THE EFFECT OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION ON PERFORMANCE WITH WORK MOTIVATION AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract

Objective – This study aims to provide an empirical explanation of the effect of interpersonal communication on performance with work motivation as a moderating variable at the interpersonal communication on performance with work motivation as a moderating variable at the Lamandau Regency Fire Department.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The type of research used in this research is quantitative. The unit of analysis in this research is the employees of the Fire Department (DAMKAR) of Lamandau Regency, totaling 35 people. The collected data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach, the software used was SmartPLS 3.0. While collecting data with a questionnaire.

Findings – Interpersonal communication has a positive and significant influence on performance and work motivation, while work motivation also acts as a mediator that strengthens the impact of interpersonal communication on employee performance at the Lamandau Regency Fire Department.

Conclusion and Implications – Effective interpersonal communication at the Lamandau Regency Fire Department directly improves employee performance and work motivation. Work motivation is also proven to contribute positively to performance improvement. In addition, interpersonal communication not only has a direct impact, but also indirectly affects performance through increased work motivation.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication, Performance, Work Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a basic human activity. By communicating humans can relate to each other in everyday life in the household, workplace and community environment. The importance of communication for humans cannot be denied anymore, as well as for organizations or companies. To support and improve employee performance, effective communication is needed, so that work motivation increases and employee performance can run optimally. Communication is in everyone's interest to socialize with others. A person will find it difficult to connect with others without communication.

In addition to communication, work motivation and employee performance are also needed in maintaining an organization. Motivation is an impetus or reason that becomes the basis of a person's enthusiasm for doing something or doing something to achieve a certain goal. The main benefit of motivation is to create work passion, so that work productivity increases. Meanwhile, the benefit of working with motivated employees is that the work can be completed appropriately. This means that the work is completed according to the correct standards and within a predetermined time scale, and employees are happy to do their work.

Employee performance is one of the most important things in an organization or company. This is because a goal or target in the company will be achieved if employees are able to have good performance in achieving this. Thus, it is important for organizations or companies to monitor employee performance and even make efforts that can improve employee performance. Basically, performance in this employee has an important factor, namely the achievement of goals, which means that it can be one of the benchmarks for the success of employee performance. Employees are said to have good performance if they successfully meet deadlines (or less than the specified time), succeed in building a positive company image and customer interaction, work effectively. Conversely, if employees or individuals working in a company do not work effectively, then customers will judge poorly and will eventually choose other similar alternative companies. If in an organization there is poor communication, it will create differences between employees with one another so that it can lead to conflict or division.

The main task of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees is to carry out government affairs in their working area for fire disaster prevention, emergency response, suppression and rescue. The Lamandau Regency Fire Service can also help with other community problems such as the rescue of living beings and objects. For example, if there are residents who are drowning, helping flood victims, and can also be asked for help saving animals. Employee performance is the level of overall success of an employee within a certain period of time which is an achievement to meet the organization's work standards or work results as a predetermined target based on several criteria that have been agreed upon.

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers, there is a phenomenon in the Lamandau Regency Fire Service which shows that when at the fire location there are several employees who are pacing and not clearly performing their duties in the field. This phenomenon often occurs due to several things such as shrinking when seeing the size of the fire and not understanding how to control the water released when watering the fire. From this information, it appears that employee performance has not been stable. In addition, the lack of good communication personally or in the context of work by leaders or fellow colleagues can affect performance which creates negative attitudes or behaviors such as there are still employees who are awkward and reluctant to communicate with leaders, and in responding to fellow employees or team interlocutors which results in miscommunication, and they tend to communicate indirectly between fellow employees, they communicate through connecting media such as cellphones. This sometimes causes a lot of misunderstanding in doing work which will have an impact on employee performance. Supported by the lack of maximum employee motivation to do work during picket and concern for fellow coworkers in the field, such as calming coworkers when they see the size of the fire. The reduced performance experienced by employees will certainly have a bad impact on the organization, which will hinder the organization in achieving the desired target or work results.
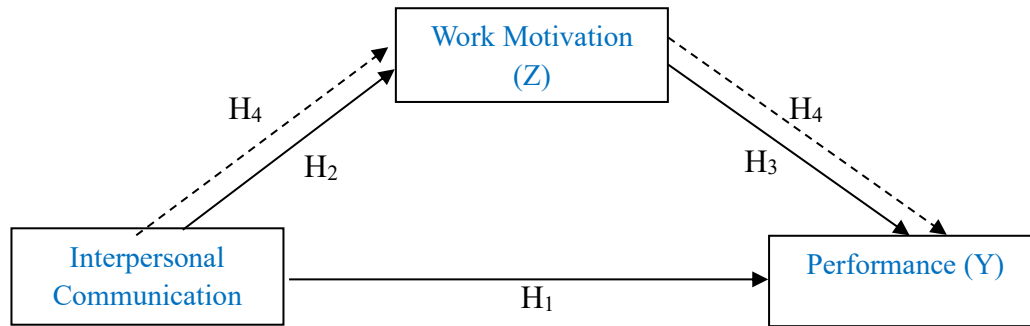
Picture 1. Conceptual Framework Drawing

