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## THE EFFECT OF INTERPERSONAL SKILLS ON PERFORMANCE OF REGIONAL SECRETARIAT EMPLOYEES IN KAPUAS HULU REGENCY

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### **Abstract**

The facts that occur in the field show that the performance of government employees as public services still has not achieved the performance increased; based on the Government Agency Performance Accountability Report of the Kapuas Hulu Regency regional secretariat in 2012. The purpose of this study was to determine the Effect of Interpersonal Skills on the Performance of the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat Staff. This study uses a quantitative research approach the method used is the survey method. The population in this study were all employees (civil servant status) who worked in the regional secretariat of Kapuas Hulu Regency, totaling 137 employees. The sampling technique uses Simple Random Sampling. Based on the results of sample calculations in this study there were 102 employees. The research instrument used was a questionnaire. Data analysis in this study was conducted using descriptive statistical analysis techniques and statistical inferential. Based on the results of testing the hypothesis it can be concluded that Interpersonal Skills have a positive direct effect on employee performance. That is, improving employee performance at the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat can be done by increasing the interpersonal skills possessed by employees.

**Keywords:** Interpersonal Skills; Performance Increased

### **Introduction**

The existence of public organizations in the era of openness in the present will face challenges and demands that are heavier than stakeholders as service users of the public organization itself. To overcome this problem, the actors in public organizations must be able to show better performance from time to time in order to provide better service to the community as stakeholders or users of the public organization.

As a public organization, the Kapuas Hulu Regency government is one of the districts with the longest distance from the capital city of the province of West Kalimantan. In its journey from the formation of the district, it continues to strive to improve itself, both in terms of organization in the form of organizational restructuring and from the side of its employees by appointing new employees, providing opportunities to develop their careers

through formal and informal education and training. These steps are carried out in an effort to improve performance and the outcomes to be achieved are in accordance with the organizational objectives that have been set. On the vision and mission set out in the Kapuas Hulu district, the main points are: "Realizing a professional, credible, responsive and responsible bureaucracy", and outlined in the Kapuas Hulu Regency Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD).

To achieve apparatus resources as stated in the vision and mission in an effort to improve better public services is certainly not easy, because it must form a new behavior from the resources of the existing apparatus; and it will be related to technical skills, personal skills and conceptual skills (Robbin, 2006: 6-7).

The number of employees owned by the Regional Secretariat of Kapuas Hulu Regency is 146 people with educational qualifications with diploma education, as many as 58.9% with undergraduate and master degrees. The remaining 35.62% have high school/equivalent education and only 5.48% have junior and elementary school education. The condition of the existing employee education illustrates the condition of the existing resources at the regional secretariat when viewed from the formal education background they have.

In general, the facts that occur in the field show that the performance of government employees as public services still has not achieved the performance increased; based on the Government Agency Performance Accountability Report of the regional secretariat of Kapuas Hulu Regency in 2012, shows that "Achievement of performance by regional secretariat employees is only around 84% of the performance targets set in 2012". The failure to achieve the performance target is certainly caused by many factors, both individual and group, both internal and external. Based on the results of research conducted by Gani (2009) relating to the factors that influence the performance of employees with independent variables consisting of professionalism (X1), discipline (X2) and work motivation (X3) on performance (Y) shows the results of professionalism, discipline, and work motivation has a significant effect on performance. The results of the study are also supported by Campbell's opinion in Mahmudi (2010) arguing: "That the functional relationship between performance and performance attributes is influenced by three factors, namely the factor of knowledge, skills, and motivation".

Furthermore, Mahmudi (2010: 20) suggests the factors that influence performance are:

1. Personal/individual factors, including knowledge, skills, abilities, confidence, motivation, and commitment that each individual has;
2. Leadership factors, including quality in providing encouragement, enthusiasm, direction, and support for managers and team leaders;
3. Team factors include: the quality of support and enthusiasm given by colleagues in one team, the trust of fellow team members, the cohesiveness and closeness of team members;
4. System factors include: work systems, work facilities or infrastructure provided by organizations, organizational processes, and work cultures in organizations;
5. Contextual (situational) factors, including pressure and changes in the external and internal environment.

From the results of several reports, research and opinions above can be synthesized that there are many factors that can affect the performance of employees in carrying out their work; these factors can be sourced from individuals, groups, and organizations as well as internal and external environmental factors of the organization.

