

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN HAJJ AND UMRAH MANAGEMENT: THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL PILGRIMAGE SERVICES

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Abstract

Human Resource (HR) quality improvement in Hajj and Umrah management refers to a systematic and continuous effort to improve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of Hajj and Umrah service officers and managers. This includes a series of processes ranging from recruitment, training, competency development, to performance evaluation that aim to ensure that every personnel involved in organising Hajj and Umrah has adequate capacity to provide excellent service to pilgrims. Improving the quality of human resources does not only focus on the technical aspects of service, but also includes a deep understanding of the spiritual, cultural, and ethical values that form the basis for the implementation of Hajj and Umrah, so as to produce human resources who are not only professional in their duties, but also have high integrity and dedication in serving pilgrims. The results show that a comprehensive HR development programme should include improving ritual knowledge, management skills, foreign language ability, cross-cultural understanding, and soft skills. The use of information technology in training and performance management was also found to be an important factor in optimising HR quality. The research also underlines the importance of establishing an organisational culture that is oriented towards service excellence and continuous improvement. Thus, this study emphasises that investment in HR development has a direct impact on improving service quality, pilgrims' satisfaction, and the efficiency of Hajj and Umrah operations.

Keywords: Human Resources, Hajj and Umrah Management, Jamaah Services.

INTRODUCTION

Hajj and Umrah are one of the pillars of Islam that must be performed by Muslims who are physically and financially able. Every year, millions of Muslims from various countries, including Indonesia, make the sacred journey to Makkah and Madinah to perform these acts of worship. (Ela, 2022). The organisation of Hajj and Umrah is a big responsibility for the government and related institutions to ensure the smoothness, safety, and comfort of pilgrims during the worship. (Almehmadi, 2023)..

In the context of Indonesia, as a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the management of Hajj and Umrah is a very complex and challenging task.

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Some of the problems that often arise in the organisation of Hajj and Umrah include: 1) The limited number of Hajj quotas compared to the increasing number of applicants, leading to long waiting lists. 2) The complexity of logistics and accommodation to handle thousands of pilgrims at the same time. 3) The need for adequate health services, given the diverse health conditions of pilgrims. 4) Challenges in providing effective worship guidance to pilgrims with diverse religious knowledge backgrounds. 5) The need for good coordination between various parties, including the government, travel agencies, and authorities in Saudi Arabia. (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

In the midst of these challenges, the quality of Human Resources (HR) in the management of Hajj and Umrah is a key factor that determines the success of the implementation of this worship. Qualified human resources are needed in various lines, from planning, implementation, to evaluation of the implementation of Hajj and Umrah. (Yuliansyah et al., 2024)..

However, several HR-related problems are still frequently encountered, such as: 1) Lack of technical and non-technical competencies required in the management of Hajj and Umrah. 2) The mismatch between educational background and expertise with the tasks carried out. 3) Lack of cross-cultural understanding required in serving pilgrims from various backgrounds. 4) Limited mastery of foreign languages, especially Arabic and English. 5) Lack of continuous professional development programmes to improve the quality of human resources. (Almuzaini et al., 2021)..

Given the important role of human resources in ensuring the success of pilgrimage services, improving the quality of human resources in Hajj and Umrah management is a must. This quality improvement will not only have an impact on pilgrims' satisfaction, but also on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Hajj and Umrah organisations. (Khan & Shambour, 2023)..

Therefore, this study examines more deeply the strategy of improving the quality of human resources in Hajj and Umrah management, and its impact on the success of pilgrimage services.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses literature. Literature research method, also known as literature study or literature review, is a research method that uses written sources to collect and analyse data. (JUNAIDI, 2021); (Abdussamad, 2022).

Results and Discussion

Hajj and Umrah Management

Hajj and Umrah Management is the process of planning, organising, directing, and supervising all aspects related to the implementation of Hajj and Umrah. This includes various activities ranging from registration of prospective pilgrims, pre-departure coaching and guidance, management of transportation and accommodation,

to the implementation of worship in the holy land and the return of pilgrims to their homeland. (Maulana & Mawadah, 2023).. The main objective of Hajj and Umrah management is to ensure that the entire process of worship can run smoothly, safely, and in accordance with Islamic law, as well as providing the best service to pilgrims. (Anwar et al., 2023).

In a broader context, Hajj and Umrah management also involves coordination between various parties, including the government, travel agencies, airlines, and authorities in Saudi Arabia. The aspects managed include administration, finance, health, security, and the spiritual aspects of the pilgrimage. In addition, the management of Hajj and Umrah must also consider factors such as the Hajj quota, the development of information technology to facilitate the registration process and services, and efforts to improve the quality of pilgrimage guidance. With effective and efficient management, it is expected that the implementation of Hajj and Umrah can provide a deep and memorable spiritual experience for pilgrims. (Lutfi et al., 2020).