Based on the above framework, the authors propose the following hypothesis:

H1: There is an effect of interpersonal communication on the performance of employees of the Lamandau Regency Fire Service.
H2: There is an effect of interpersonal communication on the work motivation of employees of the Fire Service of Lamandau Regency.
H3: There is an influence of work motivation on the performance of employees of the Fire Service of Lamandau Regency.
H4: There is a role of work motivation as a mediating influence between interpersonal communication and employee performance of the Fire Service of Lamandau Regency.

METHODS

The type of research used in this study is quantitative. The unit of analysis in this study were 35 employees of the Fire Service (DAMKAR) of Lamandau Regency. The collected data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach, the software used was SmartPLS 3.0. While collecting data with a questionnaire and the measuring instrument used is a Likert scale. The variables and indicators in this research can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Identify Variables

Variable	Definition	Indikator Variabel
Interpersonal communication (X)	Interpersonal communication or interpersonal communication is communication between people face-to-face, which allows each participant to capture the reactions of others directly, both verbally and non-verbally (Mulyana, 2010: 81).	- Clear - Precise - Context - Channeling - Culture
Work motivation (Z)	Motivation is a force that encourages a person to take an action or not which essentially exists internally and externally positive or negative (Sedarmayanti, 2017).	Abraham Maslow's theory: - Physiological needs - The need for a sense of security - The need to feel belonging - The need for self-

Variable	Definition	Indikator Variabel
		- esteem - The need to self-actualize
Employee Performance (Y)	Performance is the level of achievement of results from working on a particular task. Company performance is the level of achievement of results from realizing the goals of the company (Nurjaya, 2020).	- Quality of work - Quantity of work - Punctuality - Effectiveness - Independence

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model carried out using questionnaire data tabulation produces results, which can be seen in Picture below:
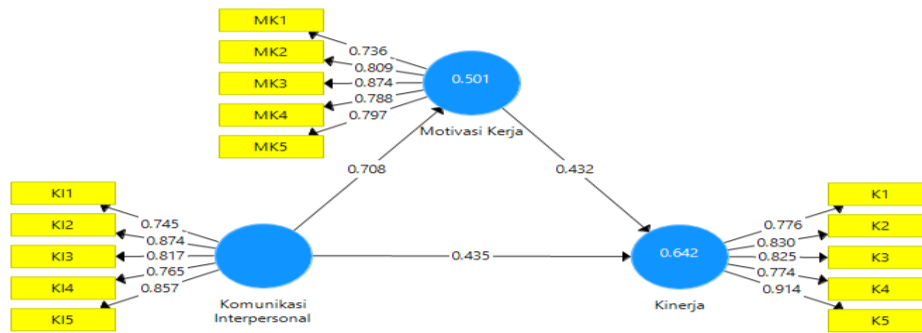
Picture 2. Outer Model or Measurement Model

As a result of testing the outer model or measurement model in the picture 2, it was found that many of the research variable indicators had an outer loading value of ≥ 0.70, so they were declared sufficient to meet the requirements. So, the research instrument was then tested through validity and reliability testing which was assessed from outer loading, AVE (Average Variance Extraced), cross loading, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability.

