

THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE SENIORITY AND LOYALTY ON POSITION PROMOTION AT THE GOWA REGENCY TRADE AND INDUSTRY SERVICE

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of employee seniority and loyalty on job promotion at the Trade and Industry Service of Gowa Regency. The research is motivated by the importance of fair and transparent promotion systems in public organizations, where both seniority and loyalty are often considered as decisive factors. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to all 39 employees of the Trade and Industry Service using a saturated sampling technique. The data were analyzed with multiple linear regression supported by SPSS version 30, and the validity and reliability of instruments were tested prior to hypothesis examination. The results demonstrate that seniority has a positive and significant effect on job promotion, as indicated by the t-count value of 3.188, which exceeds the t-table value of 1.686, with a significance level of 0.003. Similarly, employee loyalty shows a positive and significant effect on job promotion with a t-count of 3.151 and the same significance value of 0.003. Furthermore, simultaneous testing confirms that both variables jointly influence job promotion, with an R² value of 0.328, suggesting that 32.8% of the variance in job promotion is explained by seniority and loyalty, while 67.2% is affected by other factors. These findings imply that organizations should design promotion policies that balance seniority, loyalty, and competency to ensure fairness and improve employee motivation.

Keywords: Seniority, Employee Loyalty and Job Promotion.

INTRODUCTION

A government organization can be seen from the quality of service implemented through fast and precise performance in serving the community. Placement of employee positions based on appropriate positions is very important so that government activities run effectively and efficiently. Government activities are carried out by Human Resources (HR), especially employees who are the driving force. Management is the science and art of managing the use of human resources and other resources effectively and efficiently to achieve certain goals. Management consists of six main elements, known as 6M, namely: *men* (human), *money* (money), *method* (method), *materials* (material), *machines* (machines), and *market* (market). The element of “*man*” (human) has developed into a branch of science called Human Resource Management (HRM), which is a translation of man power management. Management that regulates this human element is also known as personnel management or personnel management. (Santosa & Efendi, 2023).

The success or failure of an organization is highly dependent on the ability of human resources to carry out the tasks given. Human resources play an important role in the organization, so every organization needs to think about how to develop human resources so that performance can be improved and organizational progress can be achieved. One indicator of organizational success is the level of employee seniority, which refers to the length of time a person has worked in the organization. Employees with high seniority are considered to have higher loyalty. According to Tabita Maria Patanduk, et al. (2024), “Seniority is the length of time an employee has worked in a position in one part of a company or organization.” Seniority is often considered an objective method of assessing employees, because it reflects a person's experience and length of service. In addition to seniority, employee loyalty also affects job

promotions. Loyal employees tend to show good performance in achieving organizational goals. Loyalty, according to Gina Widialestari, et al. (2023), is "the mental attitude of employees shown through their loyalty to the company, even though the company's conditions may fluctuate." Therefore, organizations need to improve employee performance through job promotions.

Job promotion, as explained by Nofal Supriaddin (2020), is "the movement of employees to higher positions in the organization, accompanied by increased authority, responsibility, rights, status, and income." Job promotion not only increases employee motivation to work harder, but also ensures that important positions are filled by the right people with adequate skills and experience. However, in the industrial and trade sector in Gowa Regency, which is managed by the Trade and Industry Service, it was found that job promotions were not optimal. This sector plays a strategic role in regional economic development, for example through job creation and increasing exports. Although this sector shows economic resilience, the promotion policy at the Trade and Industry Service of Gowa Regency sometimes does not comply with the principle of "*The Right Man on the Right Place*."

Based on the results of initial observations at the Gowa Regency Trade and Industry Service, it was found that the implementation of job promotions tended to be influenced by seniority and loyalty factors. Some employees who had longer seniority felt that this increased their chances of being promoted. However, there were also employees who had worked for a long time but had not been promoted, which showed that seniority was not always the main factor in job promotions. On the other hand, loyalty to the leader and emotional closeness to the regional head also seemed to influence the job promotion process, although not always based on competence or educational background that was in accordance with the position given. This phenomenon illustrates the inconsistency in the job promotion process, which can affect employee efficiency and work enthusiasm. A job promotion process that is not completely objective and transparent can impact employee perceptions of fairness in the organization. Therefore, an evaluation of a fairer job promotion policy is needed and is based on clear criteria, such as balanced competence, seniority, and loyalty.

