

The Effect of Interpersonal Communication and Work Motivation on Employee Performance: A Quantitative Study at Honda Semarang Centre

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ABSTRACT

Background: Employee performance is pivotal in driving organizational success, particularly in highly dynamic sectors such as the automotive industry. Within such environments, interpersonal communication and work motivation are considered essential factors influencing work outcomes. However, practical gaps often arise, leading to underperformance despite theoretically favorable conditions.

Aims: This study aims to investigate the effect of interpersonal communication and work motivation on employee performance in the Body Repair Division at Honda Semarang Centre.

Methods: A quantitative associative approach was employed, involving a saturated sample of all 30 employees. Data were gathered via a structured questionnaire measured on a Likert scale and analyzed using multiple linear regression. Instrument validity and reliability were confirmed, and classical assumption tests were conducted.

Results: Findings reveal that both interpersonal communication and work motivation significantly and positively influence employee performance, both independently and collectively. The model's coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.949, suggesting that 94.9% of performance variation is explained by these two variables. Descriptive statistics indicate high average scores across all variables with strong internal consistency.

Conclusion: This study affirms that fostering open, empathetic, and supportive communication channels, coupled with effective motivational strategies, substantially boosts employee performance. The high explanatory power of the model underscores the strategic value of psychosocial factors in human resource management. These insights not only validate existing theories by Devito and Herzberg but also offer actionable recommendations for practice. Organizations should prioritize interpersonal engagement and incentive systems as integral components of their performance management frameworks, particularly in performance-intensive industries. Sustained investment in these areas is likely to result in improved employee satisfaction, reduced operational frictions, and enhanced organizational productivity.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication, Work Motivation, Employee Performance, Regression Analysis, Human Resources.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is one of the main indicators in determining the success of a company (Andy Pratama & Putri Handayani, 2022; Kusuma et al., 2021; Putri & Astuti, 2022) . including in the automotive industry such as Honda Semarang Centre Body Repair Division. Performance not only reflects individual achievement in completing tasks, but also directly contributes to organisational effectiveness in achieving targets. In a complex and challenging work dynamic, companies are required to ensure that each employee has the ability, commitment, and adequate work environment support (Hulu et al., 2022; Marbun & Jufrizen, 2022) . Therefore, it is important to examine the factors that significantly affect employee performance so that companies can manage human resources strategically and sustainably.

However, there is a glaring gap between ideal practices and real conditions in the field. Ideally, employee performance is achieved through a harmonious synergy between effective communication and high work motivation (Ahmad, 2021; Luthfi et al., 2022; Prayogi & Lesmana, 2021) . Unfortunately, the reality at Honda Semarang Centre shows that work achievement targets are often not met. This indicates problems in communication between employees and between superiors and subordinates, as well as a less than optimal system for providing work motivation.

This situation opens up research opportunities to scientifically explore the influence of factors that are thought to affect employee performance, namely interpersonal communication and work motivation (Erdiansyah et al., 2022; Fitriah & Rohendi, 2022; Nurhayati & Supardi, 2020) . Through a quantitative approach, this research is expected to provide strong empirical data to understand the extent to which these two variables play a role in improving work performance. In addition, this research can also be an evaluation material for company management in formulating human resource development strategies.

Based on previous studies, the relationship between interpersonal communication, work motivation, and employee performance shows mixed results. Most studies state a significant positive effect, but there are also contradictory results depending on the context and industry sector. This gap is then used as the basis for the novelty of this research, especially by taking objects in the automotive private sector and testing two variables at once.

Interpersonal communication was chosen because it has been shown to play a role in shaping an open, empathic, and supportive work climate. (Data & Didit Fachri Rifai, 2022; Hamid et al., 2022; Muslich et al., 2022) . Meanwhile, work motivation was chosen because it is the main driver in achieving work targets through intrinsic and extrinsic encouragement. These two variables are believed to have a strategic influence on work performance.

The purpose of this study is to analyse and test the effect of interpersonal communication and work motivation on employee performance, both partially and simultaneously. The research questions raised are: Do interpersonal communication and work motivation significantly affect employee performance at Honda Semarang Centre Body Repair Division?

Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide concrete recommendations for corporate HR management, and theoretically contribute to the development of organisational communication studies and performance management.

METHODS

Research Design

This study uses an associative quantitative approach with the aim of knowing the effect of interpersonal communication and work motivation on employee performance. This design allows researchers to test the relationship between variables simultaneously and partially using statistical analysis.

Population, sample and participants

The population in this study were all 30 employees of the Honda Semarang Centre Body Repair Division. Because the number is relatively small, saturated sampling technique is used, that is, the entire population is sampled. The research was conducted for three weeks in January 2023. To minimise social bias in questionnaire responses, the researcher guaranteed the confidentiality of respondents' identities and explained that there were no personal consequences for the answers given.

Research instruments

The instrument used is a questionnaire that is prepared based on the theoretical indicators of each variable. For interpersonal communication variables using indicators from Devito (2005), work motivation from Mangkunegara (2009), and employee performance also refers to Mangkunegara (2009). The instruments were tested for validity and reliability before being used in data collection.

Procedure, research time and place

The data was collected by distributing questionnaires directly to employees at the research location, Honda Semarang Centre, during a certain period of time according to the research schedule. In addition, researchers also conducted direct observations in the field to strengthen quantitative findings.

Research Plan

Data were analysed using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of interpersonal communication and work motivation on employee performance. Classical assumption tests were conducted first, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. Furthermore, the F test was conducted to test the simultaneous effect and the t test to test the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to measure the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of descriptive analysis show that the interpersonal communication variable has an average value of 4.23 with a standard deviation of 0.57, which indicates that employee perceptions of interpersonal communication are high and tend to be evenly distributed. This reflects that most employees perceive openness, empathy, support, positivity, and equality in their work interactions. This finding supports the importance of interpersonal communication in creating a harmonious and productive work environment.

