



HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN A DENTAL CLINIC: A CASE STUDY OF DENTAL CARE SENGON JOMBANG

Indah Wahyuni

Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis PGRI Dewantara, Jombang
Correspondence: indahwahyuni.2261124@itebisdewantara.ac.id

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze human resource management practices at Dental Care Sengon Jombang, with a particular focus on human resource planning, development, and maintenance. The study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving individuals directly engaged in the clinic's operations. The findings indicate that human resource management at the clinic has been implemented through three main functions. Workforce planning is carried out flexibly in accordance with service needs, human resource development is conducted through training and direct workplace learning, and human resource maintenance is reflected in open, flexible, and family-oriented working relationships. These findings suggest that human resource management practices at the clinic have supported operational continuity and service quality, although they remain adaptive in nature and have not yet been fully formalized. This study underscores the importance of strengthening more structured human resource management systems in small-scale healthcare facilities

Keywords: human resource management, dental clinic, human resource planning, human resource development, human resource maintenance

A. INTRODUCTION

Human resource management (HRM) is one of the main determinants of success in healthcare organizations because service quality fundamentally depends on the people who carry out work processes, interact with patients, and sustain service continuity. In the healthcare sector, the role of HRM extends beyond administrative matters such as recruitment or scheduling. It also encompasses role structuring, competency development, maintenance of working relationships, and the creation of an organizational environment that supports performance. Liu et al. (2023) show that HRM research in healthcare continues to expand and increasingly focuses on performance, service quality, and organizational efficiency. These findings confirm that HRM has shifted from a merely supportive function to a strategic factor in healthcare management.

The urgency of HRM becomes even more pronounced in small-scale healthcare facilities, such as dental clinics, because such organizations usually operate with limited personnel, simple structures, and work divisions that rely heavily on everyday coordination. Under these conditions, weaknesses in workforce planning, development, or maintenance may immediately affect service quality, operational stability, and patient experience. Alkan et al. (2024) demonstrate that organizational factors such as institutional support, leadership involvement, flexible work arrangements, and workplace challenges significantly influence workforce development, recruitment, and retention in healthcare. This indicates that the quality of HRM is closely related to the sustainability of healthcare organizations, including those that are small and privately operated.

In the context of dental clinics, HRM has distinctive characteristics. Dental services require not only clinical competence but also effective coordination among dentists, support staff, and clinic management. Consequently, HRM in a dental clinic cannot be separated from efforts to maintain service quality, process efficiency, and patient satisfaction. Crisan et al. (2021) found that the implementation of quality initiatives in dental clinics is associated with overall quality, patient satisfaction, internal process improvement, service quality, and business outcomes. This finding indicates that management practices in dental clinics, including workforce management, directly influence organizational performance. Thus, HRM in dental clinics should be understood as an integral part of service quality management rather than merely a matter of daily operational administration.

Previous studies also show that leadership, development, and workforce retention are major challenges in dentistry. Wilson et al. (2019) emphasize that recruitment, development, mentoring, and talent retention constitute significant challenges in dental organizations. Similarly, Antoniadou (2022) shows that leadership and managerial skills in dentistry are becoming increasingly important for ensuring the sustainability of dental practice and business quality. Che Musa et al. (2020) also found that policy changes, demographic shifts, healthcare liberalization, and workforce governance challenges influence the development of the dental workforce. These findings suggest that HRM in dentistry cannot be separated from issues of leadership, competence, and organizational structuring.

At the same time, discussion of the dental workforce also shows that the work environment and career choices of dental professionals are shaped by broader organizational factors. Johnson et al. (2020) found that dental graduates' employment decisions are influenced by job availability, family relationships, mentoring quality, clinical training, and lifestyle considerations. This is important because it indicates that workforce presence in dental organizations is determined not only by technical organizational needs but also by opportunities for professional development and the work context offered. In other words, dental organizations that create sound work systems and professional support structures are more likely to retain competent personnel.

