

ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN TIDORE ISLANDS

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ABSTRACT

The reform of the public sector is a crucial aspect of development and the enhancement of government efficiency. One vital element within this reform is the improvement of the performance of public officials, encompassing various stages in budget management, including planning, approval, implementation, and public fund accountability. This study has a clear objective, which is to identify the impact of organizational communication on the performance of government officials. In the context of Tidore Islands, the research population involves the Regional Work Units (SKPD), which play a significant role in local governance. Data for this research was collected through the distribution of questionnaires to 250 respondents from each SKPD. The use of these questionnaires aims to test the research hypothesis, which suggests that organizational communication has a significant influence on the performance of government officials. Data analysis results reveal a strong correlation between effective organizational communication and government officials' performance. This finding provides empirical evidence supporting the importance of good communication in enhancing the performance of local government, ultimately contributing to the realization of a more efficient and transparent public sector reform. Thus, this research makes a significant contribution to the development of better public policy and management practices in Tidore Islands.

Keywords: apparatus performance; organizational communication; local government.

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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of Law No. 32 of 2004 on regional governance has resulted in changes to the governance system. Initially, this system was based on a centralized accountability pattern, but it has now shifted towards a decentralization pattern. In this decentralization pattern, regions are granted broad authority to manage and be genuinely responsible for the potential of their respective areas. However, this authority does not apply to matters determined by the law as the domain of the central government, such as foreign policy, defense, security, justice, national monetary and fiscal policies, as well as religion.

The impact of this regional autonomy system is a shift in the government's orientation from a "command and control" approach to one focused on the demands and needs of the public. One of the primary objectives of implementing regional autonomy in Indonesia is to strengthen the local economy to support the national economy, especially in facing the era of free trade (Smith, 2008; Usman, 2002). This objective will be achieved only if all segments of society earnestly implement it.

The initial step toward achieving this success is through the reform of the public sector. Public sector reform not only encompasses changes in institutional structures but also involves renewing the tools used to support public institutions to make them economically, efficiently, effectively, transparently, and accountably operated. This will help achieve the goal of reform, which is to establish truly "good governance" (Mardiasmo, 2012).

Public sector reform also includes reform of local finances, which, in turn, affects budget reform. The processes of budget preparation, approval, implementation, and accountability have undergone changes. Previously, the accountability of the Regional Budget (APBD) required approval from the Minister of Home Affairs and the Governor. However, currently, APBD accountability only requires approval from the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) through Regional Regulations (Perda) (Mardiasmo, 2012).

Furthermore, the Regional Budget Plan (RAPBD) is prepared based on performance-based budgeting. This places a significant responsibility on Regional Work Units (SKPD) as budget users to provide adequate resources to manage the budget economically, efficiently, and effectively, reflecting the interests of the community (Hidayat, 2022; Hoerudin, 2019). The assessment of the performance of Regional Work Units is highly influenced by the performance of SKPD in realizing the welfare of the community in the region (Sumtaky et al., 2018; Suwanda, 2019).

Lestari & Ramantha (2013) conducted a study on the influence of budget participation on managerial performance and the impact of communication on the relationship between budget participation and managerial performance at PT. (Persero) Angkasa Pura I Ngurah Rai Airport - Bali. The population in this study included all managers involved in budget preparation at PT. AP I Ngurah Rai - Bali, totaling 43 individuals. The results of this research show that budget participation has a positive and significant impact on managerial performance, and communication significantly influences the relationship between budget participation and managerial performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Communication

Humans, as social beings, have a need for assistance from individuals around them. In the context of humans as social creatures, communication is not merely a tool for building relationships among individuals, but it is also a tool that enables humans to survive (Mercer, 2002; Rosenberg & Chopra, 2015; Simabur et al., 2023). Therefore, it is essential for humans to be proficient in communication. Humans, possessing noble virtues and the ability to adapt to their surroundings, continue to interact, converse, convey desires, and more through communication. All these needs and desires can only be fulfilled through effective communication, particularly in the context of office organizations or companies. In this context, effective and seamless communication is crucial for conducting operational activities and ensuring the company's continuity. Insufficient communication can hinder collaboration (Abdeen et al., 2021; Banaeianjahromi & Smolander, 2019; Hansson et al., 2018).

