

OPTIMIZATION OF POLICE MEMBER CAREER MANAGEMENT BASED ON INTEGRITY IN IMPROVING GUIDANCE PROFESSIONALISM HUMAN RESOURCES (STUDY ON PEMATANGSIANTAR RESORT POLICE)

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Abstract

Career management for members of the Indonesian National Police is not merely an administrative mechanism, but a strategic instrument for fostering professionalism and safeguarding public trust. This article examines how career development for police personnel at the Pematangsiantar Police Resort can be optimized by placing integrity at its core rather than treating it as a mere formal requirement in performance evaluation. Using a juridical-empirical approach with a qualitative descriptive method, the study combines a review of police-related regulations with field observation of career-development practices. The findings indicate that patterns of transfer, promotion, and placement still tend to rely on seniority and structural proximity, leaving integrity underutilized as a decisive factor in career decisions. This condition lowers the motivation of high-performing personnel who lack strong networks and creates opportunities for misconduct. The article proposes that optimizing integrity-based career management requires three pillars: transparency in the assessment system, strengthening internal oversight, and cultivating an organizational culture that upholds honesty as a professional identity, so that human resource development within the police produces personnel who are both technically competent and trustworthy to the public they serve.

Keywords:career management; integrity; professionalism; human resources; police.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Indonesia National Police has a constitutional mandate as a state instrument that maintains public security and order, enforces the law, and provides protection, care, and services to the community. This mandate can only be carried out optimally if supported by human resources who are not only technically competent, but also have strong integrity in carrying out daily tasks.

In practice, public trust in the police institution is heavily influenced by the individual behavior of its members in the field. Even the smallest deviations committed by individual members can have a ripple effect on the overall image of the institution. Therefore, career development for police officers should not only be directed at meeting the organization's structural needs, but also serve as a means of selecting and encouraging personnel with integrity to receive equal development opportunities with others.

Good career management is essentially an ongoing process that encompasses planning, developing, and evaluating employee career paths to align them with both organizational needs and individual aspirations. When this process is transparent and based on objective performance, employees are motivated to perform optimally, confident that their efforts will be fairly rewarded. The problem is that in many regional police units, including those focused on this study, career development patterns are still characterized by a tendency to prioritize seniority, personal proximity to policymakers, or other non-substantive considerations. This situation risks weakening the morale of personnel who, in fact, demonstrate good performance and maintain integrity but lack strong structural networks.

The Pematangsiantar Police Department, as a regional work unit overseeing a jurisdiction with complex social and criminal dynamics, faces unique challenges in managing the careers of its hundreds of personnel. On the one hand, the organization is required to appropriately place personnel according to their competencies to meet operational demands; on the other hand, these placement and promotion decisions must remain ethically and legally accountable to avoid creating social jealousy within the organization.

Based on the description, this study is important to examine in more depth how the career management of police officers can be optimized by making integrity the main foundation, so that the development of human

resources produced is truly able to improve the professionalism of the institution, especially in the Pematangsiantar Police Resort environment. Based on this background, the problem formulations proposed in this article are: first, how is the implementation of police officer career management in the Pematangsiantar Police Resort currently running; second, what factors hinder the implementation of integrity principles in career development; and third, what is the model for optimizing integrity-based career management that can be applied to improve the professionalism of human resource development in the work unit.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Management Concept

Career management is understood as a series of organizational activities that encompass systematic planning, coaching, and development of employee positions, taking into account competency, performance, and organizational needs. Ideally, these activities should not stop at the administrative aspects of transfers and promotions alone, but also encompass competency development, regular performance assessments, and self-development guidance for each employee.

Within the Indonesian National Police, personnel career management arrangements have been outlined in various technical regulations governing education, transfers, and promotions. These regulations, in principle, require that every career decision be based on objective, measurable, and accountable assessments, not solely on personal proximity or structural seniority.

The Concept of Integrity in Public Organizations

Integrity can be defined as consistency between a person's values, words, and actions, reflected in honesty, steadfastness in ethical principles, and the courage to reject deviant practices even under situational pressure. In the study of organizational ethics, integrity is positioned as one of the main character pillars that determine the quality of leadership and public trust in an institution.

For the police, integrity holds a special place because it is directly linked to the discretionary authority held by each member in the field. The police professional code of ethics explicitly places honesty, fairness, and responsibility as values that must be upheld by all personnel in carrying out their duties. The provisions of the code of ethics serve as a normative reference and benchmark for behavior that should ideally be taken into consideration in every career development process.

Professionalism and Human Resources Development

Professionalism in the context of human resources refers to an employee's ability to carry out tasks according to the competency standards, work ethics, and responsibilities inherent in their profession. Professionalism isn't born instantly, but rather is developed through a continuous development process that includes training, performance evaluation, recognition for achievement, and consistent discipline. The three concepts mentioned above—career management, integrity, and professionalism—are fundamentally intertwined.

