

THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATION SOFT SKILLS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUNG GENERATION EMPLOYEES IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The main focus of the problem is the demand for effective communication skills in a very dynamic work environment. This study aims to determine the impact of communication soft skills on the performance of young generation employees in the work environment. The analysis methodology used is quantitative with an associative approach. Data collection was carried out by distributing online questionnaires to various young generation employees in various companies in Java. Data analysis was carried out manually and assisted by Microsoft Excel 2016 with research instrument testing in the form of validity tests, reliability tests, simple linear regression analysis, correlation coefficients, determination coefficients and hypothesis tests. From the results of the study, there is a very strong influence between communication soft skills on employee performance, namely with a correlation of 0.828 and through the results of a simple linear regression analysis, namely $Y = 2.690 + 1.011X$, meaning that changes in Y are in the same direction as X . To find out how big or small an influence is, the determination coefficient (R^2) was used which was obtained at 68.5%, this shows the magnitude of the influence of communication soft skills on employee performance by 68.5% and the remaining 31.5% is influenced by other factors not studied by the author. From the results of the hypothesis testing, the t count $>$ t table was obtained, namely $7.955 > 2.204$, which means that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted so that communication soft skills (X) have a significant influence on employee performance (Y).

Keywords: soft communication skills, employee performance, young generation

Introduction

In this age of globalization, especially in the era of increasingly rapid development of information technology, companies face one of the challenges, namely how human resources can be created more qualified. Where quality resources will be used in improving the performance of employees in an effort to achieve company goals. The increasingly complex demands for the quality of human resources, especially employees in the work environment, make not only technical skills or hard skills, but non-technical skills or soft skills are also very necessary in determining the success of an individual or employee in the world of work. These soft skills as individual abilities include various aspects of behavior, emotions, and social. Where with this ability, each individual can interact with other people in various situations such as in everyday life and in the work environment (Aulia & Hamsal, 2024).

Communication skills are one of the most important soft skills in the work environment. Mas & Haris (2020) stated "Communication is a message conveyed to the communicant (recipient) from the communicator (source) through certain channels either directly / indirectly with the intention of giving an impact / effect to the communicant in accordance with what the communicator wants". As Aulia & Hamsal (2024) explain effective communication plays an important role in the success of an organization. Because it not only ensures a deep understanding of the company's goals, policy directions, and expectations, but also contributes to the development of more positive interpersonal relationships among all members of the organization. This is like the opinion of Sharma (in Khairunnisa and Hijriyantomi, 2020) which states that "The indicators of soft skills are 1) communication skills, 2) emotional intelligence, 3) thinking and problemsolving skills, 4) ethics and 5) leadership skills".

The success of a company can be seen based on the ability of a company to make outstanding employees. Hidayat et al. (2022) state that performance is defined as the achievement or success shown by an individual or group when carrying out their duties and responsibilities. In the context of younger generations, which are often associated with millennials and Z generations because they carry unique characteristics in influencing their work styles and interactions at work in a company, the performance process is not only measured by the results, but also by their contribution to the ability to innovate, collaborate, and adapt to changes in the dynamic work environment. Previous research shows that soft

skills have a strong relationship with employee performance. The correlation between soft skills and employee performance is significant. Qualities such as discipline and responsibility are elements of soft skills, can significantly increase individual productivity and success at work (Khairunnisa and Hijriyantomi, 2020).

By looking at the dynamic work environment conditions from various factors that affect individual work experiences, including interactions with coworkers, superiors, and assigned tasks can affect the role of the younger generation because they have unique characteristics and preferences. However, they also face different challenges than previous generations. One of them is the need to have good and fast adaptability. In this case, the ability of soft skills, especially communication is very important. This makes there a close relationship between communication soft skills and employee performance. Basically, research on the impact of communication soft skills on the performance of young generation employees is still relatively limited, especially in Indonesia. Based on these reasons, this study intends to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the impact of communication soft skills on the performance of young generation employees in the work environment in Indonesia, especially in Java.

Method

This research applies quantitative methodology with an associative approach. According to Sugiyono (2022:15) "Quantitative methods can be interpreted as research methods based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research certain populations or samples, data collection using research instruments, data analysis is quantitative or statistical, with the aim of testing the established hypothesis". The quantitative method is used because the data collected through online questionnaires from the Likert scale and produces ordinal data which is then converted into numeric data for quantitative analysis. The choice of survey method used is in accordance with recent research as Pakaya et al. (2023:30) states "An increasingly common method for conducting surveys is the Internet".

This study took a population of young employees working in various fields on the island of Java as many as 40 people. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique used in this study, because it is based on the selection of respondents from certain criteria, namely ages between 18 and 30 years and willing to fill out the questionnaire. Data analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel 2016 and manual methods. The analysis used to determine how much influence the independent variable, namely soft communication skills (X) has on the dependent variable, namely employee performance (Y). For this reason, this study uses a simple linear regression equation as follows (Sugiyono, 2022).

$$Y = a + bX$$

Where: X = Independent variable (Soft Communication Skills) Y = Dependent variable (Employee Performance) a = Constant (Y intersection) b = Regression coefficient, namely an increase or decrease in an independent variable (X) based on the dependent variable (Y)

By using the correlation coefficient obtained from the following Pearson product moment formula.

