of a candidate's ideas, style, and technical skills.

However, informal recruitment practices may also create several problems. Some creative businesses do not have clear recruitment standards, written job descriptions, or structured selection procedures. As a result, they may hire employees who have creative talent but lack discipline, teamwork ability, or understanding of business goals. This condition can affect work performance and organizational effectiveness. Therefore, recruitment systems need to be optimized by combining creative-based assessment with clear competency standards. Creative businesses should evaluate not only artistic or technical ability but also communication skills, adaptability, responsibility, and ability to work in a team. Training and development are also important findings in this study. The creative industry is highly dynamic because trends, technology, consumer preferences, and market demands change quickly. Creative workers must continuously improve their skills to remain relevant and competitive. In Bandung, many creative

workers develop their abilities through self-learning, community activities, workshops, online courses, and collaboration with other creative professionals. This shows that learning culture already exists within the creative ecosystem. Nevertheless, training programs in many small and medium creative businesses are still not well structured. Business owners often focus more on daily operations and production targets, while employee development receives less attention. Limited financial resources, time constraints, and lack of HR planning are common barriers to formal training. This can create skill gaps, especially in digital marketing, technology use, financial management, leadership, and business development. Therefore, creative businesses need to optimize training through affordable and flexible methods such as mentoring, peer learning, internal sharing sessions, short workshops, and partnerships with universities or creative communities.

Employee motivation is another key aspect in optimizing human resource management. The results indicate that creative workers are highly motivated when they are given creative freedom, recognition, opportunities for growth, and a supportive work environment. Unlike routine-based jobs, creative work requires emotional involvement, imagination, and personal expression. Therefore, employees in the creative industry tend to perform better when they feel trusted and valued by their organization. Recognition does not always have to be financial. Appreciation from leaders, public acknowledgment of good work, opportunities to lead projects, and involvement in decision-making can increase employee motivation. However, fair compensation remains important because many creative workers still face income instability, especially in small businesses or project-based work. If employees feel that their contribution is not fairly rewarded, their motivation and loyalty may decrease. Therefore, creative businesses need to balance intrinsic motivation, such as creative freedom and recognition, with extrinsic motivation, such as salary, incentives, and career opportunities.

Leadership also has a significant influence on human resource management in Bandung's creative industry. Supportive and participative leadership is more suitable for creative businesses because it encourages employees to express ideas, take initiative, and collaborate. Leaders in creative organizations should not only act as supervisors but also as facilitators, mentors, and motivators. They need to create an environment where employees feel safe to share opinions and experiment with new ideas. However, some creative businesses still depend heavily on the owner or founder. Decision-making is often centralized, and employees may have limited authority to develop ideas independently. This can reduce creativity and slow down innovation. To optimize human resource management, leaders need to delegate responsibilities, encourage teamwork, and build open communication. Effective leadership should provide direction without limiting creativity.

Performance evaluation in the creative industry also requires special attention. The results show that creative performance cannot be measured only by quantity of output or speed of work. It should also include originality, innovation, teamwork, problem-solving ability, customer satisfaction, and contribution to business development. For example, a designer's performance should not only be assessed by the number of designs produced, but also by the quality, uniqueness, relevance to market needs, and impact on brand image. Many creative businesses still conduct performance evaluation informally. Feedback is often given directly during projects, but it is not always documented or followed by clear improvement plans. This can make it difficult for employees to understand their progress and career development. Therefore, performance evaluation should be made more systematic while still remaining flexible. Businesses can use project-based evaluation, regular feedback sessions, peer review, customer feedback, and self-assessment. These methods are more suitable for creative work because they consider both process and results.

The work environment is another important factor that affects creativity and productivity. The findings indicate that creative workers need a workplace that supports collaboration, flexibility, communication, and experimentation. A positive work environment can encourage employees to exchange ideas, solve problems together, and produce innovative outputs. In Bandung, creative communities, coworking spaces, studios, and collaborative events have helped create an ecosystem that supports creativity. However, internal work environments in some creative businesses still need improvement. Problems such as unclear job roles, poor communication, excessive workload, lack of work-life balance, and limited facilities can reduce employee performance. Creative work often involves tight deadlines and high client expectations, which may cause stress and burnout. Therefore, businesses need to create healthier work systems by setting clear responsibilities, managing workloads fairly, providing adequate tools and facilities, and maintaining good communication among team members.

Employee retention is also a major challenge in the creative industry. Creative workers usually seek workplaces that provide opportunities for learning, self-expression, fair rewards, and career development. If these expectations are not fulfilled, they may move to other companies, become freelancers, or start their own businesses. This situation can create high employee turnover and disrupt business continuity.