The work motivation variable shows an average value of 4.11 with a standard deviation of 0.61. The high average indicates that the majority of employees feel motivated in carrying out their tasks, both due to intrinsic factors such as job challenges and extrinsic factors such as promotion opportunities and recognition of performance. The relatively low standard deviation shows that

perceptions among employees are quite homogeneous, so it can be said that the motivation system implemented by the company is felt to be quite effective by most employees.

The employee performance variable has an average of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.60, which means that the level of performance is considered quite high by the respondents. The dimensions of work quality, work quantity, and timeliness show positive results, which reinforces the notion that employees are able to fulfil set work targets despite operational obstacles. This stable performance is a reflection of management's success in maintaining work discipline and effectiveness.

The validity test results using item-total correlation show all items are valid. The reliability test resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha value of each variable above 0.84. This indicates that the instrument used has excellent internal consistency.

Multiple linear regression analysis shows that simultaneously interpersonal communication and work motivation have a significant effect on employee performance (F count = 248,807; significance = 0.000). The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.949 and the Adjusted R^2 value of 0.945 indicate that approximately 94.5% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the two independent variables, and the model has a very high predictive ability.

Partially, interpersonal communication had a significant effect (t count = 8.890), as did work motivation (t count = 7.122), both of which exceeded the t table value (2.048). The findings corroborate that simultaneous and individual improvements in communication and motivation can lead to more optimal performance in the automotive work environment.

Table 1. Descriptive and Psychometric Statistics

	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Validity	Alpha Reliability
1.	Interpersonal communication	4,23	0,57	> r table	0,872
2.	Work Motivation	4.11	0,61	> r table	0,843
3.	Employee Performance	4,18	0.6	> r table	0,865

Table 2. Statistical Test

	Test Type	Count Value	Crisis Value	Significance
1.	Interpersonal communication t-test	8,89	2,048	Significant
2.	Work motivation t test	7,122	2,048	Significant
3.	Simultaneous f test	248,807	Significance 0.5	Significant
4.	Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	0,949	-	94.9% of variance explained

Discussion

The results showed that interpersonal communication has a significant influence on the performance of Honda Semarang Centre Body Repair Division employees. This finding is in line with Devito's theory (2005) which states that effective interpersonal communication includes openness, empathy, support, positive feelings, and equality-elements that can build conducive working relationships (Fauzi, 2020; Lanes et al., n.d.; Syaputra & Ayuh, 2020). When communication between individuals in the organisation takes place in an open and respectful manner, the information needed to carry out work can be received precisely and quickly. This allows employees to complete their tasks

efficiently and reduces the potential for conflict or miscommunication that can hinder work productivity.

In addition, work motivation was also found to have a significant effect on employee performance. This result supports Herzberg's view in the Two-Factor Theory which distinguishes between motivators (intrinsic factors) and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors) (Nurahmah et al., 2019; Wedadjati & Helmi, 2022; Yashak et al., 2020). In the context of this study, the motivation instilled by the company such as providing bonuses, turnover targets, insurance, and other incentives has succeeded in creating a higher work drive in employees. The greater the motivation felt by employees, either due to self-actualisation needs or external rewards, the greater their willingness to complete work with optimal quality and quantity.

This study supports the findings of (Firman et al., 2024; Munir et al., 2022; Santoso & Rijanti, 2022) which shows that communication and motivation have a significant influence on employee performance in the service sector which states that the psychosocial work environment such as open communication and work appreciation contributes greatly to employee productivity and loyalty. However, in the context of Honda Semarang Center, the dense and target-oriented work dynamics make these factors more prominent as determinants of performance than other organisations that are not oriented towards daily output. This finding reinforces the performance theory proposed by Mathis and Jackson (2006) (Adnan Hakim & Hamid, 2021; Bodroastuti et al., 2020; Ridho, 2022) where performance is a function of ability, motivation, and environmental support. Thus, the success of the organisation is not solely determined by the managerial system or technology used, but also by the work climate built through communication and providing the right motivation (Cahyati & Adelia, 2024; Fajri et al., 2021).

Theoretically, the results of this study also reinforce the importance of the humanistic approach in human resource management, where psychosocial factors such as a sense of being valued and interpersonal relationships are determinants of sustainable performance. This research not only confirms existing theories, but also emphasises that in the context of service and automotive industries such as Honda Semarang Center, human interaction and work motivation are highly strategic. Therefore, companies should continue to develop open communication systems and provide work motivation reinforcement through personalised and professional approaches in order to maintain superior employee performance.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that has been done, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication and work motivation have a significant influence on employee performance at Honda Semarang Centre Body Repair Division, both partially and simultaneously. Interpersonal communication that involves openness, empathy, and support is proven to be able to create a conducive work environment and support optimal employee task achievement. Similarly, work motivation built through intrinsic and extrinsic factors encourages higher work enthusiasm, thus positively impacting the quality, quantity, and timeliness of work execution.

With a coefficient of determination of 94.9%, this study confirms that the two independent variables are the dominant factors influencing employee performance. This finding not only strengthens existing theories of communication and motivation, but also makes a practical contribution for companies to focus on strengthening social interactions and motivational reward

systems. Therefore, companies are advised to continue developing effective communication strategies and a fair and adequate reward system so that employee performance remains optimal and aligned with organisational goals.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

FR was responsible for the formulation of the research topic and design, drafting the questionnaire instrument, and conducting statistical data collection and analysis. KAF played a role in the literature study, processing the regression analysis results, and preparing the discussion and conclusions. Both collaborated in the overall preparation of the manuscript and are responsible for the originality and scientific integrity of this article.

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