The main components of Hajj and Umrah Management include several important aspects, namely: (1) Planning, which includes strategy development, goal setting, and programme preparation; (2) Organisation, which involves the division of tasks, authorities, and responsibilities among related parties; (3) Implementation, which includes coordination and implementation of the plans that have been prepared; (4) Supervision, which aims to ensure that all activities run in accordance with the plans and standards set; (5) Evaluation, which is conducted to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of programme implementation and identify areas of improvement; (6) Human Resources, which includes the management and competency development of Hajj and Umrah officers; (7) Finance, which includes the management of Hajj and Umrah funds in a transparent and accountable manner; (8) Information Technology, which is used to support administrative processes and services; and (9) Pilgrim Services, which focuses on meeting the needs and satisfaction of pilgrims during the worship journey. (UmpuSinga & Alimuddin, 2022); (Puspita & Taufiq, 2023).

Thus, Hajj and Umrah management is a complex and integrated system, which requires careful management of various components to achieve the goal of organising safe, comfortable, and Sharia-compliant worship. The success of Hajj and Umrah management is highly dependent on good coordination between components and the commitment of all parties involved to provide the best service to pilgrims. With the implementation of effective and efficient management, it is expected to improve the overall quality of the implementation of Hajj and Umrah, so that pilgrims can perform worship solemnly and gain a deep spiritual experience.

Human Resources (HR) in the Organisation of Hajj and Umrah

Human Resources (HR) play a very important and strategic role in Hajj and Umrah Management. As the spearhead of the service, HR is responsible for ensuring that all

aspects of organising Hajj and Umrah can run smoothly, effectively and efficiently. The role of HR in this case covers various fields, from planning, organising, implementing, to monitoring and evaluating. (Firdos et al., 2023).. Qualified and competent human resources are needed to manage administration, provide guidance and guidance to pilgrims, handle health problems, maintain security, and facilitate the various needs of pilgrims during the worship journey. In addition, human resources also play an important role in establishing good coordination and communication with various related parties, both domestically and in Saudi Arabia. (Azmi et al., 2021).

In the context of Hajj and Umrah Management, developing and improving the quality of human resources is one of the main focuses. This includes training and continuing education to improve the knowledge and skills of Hajj and Umrah officers, both in technical and non-technical aspects. Improving HR competencies also includes an in-depth understanding of the religious, cultural, and social aspects related to Hajj and Umrah. (Halboob et al., 2024).. In addition, character building and good service ethics are also an important part of HR development. With qualified and professional human resources, it is expected to improve the quality of service to pilgrims, overcome various challenges and obstacles that may arise during the implementation of worship, and make a positive contribution to the overall success of Hajj and Umrah management. (Bashawri, 2021).

In Hajj and Umrah management, there are various competencies required to ensure a smooth and quality organisation of the pilgrimage. First, managerial competence is key, including the ability to plan, organise, direct and supervise. Managers must be able to design effective strategies, allocate resources appropriately, and coordinate the various elements involved in organising the pilgrimage. (Chulaivi et al., 2024).. Second, technical competence relates to in-depth knowledge of Hajj and Umrah procedures, related regulations, and logistical and operational aspects. This includes an understanding of reservation systems, transport management, accommodation, and catering. Third, interpersonal and communication competencies are essential, given that the job involves intensive interaction with pilgrims from various backgrounds, as well as coordination with various related parties. (Ahdari, 2021).

In addition, religious competence is a fundamental aspect of Hajj and Umrah management. Officers must have a deep understanding of the fiqh aspects of Hajj and Umrah, and be able to provide guidance and explanations to pilgrims. Cultural and linguistic competence is also indispensable, given the international context of the pilgrimage. Arabic language skills and an understanding of Saudi Arabian culture will be helpful in carrying out their duties. (Sabr et al., 2024).. Equally important is competence in information technology, given the important role of technology in the management of pilgrim data, the Hajj information system, and various supporting applications. Finally, competence in risk management and crisis management is also crucial, given the

complexity and large scale of the Hajj and Umrah organisations that have the potential to face various challenges and emergencies (Nor et al., 2023). (Nor et al., 2023).

Quality of Congregation Service

Service quality can be defined as the level of excellence or goodness in the provision of services or services that are able to meet or even exceed customer expectations. This concept covers various aspects, including reliability in delivering promised services accurately and consistently, responsiveness in helping customers and providing fast service, assurance which includes knowledge, courtesy, and the ability of employees to foster customer trust, empathy in providing individual attention to customers, and physical evidence which includes facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance. (Taufikurrahman et al., 2024). High service quality aims not only to meet customer needs, but also to create positive experiences that can increase satisfaction, loyalty, and organisational reputation. In the context of Hajj and Umrah management, service quality is crucial given the spiritual and emotional nature of the pilgrimage, as well as the high expectations of pilgrims to have a meaningful and smooth worship experience. (Abidin et al., 2023)..

