



The Influence of Work Motivation and Communication on Employee Performance at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of work motivation and communication on employee performance at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency. This research uses a quantitative research method with a descriptive approach. The sample in this study consisted of 37 employees of the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency who were selected through questionnaire distribution. The results show that work motivation and communication have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.739, indicating that 73.9% of the variation in employee performance is explained by work motivation and communication, while the remaining 26.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. The partial test (t-test) shows that work motivation has a significant effect on employee performance ($t = 3.105$; $p < 0.05$), and communication also has a significant effect on employee performance ($t = 6.306$; $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the simultaneous test (F-test) indicates that work motivation and communication together have a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($F = 48.077$; $p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that improving employee motivation and strengthening organizational communication can enhance employee performance within the institution.

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INTRODUCTION

Employees are a crucial human resource within government organizations, playing a key role in determining the success and development of such institutions. The performance of employees significantly influences the organization's ability to achieve its goals, from planning and implementation to control processes. High-quality employee performance is essential for the smooth execution of organizational activities, requiring employees to possess adequate skills, expertise, and competencies to carry out assigned tasks effectively. However, many government organizations face challenges related to suboptimal employee performance, which can result from low work motivation and ineffective communication (Shintia Yulian et al., 2021; Kelson & Heryenzus, 2018).

Work motivation is a critical factor influencing employee productivity and organizational success. Motivated employees are more likely to exert their best efforts to achieve organizational objectives, while low motivation can lead to reduced performance. Motivation acts as an internal drive that encourages individuals to work effectively and efficiently toward organizational goals, serving as a primary factor in enhancing employee performance. Conversely, the absence of motivation can result in routine and uninspired work behavior, which hampers organizational progress (Kuncoro, 2018; Sugiyono, 2017; Nazir, 2017).

In addition to motivation, communication plays a vital role in supporting employee performance. Effective communication between leaders and employees, as well as among colleagues, ensures that tasks are executed correctly and efficiently. Poor communication can create misunderstandings, reduce morale, and negatively impact employee collaboration, ultimately affecting overall performance. In government organizations, maintaining good communication channels is necessary to foster a positive work environment and achieve organizational goals (Shintia Yulian et al., 2021; Kelson & Heryenzus, 2018).

The Inspektorat of Tapanuli Tengah Regency is a regional government organization responsible for overseeing administrative governance, including village government supervision and the implementation of local government affairs. Effective employee performance within the Inspektorat depends on high work motivation and good communication among employees and between employees and leaders. Preliminary observations indicate that employee performance at the Inspektorat has not reached its optimal level due to insufficient motivation and suboptimal interpersonal communication. Therefore, this study aims to examine

the influence of work motivation and communication on employee performance at the Inspektorat of Tapanuli Tengah Regency.

The research seeks to answer the following questions: (1) Does work motivation affect employee performance at the Inspektorat of Tapanuli Tengah Regency? (2) Does communication affect employee performance at the same institution? (3) How do work motivation and communication jointly influence employee performance? The study is limited to these two independent variables—work motivation and communication—and their impact on employee performance. The findings are expected to provide theoretical insights for future research and practical recommendations for improving employee performance in government institutions (Shintia Yulian et al., 2021; Kelson & Heryenzus, 2018).

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research method with a descriptive approach, which is based on the positivist philosophy and aims to test hypotheses through numerical data analysis (Sugiyono, 2017). The research was conducted at the Inspektorat of Tapanuli Tengah Regency, located on Jl. N. Daulay, Pandan, from April 2025 to September 2025, covering proposal preparation, fieldwork, and final thesis examination.

The population for this study consisted of all 37 employees at the Inspektorat, comprising 34 civil servants and 3 honorary staff. Given the small population size, the entire population was selected as the research sample in accordance with sampling guidelines for populations under 100 individuals (Sugiyono, 2017; Arikunto, 2016). Data collection utilized both qualitative and quantitative data sources. Quantitative data were measured numerically and included interval and ratio data (Kuncoro, 2018), while qualitative data were obtained in the form of words, sentences, or images (Sugiyono, 2015). Primary data were collected directly from employees through questionnaires and interviews, while secondary data were obtained from institutional documents, journals, and relevant literature to support the research (Arikunto, 2016; Sugiyono, 2017).