Table 2. Evaluation of Measurement Model/Outer Model

Cronstruct	indicators	Item reliability	Convergent Validity			
		LF	CR	CA	Rho A	AVE
Interpersonal communication	KI1	**0,745**	**0,907**	**0,871**	**0,870**	**0,661**
	KI2	**0,874**				
	KI3	**0,817**				
	KI4	**0,765**				
	KI5	**0,857**				
Work motivation	MK1	**0,736**	**0,900**	**0.860**	**0,860**	**0,643**
	MK2	**0,809**				
	MK3	**0,874**				
	MK4	**0,788**				
	MK5	**0,797**				
Employee Performance	K1	**0,776**	**0,914**	**0,882**	**0,888**	**0,681**
	K2	**0,830**				

K3	**0,825**
K4	**0,774**
K5	**0,914**

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

Loading Factor or Outer Loading

The loading factor measurement or outer loading measurement measures the correlation between each measurement item and each variable. The outer loading value between 0.50 to 0.60 is considered to meet the criteria for convergent validity. The data in table 2 shows that all indicators have an outer loading or loading factor value greater than 0.70, indicating that these indicators are valid.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is a measure used to show how far the variable reliability is. The minimum value of composite reliability between 0.60-0.70 is acceptable. Based on the data in table 2 above, it is known that the composite reliability value of the research variable ≥ 0.70 indicates that the construct has good reliability. Apart from composite reliability, there are two other measures that reflect the level of reliability or internal consistency, namely Cronbach alpha and rho A. each research variable has a Cronbach alpha and rho A value greater than or equal to 0.60-0.70.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

AVE (Average Variance Extracted) is the average variation of each measurement item associated with that variable. In addition, AVE can also reflect the convergent validity of a variable, with an AVE value ≥ 0.50 considered good. It can be seen from the data in table 2 above, where all AVE values ≥ 0.50 are considered good.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is measured using the Fornell-Lacker Criterion. According to the Fornell-Lacker criterion, a model has good discriminant validity if the root AVE of the variable is greater than the correlation between variables. Another method for measuring discriminant validity introduced by Henseler and Sarstedt is the HTMT (Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio), with a recommended value of less than 0.85 or less than 0.90.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Variable	Performance	Interpersonal communication	Work motivation
Fornell Lacker Criterion			
Performance	**O,825**		
Interpersonal communication	0,741	**0,813**	
Work motivation	0,740	0,708	**0,802**
Heterotrait-Monotrait Criterion (HTMT)			
Performance			
Interpersonal communication	0,837		
Work motivation	0,841	0,812	

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

Evaluation of discriminant validity by testing the Fornell-Lacker criteria can be seen in table 3, the Fornell-Lacker criteria, namely the AVE root of the variable must be greater than the correlation between variables. The performance variable has an AVE root (0.825) greater than the correlation of the interpersonal communication variable, namely the AVE root (0.741) and also greater than the correlation of the work motivation variable, namely the AVE root (0.740).

Furthermore, in the interpersonal communication variable, where the variable has an AVE root value of (0.813) which has a greater correlation value than the work motivation variable, namely the AVE root (0.708) and the work motivation variable has an AVE root of (0.802) which is greater than the correlation value of other indicators. The Fornell Lacker criterion above shows that the correlation value between the variables themselves is greater than the correlation of these variables with other variables.

The discriminant evaluation using the HTMT (Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio) test is considered more sensitive and accurate in detecting discriminant validity. The data in Table 3 shows that the assessment criteria are met, where the variable more strongly divides the variation of the measurement item with the item that measures it than with items of other variables. The discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker criteria indicates that the AVE root of each variable is greater than the correlation between variables. For example, the performance variable has an AVE root (0.825) greater than the correlation with the interpersonal communication variable (0.741) and the work motivation variable (0.740). Similarly, the interpersonal communication and work motivation variables also have AVE roots that are greater than the correlation with other variables. This indicates that the correlation values within each variable are greater than the correlations of these variables with other variables.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