Furthermore, Harrison in Armstrong (2009: 32) suggests four main issues that affect performance:

1. The learner, who needs the right level of competence, motivation, support, and incentives in order to perform effectively.
2. The learner's work group, whose members will exercise a strong positive or negative influence on the attitudes, behavior, and performance of the learner.
3. The learner's manager, whose needs to provide continuing support and act as a role model, coach, and stimulator related to performance.
4. The organization, which may produce barriers to effective performance if there is no power, cohering vision; ineffective structure, culture or works systems; unsupportive employee relation policy and systems; or in appropriate leadership and management style.

From some expert views, it can be synthesized that performance is the achievement of work results both individually, in groups and in organizations. Performance or performance is a process to achieve achievement of work results or work performance at a certain time that can be measured. Performance is a combination of ability, motivation, and opportunity. Performance is the performance achieved by employees or someone who can be measured through the quality of work, quantity of work, timeliness in work and the ability to cooperate.

The measurement of morning performance of civil servants (PNS) has been regulated in the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 46 of 2011, namely the performance appraisal of civil servants is a systematic assessment process carried out by appraisal officials on employee work goals and work behavior of civil servants. Work performance is the result of work achieved by each civil servant in an organizational unit in accordance with the employee's work goals and work behavior. Employee Work Objectives, hereinafter abbreviated as SKP, are work plans and targets to be achieved by a civil servant.

Interpersonal skills are one of the factors that have an important role in determining a person's performance in carrying out their work in an organization. Based on the results of research conducted by Kanthasamy (2009) at the Indah Water Consortium Company, Sdn. Bhd., With the dissemination of 100 research questionnaires to managers at the company, and analyzed with descriptive techniques, regression and factor analysis showed there was a positive relationship between interpersonal skills and robbin performance, 2009: 11). It can be stated that interpersonal skills are a capability or skill possessed by someone who is not a talent but is the result of training or education and experience in communication, understanding others and managing conflict (leading individuals or groups). Interpersonal skills possessed by an employee or worker in an organization will have an influence on the performance produced by the employee itself.

As a public organization, the Kapuas Hulu district government still faces many obstacles related to the performance of its employees, although in terms of education level the employees themselves are sufficient. But in implementing for good performance achievement, many other determinants will affect the performance of these employees. For this reason, the researcher will reveal whether there is a direct influence of interpersonal skills on the performance of employees at the Kapuas Hulu district regional secretariat.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **A. Employee Performance**

Performance issues are a problem that still remains a major concern in organizational life because performance is an achievement by someone, a group, an organization that ultimately as an indicator to measure the achievement of goals of an organization itself.

At the most basic level, Borman and Motowidlo "Task performance refers to the individual's proficiency with which he or she performs activities which contribute to the organization" (Sonnentag and Frese, 2002: 6). While according to Wibowo (2012: 81), "Performance is a process of how work takes place to achieve work results". Furthermore, performance or work performance is a result of work achieved by someone in carrying out the tasks assigned to him based on skills, experience and sincerity and time (Hasibuan, 2009: 73). From the opinion of the experts, it can be synthesized that performance is an accomplishment of work achieved by an individual which is a manifestation of motivation, ability and can be measured or judged by the results achieved. Therefore, a standard and method of measuring or evaluating performance are needed.

Performance appraisal is a step to find out the extent to which performance is produced by an individual in carrying out the tasks assigned to him. "Performance measurement is the process of definition, monitoring, and using objective indicators of organizations and programs on a regular basis-of-vital concern for managers in government and non-profit sectors" (Poister, 2003: 3). Six primary criteria that can be used to measure performance (Bernadin and Russel, 1997: 109):

- a. Quality is the degree to which the process or results of the implementation of activities approach perfection or approach the expected goals.
- b. Quantity is the amount generated, for example, the number of rupiahs, number of units, number of cycles of activities completed.
- c. Timeliness is the degree to which an activity is completed at the desired time, taking into account the coordination of other outputs and the time available for other activities.
- d. Cost-effectiveness is the extent to which the use of organizational power (human, financial, technological, material) is maximized to achieve the highest results or a reduction in losses from each unit of resource use.
- e. Need for supervision is the degree to which an official can carry out a job function without requiring the supervision of a supervisor to prevent undesirable actions.
- f. Interpersonal Impact is the degree to which employees/employees maintain self-esteem, good name, and cooperation between coworkers and subordinates.

In the environment of civil servants (PNS) the Government has issued Government Regulation Number 46 of 2011 concerning the Assessment of Civil Servants' Civil Servant Performance. The aim is to improve the performance and performance of civil servants. This PP is a refinement of Government Regulation Number 10 of 1979 concerning the Assessment of Civil Servants' Work which is deemed no longer in line with the development of legal conditions and needs. The work performance appraisal of civil servants aims to ensure the objectivity of PNS development based on the work performance system and career system which is focused on the work performance system.