Communication serves as the adhesive that unites humans to work together in achieving common goals (Barrett, 2002; Denton Jr & Kuypers, 2007). The vital role of communication is also evident in restoring the balance between organizational needs

and employee needs, as well as in building and maintaining trust. Communication is the key to organizational rejuvenation and enhancing workplace harmony. Conversely, a lack of effective communication can disrupt coordination, leading to disharmony that may hinder the achievement of organizational targets and goals (Ndraha, 2023; Nwokocha, 2015).

The origin of the word "communication" can be traced back to the Latin term "communis," meaning "shared." There are various definitions of communication by scholars, one of which is Schement (2017); and Yamamoto (2019) definition, which defines communication as the process of transferring knowledge from one individual to another with a specific purpose (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). In this context, smooth communication is open communication, where information flows freely both from the top down and vice versa. In an organization, this information should ideally be available in an atmosphere of mutual trust, where people are genuinely interested in, attentive to, and respectful of one another. These factors ensure the smooth flow of communication in all organizations (Zeithaml et al., 1988). Similarly, in the preparation of a company's budget, effective and seamless communication between leaders and subordinates is crucial to align perceptions, formulate, and execute work plans efficiently. Brilliant ideas from individuals, whether they are leaders or subordinates, only hold meaning if they can be conveyed and communicated efficiently.

Apparatus Performance

Performance assessment is a crucial aspect of evaluating the operational effectiveness of an organization, both at an overall level and at the departmental or individual level (Sidik et al., 2022). This assessment is conducted based on predetermined performance standards and criteria, as elucidated by Jeon et al. (2013). Managerial performance, which is evaluated by superiors, plays a primary role in enhancing the overall effectiveness of the organization (Simanjuntak et al., 2021). This is because, fundamentally, organizations are run by people, so performance evaluation essentially appraises individual behaviors in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities within the organization.

The importance of performance assessment is also highly relevant in the context of the public sector organization (Pogo, 2022). In it, higher management levels delegate some of their authority to lower management levels, accompanied by the allocation of necessary resources. The utilization of authority and the consumption of resources in carrying out tasks and responsibilities are considered integral to performance measurement. The results of these performance assessments then serve as the basis for superiors to provide evaluations of their subordinates' performance, and conversely, subordinates receive feedback on how superiors assess their performance (Judge & Ferris, 1993).

Therefore, performance assessment is a key element in organizational management, both in the private and public sectors. It aids organizations in evaluating their operational effectiveness, motivating employees, and identifying areas in need of improvement, thereby enhancing overall efficiency and the achievement of organizational goals.

Hypothesis Development & Conceptual Framework

This study aims to evaluate the impact of organizational communication on the performance of local government officials. The hypotheses proposed in this research are based on prior studies, such as the research conducted by Wahyuni (2009), which examined the influence of organizational communication on the performance of accounting department employees, with organizational commitment and job pressure as intervening variables, in a state-owned enterprise (BUMN) in West Sumatra Province. The findings of that study indicated that organizational communication has a positive and significant effect on performance, while it has a negative impact on job pressure. However, job pressure does not affect performance. Furthermore, organizational communication does not influence organizational commitment, and organizational commitment also does not impact performance. This research does not identify organizational commitment and job pressure as intervening variables in the relationship between organizational communication and performance. Based on the development of these hypotheses, this study will construct a conceptual framework to investigate this relationship.

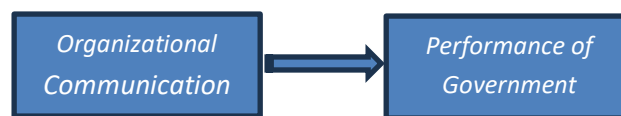


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the conceptual framework depicted above, the research hypothesis is formulated as follows: "Organizational Communication influences the Performance of Government Officials in Tidore Islands."

METHODS

This research utilizes an explanatory research design because its primary objective is to elucidate the causal relationship between variables through hypothesis testing. The study's target population consists of the government units within the Tidore Islands Municipal Work Unit (SKPD), encompassing 12 office departments, 2 secretariats, the Inspectorate, a public hospital (RSUD), 3 agencies, 6 offices, 9 districts, and 9 villages. To be more specific, this research focuses on individuals holding middle management positions within the Tidore Islands Municipal Work Unit. The total number of respondents is 250, comprising the heads of SKPD, SKPD secretaries, section heads, and department heads.