In this research, the relationship between variables will be explained based on the values obtained from the coefficient path. This value can be seen in the picture below.
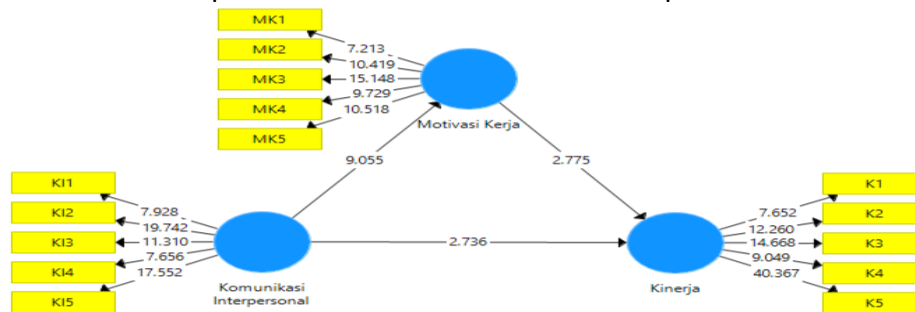
Picture 3. Inner Model Output

Evaluation of the structural model involves testing hypotheses regarding the influence between the research variables. The first stage is a multicollinearity test between variables using inter VIF (varience inflation factor) measurements.

Table 4. Collinearity Statistic (VIF)

Constructs	Inner VIF
Interpersonal communication → Performance	2,004
Interpersonal communication → Work motivation	1,000
Work motivation → Performance	2,004

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

The internal VIF value in this study showed less than 5, so there was no indication of multicollinearity between the variables. The second stage involves testing hypotheses between variables by looking at t-statistics or p-values. If the t-value of the calculation statistics (t-table) is greater than 1.96 or the p-value tested is less than 0.05, it indicates that there is a significant influence between the variables. The third stage is a 95% path coefficient confidence interval.

Table 5. Testing of Direct and Indirect Influence Hypothesis

Hypothesis	*Original Sample*	T-statistik	P-value	95% Confidence Interval *Path Coefficient*		Desc.
				Lower Limit	Lower Limit	
H1. KI → K	0,435	2,978	**0,003**	0,146	0,436	**Accepted**
H2. KI → MK	0,708	9,783	**0,000**	0,072	0,720	**Accepted**
H3. MK → K	0,432	3,012	**0,003**	0,143	0,436	**Accepted**
H4. KI→ MK → K	0,306	2,722	**0,007**	0,112	0,315	**Accepted**

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

The value of the table is as follows:

Df = 35 − 3 − 1 = 31 (1,695)

Based on what is explained in table 8. above, an analysis of the research hypothesis can be carried out as described below.

H1 : Interpersonal Communication Affects Performance

The first hypothesis (H1) was accepted, namely that there was a significant influence of interpersonal communication on performance with the original sample (0.435) with a value (t-statistic) of 2.978 (>1.695 tables) and a p-value of 0.003 (less than α= 0.05) which means significant. In the 95% confidence interval, if the improvement of interpersonal communication is greater and stronger, it will improve performance between values of 0.146 to 0.436. The results of the test showed that there was enough empirical evidence to accept the hypothesis that better interpersonal communication would improve employee performance. The original sample value is positive, meaning that the relationship between interpersonal communication and employee performance has a one-way relationship. A one-way relationship means that if interpersonal communication improves, performance will also improve.

H2 : Interpersonal Communication Affects Work Motivation

The second hypothesis (H2) was accepted, namely that there was a significant influence of interpersonal communication on work motivation with the original sample (0.708) with a value (t-statistic) of 9.783 (>1.695 tables) and a p-value of 0.000 (less than α= 0.05) which means significant. In the 95% confidence interval, if the improvement of interpersonal communication is greater and stronger, it will increase work motivation between a value of 0.072 and 0.720. The results of the test showed that there was enough empirical evidence to accept the hypothesis that better interpersonal communication would increase work motivation. The original sample value is positive, meaning that the relationship between interpersonal communication and work motivation has a one-way relationship. A one-way relationship means that if interpersonal communication increases, work motivation will also increase.

H3 : Work Motivation Affects Performance

The third hypothesis (H3) was accepted, namely that there was a significant influence of work motivation on performance with the original sample (0.432), with a t-statistical value of 3.012 (>1.695 tables) and a p-value of 0.003 smaller than α= 0.05 which means significant. In the 95% confidence interval, by increasing the improvement in work motivation, it will improve performance at a value located between 0.143 to 0.436. The original sample with a positive sign can be interpreted

as a one-way relationship. From these results, it can be concluded that the better the work motivation, the more performance will be significantly improved.

