

Analysis Of The Roles And Duties Of Secretaries At Institution X

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Abstract

The role of a secretary within an institution serves as a liaison both internally and externally and as an assistant to the leader in carrying out their duties. In other words, the secretary also acts as the right hand of the leader. This study aims to analyze the roles and responsibilities of the secretary in Institution X using a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results indicate that the secretary's role includes functioning as a coordinator across departments, a liaison with the institution's head, and a manager of administrative and financial tasks. The secretary's responsibilities are divided into routine tasks, such as handling correspondence, managing the leader's schedule, and maintaining office facilities, and incidental tasks, such as preparing meetings and managing financial documents. The primary challenge faced is communication issues due to busy schedules and the frequent absence of staff from the office. This study underscores the critical role of the secretary in supporting the institution's operational efficiency and provides recommendations to enhance coordination through more systematic approaches.

Keyword: Secretary's role; Secretary's responsibilities; Communication challenges

1. Introduction

The role of secretaries has undergone significant changes, especially with the advancement of technology and the phenomenon of globalization. Secretaries are no longer solely responsible for administrative matters, but have also become essential components in management. Their roles include providing support to leadership in decision-making and managing effective communication both within and outside the organization. According to (Gaol, 2015) secretaries play an important role for both superiors and subordinates. For superiors, secretaries function as communication liaisons, information sources, message conveyors, idea contributors, and success facilitators in tasks. Meanwhile, their role towards subordinates includes fair policy determination, providing motivation, receiving feedback, and building good relationships with subordinates. The attitude and behavior of secretaries greatly influence subordinate performance, making it important to create an effective and productive work environment.

The transformation in the role and duties of a secretary, who previously only managed correspondence, has now expanded to include a variety of complex activities that assist office operations, particularly in supporting the work of a leader. The duties of a secretary continue to evolve with the positions held and responsibilities received from superiors. Secretaries hold a crucial role in the smooth operation of the office because their position significantly impacts the leader's performance. Secretaries can also be considered the principal assistants to the leader, thus bearing the responsibility for the trust given.

This research discusses the issues regarding the role and duties of secretaries at Institution X using a qualitative research approach that involves data collection through interviews, observations, and documentation. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to previous research findings by conducting further investigation at Institution X. The Analysis of Secretarial Duties and Roles is important for Institution X as it can provide insights and understanding of the significance of secretarial roles and duties for Institution X.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Secretary

The term "secretary" originates from the Latin word "secretum," which means something hidden or secret. The person who holds secrets is referred to as "secretarium" or "secretaires" in Latin, "secretares" in Dutch, and "secretary" in English. Thus, a secretary can be defined as someone who has the ability to keep secrets (Iwin Ardyawin et al., 2019)). According to H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler in Zahra (2023), a secretary is an individual who works for another person to assist with writing tasks, correspondence, obtaining information, and handling other matters. Additionally, The Professional Secretary International in America, as cited in Darmanto & M Ed (2014), defines a secretary as an assistant to an executive leader who possesses office administrative knowledge and skills, can work independently without direct supervision, and is able to take initiative, provide recommendations, and make decisions within their authority.

Wursanto, as cited in Priansa (2017), states that a secretary is an individual responsible for performing various office tasks to support the leader's activities. In this context, a secretary acts as an employee or team member within an organization with structured duties and receives

a salary from the organization. According to Rafidah et al. (2024), a secretary is the person closest to the leader and is usually the first to know about policy plans formulated by the leader. Therefore, it can be concluded that a secretary is a professional who supports the organization's leader through the management of administrative tasks such as document writing, correspondence, and information gathering. They are expected to have proficient administrative skills, be able to work independently, and take initiative and make decisions within their scope of authority.

2.2 The Role of a Secretary

A secretary plays a crucial role in a company, influencing the achievement of organizational goals. According to Zahra (2023), the primary roles of a secretary include acting as a liaison between leadership and external parties, coordinating important events, maintaining the confidentiality of company information, and providing input and support to leadership. Additionally, a secretary is responsible for preserving a positive and productive company culture. Gaol (2015) adds that secretaries serve as communication links between leadership and subordinates, help convey orders, and offer alternative perspectives that assist leaders in decision-making. This indicates that secretaries do not merely perform administrative functions but also support company strategy and operations.

The role of a secretary towards subordinates is also very significant. Secretaries are responsible for establishing fair policies, motivating employees, and receiving feedback from staff to resolve various issues (Gaol, 2015). According to Sudarwinarti and Aktis in Thalia & Hutapea Joan Yuliana (2021), secretaries act as guardians and connectors for the company by ensuring the leader's schedule remains uninterrupted, checking and managing data, and representing the leader at various events. As the keepers of secrets, secretaries are responsible for protecting the company's critical information from leaks. This role is crucial for maintaining the organization's trust and confidentiality.