The research employs the Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach, using the Partial Least Square (PLS) as the alternative method. The software used for analysis is Warp PLS 3.0. PLS is a component-based or variance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. One of the key advantages of PLS is that it does not require specific distribution assumptions for parameter estimation, thus obviating the need for parametric techniques to assess significance (Ghozali & Latan, 2012; S. Sangadji et al., 2022; Sangadji, 2023). The evaluation of the PLS model involves assessing two components: the outer model and the inner model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Loading Analysis Convergent Validity Testing

The testing of outer loadings is akin to data quality assessment, intended to mitigate biases that may arise from research data, in explaining the constructs of the variables to be measured or testing the validity and reliability of constructs. As known, PLS analysis is a factor-based analysis that can also be referenced as a form of validation for a construct. This study employs reflexive indicators for each latent variable. The testing of outer weights indicates an examination of each indicator in explaining the latent variable construct. Significant values indicate favorable outcomes.

The processing results, as seen in the attached table, reveal that the overall weight values generally show good indicators, with the majority being significant in relation to latent variables. In other words, the p-values are less than 0.05, and the VIF values are less than 3.3 (Kock, 2015). In the attached table of weight values, there are a few non-significant ones; however, the researcher has retained them as removing one formative indicator can alter the overall content (Hair et al., 2013).

Discriminant Validity Testing

The Discriminant Validity testing is aimed at examining that each measurement of one construct variable differs from the measurement of another. Discriminant validity testing is performed using cross loadings, which involve comparing the loading values of the construct variable being tested with other constructs. If an indicator exhibits a high loading value on a different construct, it indicates weak discriminant validity for the research variable.

The results of the analysis yield cross-loading values or correlations between constructs and corresponding variables. Generally, these findings support the measurement concept of each variable, as they possess the highest loading factor when compared to loading factors for other variables. Although some indicators may still exhibit relatively weak loadings, they will still be used in the analysis.

Reliability and Variance Extract.

The criteria for validity and reliability can also be assessed based on the Reliability values of each construct and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. Constructs are considered to have high reliability if their Reliability value is 0.70 or higher, and their AVE is above 0.50. Based on the test results, it can be concluded that all constructs meet the reliability criteria. This is evident from the Composite Reliability value for the performance variable, which is above 0.70. However, there are still some constructs with AVE values below 0.50, and this condition is still acceptable.

Inner Model

The testing of the inner model or structural model is conducted to examine the relationship between constructs. The inner model testing also serves as an assessment of the hypothesized relationships among latent variables. The significance of the estimated parameters provides valuable information regarding the relationships between the research variables.

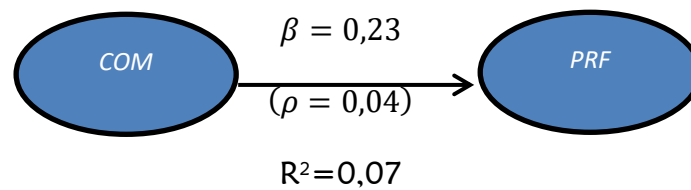


Figure 2. Measurement Results

Based on the results of the conducted measurements, it can be stated that communication positively influences managerial performance, or H1 is acceptable. The test results indicate that the influence of the Communication variable on government officials' performance shows a coefficient value of 0.228 with a positive direction and a p-value of $0.040 < 0.05$. This result signifies that communication within the budget significantly impacts government officials' performance. In her research, Wahyuni (2009) examined the influence of organizational communication on government performance with organizational commitment and job pressure as moderator variables. She found that organizational communication directly affects performance. Effective communication can enhance workplace harmony within the organization. Conversely, in the absence of effective communication, coordination will be disrupted. As a result, disharmony will interfere with the process of achieving organizational targets and objectives (Nasution et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that the organizational communication variable has a significant impact on the performance of government officials. With the hypothesis stating that organizational communication affects the performance of government officials, this hypothesis is validated as true. This suggests that effective organizational communication plays a crucial role in enhancing the performance of government personnel, underscoring the importance of fostering strong communication practices within the government framework. This research underscores the significance of understanding and improving communication within government agencies as a means to enhance overall operational effectiveness and efficiency.

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