Career management that ignores integrity has the potential to produce officials who are administratively competent but morally fragile, while human resource development that lacks professionalism will only result in an organization that stagnate, even if its personnel have good intentions. This framework forms the basis of the analysis in this article: that optimizing career management will only be meaningful if integrity is made a determining factor, not merely an administrative complement.

METHOD

This research uses an empirical juridical approach, namely an approach that combines the study of legal norms and official regulations within the Indonesian National Police with the reality of their implementation in the field, particularly at the Pematangsiantar Police Resort. The nature of this research is descriptive analytical, which aims to systematically describe the conditions of the implementation of police officer career management, then analyze it to formulate a relevant optimization model.

The data used consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through field observations and unstructured interviews with several personnel and officials in the personnel administration section at the Pematangsiantar Police Resort. This data is used to capture the actual practice of implementing mutations, promotions, and job placements in the work unit. Secondary data was obtained through a literature study of laws and regulations, Police Chief regulations, books, journals, and official documents relevant to the theme of career management and integrity in police organizations.

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing

conclusions, so that field findings can be confronted with the normative and theoretical frameworks that have been described in the literature review section.

This kind of analytical approach allows researchers to capture recurring patterns in career coaching practices while identifying gaps between normative provisions and implementation in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Career Management at the Pematangsiantar Police Resort

Institutionally, the mechanism for job transfers and promotions within the Pematangsiantar Police Resort has been implemented in accordance with the provisions, guidelines, and career development procedures applicable within the Indonesian National Police. The process for proposing transfers and promotions is not carried out individually, but rather through administrative stages and organizational considerations involving leadership elements and divisions authorized to manage human resources. This mechanism is intended to ensure that all decisions regarding personnel placement, transfers, and filling certain positions remain within the scope of organizational needs and member career development.

In practice, the process of determining transfers and promotions generally considers several aspects, including length of service, rank, assignment experience, education and training, organizational needs, and an assessment of task performance. These considerations are crucial in determining an individual's suitability for a position or placement. Therefore, career development mechanisms are normatively directed toward placing personnel according to their competencies and the organization's needs.

Nevertheless, field research indicates that the assessment process for personnel undergoing transfers or promotions still faces a number of issues. One particularly prominent issue relates to the performance appraisal pattern, which remains heavily dependent on the assessment of direct superiors. Superior assessments are indeed a crucial tool for assessing the quality of a member's task performance, as they provide the opportunity to directly observe the behavior, discipline, responsibility, and work achievements of personnel. However, if these assessments are not supported by objective, measurable, and adequately documented indicators, there is the potential for differences in perceptions in determining the quality of personnel.

This issue becomes even more important when linked to the aspect of integrity. Integrity should not only be understood as compliance with official regulations, but also encompasses honesty, consistency between words and actions, responsibility in exercising authority, exemplary behavior, and the ability to maintain professionalism while carrying out duties. Therefore, a track record of integrity should be a component that receives serious attention in every process of coaching and career development for police officers.

Research findings indicate that integrity has not been fully recognized as a variable with its own assessment indicators in the career decision-making process. Integrity assessments tend to be integrated into general assessments of personnel performance, discipline, and behavior. This can lead to differences in understanding and assessing the quality of a member's integrity. A member with good work performance may not necessarily have the same level of integrity as another member without a comprehensive assessment of their track record.

These limited indicators also have the potential to create problems in creating a truly merit-based promotion system. A merit system essentially places competence, performance, qualifications, achievements, and integrity as the primary basis for determining an individual's career development. If career decisions are influenced primarily by subjective considerations or personal relationships, the principle of objectivity in human resource development may be weakened. In the context of the police organization, this situation has broader consequences, as the quality of personnel is closely linked to public trust in law enforcement institutions.

Beyond the issue of subjectivity, the study also found a perception among some personnel that closeness to certain officials can be a factor influencing a person's chances of obtaining a position or placement considered more strategic. This perception does not necessarily mean that every transfer and promotion decision is made based on personal relationships. However, the emergence of such a perception indicates that the career development system still needs stronger transparency and accountability mechanisms. In an organization that upholds professionalism, even perceptions of unfairness require attention because they can affect the level of internal trust in the existing system.

If this situation is not managed properly, a gap can emerge between personnel who feel they have met the requirements based on achievement and competence and the results of career development decisions they receive. Personnel who feel they are performing well but do not receive proportional career development opportunities are likely to experience decreased motivation. In the long term, this situation can affect the employee's sense of achievement, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Conversely, implementing an objective, transparent, and integrity-based career system can foster healthy competition among members. Each member will be

motivated to improve their competence, enhance their performance, maintain discipline, and

Factors Inhibiting the Implementation of Integrity in Career Development

There are several factors that hinder the internalization of integrity values into the career management system in the environment studied, including:

1. The lack of standardized integrity assessment instruments means that assessments of personnel honesty and discipline are still qualitative and easily influenced by the assessor's subjectivity;
2. Weak transparency of information regarding career assessment criteria and results to the personnel concerned, thus giving rise to suspicion regarding the ongoing process;
3. The limited internal oversight function in monitoring the track record of violations and personnel achievements on an ongoing basis, so that the data available during career hearings is often not up to date;
4. A work culture that still places seniority and personal relationships as the dominant considerations, indirectly shifts the role of integrity as the main basis for career decision-making.