H4 : The Role of Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable of the Influence between Interpersonal Communication on Performance

The fourth hypothesis (H4) was accepted where significant work motivation played a role as a mediation variable, namely mediating the indirect influence of interpersonal communication on performance with the original sample of mediation (0.306), with a t-statistical value of 2.722 greater than the ttable 1.695 and a p-value (0.007 < 0.05) so that it can be proven that the influence of mediation occurs. In the 95% trust interval by increasing the improvement of work motivation, this mediation role will increase to 0.315. In this case, it can be understood that the relationship between interpersonal communication, both directly and indirectly, has a real effect on employee performance, through work motivation it is also able to affect employee performance. Thus there is enough empirical evidence to accept this hypothesis that the better interpersonal communication will be.

Table 6. F Square dan Statistic Upsilon

Path Coefficient	F Square	Mediation	Upsilon (v)	Mediation Effect
KI → K	0,264			
KI → MK	1,004	KI → MK → K	0,094	*Medium*
MK → K	0,260			

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

F Square

The interpretation of the f square value referring to Hair et al (2017) is 0.02 low, 0.15 moderate and 0.35 high. So it can be seen that the data in table 4.9 shows that the interpersonal communication variable has a moderate influence on performance with an f square value of 0.264. Then, the interpersonal communication variable had a high influence on work motivation with an f square value of 1.004. And the work motivation variable had a moderate influence on performance with an f square value of 0.260.

Upsilon (v)

The interpretation of the upsilon statistical value (v) referring to the recommendation by Cohen in Ogbeibu et al (2020) is 0.01 (low mediation effect), 0.075 (medium mediation effect), and 0.175 (high mediation effect). Based on the calculation above, the role of work motivation in mediating the indirect influence of interpersonal communication on performance at the structural level is classified as the influence of medium/moderate mediation (0.094).

Evaluation Goodness of Fit

Several measures have been developed to assess the acceptance of the proposed model, including: R square, Q square, Goodness of Fit Index, SRMR, and PLS predict, as follows:

Table 7. Goodness of Fit

	R Square	Q Square
Kinerja	0,642	0,404
Motivasi Kerja	0,501	0,289

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

R Square and Q Square

R-squared values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 indicate high, moderate, and weak influence, respectively. Based on the results, the R Square for the performance variable (K) is 0.642, which means that the interpersonal communication and work motivation variables explain 64.2% of the performance variables, so the model is considered moderate. Q-square measures the accuracy of predictions, indicating how accurately exogenous/endogenous variables predict endogenous variables. The Q-square results for the performance and work motivation variables show moderate predictive relevance.

Goodness of Fit Index (GoF)

The GoF values can be interpreted as follows: 0.1 (low GoF), 0.25 (medium GoF), and 0.36 (high GoF).

$$GoF = \sqrt{(communality \times R^2)} = \sqrt{(0.662 \times 0.572)} = \sqrt{(0.378)} = 0.615$$

The calculation results show that the GoF value of the model is 0.615 including the category of high GoF. Empirical data is able to explain measurement models and measurement models with a high degree of fit.

SRMR

SRMR is Standardized Root Mean Square Residual where this value is a measure of model fit (model fit), which is the difference between the data correlation matrix and the model estimated correlation matrix. The SRMR value in this study is 0.096 which means that the model has an acceptable fit match. Empirical data can explain the influence between variables in the model.

PLSpredict

PLS prediction is used as validation to test the prediction ability of the PLS model. The PLS model is said to have the ability to predict if the RMSE (root mean square error) value of the PLS model is lower than the linear regression (LM) model.