In conclusion, the role of a secretary encompasses three main aspects: their role within the company, towards the leadership, and with the employees. Secretaries not only act as intermediaries between leadership and employees but also support the overall smooth operation of the company. With their numerous responsibilities, secretaries become integral parts in ensuring the continuity and success of the organization.

2.3 Types of Secretaries

According to Sufriadi (2019) secretaries can be classified based on their position, authority, and responsibilities. Firstly, there are institutional secretaries (organization secretaries), who hold positions like office managers handling all aspects of office operations, such as the Secretary-General, Regional Secretary, and Corporate Secretary (often referred to as Executive Secretary). These secretaries play a crucial role in understanding the goals and principles of the organization and can effectively structure and manage workflows. Secondly, there are personal secretaries, who serve as assistants and liaisons between the leader and other parties. Personal secretaries, such as the Director's Secretary and Manager's Secretary, help leaders focus on their primary tasks by managing administrative work and shielding them from minor disruptions. The ability to understand the leader's character, habits, and needs is key to the effectiveness of personal secretaries.

Additionally, secretaries are categorized based on their skills and work experience. Junior secretaries are individuals who are new to their careers, typically fresh graduates from

secretarial institutions, and still require guidance in their duties. Meanwhile, senior secretaries are experienced professionals with extensive knowledge and high managerial capabilities. This distinction indicates that the role of a secretary is determined not only by their position but also by the competence and experience they bring to support the organization or leadership functions (Sufriadi, 2019).

2.4 Duties of a Secretary

According to Sedianingsih et al. (2014), the duties of a secretary are grouped into three main categories. Routine tasks include daily work that does not require specific instructions from superiors, such as handling correspondence, greeting guests, answering phones, managing the leader's schedule, organizing files, and maintaining the office space. Incidental tasks involve work carried out based on direct instructions from superiors, such as planning meetings, organizing company events, writing speeches, handling important documents, and accompanying the leader on business trips. Additionally, there are creative tasks, which are undertaken at the secretary's own initiative, such as planning work, enhancing competencies, and managing office supplies and equipment. Durotul Yatimah, as cited in Dwihartanti & Faizah (2018), also adds that the duties of a secretary include coordinative tasks, aimed at building cooperation and communication to achieve organizational goals more effectively.

According to Darmanto & M Ed (2014) the duties of a secretary can be classified based on their type. Administrative tasks include typing, documentation, and managing correspondence; receptionist tasks involve receiving guests and phone calls; financial tasks cover managing petty cash and payments; while social tasks include supporting the needs of the leader. Additionally, secretaries also perform incidental tasks, such as preparing meetings, planning business trips, and creating presentations. This division of tasks shows that secretaries hold complex and varied roles, which directly support the smooth operation of the organization (Darmanto & M Ed, 2014; Dwihartanti & Faizah, 2018; Sedianingsih et al., 2014).

3. Material and Method

This section explains the research methodology, including the research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis. These methods are designed to be replicable by other researchers for similar studies in the future. This research focuses on the roles and duties of secretaries at Institution X using a qualitative approach.

3.1 Design Study

This research employs a qualitative approach aimed at deeply understanding social or cultural phenomena through descriptive and analytical methods. Data collection is conducted using in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, using triangulation to ensure data validity. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore contexts deeply to understand specific patterns or meanings contained within the phenomena being studied. This method is very useful for generating a comprehensive understanding of human experiences or social dynamics in a particular environment.

One of the frequently used approaches in qualitative research is the case study approach. Case studies are useful for deeply understanding specific issues and helping researchers in better adjusting their analysis to the research subject. According to Rusandi & Rusli (2021), a case study is a series of research activities conducted carefully and thoroughly on a specific program, event, or activity. This research can be conducted at the individual, group, institution, or organization level, with the aim of gaining a deep understanding of the

phenomena or events being studied. This approach allows researchers to explore specific complex issues, providing a rich perspective on the phenomena examined.

3.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic process of collecting and organizing information to make it easier to understand and present to others Annisa Rizky Fadilla & Putri Ayu Wulandari (2023), mention that data analysis involves the management of interviews, field notes, and other materials in an orderly manner. According Djajanegara (2019), data analysis aims to filter, classify, arrange, and interpret data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In the context of qualitative research, data analysis not only functions to understand the existing data but also to discover patterns, relationships, or meanings behind the data.