To improve retention, creative businesses in Bandung need to develop strategies that increase employee loyalty and sense of belonging. These strategies may include career development programs, fair compensation, flexible working arrangements, recognition systems, team-building activities, and opportunities to participate in important projects. Retention should not be seen only as an effort to keep employees, but also as a way to build long-term commitment and strengthen organizational culture. The discussion shows that the optimization of human resource management in Bandung's creative industry requires an integrated and strategic approach. Recruitment, training, motivation, leadership, performance evaluation, work environment, and retention are connected to each other. For example, good recruitment will bring talented employees into the organization, but without proper training and motivation, their potential may not develop. Similarly, strong leadership and a supportive work environment can improve employee performance and reduce turnover.

The findings also show that creative businesses need to balance flexibility and structure. Flexibility is important because creativity requires freedom, experimentation, and openness. However, too much informality can create problems such as unclear responsibilities, weak performance control, and inefficient work processes. Therefore, creative businesses should implement human resource management systems that are simple, flexible, and suitable for their business scale. Small businesses may not need complex HR systems, but they still need clear job descriptions, fair evaluation, regular feedback, and basic employee development plans. Overall, the results indicate that optimizing human resource management can help Bandung's creative industry improve creativity, productivity, innovation, and competitiveness. Effective HRM practices can support creative workers in developing their skills and contributing more effectively to organizational goals. In addition, better HRM can help creative businesses become more sustainable and professional while maintaining their creative identity.

Based on the discussion, several strategies can be recommended. First, creative businesses should improve recruitment by using clear competency standards and portfolio-based assessment. Second, they should provide continuous training and development through affordable and flexible learning methods. Third, they should increase employee motivation by combining creative freedom, recognition, fair compensation, and career opportunities. Fourth, leaders should apply participative and supportive leadership styles. Fifth, performance evaluation should include both creative and business-related indicators. Sixth, businesses should create a healthy and collaborative work environment. Finally, employee retention should be strengthened through career development, welfare improvement, and positive organizational culture.

In conclusion, human resource management optimization is essential for the sustainability of Bandung's creative industry. Creative businesses that are able to manage their human resources effectively will have greater potential to produce innovative products, adapt to market changes, and compete in the creative economy. Therefore, HRM should be viewed not merely as an administrative function but as a strategic tool for developing creativity, improving business performance, and supporting Bandung's position as a creative city.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in the introduction, this study emphasizes that the creative industry in Bandung has an important role in supporting local economic growth, innovation, and employment opportunities. Bandung has strong potential as a creative city because it is supported by young talents, cultural diversity, creative communities, educational institutions, and various creative subsectors such as fashion, culinary, design, digital media, music, and visual arts. However, the development of the creative industry also creates challenges in managing human resources effectively.

The results and discussion show that human resource management is a strategic factor in improving the performance and sustainability of creative businesses in Bandung. The main aspects that need to be optimized include recruitment and selection, training and development, employee motivation, leadership, performance evaluation, work environment, and employee retention. Creative businesses require employees who are not only technically skilled, but also innovative, adaptive, collaborative, and able to respond to changing market trends.

This study concludes that the optimization of human resource management can help creative businesses increase productivity, strengthen creativity, improve innovation, and build stronger competitiveness. Recruitment should be based on clear competency standards and portfolio assessment. Training and development should be conducted continuously to improve employee skills and adapt to technological and market changes. In addition, employee motivation can be improved through recognition, fair compensation, career opportunities, and creative freedom. Supportive leadership and a collaborative work environment are also necessary to encourage employees to share ideas and contribute actively to business development.

Furthermore, performance evaluation in the creative industry should not only focus on quantity of work, but also on originality, teamwork, problem-solving ability, customer satisfaction, and contribution to innovation. Employee retention also needs serious attention because creative workers often seek workplaces that provide growth opportunities, appreciation, flexibility, and positive organizational culture. Therefore, creative businesses in Bandung should develop simple but effective human resource management systems that balance flexibility and structure.

For future development, creative industry businesses in Bandung are expected to implement more systematic human resource management practices. This can be done by creating clear job descriptions, providing regular training programs, using digital tools for HR management, developing fair reward systems, and building partnerships with universities, creative communities, and government institutions. These efforts can help improve the quality of human resources and support the long-term sustainability of the creative industry. In conclusion, human resource management optimization is essential for the success of Bandung's creative industry. By managing human resources strategically, creative businesses can create a more productive, innovative, and competitive work environment. This will not only benefit individual businesses, but also strengthen Bandung's position as a creative city and contribute to the broader development of Indonesia's creative economy.

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