Civil servant work performance will be assessed based on 2 (two) elements of assessment, according to the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 46 of 2011 concerning Assessment of Civil Servants' Work Performance. Article 4 as follows:

1. SKP (Employee Work Objectives), namely: work plan and targets to be achieved by a civil servant.

2. Work behavior, namely: every behavior, attitude or action taken by civil servants or not doing something that should be done in accordance with the provisions of the legislation.

From the viewpoint of experts and applicable laws and regulations relating to employee performance in a government organization, it can be synthesized that performance is a performance achieved by a person in a certain period of time and can be measured by indicators: quality of work, quantity of work, timeliness in work and ability to cooperate.

#### B. Interpersonal Skills

In an organization, many resources are needed, but human resources are a key resource in achieving organizational goals. One step that can be done in overcoming employee problems in an organization is through education, training, and coaching. Hogan and Warrenfelz "Defined interpersonal skills as competencies and behaviors that involve direct communication such as communicating and building relationships with others" (Kanthasamy, 2009: 21). In essence "Interpersonal ability is a skill to socialize with others" (Putra and Pratiwi, 2005: 232).

From some expert understanding and opinions above, it can be synthesized that interpersonal skills or interpersonal skills are a skill to recognize and respond appropriately to the feelings, attitudes and behaviors, motivations and desires of others. How we can build harmonious relationships by understanding and respond to humans or other people is part of interpersonal skills.

Given the interpersonal skills (interpersonal skills) possessed by a person is not an innate skill, but is a skill that is trained and studied, through the process of education, training, coaching, and experience. Therefore, interpersonal skills really need to be developed in an organization in an effort to achieve organizational goals that have been set. Furthermore, the scope of interpersonal skills according to Mariepazh (2012: 20):

*"An individual's interpersonal skills also determine one's ability to initiate, develop and maintain caring as well as productive relationships. These skills are categorized in four areas, namely: disclosing oneself to and trusting each other, accurately communicating with each other, resolving conflict and relationship problems constructively, and encouraging as well as appreciating diversity".*

##### 1) Communicate

Communication in the Large Dictionary of Indonesian Language is "Delivery and reception of messages or news between two or more people so that the message in question can be understood; relationship; contact (KBBI, 2013). Next Deborah (2006: 386) defines:

*"Communication is the transmission of meaning from one person to another or to many people, whether verbally or non-verbally. Communication from one person to another is commonly depicted as a simple triangle consisting of the context, the sender, the message, and the receiver".*

Can be synthesized communication is the process of sending and receiving messages that are verbal or nonverbal between two or more people, in other words in communication there are main elements, namely the sender (sender), recipient of the message (receiver) and message content (context) in the form language.

Humans as social beings as well as individual beings will continue to make relations with other people because it is not possible for someone not to make connections or communicate with other people during his life.

In communicating not all people have the ability to listen well or want to be a good listener. Therefore, so that interpersonal communication can run well, then someone in addition to having the skills in delivering messages must also have listening skills.

## 2) Motivation

Edwin B Flippo in Saidi and Halim (2007: 94) suggested:

*“Motivation it is a skill in aligning employees, want simultaneously with the attachment of organizational objectives. This means that motivation is expertise in directing employees and organizations to want to work successfully so that the desires of employees are achieved while achieving organizational goals”.*

In another section Robbins (2006: 213) defines motivation as a process that determines the intensity, direction, and perseverance of individuals in trying to achieve goals. It can be concluded that motivation is a psychological condition that encourages a person to carry out a business or activity to achieve organizational goals and individual goals. This also means motivation is an impulse that arises in a person that causes him to do certain actions to meet the needs in accordance with the tasks and functions in the organization and personal goals.

Even though outwardly humans have the natural ability to negotiate, but to be able to negotiate well, these basic abilities need to be developed into a better ability, especially for people who work or are members of an organization. The word negotiation comes from the word negotiate, in English which means negotiating, discussing, discussing or overcoming problems. Furthermore, Margaret and Bazerman in Luthans (2006: 463) suggest negotiation is a common mechanism for solving the problem of differences and allocating resources. Luthan further stated, negotiation was more than just a conflict resolution. Negotiation becomes managerial expertise for the success of individuals and organizations. Can be synthesized that a negotiation is a step or completion that is done both between individuals, and organizations in overcoming or avoiding conflicts that occur in an organization.