In healthcare more generally, research also shows that supportive work environments are closely related to job satisfaction, retention intentions, and service quality. Guirardello et al. (2023) found that aspects of the practice environment in primary healthcare are associated with job satisfaction, intention to remain, and perceived service quality. Al-Hakim et al. (2022) demonstrated that workload is related to job satisfaction and that this relationship is influenced by psychological meaningfulness and perceived organizational support. Lu et al. (2022) further showed that patient safety culture is negatively associated with burnout and positively associated with work-life balance among healthcare workers. Taken together, these findings suggest that effective HRM is concerned not only with job structure but also with organizational support, work culture, and employee well-being.

Although HRM in healthcare has been widely studied, several important gaps remain. First, many studies focus on hospitals, large healthcare systems, or specific professional groups, whereas studies on HRM practices in small, local private dental clinics remain relatively limited. Second, some studies address retention, quality, or job satisfaction only partially, without adequately explaining how HRM functions are concretely implemented in small organizations. Third, the context of dental clinics is particularly interesting because their organizational structures are simpler, working relationships are more direct, and decision-making processes are more centralized, making HRM practices likely to differ from those in larger healthcare organizations. Therefore, studies that examine HRM practices directly in dental clinics are both theoretically and practically relevant.

Based on this background, the present study is grounded in the assumption that HRM in dental clinics is not limited to administrative functions but also concerns how the organization

plans workforce needs, develops employee competencies, and maintains working relationships in ways that support service quality. Dental Care Sengon Jombang was selected because it represents a small-scale healthcare organization that relies heavily on effective HRM for its daily operations. By examining human resource planning, development, and maintenance in this clinic, this study aims to provide a more contextualized account of how HRM is practiced in a private dental clinic setting. Academically, this study is expected to enrich the literature on HRM in non-hospital healthcare facilities. Practically, it is expected to serve as a basis for clinic managers to reflect on how to build a more directed, adaptive, and sustainable workforce management system.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Human Resource Management in Healthcare Service Organizations

Human resource management (HRM) is a strategic function that governs how organizations acquire, assign, develop, and retain their workforce in order to achieve organizational objectives effectively. In the healthcare sector, the role of HRM is particularly critical because service quality is strongly influenced by the quality of human interaction, both in relationships among employees and in interactions between service personnel and patients. Liu et al. (2023) demonstrate that HRM research in the healthcare sector has developed prominently around themes of organizational performance, service quality, efficiency, and service sustainability. This finding confirms that HRM in healthcare organizations cannot be regarded merely as an administrative concern, but rather as a strategic foundation for service quality and organizational success.

In the healthcare service context, HRM is also closely related to how organizations establish supportive work environments, clear role structures, and adequate institutional support. Alkan et al. (2024) show that the development, recruitment, and retention of healthcare personnel are influenced by organizational factors such as leadership, institutional support, work flexibility, and working conditions. Accordingly, effective HRM is not only concerned with staffing the organization, but also with creating a work system that enables healthcare personnel to remain, grow, and deliver optimal service. In smaller healthcare organizations, such as dental clinics, this function becomes even more crucial because dependence on each individual employee is relatively greater than in larger organizations.

2. HRM in Dental Clinics

Dental clinics, as healthcare service organizations, possess characteristics that differ from hospitals or larger healthcare facilities. Their organizational structures tend to be simpler, the number of personnel is more limited, and working relationships are generally more direct among owners, clinical personnel, and supporting staff. Under such conditions, HRM practices often operate in a more flexible and personal manner. However, such flexibility does not necessarily imply effectiveness. If the functions of workforce planning, development, and maintenance are not managed systematically, clinics may encounter problems related to task allocation, service continuity, and workforce stability.