METHOD STUDY

This research employs a quantitative design, which is a systematic and logical process of collecting and analyzing numerical data to test specific theories by examining relationships between variables through statistical procedures. As noted by Agus Budhi Santosa & Achmad Efendi (2023), the quantitative approach is widely used in inferential research, particularly for hypothesis testing, where conclusions are drawn based on the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis; it also enables the identification of significant differences between groups and relationships among variables, making it suitable for studies involving large samples. The study was conducted at the Trade and Industry Service Office of Gowa Regency, located at Jl. Mesjid Raya No.34, Sungguminasa, Somba Opu District, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, over two months from November to December 2024. The data used was quantitative, collected through questionnaires distributed to employees and categorized into primary data, obtained directly from respondents via questionnaires or interviews, and secondary data, derived from institutional reports, tables, and diagrams. The population consisted of all 39 employees of the Trade and Industry Office, with the sample determined using a saturated sampling method that included all members of the population. Data collection techniques involved observation of ongoing activities, documentation of office records and organizational profiles, and structured questionnaires with checklists and rating scales to measure employee behaviors and attitudes.

An operational definition explains how each variable in a study is measured, and in this research the variables include Seniority (X1), defined as the position or status gained based on tenure within an organization; Employee Loyalty (X2), defined as the extent of employees' commitment and dedication to their organization; and Job Promotion (Y1), defined as an increase in organizational position accompanied by greater responsibilities and higher income, all of which are measured using a Likert scale. To categorize and analyze data, several measurement scales were applied, namely the nominal scale for labeling categories without order, the ordinal scale for ranking variables, the interval scale for measuring variables with equal intervals but no absolute zero, and the ratio scale as the highest measurement level with an absolute zero allowing for comparisons. Data collected was processed using SPSS through various statistical techniques, including descriptive analysis to summarize data performance, and research instrument testing to ensure accuracy and consistency, where validity was tested

using Pearson correlation and reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. Furthermore, classical assumption tests were performed to verify the regression model, consisting of a normality test to determine whether residuals followed a normal distribution, a multicollinearity test to check correlations among independent variables, a heteroscedasticity test to ensure variance consistency of residuals, and an autocorrelation test to identify potential correlations of residuals over time. Overall, this methodological framework provides a systematic and structured process for data collection, measurement, and analysis, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results

1. Presentation of Data and Results

a. Respondent Characteristics

The data in this study were obtained through a questionnaire distributed to 39 respondents. This study explains the characteristics of respondents who are employees of the Gowa Regency Trade and Industry Service. The characteristics analyzed include gender, level of education, and age. Based on the results of the research, the characteristics of respondents by gender are presented in Table 1. The table shows that 26 respondents (66.7%) were male, while 13 respondents (33.3%) were female. This indicates that male respondents outnumber female respondents in this study.

Table 1
Respondent Characteristics Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	26	66.7
Female	13	33.3
Total	39	100

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024

The educational background of respondents is presented in Table 2. The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree (S1), totaling 23 people (59%), followed by those with a Senior High School (SMA) education at 9 people (23.1%), and Master's degree (S2) holders at 7 people (17.9%). This indicates that most respondents have an S1 education level.

Table 2
Respondent Characteristics Based on Education Level

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Senior High School	9	23.1
S1	23	59.0
S2	7	17.9
Total	39	100

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024

Table 3 presents respondent characteristics based on age. The largest proportion of respondents (38.5%) are aged 50 years and above, followed by 40-49 years (35.9%) and 30-39 years (25.6%). This data suggests that most respondents belong to the older age category.