## 3) Negotiation/Resolving Conflict

In a work organization in the present, there is a lot of cultural integration among fellow workers because workers have different cultural backgrounds. In the beginning, of course, cultural differences would create a new problem if workers were never trained or directed to understand each other's differences. Therefore, the problem of the ability of employees or workers to respect differences among fellow colleagues is very important. Because the issue of respecting differences will lead to disharmony in the work environment and impact on organizational performance. Luthans (2006: 80) suggests that the characteristics of diversity can take the form of age, gender, ethnicity, education. Therefore diversity in a work organization cannot be avoided; then it is very important how an organization to manage diversity that occurs within the organization. Can be synthesized that Interpersonal skills or interpersonal skills are a skill to recognize and respond appropriately to feelings, attitudes and behaviors, motivations and desires of others with indicators of convincing others, communicating, motivating and resolving conflicts and respecting differences.

## 4) Appreciating Differences

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**Research Methods**

This study uses a quantitative research approach through hypothesis testing. The method used is the survey method. Causal studies were conducted in this study to examine and analyze the interrelationships between variables and explain the direct influence of independent variables on dependent variables with Interpersonal Skills (X) variables with Employee Performance (Y), which were tested based on empirical data from research objects and carried out statistical analysis as a basis in hypothesis testing.

The population in this study were all employees (civil servant status) who worked in the regional secretariat of Kapuas Hulu Regency, totaling 137 employees. Because the population size is relatively large, it is necessary to determine the study sample The sampling technique is done by using Simple Random Sampling technique with a random sampling of respondents. While the sample size set for 5% precision based on Umar's formula (2011: 56), is equal to:

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= \frac{N}{N(\alpha)^2 + 1} \\
 &= \frac{137}{137(0,05)^2 + 1} \\
 &= 102,05 \text{ or } 102 \text{ employees}
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the results of calculations using the formula above, the samples taken in this study amounted to 102 employees. The research instrument used was a questionnaire. Based on the testing of the Employee Performance instrument (Y) which consists of 30 items/items, only 26 items are valid, d while reliability testing shows the Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.902; as a whole is reliable. Furthermore, based on a trial of Interpersonal Skills instruments (X1) consisting of 30 items/items only 25 items were valid, while reliability testing showed a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.896; overall reliable.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using descriptive statistical analysis techniques and statistical inferential. While inferential statistical analysis is done to see the direct effect between the research variables. Hypothesis testing is carried out at a 95% significance level or  $\alpha$  0.05.

**Results And Discussion**

**A. Results**

The research variable data described in this study includes exogenous variable data (independent variable) and endogenous (dependent variable).

Table 1 Statistical Summary of Baseline Data on Central Tendency and Variability

Value of Central Tendency and Variation	Interpersonal Skills (X <sub>1</sub> )	Employee Performance (Y)
Number of Samples (n)	102	102
Mean	107,02	113,28
Median	108	114
Mode	109	114

Value of Central Tendency and Variation	Interpersonal Skills (X <sub>1</sub> )	Employee Performance (Y)
Std. Deviation	5,865	5,260
Minimum	94	101
Maximum	120	125
Sum	10916	11550
Class Range (R)	26	24
Number of Interval Classes = k = 1 + 3,322		
log n	7,67	7,67
Rounded off	7	7
Interval class width = i = R/k	3,625	3,259
Rounded off	4	4

The estimated interpersonal skills variable error test on employee performance was carried out by Liliefors test based on the regression equation  $\hat{Y} = a + bX_1$ . The calculation results for a constant and slope value b from X<sub>1</sub> obtained a simple form of the regression equation  $\hat{Y} = 28.594 + 0.791X_1$ . Based on the estimation error and regression equation, the value of  $L_{count}$  ( $L_o$ ) is 0.0830 and  $L_{table}$  (0.05; 102) = 0.087727 (0.0830 < 0.087727). Then H<sub>0</sub> is accepted, it can be concluded that the standard error estimated by equation  $\hat{Y} = 28.594 + 0.791X_1$  comes from a population that is normally distributed. So that the data on employee performance variables for interpersonal skills meet normal requirements to be analyzed in this study. From the results of the calculation of data through linearity regression test variable Employee Performance variable (Y) on Interpersonal Skills variable (X<sub>1</sub>) obtained a regression equation  $\hat{Y} = 28.594 + 0.791 X_1$ , obtained  $F_{count}$  coefficient 0.890 <  $F_{table}$  (24; 76) 1.82 and significant deviation from linearity 0.614 > 0.05. Then it can be stated that the regression equation is linear.