The data analysis process in this research consists of four stages. First, data collection, where data is gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation relevant to the research focus. Second, data reduction, which involves grouping, simplifying, and eliminating irrelevant data, making the remaining data easier to understand and informative. This step is crucial given the large amount of data generated from qualitative research. Third, data presentation, where research findings are systematically organized to facilitate analysis and understanding in line with the research objectives. The presented data must be made simple and clear for easy interpretation. Lastly, drawing conclusions, which involves testing the validity of the findings. Initial conclusions are tentative and may change if new evidence is found during data collection, but they can become more valid if supported by strong evidence (Annisa Rizky Fadilla & Putri Ayu Wulandari, 2023; Djajanegara, 2019)

4. Result

4.1 The Role of Secretaries at Institution X

The role of a secretary in an institution is a crucial element for the smooth operation and achievement of planned goals. In observations conducted, secretaries at Institution X function as liaisons and coordinators among various departments, ensuring that communication and activities run smoothly. As explained by participants in interviews, the role of a secretary can be seen as an administrative organizer who also has a strategic role in coordinating all departments, ranging from general affairs and activities, finance, to planning. This role makes the secretary the main link between these departments and the head of the institution, as well as the right hand of the leader in decision-making.

The results of interviews with participants revealed that secretaries have responsibilities in organizing schedules for activities such as education, training, and meetings, ensuring that all administrative preparations go smoothly. Secretaries also play an important role in budget management, which includes verifying fund request documents before they are approved for further processing by the head of the institution. These tasks show that secretaries not only manage administrative aspects but also act as efficient links between the various departments in the institution, ensuring that every activity and policy is implemented as planned.

Therefore, the role of a secretary at Institution X is not only as an administrative executor but also as a key coordinator who ensures smooth communication and integration between departments. The presence of an effective secretary greatly determines how well the

organization can achieve its set goals, especially in maintaining the flow of information and the smooth execution of every activity held by the institution.

4.2 Duties of a Secretary at Institution X

The duties of a secretary at Institution X encompass various important responsibilities that support the smooth operation of the institution. Based on interviews with participants, the tasks of a secretary include financial management, such as reviewing expenditure documents, processing payment requests, and ensuring that activities are carried out as planned with well-coordinated reporting. Additionally, the secretary is responsible for the maintenance of institutional assets, such as buildings, vehicles, and office equipment, including recording and supervising maintenance. In the administrative field, the secretary manages incoming and outgoing correspondence, communicates directives from the head to the relevant departments, and organizes the leader's schedule, including noting invitations, meetings, and other activities to be arranged with an effective system.

The secretary also serves as a liaison between the head of the institution and various departments to ensure that information is conveyed accurately and communication is maintained. Cross-departmental coordination, including finance, general affairs, human resources, as well as planning and reporting, is an integral part of the secretary's duties. Moreover, the secretary assists in the implementation of administrative policies, such as managing important documents and arranging the head's agenda, to support the efficiency and effectiveness of work within the organization.

Thus, the role of a secretary at Institution X is not only administrative but also strategic in maintaining communication, coordination, and the execution of various organizational functions. This role ensures operational smoothness and supports the leader's decision-making through effective information management.

4.3 Challenges in Performing the Roles and Duties of Secretaries at Institution X

In a large institution like Institution X, the main challenge faced by secretaries in performing their roles and duties is communication issues. Effective communication is crucial for secretaries to coordinate the various departments within the institution. Without good communication, interdepartmental activities cannot be optimally organized, which can hinder the smooth operation of the institution. Based on interviews with participants, communication barriers primarily arise due to the high level of busyness in each department, where each has activities and plans often carried out outside the office. This requires extra effort to ensure that every team member remains well-coordinated.

Participant A stated that the main obstacle is the need to unify the entire large institution, which requires good communication and extra attention to each busy department. Participant B added that for secretaries, the challenge is to ensure all departments work well despite very tight schedules, requiring additional effort to coordinate activities. Participant C highlighted the difficulties that arise when all departments are busy with their own agendas, causing interdepartmental coordination to be delayed. Participant D emphasized that the biggest challenge is ensuring that all activities in each department run smoothly, which depends on communication that is sometimes difficult to maintain due to each department's busyness.

Overall, communication barriers are the main challenges faced by secretaries in a large institution like this. Therefore, more effort is needed to build an effective communication

system and ensure that all parties remain coordinated despite busy schedules and diverse activities.

5. Discussion

5.1 The Role of Secretaries at Institution X

The role of a secretary is crucial in enhancing the operational effectiveness of the institution. Secretaries serve as liaisons among various parties and as coordinators among different departments within the institution (Putu et al., 2023; Suminar & Wardani, 2019). Based on interview results, secretaries at Institution X act as coordinators for all departments and as liaisons between departments and the head of the institution. This aligns with Zahra (2023) research, which explains that secretaries act as intermediaries between leadership and external parties, ensuring smooth and professional communication. Secretaries also serve as coordinators for various important events and meetings within the institution.