Crisan et al. (2021) show that management quality in dental clinics is associated with the implementation of quality initiatives, internal process improvement, service quality, patient satisfaction, and business outcomes. This finding suggests that dental clinic management, including the management of its workforce, cannot be separated from the overall quality of the organization. Antoniadou (2022) also emphasizes that leadership and managerial skills in dentistry are becoming increasingly important to ensure the sustainability of practice and the effective management of dental businesses. Accordingly, dental clinics require HRM that is not merely administrative in nature, but also adaptive to operational needs, service quality, and the professional development of staff.

Other studies likewise indicate that the dental sector faces distinctive challenges in workforce recruitment, development, and retention. Wilson et al. (2019) show that dental organizations face challenges in recruiting, mentoring, developing, and retaining talent. Che Musa et al. (2020) further demonstrate that policy changes, labor market dynamics, and professional governance influence the development of the dental workforce. These findings indicate that HRM in dental clinics is a complex issue that cannot be adequately explained solely through formal administrative functions. Therefore, studies on HRM practices in dental clinics need to examine how such management is actually implemented in the context of everyday organizational life.

3. Human Resource Planning

Human resource planning refers to the process of determining an organization's workforce needs in terms of staffing levels, types of competencies, and division of roles in order to ensure that operational activities can run effectively. In healthcare service organizations, human resource planning is particularly important because the services provided are highly sensitive to staffing adequacy, professional competence, and the appropriate placement of personnel. Effective human resource planning helps organizations anticipate workforce needs, reduce workload imbalances, and maintain service continuity.

In the healthcare context, workforce planning cannot be separated from organizational dynamics and patient needs. Johnson et al. (2020) show that employment choices and the sustainability of engagement among dental personnel are influenced by the quality of training, professional experience, mentoring support, and the work context offered by the organization. This finding suggests that workforce planning is not merely a matter of determining how many employees are required, but also of how the organization creates working conditions that encourage professionals to join and remain. In dental clinics, human resource planning may include the allocation of roles among dentists, assistants, receptionists, and administrative staff, as well as the regulation of workloads to ensure that services continue to operate efficiently. Accordingly, human resource planning constitutes an initial function that determines whether the organization is able to operate in a stable and well-directed manner.

4. Human Resource Development

Human resource development refers to organizational efforts to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and capacities so that they are able to perform their duties more effectively and adapt to changing demands. In healthcare organizations, human resource development is of central importance because service quality is strongly determined by professional competence, procedural accuracy, and employees' ability to keep pace with technological changes and evolving service standards. Human resource development may be carried out through formal training, workplace learning, mentoring, performance evaluation, and work routines that foster competency improvement.

Alkan et al. (2024) emphasize that the development of healthcare personnel is strongly influenced by organizational support and the quality of leadership. Antoniadou (2022) likewise shows that leadership and managerial skills constitute an important component of capacity development in dental practice. In the context of dental clinics, human resource development does not always occur through large-scale formal training programs, but may instead take the form of direct instruction, experience-based learning, and habituation to particular work standards. Thus, human resource development in dental clinics may be understood as a continuous process that helps employees adapt to service demands and improve their professional capacity.

5. Human Resource Maintenance

Human resource maintenance refers to organizational efforts to ensure that employees remain motivated, feel supported, and are willing to remain within the organization. This function is related to employment relations, the comfort of the work environment, organizational support, internal communication, and employee well-being. In healthcare service organizations, human resource maintenance is especially important because the long-term quality of service is strongly influenced by workforce stability and the quality of relationships among employees.

Guirardello et al. (2023) show that the practice environment in primary healthcare is associated with job satisfaction, intention to remain, and perceptions of service quality. Al-Hakim et al. (2022) find that workload is related to job satisfaction, and that this relationship is influenced by psychological meaningfulness and perceived organizational support. Lu et al. (2022) further show that patient safety culture is positively associated with work-life balance and negatively associated with burnout among healthcare personnel. These three studies indicate that human resource maintenance is not solely concerned with compensation, but also with the quality of the work environment, organizational support, and employees' psychological well-being. In the context of dental clinics, human resource maintenance may be reflected in harmonious working relationships, open communication, a fair division of tasks, and attention to employees' comfort in carrying out their work. Therefore, human resource maintenance constitutes an important aspect of sustaining organizational stability and service quality.

C. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of HRM practices at Dental Care Sengon Jombang within the real context of organizational operations. A case study design was used because the research focused on a single case unit, namely a private dental clinic, allowing the researcher to explore HR processes, policies, and practices in a contextualized manner. Accordingly, the study was not intended for statistical generalization, but rather to produce an in-depth understanding of how human resource planning, development, and maintenance are implemented in a dental clinic setting.

The study was conducted at Dental Care Sengon Jombang. The site was selected purposively because it is relevant to the research focus as a private dental healthcare facility that manages human resources in a relatively simple and flexible way. Informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in clinic operations and HR management. The informants included the clinic owner or manager as the key informant, as well as medical personnel and support staff directly involved in service processes. The criteria for selecting informants were direct involvement in daily work activities, understanding of HR management mechanisms at the clinic, and willingness to provide information openly. These criteria were important to ensure methodological focus and appropriate informant selection.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were used to obtain information regarding workforce planning, competency development, patterns of working relationships, and the clinic's internal policies. Observation was conducted to examine directly the work situation, interactions among employees, and task distribution. Documentation was used to complement field data through relevant supporting documents. The combination of these three techniques was important to ensure that the data did not rely solely on informants' statements, but were also supported by direct observation and documentary evidence.

Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis based on coding procedures, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. This process was used to identify

initial concepts, group the data into categories, and formulate the study's main themes: human resource planning, development, and maintenance. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and method triangulation so that the findings would have stronger credibility.

D. Results and Discussion

1. Result

The findings indicate that human resource management at Dental Care Sengon Jombang Dental Clinic can be mapped into three principal themes, namely human resource planning, human resource development, and human resource maintenance. These three themes emerged consistently from the interview, observation, and documentation data, and they serve as the primary framework for interpreting workforce management practices within the clinic.

With regard to human resource planning, the study found that workforce planning in the clinic is conducted flexibly and remains centered on the clinic management. Staffing needs are not formulated in long-term planning documents, but are instead determined on the basis of service demands, patient volume, and the continuity of daily operations. This pattern suggests that decisions concerning workforce requirements remain situational in nature. In practice, such an approach enables the clinic to respond quickly to service needs. At the same time, however, it also indicates that the human resource planning function has not yet been implemented through a formal and well-documented system. This finding demonstrates that the clinic has already adopted planning practices, yet these remain adaptive rather than strategic.

In terms of human resource development, the findings show that the clinic develops its workforce through training, workshops, and direct workplace learning. For medical personnel, development primarily takes place through practical experience, habituation to work procedures, and the enhancement of skills relevant to service needs. Supporting staff, by contrast, are developed mainly through direct guidance in day-to-day work activities. Thus, human resource development in the clinic is not yet fully based on structured formal training programs, but relies more heavily on a learning-by-doing mechanism. This condition is quite common in small-scale healthcare organizations because it is more resource-efficient and directly aligned with service demands. Nevertheless, this approach also indicates that competency development is not yet supported by a strong system of evaluation and documentation.

With respect to human resource maintenance, the study found that the clinic sustains its workforce through flexible working relationships, open communication, and a family-like atmosphere. Workforce maintenance is not yet fully grounded in a comprehensive formal welfare system, but instead relies largely on managerial attention, workplace comfort, and positive interpersonal relationships. This finding indicates that human resource maintenance in the clinic is carried out through a relational rather than a systemic approach. In the short term, this pattern appears sufficiently effective in maintaining employee loyalty and workplace comfort. In the long term, however, an excessive dependence on personal relationships may become a point of vulnerability if it is not accompanied by a more formalized work system and employee welfare structure.