Table 3
Respondent Characteristics Based on Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30-39 Years	10	25.6
40-49 Years	14	35.9
≥ 50 Years	15	38.5
Total	39	100

Source: *Primary Data Processing Results, 2024*

2. Descriptive Analysis

The study utilized primary data collected through questionnaires to assess the relationship between seniority, employee loyalty, and job promotion. The sample consisted of 39 respondents, and the descriptive analysis results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Descriptive Analysis Results

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Seniority	39	12	30	22.08	5.971
Employee Loyalty	39	32	40	36.46	3.741
Job Promotion	39	20	40	33.05	5.370

Source: *Primary Data Processing Results, 2024*

From Table 4 the descriptive statistical analysis results indicate that the seniority variable (X1) has a minimum value of 12 and a maximum value of 30, with an average of 22.08 and a standard deviation of 5.971. The employee loyalty variable (X2) has a minimum value of 32 and a maximum value of 40, with an average of 36.46 and a standard deviation of 3.741. Meanwhile, the job promotion variable (Y) has a minimum value of 20 and a maximum value of 40, with an average of 33.05 and a standard deviation of 5.370.

3. Research Instrument Test

a. Validity Test

The validity test was conducted to determine whether the questionnaire questions were valid. The validity test compares the calculated r-value (r count) with the table r-value (r table), where $r \text{ count} > r \text{ table}$ indicates validity. Table 5 presents the validity test results, showing that all question items have r count values greater than r table (0.316), meaning all variables are valid.

Tabel 5
Ringkasan Hasil Penelitian

Uji/Analisis	Hasil Utama	Keterangan
Validitas Instrumen	Semua item X1 (0.451–0.812), X2 (0.537–0.876), Y (0.472–0.821) > r-tabel (0.316)	Valid
Reliabilitas Instrumen	Cronbach's Alpha X1 = 0.939, X2 = 0.955, Y = 0.871 (≥ 0.60)	Reliabel
Multikolinearitas	Tolerance = 1.000; VIF = 1.000	Tidak ada multikolinearitas
Autokorelasi (DW)	DW = 1.840, antara DU (1.566) dan 4–DU (2.434)	Tidak ada autokorelasi
Regresi Linier Berganda	$Y = 2.689 + 0.381X_1 + 0.602X_2$	-
Uji t (Parsial)	X1 → Y : $\beta = 0.381$, t-hitung = 3.188, Sig. = 0.003 < 0.05 (Signifikan) X2 → Y : $\beta = 0.602$, t-hitung = 3.151, Sig. =	Kedua variabel berpengaruh positif signifikan

	0.003 < 0.05 (Signifikan)	
Uji F (Simultan)	F-hitung = 8.788 > 3.23; Sig. = 0.001	Signifikan
Koefisien Determinasi (R ²)	R = 0.573; R ² = 0.328; Adjusted R ² = 0.296	32.8% variasi job promotion dijelaskan oleh seniority & loyalty, sisanya 67.2% faktor lain

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024

b. Reliability Test

The reliability test ensures that the respondents' answers remain consistent over time. Using Cronbach's Alpha with a significance level of 0.6, the results in Table 6 confirm that all variables are reliable, as their Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.6.

Table 6
Reliability Test Results

Variables	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Standard	Information
Seniority (X1)	6	0.939	0.6	Reliable
Employee Loyalty (X2)	8	0.955	0.6	Reliable
Job Promotion (Y)	8	0.871	0.6	Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024

4. Classical Assumption Test

a. Normality Test

The normality test determines whether residuals in the regression model are normally distributed. Based on the normality test results (Figure 4.2), the actual data follows the normal line, indicating that the regression model meets the normality assumption.

b. Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test determines whether there is correlation between independent variables. A good regression model should not exhibit multicollinearity. The results in Table 7 show that the tolerance values for seniority (X1) and employee loyalty (X2) are both 1.000 (> 0.10), and their VIF values are 1.000 (< 10.00), indicating no multicollinearity.

Table 7
Multicollinearity Test Results

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Seniority (X1)	1.000	1.000
Employee Loyalty (X2)	1.000	1.000

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2024

c. Autocorrelation Test

The autocorrelation test determines whether the residuals in the regression model are correlated. Using the Durbin-Watson test, the obtained value (1.840) falls within the range of $DU < DW < (4-DU)$, confirming no autocorrelation.

5. Multiple Regression Test

The study employs multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of seniority and employee loyalty on job promotion. The regression equation is:

$$Y = 2.689 + 0.381X_1 + 0.602X_2$$

This result indicates that seniority and employee loyalty positively affect job promotion.