According to Gaol (2015) one of the roles of a secretary is to facilitate communication and foster relationships between leaders and subordinates, ensuring tasks are carried out effectively. Additionally, Thalia & Hutapea Joan Yuliana (2021) state that secretaries play important roles as liaisons, event organizers, sources of information, coordinators, assistants, and supporters in managerial decision-making. Therefore, the role of a secretary is vital for the smooth operation of the institution, and if this role is not executed well, the institution's performance can be adversely affected.

5.2 Duties of a Secretary at Institution X

In performing their work, secretaries interact with leaders, clients, employees, and their own tasks (Iwin Ardyawin et al., 2019). The duties of a secretary can be divided into several categories: routine, incidental, and creative tasks. Routine tasks are performed almost daily without instructions from superiors, while incidental tasks are only carried out when requested by the leader. Creative tasks, which are not part of routine duties, are performed at the secretary's own discretion (Sedianingsih et al., 2014). Durotul Yatimah, as cited in Dwihartanti & Faizah (2018) also mentions that the duties of a secretary include routine, incidental, creative, and coordinative tasks.

Based on interviews, the duties of secretaries at Institution X mostly encompass routine and incidental tasks. Routine tasks include managing incoming mail, leader correspondence, maintaining office equipment, keeping the office space organized, preparing petty cash reports, and maintaining the leader's schedule of activities. Other incidental tasks include preparing meetings, managing the institution's financial documents, attending meetings related to the institution, and other tasks as directed by superiors. Zahra (2023) research also mentions that the duties of secretaries include preparing meeting agendas, compiling reports, drafting the leader's speeches, checking printed materials, and attending meetings on behalf of the leader. Other tasks include answering phone calls, taking messages, greeting guests, maintaining daily expenditure reports, and preparing funds for the institution's needs.

5.3 Challenges in Performing the Duties and Roles of Secretaries at Institution X

Based on interviews conducted at Institution X, the main challenge faced by secretaries in performing their duties is communication issues. This is due to the busy schedules of each department within the institution, where some departments are often out of the office for external activities. This situation makes it difficult for secretaries to coordinate all departments

because communication is hindered by the difficulty in meeting face-to-face and the differences in location and timing (Risnawati, 2015).

According to Gaol (2015), secretaries who act as public relations officers both internally and externally must pay attention to communication aspects. Secretaries also need to understand various individuals with different characters and interests, which requires skills in interpersonal relationships. Triwidodo, as cited in Risnawati (2015), identifies several communication barriers, including physical barriers that occur due to differences in location and timing between staff and secretaries. Risnawati (2015) also provides solutions to overcome these communication barriers, such as expanding knowledge, having good speaking skills, and using body language and eye contact to clarify information. Thus, communication barriers at Institution X, particularly physical barriers due to differences in location and schedule, can be addressed by enhancing communication skills and empathy among all involved parties.

6. Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

Based on data analysis, it can be concluded that the role of secretaries at Institution X is as coordinators and liaisons among various departments with the head of the institution, as well as functioning as the right hand of the head of the institution. Secretaries play an essential role in unifying the entire institution to perform tasks effectively. The duties of secretaries at Institution X not only include routine tasks, such as managing incoming mail, maintaining office equipment, and organizing office space, but also other related tasks, including managing the leader's schedule, preparing meetings, managing financial documents, and attending meetings as directed by superiors. The challenges faced by secretaries in performing their duties are related to communication, which is hindered by busy schedules and the infrequency of staff being in the office due to external activities, making interdepartmental coordination difficult.

6.2 Implication

The findings of this research support previous studies that show the role and duties of secretaries are crucial for companies or institutions, particularly as liaisons both internally and externally (ABIOYE Lukman Adegboyega & DAVIES Ufuoma, 2020; Armiwal & Suhaibah, 2022; Dessy Susanti et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2019; Sufriadi, 2019; Suminar & Wardani, 2019; Thalia & Hutapea Joan Yuliana, 2021; Wahyuni & Djamil, 2021; Wulandari & Djamil HS, 2022; Zuhriah et al., 2022). Practically, this research demonstrates that at Institution X, the role of the secretary as a coordinator and right hand to the head of the institution is very important. However, communication barriers arise due to the busy schedules of each department, hindering interdepartmental coordination.

6.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions obtained earlier, the researcher recommends conducting comparative studies on other institutions to obtain varied data and increase the number of sources to make the results more representative. Additionally, integrating quantitative research methods to complement the qualitative approach on the roles and duties of secretaries is suggested.

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