Data collection techniques included literature review, observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The study variables consisted of independent variables—work motivation (X_1) and communication (X_2)—and the dependent variable—employee performance (Y) (Agung, 2014). Operational definitions were based on established indicators: work motivation included physiological needs, security, social needs, rewards, and self-actualization (Hamali, 2018); communication included understanding, enjoyment, influence on attitudes, relationship improvement, and action (Deddy, 2015); performance included effectiveness, efficiency, quality, timeliness, productivity, and safety (Fahmi, 2017). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, with intervals to classify scores from “very good” to “poor” (Furchan, 2016).

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 27, beginning with instrument testing, including validity and reliability tests. Validity was assessed by correlating questionnaire items with total scores, and reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha, with values above 0.70 considered reliable (Ghozali, 2018). Classical assumption tests—normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity—were performed to ensure the regression model’s suitability. Multiple linear regression analysis was then applied to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables using the formula:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon$$

where Y represents employee performance, α is the constant, β_1 and β_2 are regression coefficients for work motivation and communication, respectively, and ϵ is the error term. Hypothesis testing was conducted using t-tests for partial effects and F-tests (ANOVA) for simultaneous effects at a 95% confidence level to determine the significance of independent variables on employee performance (Sugiyono, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Respondent Description

Based on the results of the study conducted at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency with a total of 37 respondents, the characteristics of respondents can be identified based on age, gender, and education level.

Based on age characteristics, the largest proportion of respondents were aged 41–50 years and 51–60 years, each consisting of 12 respondents (32.43%). Respondents aged 31–40 years amounted to 11 people (29.73%), while the smallest proportion of respondents were aged 20–30 years, namely 2 people (5.41%). These results indicate that most employees are within a productive age range and possess relatively mature work experience.

Based on gender characteristics, the majority of respondents were male, totaling 22 people (59.46%), while female respondents accounted for 15 people (40.54%). This distribution indicates that employees at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency are predominantly male.

Based on the level of education, most respondents held a Bachelor's degree (S1), totaling 27 people (72.97%). Furthermore, 6 respondents (16.22%) held a Master's degree (S2), 3 respondents (8.11%) had a senior high school education, and 1 respondent (2.70%) had a primary school education. These results indicate that the majority of employees have a relatively high educational background, which is expected to support the effective implementation of organizational duties and responsibilities.

Descriptive Analysis of Research Questionnaire

a. Work Motivation (Variable X1)

Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis regarding the work motivation variable, which consists of 10 statement items, the overall average score obtained was 3.89, which falls into the good category. This indicates that the level of work motivation among employees at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency is generally good.

The highest average score was found in the statement regarding employees feeling calm while working because the institution provides adequate safety and security facilities, with an average score of 4.03. This indicates that employees feel secure and comfortable when performing their duties. Meanwhile, the lowest average score was obtained from the statement regarding cooperation among employees, with an average score of 3.73, although it still falls within the good category. Overall, these findings indicate that employee work motivation is relatively good, as reflected by the fulfillment of employee needs, recognition from leaders, and opportunities to pursue higher education.

b. Communication (Variable X2)

Based on the analysis results of the communication variable, which also consists of 10 statement items, the overall average score obtained was 3.79, which is categorized as good. The highest average score was found in statements related to a pleasant work atmosphere due to warm communication and effective information delivery from leaders, with an average value of 4.08. This indicates that communication between leaders and employees has been implemented effectively.

Meanwhile, the lowest average score was obtained in statements related to positive employee behavior resulting from effective communication and improved work outcomes due to communication, with an average score of 3.62. However, this score still falls within the good category. Therefore, it can be concluded that organizational communication within the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency has been implemented relatively effectively.

c. Employee Performance (Variable Y)

Based on the analysis results of the employee performance variable, which consists of 10 statement items, the overall average score obtained was 3.75, which is categorized as good. The highest average score was obtained in the statement related to employees' ability to complete work according to expectations, with an average value of 4.03. This indicates that most employees are able to complete their work in accordance with organizational expectations.