These three themes may be summarized in the following model of the study's findings.

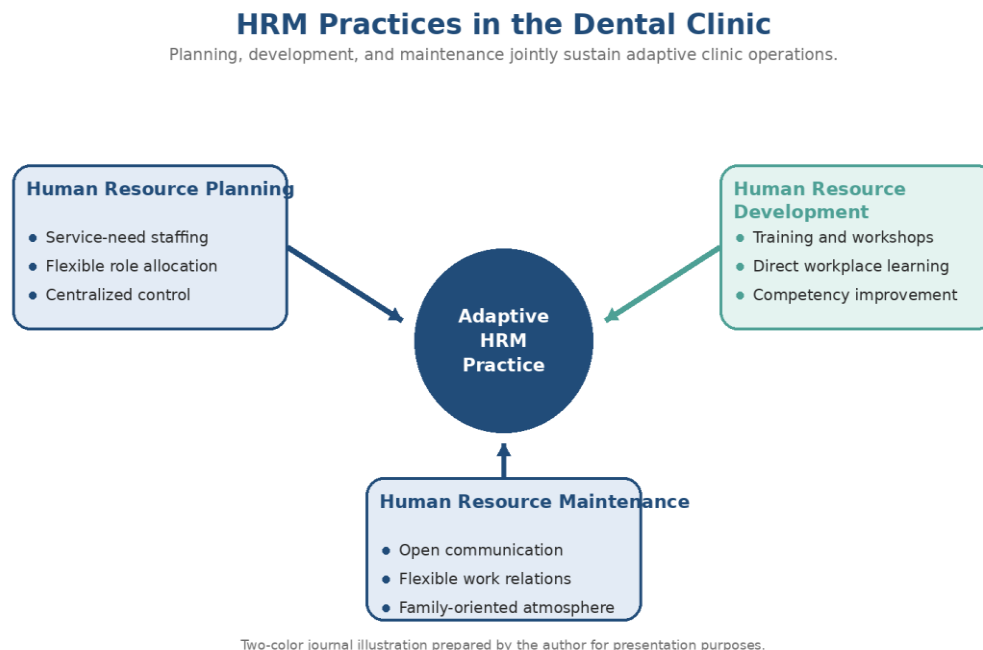


Figure 1. Conceptual Summary of HRM Practices at Dental Care Sengon Jombang

Based on Figure 1, it can be understood that human resource management in the clinic operates through three principal functions; however, these functions are still implemented in an adaptive and flexible manner and have not yet been fully formalized. This finding is important because it indicates that, in small-scale healthcare organizations, HRM practices may remain operationally effective even when they are not yet supported by a fully developed formal policy framework.

2. Discussion

The finding that human resource planning is flexible and centralized suggests that the clinic still performs workforce planning in an informal manner. From an HRM perspective, such a condition is commonly found in small healthcare service organizations that rely on rapid decision-making by owners or managers. This finding is consistent with Liu et al. (2023), who show that HRM in the healthcare sector is evolving from an administrative function toward a strategic one, although the degree of formality is strongly influenced by organizational capacity. In the context of dental clinics, Crisan et al. (2021) emphasize that management quality is closely related to the quality of internal processes and service outcomes. Therefore, the fact that this clinic does not yet have written long-term planning indicates the presence of an important managerial gap: operations may continue to function, but the strategic foundation of human resource planning remains underdeveloped. This result is also in line with Wilson et al. (2019) and Che Musa et al. (2020), who show that the dental sector faces challenges in recruitment, development, and workforce management, such that human resource planning cannot remain merely reactive.

At the national level, this pattern is likewise supported by studies in healthcare services. Rizany et al. (2023) show that work scheduling is significantly associated with nurses' job satisfaction, indicating that effective workforce arrangement influences the work experience of healthcare personnel. Dwiyantri et al. (2022), in their literature review, also show that job satisfaction is related to nurses' organizational commitment. These findings reinforce the interpretation that although small organizations may function under flexible systems, more systematic planning and workforce arrangement remain necessary to sustain workforce stability and service quality.