Table 8. PLSpredict

Item	Model PLS		Model LM	
Pengukuran	RMSE	MAE	RMSE	MAE
K1	0.660	0.503	0.709	0.559
K2	0.497	0.389	0.556	0.439
K3	0.566	0.455	0.640	0.491
K4	0.527	0.417	0.628	0.484
K5	0.546	0.437	0.616	0.495
MK1	0.660	0.560	0.722	0.647
MK2	0.447	0.337	0.488	0.377
MK3	0.591	0.467	0.656	0.515
MK4	0.541	0.424	0.557	0.428
MK5	0.561	0.428	0.623	0.486

Source: PLS Output Results 2024

It can be concluded that all the measurement items of endogenous variables (performance and work motivation) of the proposed PLS model have lower RMSE and MAE values than the LM (linear regression) model, so the proposed PLS model has high predictive power.

The Influence of Interpersonal Communication on Performance

Based on the results of the first hypothesis test, it can be concluded that the interpersonal communication variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This means

that the higher the intensity of the implementation of interpersonal communication by Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees, the higher the level of performance of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees. Likewise, the lower the intensity of the implementation of Interpersonal Communication by Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees, the lower the level of performance of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees.

Interpersonal communication is one of the driving factors for the creation of employee performance. For example, Fire Service employees can adjust the conversations they have and listen with the objectives of the discussion when communicating so that there are no misunderstandings in the delivery.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Tobeoto et al (2022), Suwardi et al (2023), Anugrahni (2023) and Putri A.S (2023). Which states that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on performance.

Interpersonal communication affects work motivation

Based on the results of the second hypothesis test, it can be concluded that the variable of interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on work motivation. This means that the higher the intensity of the implementation of interpersonal communication by Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees, the higher the work motivation of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees. Likewise, the lower the intensity of the implementation of interpersonal communication, the lower the work motivation of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees. Increasing the value of work motivation can be done by increasing the intensity of implementing interpersonal communication.

One of the driving factors for the creation of employee work motivation is interpersonal communication. For example, by being willing to listen to co-workers, choose every word that is spoken, speak important and helpful and provide good, structured direction. So that in this study that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant influence or contributes significantly to work motivation, in other words, interpersonal communication has a direct influence on employees so that it can increase employee work motivation.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Putri, N. F., & Nasution, M. A. (2021) and Putri, A. S. (2023) which stated that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on work motivation.

Work motivation affects performance

Based on the results of the third hypothesis test, it can be concluded that the work motivation variable has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This means that the higher the work motivation of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees, the higher the level of performance of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees. Likewise, vice versa, the lower the employee's work motivation, the lower the level of employee performance. Work motivation can create high employee performance, work motivation is an important thing for everyone to have at work. For example, by building closer relationships between employees and fellow employees and leaders, as well as creating a positive and pleasant work atmosphere. So that in this study that work motivation has a positive and significant influence or contributes significantly to employee performance, in other words, work motivation has a positive and direct influence on employees so that it can improve employee performance.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Adelia (2022) and Putri A.S. which stated that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance.

The Role of Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable of the Influence between Interpersonal

Communication on Performance

Based on the results of the fourth hypothesis test, it can be concluded that significant work motivation plays a role as a mediating variable, namely mediating the indirect influence of interpersonal communication on performance. This means that the higher the intensity of the implementation of interpersonal communication, the higher the level of employee performance along with the high work motivation. The results of this study prove that work motivation is able to mediate the relationship between interpersonal communication and employee performance. Interpersonal communication is an important factor that affects performance factors and work motivation. Theoretically, the results of this study give implications that interpersonal communication can affect performance indirectly. Indirect relationships can occur through work motivation mediation, where employee performance will increase if the employee is motivated by his or her work. So the better interpersonal communication will be able to improve employee performance mediated by work motivation. For example, by holding regular meetings and gathering with employees, and asking about the progress of the assigned tasks or how employees feel at work and offering suggestions.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Putri A.S (2023) which states that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance with work motivation as a mediating variable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion on the Influence of Interpersonal Communication on Performance with Work Motivation as a Mediation Variable (Lamandau Regency Fire Service Study), there are conclusions as follows, Interpersonal communication has a positive and significant influence on the performance and work motivation of Lamandau Regency Fire Service employees, which shows that the better communication is established, the higher the work motivation and performance of employees. In addition, work motivation also plays an important role in improving performance, where the better the motivation applied, the more optimal the performance achieved. Furthermore, interpersonal communication affects performance not only directly but also through work motivation, confirming that these two factors together contribute significantly to improving employee performance.

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