Indicators of pilgrim service quality in the context of Hajj and Umrah include several key aspects that can be used to measure and evaluate the level of satisfaction and effectiveness of the services provided. First, reliability in providing services as promised, including timeliness in document processing, transportation, and implementation of worship rituals. Second, the responsiveness of officers in handling questions, complaints, or special needs of pilgrims quickly and efficiently. Third, assurance, which includes the knowledge and competence of officers in providing worship guidance and security during the trip. (Alshaibi, 2024). Fourth, empathy in providing personal attention and understanding the individual needs of pilgrims. Fifth, tangibles such as the quality of accommodation, transport, and worship facilities provided. Sixth, information accessibility, including the availability and clarity of information related to schedules, procedures, and worship guides. Seventh, problem handling and crisis management, which measures the ability of organisers to overcome emergency situations or obstacles that may arise. Finally, post-worship evaluation, which includes follow-up and feedback from pilgrims for future service improvements. All these indicators together provide a comprehensive picture of the quality of service received by Hajj and Umrah pilgrims. (Zulfikarijah, 2023)..

HR Quality Improvement

Improving the quality of Human Resources (HR) can be achieved through various comprehensive and sustainable methods. Firstly, a structured training and development programme, covering technical, soft skills and leadership training, can improve employee competencies and skills. Secondly, the implementation of an effective

performance management system, including goal setting, regular evaluation, and constructive feedback, helps identify areas of development and motivates employees to continue developing. Third, mentoring and coaching programmes can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience from senior to junior employees. Fourth, job rotation and cross-departmental project assignments can broaden employees' perspectives and capabilities. Fifth, investing in formal education through scholarships or tuition reimbursement programmes can improve employees' academic qualifications. Sixth, creating an organisational learning culture that encourages innovation, knowledge sharing and continuous learning. Seventh, utilising e-learning technology and digital learning platforms to provide access to flexible and up-to-date educational resources. (Al-Hajri et al., 2020).. Finally, a comprehensive employee well-being programme, covering physical, mental and financial aspects, can support employee productivity and loyalty. A combination of these methods, tailored to the specific needs of the organisation, can significantly improve the quality of HR, which in turn will improve overall organisational performance. (Abudiyah, 2020).

Improving the quality of human resources (HR) faces various complex and dynamic challenges. First, the rapid development of technology and changes in labour market demands require rapid adaptation in HR development programmes. Second, budget constraints often hinder the implementation of comprehensive training and development programmes. Third, resistance to change from employees can slow down the transformation and development process. (Bashel et al., 2021).. Fourth, generational gaps in the workforce create differences in learning styles and career expectations that need to be accommodated. Fifth, globalisation necessitates the development of cross-cultural and linguistic competencies. Sixth, maintaining a balance between the development of hard skills and soft skills is a challenge. Seventh, measuring the impact and ROI of HR development investments is often difficult. Finally, retaining top talent amidst fierce job market competition is an ongoing challenge for many organisations. (Ali et al., 2020).

Thus, facing the challenges of improving the quality of HR requires a holistic, flexible and forward-looking approach. Organisations need to adopt adaptive HR development strategies, leverage the latest learning technologies, and create a culture of continuous learning. Investment in people development should be viewed as a strategic priority, not just an operational cost. Collaboration between HR departments, management and employees is essential to identify relevant development needs and design effective programmes. By proactively addressing these challenges, organisations can build resilient, adaptive human capital capable of driving growth and innovation in the face of a rapidly changing business environment.

Conclusion

Improving the quality of Human Resources (HR) in Hajj and Umrah management is a crucial factor that determines the success of services to pilgrims. With the increasing number of pilgrims every year and the complexity of organising Hajj and Umrah, the need for competent, professional, and integrity human resources is becoming increasingly urgent. Investment in HR development not only improves operational efficiency, but also contributes directly to improving service quality and pilgrim satisfaction.

A comprehensive HR development programme should cover various aspects, including improving knowledge of Hajj and Umrah rituals, management and logistics skills, foreign language ability, cross-cultural understanding, as well as soft skills such as effective communication and handling emergency situations. The use of information technology in training and performance management also needs to be optimised to cope with the digitalisation era. In addition, the establishment of an organisational culture oriented towards excellent service and continuous improvement is essential to ensure consistency in service quality.

Success in improving the quality of human resources will have a direct impact on the pilgrims' spiritual experience, the safety and comfort of the worship journey, and the overall efficiency of Hajj and Umrah. Therefore, the government, Hajj and Umrah organising agencies, as well as all stakeholders must be committed to continuously improving HR competency standards, allocating adequate resources for HR development, and creating an effective evaluation system to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of services for Hajj and Umrah pilgrims.

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