Integrity-Based Career Management Optimization Model

Based on these findings, optimization of integrity-based career management can be built through the following three main pillars.

1. Transparency of the Assessment System

Every career assessment criterion, including integrity indicators such as honesty in reporting, adherence to procedures, and disciplinary track records, needs to be formulated in a measurable manner and made public to all personnel. This transparency is crucial so that each member clearly understands the parameters used to determine eligibility for transfers and promotions, thereby minimizing the scope for purely subjective assessments.

2. Strengthening Internal Supervisory Functions

The internal oversight function, including professional and security elements, needs to be strengthened in its role as a provider of personnel track record data on an ongoing basis, not just when a violation occurs. This way, an employee's integrity history can be integrated with the performance data used in career hearings, rather than isolated information that only emerges when problems arise.

3. Building an Integrity-Based Work Culture

System optimization alone will not be effective without strengthening an organizational culture that makes integrity a professional identity, not just a normative slogan. This can be fostered through regular mental development, leadership role models in career decision-making, and appropriate recognition for personnel with high integrity, so that these values are truly internalized as part of daily work, not simply adhered to out of fear of sanctions.

These three pillars complement each other. Transparency without strong oversight will easily manipulate data; strong oversight without a supportive work culture will only result in formal compliance; and a good work culture without a transparent system will be difficult to objectively measure its success. Therefore, the simultaneous implementation of all three is believed to encourage the creation of career management that is truly based on integrity, while simultaneously enhancing the professionalism of human resource development within the Pematangsiantar Police Department.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

1. The institutional implementation of career management for members of the Pematangsiantar Police Resort has been carried out based on the career development mechanisms and guidelines applicable within the Indonesian National Police. The processes of transfer, promotion, and career development have involved leadership elements and human resources through mechanisms established by the organization. However, weaknesses remain in its implementation, particularly in the aspect of objectivity in personnel performance and integrity assessments. Assessments still rely predominantly on evaluations by direct superiors and are not fully supported by measurable instruments for comprehensively assessing integrity track records. This situation opens up room for subjectivity and perceptions of unfairness in career development. Therefore, the administratively implemented career management still needs to be strengthened so that the

principles of merit, professionalism, objectivity, and integrity can become a more dominant basis in every personnel career decision.

2. Factors inhibiting the implementation of integrity in the career development of members of the Pematangsiantar Police Resort are primarily related to the suboptimal integrity assessment system, limited transparency in the career development process, suboptimal oversight of personnel track records, and the continued influence of organizational culture in the form of seniority and personal relationships. The absence of standardized integrity instruments means that aspects of honesty, discipline, responsibility, compliance, and ethical track records cannot be fully measured objectively. On the other hand, suboptimal transparency regarding career assessment criteria and results can lead to the perception that transfer and promotion decisions are not always based on achievement and competence. If these obstacles are not immediately addressed, they can reduce internal trust in the career development system and potentially affect personnel motivation to improve performance and maintain integrity in carrying out their duties.
3. The model for optimizing integrity-based career management in the Pematangsiantar Police Department can be implemented through the integration of three main pillars: transparency in the assessment system, strengthening the internal oversight function, and developing an integrity-based work culture. Transparency is necessary to provide clarity regarding the standards, indicators, and procedures used in determining transfers and promotions. Internal oversight needs to be strengthened by providing and updating data on personnel performance records, discipline, achievements, and violations as considerations in career decision-making. Meanwhile, an integrity-based work culture needs to be built through exemplary leadership, continuous development, recognition of personnel who demonstrate integrity and achievement, and the application of consistent consequences for violations. These three pillars must be implemented in an integrated manner because the success of integrity-based career management is not sufficient through changes in administrative procedures alone, but requires simultaneous changes in the assessment system, supervision, and organizational culture. The implementation of this model is expected to produce a more objective, transparent, accountable, professional, and merit-oriented career development system, so that strategic positions and responsibilities within the Pematangsiantar Police Department can be assigned to personnel who possess accountable competence, performance, loyalty, and a track record of integrity.

Suggestion

1. For the Pematangsiantar Police Resort, it is necessary to strengthen the transfer and promotion system with objective, measurable, and transparent integrity assessment indicators.
2. For leaders and HR departments, it is necessary to increase supervision and update the track record of performance, discipline, achievements, and integrity of each personnel as a basis for career development.
3. For all personnel, it is necessary to improve professionalism, discipline, and integrity in carrying out duties in order to create a fair, merit-based, and professional career development system.

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