Meanwhile, the lowest average score was obtained from the statement regarding the ability of employees to work quickly without reducing the quality of work, with an average score of 3.57, although it still falls within the good category. Overall, these results indicate that employee performance at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency is generally good, as reflected in work completion, timeliness, and the quality of work produced.

Research Instrument Testing

The results of the validity test show that all statement items for the variables work motivation, communication, and employee performance have r-count values greater than the critical value of 0.30. This indicates that all questionnaire items used in this study are valid and suitable for measuring the research variables. Therefore, the research instrument is considered capable of accurately measuring the variables examined in this study.

Based on the results of the reliability test, the Cronbach's Alpha values for each variable were 0.869 for work motivation, 0.884 for communication, and 0.881 for employee performance. These values are greater than the minimum reliability threshold of 0.60, indicating that all variables in this study have a high level of reliability. Thus, the research instrument used in this study is considered consistent and reliable in measuring the research variables.

Classical Assumption Test

The normality test aims to determine whether the data in this study follow a normal distribution. Based on the histogram graph and the normal probability plot (P-P Plot), the data points appear to spread around the diagonal line and follow its direction. This indicates that the data are normally distributed.

This finding is also supported by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test, which shows an Asymp. Sig value of 0.113, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the residual data in this study are normally distributed.

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test using a scatterplot graph, the data points are spread randomly both above and below the zero line on the Y-axis and do not form a specific pattern. This indicates that the regression model used in this study does not experience heteroscedasticity problems, and therefore the regression model is appropriate for further analysis.

The results of the multicollinearity test show that the tolerance values for the work motivation and communication variables are 0.727, while the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are 1.376. Since the tolerance values are greater than 0.10 and the VIF values are less than 10, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity among the independent variables. Therefore, the regression model used in this study meets the classical assumption of multicollinearity.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance at the Inspectorate of Central Tapanuli Regency. This is evidenced by the t-test result showing that the calculated t-value is greater than the t-table value ($3.105 > 2.03224$) with a significance value of 0.004 (< 0.05). These findings suggest that higher levels of work motivation encourage employees to perform their duties more effectively. This result is consistent with previous studies conducted by Yulian et al. (2021) and Kelson and Heryenzus (2018), which also found that work motivation significantly influences employee performance.

Furthermore, the study reveals that communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The t-test results show that the calculated t-value (6.306) is greater than the t-table value (2.03224) with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05). This finding indicates that effective communication within the organization plays an important role in improving employee performance by facilitating information exchange and strengthening coordination between leaders and employees. This result is also in line with previous studies by Yulian et al. (2021) and Kelson and Heryenzus (2018), which reported that communication significantly affects employee performance.

In addition, the results of the simultaneous test demonstrate that work motivation and communication together have a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This is supported by the F-test result showing that the calculated F-value (48.077) is greater than the F-table value (3.28) with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). These findings indicate that both variables jointly contribute to improving employee performance. Therefore, organizations should focus on strengthening motivational strategies and improving internal communication to enhance employee performance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the research instruments used to measure work motivation, communication, and employee performance are valid and reliable, and the data meet the normality assumption. The results indicate a strong relationship between work motivation and employee performance ($r = 0.658$) and a very strong relationship between communication and employee performance ($r = 0.815$). The regression analysis shows that both work motivation and communication have positive effects on employee performance, with the regression equation $Y = 1.152 + 0.296X_1 + 0.654X_2$. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.739 indicates that 73.9% of the variation in employee performance is explained by work motivation and communication, while the remaining 26.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Hypothesis testing confirms that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($t = 3.105$; $p < 0.05$), communication also has a positive and significant effect ($t = 6.306$; $p < 0.05$), and both variables simultaneously have a significant effect on employee performance ($F = 48.077$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, organizations are encouraged to enhance employee performance by strengthening motivational strategies, providing recognition and development opportunities, and fostering open and effective communication within the workplace, while future research is recommended to explore additional factors influencing employee performance.

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