The second finding, namely that human resource development takes place adaptively through training, workshops, and direct workplace learning, indicates that the clinic has implemented a development function, but still in a practical and informal format. In HRM theory, development does not always need to take the form of large-scale formal training; in small organizations, development often occurs through on-the-job learning. This finding is consistent with Antoniadou (2022), who highlights the importance of managerial skills and capacity development in dental practice, as well as with Alkan et al. (2024), who emphasize that the development of healthcare personnel is strongly influenced by organizational support and leadership quality. In other words, the clinic has moved in the right direction because it does not allow its workforce to develop passively. However, it still requires a more structured development system so that knowledge transfer and competency evaluation do not depend solely on daily experience.

The third finding, concerning human resource maintenance through flexible, open, and family-like working relationships, indicates that the clinic relies on interpersonal relations as the basis for workforce retention and loyalty. This is consistent with Guirardello et al. (2023), who show that the practice environment is associated with job satisfaction, intention to remain, and perceptions of service quality. Lu et al. (2022) also show that a supportive organizational culture is associated with staff well-being, while Al-Hakim et al. (2022) emphasize that organizational support strengthens job satisfaction when work demands are high. In the national context, studies on nursing leadership and work environments likewise show that the quality of the work environment is associated with job satisfaction and the commitment of healthcare personnel. Accordingly, the findings of this study demonstrate that harmonious working relationships can indeed constitute an important asset for small clinics; however, without a more formal welfare system, human resource maintenance risks becoming overly dependent on leadership figures and personal closeness.

Overall, this study shows that HRM at Dental Care Sengon Jombang Dental Clinic has been carried out through three principal functions, yet it remains at an adaptive-informal stage rather than a formal-strategic one. This finding is important because it demonstrates that small organizations are still able to implement HRM practices that are operationally effective. However, for long-term sustainability, strengthening is required in the areas of written planning, more systematic competency development, and employee maintenance that is not based solely on family-like relationships. Thus, the contribution of this study lies in explaining that HRM practices in small clinics are not absent; rather, they are present in contextualized forms that are closely aligned with service needs, yet still require formalization in order to become more sustainable.

E. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that human resource management at Dental Care Sengon Jombang has been carried out through three main functions: human resource planning, human resource development, and human resource maintenance. Human resource planning is conducted flexibly and adjusted to the clinic's service needs, but has not yet been supported by long-term written planning. Human resource development has been undertaken through training, workshops, and direct workplace learning, although its implementation remains practical and not yet fully structured. Meanwhile, human resource maintenance is manifested through open, flexible, and family-oriented working relationships, which help maintain employee comfort and loyalty. Overall, the study shows that HRM practices at the clinic have functioned reasonably well and supported service operations, but they remain adaptive and informal rather than fully developed into a formal and strategic managerial system.

Based on these findings, the clinic management is advised to begin developing a more structured HRM system, especially in relation to workforce planning, competency development, and employee maintenance. Human resource planning needs to become more systematic so that the clinic does not merely respond to short-term needs, but also has a medium- and long-term direction for workforce development. The clinic should also consider more planned training programs as well as clearer evaluation and reward systems so that employee development and maintenance do not depend solely on personal relationships.

For future research, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted in more than one clinic or similar healthcare facility so that a broader understanding of HRM practices in small-scale healthcare organizations can be obtained. Future studies may also employ comparative or mixed-methods approaches to enrich the analysis, for example by comparing clinics with formal HRM systems and those that remain informal. In addition, the research focus may be extended to issues such as leadership, job satisfaction, employee retention, and service quality, so that the contribution of HRM studies in the healthcare sector may become more comprehensive.

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