6. Hypothesis Testing

a. T-test

The t-test measures the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. The results show that the seniority variable (X1) has a t-count of 3.188, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.686, with a significance value of 0.003 (< 0.05). This means that seniority has a positive and significant effect on job promotion.

B. Discussion

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers regarding the influence of seniority and employee loyalty on job promotions at the Trade and Industry Service of Gowa Regency, it will be explained in the following discussion:

1. The influence of seniority on job promotion at the Department of Trade and Industry of Gowa Regency

Based on the results of the t-test, the t-count value was obtained at 3.188, which is greater than the t-table of 1.686, and the significance value was 0.003, which is smaller than 0.05. This shows that seniority has a positive and significant influence on job promotion at the Gowa Regency Trade and Industry Service. In addition, the results of the determination test (R^2) showed that seniority explained 32.8% of the variability in job promotion, while the rest was influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Seniority plays a significant role in determining who gets promoted because employees with longer tenure generally have a better understanding of the work system, organizational culture, and dynamics that occur within the agency. They are also more experienced in handling various work situations compared to employees who have just joined.

However, promotions based solely on seniority can be less effective if they do not consider employee competence and performance. It is possible that employees who have worked longer may not have the skills or innovations that match the needs of the organization. Therefore, in an ideal promotion system, seniority should be considered along with other factors such as individual performance, technical skills, and leadership so that the organization remains competitive and develops. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Eva Toding Komba (2024), which states that job promotions are positively and significantly influenced by seniority. In other words, the longer an employee works in an organization, the more likely they are to get a job promotion. However, other studies also emphasize that factors such as skills and work dedication remain important aspects in determining promotions.

2. The influence of employee loyalty on job promotions at the Gowa Regency Trade and Industry Service

Based on the results of the t-test, the t-count value was obtained at 3.151, which is greater than the t-table of 1.686, and the significance value was 0.003, which is smaller than 0.05. This shows that employee loyalty has a positive and significant influence on job promotion at the Gowa Regency Trade and Industry Service. The results of the determination test (R^2) also show that employee loyalty explains 32.8% of the variability in job promotion, which means that employees who show high loyalty have a greater chance of being promoted. Employee loyalty to the organization can be interpreted as their commitment to work, maintaining the good name of the organization, and willingness to provide the best contribution to the agency. Loyal employees tend to have a high level of dedication, work hard, and demonstrate compliance with the rules and values of the organization. This loyalty is often one of the factors considered in job promotions because employees who are loyal to the organization tend to understand the company's vision and mission better and are more stable in their work.

However, the challenge in measuring loyalty is the existence of subjective perceptions that can influence promotion decisions. Sometimes, loyalty is interpreted as personal closeness to superiors or social relationships within the organization, which can lead to less objective promotion decisions. Therefore, there needs to be a clearer and more transparent evaluation system in assessing employee loyalty, for example

through performance assessments, work dedication, and real contributions to organizational achievements. This study is also supported by the results of a study conducted by Tenti Suka Dewi et al. (2021), which states that increasing employee loyalty contributes directly to increasing job promotions in the company. Employees who have a high commitment to the company and show loyalty in their work have a greater chance of getting a promotion compared to those who are less loyal.

CLOSING AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research on the influence of seniority and employee loyalty on job promotions at the Trade and Industry Service of Gowa Regency, it can be concluded that both variables have a significant impact on job promotion. The seniority variable is proven to significantly influence job promotion, as indicated by the t-test results with an α value of 0.003, which is smaller than 0.05, demonstrating a high level of significance. Similarly, the employee loyalty variable also has a significant effect on job promotion, with the t-test results showing an α value of 0.003, meeting the significance criteria in this study.

B. Suggestion

Based on the conclusions and research findings, several suggestions are proposed. For agencies, it is important to ensure that seniority is accompanied by competence through continuous training and performance evaluations. Additionally, to enhance employee loyalty, organizations should focus on increasing job satisfaction, involving employees in decision-making processes, and implementing fair leadership practices. For future researchers, it is recommended to explore new variables to provide more diverse and innovative research findings.

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