Based on the results of the calculation it is known that all correlation coefficients between variables are positive and significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$ . This shows that there is a relationship (correlation) that is positive between the research variables, namely rx, which is greater than 0.880 \*\*, then the pyx path coefficient value = 0.305 with  $t_{count} = 3.872$  and  $t_{table}$  (0.05; 97) = 1.660 and  $t_{table}$  (0, 01:97) = 2,364. Because  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  (0.05; 97) and  $t_{table}$  (0.01: 97); ( $tt1,660 < th3,872 > tt2,364$ ), then H<sub>0</sub> is rejected which means that the path coefficient py<sub>1</sub> = 0,305 is significant at the significance level  $\alpha = 0,05$  and  $\alpha = 0,01$ . It can be concluded that interpersonal skills have a positive direct effect on employee performance.

## B. Discussion

The results of the testing of this study indicate that there is conformity with the theories presented by experts such as Mahmudi (2010: 18) suggesting the factors that influence performance are: "Personal / individual factors, including knowledge, skills (skills), ability, trust self, motivation and commitment possessed by each individual, leadership factors, including quality in providing encouragement, enthusiasm, direction, and support for managers and team leaders; Team Factors include: the quality of support and enthusiasm given by colleagues in one team, the trust of fellow team members, cohesiveness and closeness of team members; System factors include: work systems, work facilities or infrastructure provided by organizations, organizational processes, and work cultures in organizations; Contextual (situational) factors include: pressure and changes in the external and internal environment.



In line with what has been stated, Campbell in Mahmudi (2010: 20) suggests: "the functional relationship between performance and performance attributes is influenced by three factors, namely the factor of knowledge, skills, and motivation".

In the context of the results of this study, the group integrity variable is the most dominant variable influencing employee performance. This shows that group integrity is the most important factor that needs attention in carrying out actions to improve the performance of civil servants; this is because the organizational structure of government refers to formal groups that are built from large organizations (offices) to small organizations (parts and sections). This means that the success of the performance is not viewed solely from the individual side but is seen from the smallest unit of work as a reflection of the greater performance of the organization. In line with this, Robbins (2006: 341) suggests a number of structural factors that show relationships with group performance; among them are perceptions of roles, norms, inequality of status, group size, the composition of demographics, group assignments and cohesiveness. Furthermore, some group performance can be estimated by assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of each member "Robbins (2006: 312). Overall, these research findings are relevant and support the views expressed by Armstrong (2009), Mahmudi (2010) that performance is directly influenced positively by variables of interpersonal skills, group integrity, and self-efficacy.

Based on the results of the research that has been done, it is known that there is a direct positive effect of interpersonal skills on employee performance. This is consistent with the results of research conducted by Akintayo and Faniran(2009:73) regarding group dynamics and interpersonal relations among workers, a case in Nigerian Breweries. The research findings show that: There is a significant relationship between communication skills and the level of social interaction between workers. Also, a significant relationship is found between interpersonal relationships between the workforce and the achievement of organizational goals. This is supported by the opinion of Hasibuan (2009: 73) "A result of work achieved by someone in carrying out tasks assigned to him based on skills, experience and sincerity and time". Further stated by Mount et al. (2005: 447) "All of the can have personality dimensions have a significant impact on job performance and interpersonal relationships."

So it is clear that the interpersonal skills possessed by employees are a skill that must be continuously improved from time to time so that the achievement of good performance individually which will also have an impact on group performance can be maintained even more. In improving the interpersonal skills of employees who need to be considered more seriously are indicators of communication skills. This is necessary considering the cultural and linguistic background possessed by the people who work in the government sector consists of different backgrounds, so that in carrying out interpersonal communication in the delivery of information both verbally and in writing sometimes encounters obstacles to get a maximum understanding of information received or delivered.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the results of testing the hypothesis and the discussion of the results of the research that has been done, it can be concluded that Interpersonal Skills have a positive direct effect on employee performance. That is, improving employee performance at the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat can be done by increasing the interpersonal skills possessed by employees. Based on the research conclusions on the performance of employees at the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat above, it can be stated the research implications Increasing interpersonal skills will have an impact on improving performance

employee; thus if you want to improve employee performance at the Kapuas Hulu District Secretariat, it can be done by increasing employee interpersonal skills by strengthening the skills of employees in convincing people, communication skills, motivating skills, conflict resolution skills, and skills in respecting differences.

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