(Supriadi, 2021).

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum XY - \sum X \sum Y}{\sqrt{\{n \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \cdot \{n \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Where: r_{xy} or r_{count} as the correlation coefficient of person

X as the independent variable (Soft communication skills)

Y as the dependent variable (Employee performance) n for the number of samples

Before conducting a simple linear regression analysis and correlation coefficient, data from the Likert scale will be tested with validity and reliability testing to ensure that the data and provisions are valid and consistent. After that, testing a simple linear regression analysis, correlation coefficient, and several additional tests such as the coefficient of determination and hypothesis testing (t-test).

Results And Discussion

1. Research Results

a. Validity Testing

The word validity is often interpreted as a metric or measurement that shows the level of validity or validity of a data instrument. To measure the validity of a questionnaire from each variable, you can use the validity test. Testing the validity of the questionnaire instrument aims to assess whether the instrument can accurately measure information related to the object of research. How to test validity can be done by comparing r_{count} with r_{table} , where the error rate (significant) is 5%. The r_{table} value used is calculated with a significance level of 0.05 or 5%. For the number of samples (n) of 40.

Using the formula : $DF = n - 2 = 40 - 2 = 38$

By looking at the distribution table, the r_{table} value is 0.312. With conditions:

1. If the value of $r_{count} > r_{table}$ means that each statement sentence is said to be valid
2. If the value of $r_{count} < r_{table}$ means that each statement sentence is said to be invalid

Table 1 a. X Value Validity Testing Results

Variable X	r_{count}	r_{table}	Clarity
Sentence 1	0,714	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 2	0,789	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 3	0,654	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 4	0,710	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 5	0,792	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 6	0,665	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 7	0,688	0,312	Relevant

Table 1 b. Y Value Validity Testing Results

Variable Y	r_{count}	r_{table}	Clarity
Sentence 1	0,654	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 2	0,641	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 3	0,763	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 4	0,756	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 5	0,774	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 6	0,773	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 7	0,689	0,312	Relevant
Sentence 8	0,722	0,312	Relevant

Source: Data processed with Microsoft Excel (2016)

Based on the validity test results, the r_{count} value is higher than the r_{table} of 0.312.

b. Reliability Testing

Reliability is defined as a measurement that is able to provide reliable or reliable data. This study uses Cronbach's Alpha which aims to ensure that the questionnaire used provides reliable and consistent results so that it can strengthen the validity of the research as a whole.

Table 2. Reliability Testing Results

No	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Core Values	Description
1.	Soft communication skills	0,836	0,60	Consistent
2.	Employee performance	0,867	0,60	Consistent

Source: Data processed with Microsoft Excel (2016)

From these data, Cronbach's Alpha of the communication soft skills and employee performance variables is greater than the basic value set at 0.60.

c. Simple Linear Regression

The purpose of simple liner regression analysis is to examine the functional relationship of two variables, namely the independent variable and the dependent variable. In this case, it aims to measure the impact of variable X which is communication soft skills as an independent variable on variable Y which is employee performance as the dependent variable. The relationship between the two variables can be expressed in the form of the following equation:

$$Y = a + bX$$

$$Y = 2.690 + 1.011X$$

Where: X as communication soft skills

Y as employee performance

If X is 0 then $Y = 2,690$

In other words, if the value (a) or constant is 2.690, it indicates that when communication soft skills (X) do not increase in value (0) so employee performance (Y) will remain stable at 2.690. Meanwhile, if the regression coefficient (b) is 1.011, it indicates a positive relationship between communication soft skills and employee performance.

d. Correlation Coefficient

Correlation analysis is a form of research that determines the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two or more numerical variables. The strength and relationship can be expressed by a correlation coefficient (r) to indicate the magnitude and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The magnitude of the correlation coefficient is a minimum (- 1) and a maximum (+1), and the direction of the relationship can be positive or negative. The results of the calculation of the correlation coefficient carried out manually through the following formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{40(8088) - (498)(611)}{\sqrt{\{40(6676) - (498)^2\} \cdot \{40(10043) - (611)^2\}}}$$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{323.520 - 304.278}{\sqrt{(19.036) \cdot (28.399)}}$$

$$r_{xy} = 0,828$$

The results of the calculation of the correlation coefficient, obtained for a correlation of 0.828, are included in the predetermined correlation with a very strong level of relationship.

e. Coefficient of Determination

Determination analysis is carried out to determine how much contribution the independent variable makes to the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R²) has a value between 0 and 1. The calculation results with the following formula.

$$(R^2) = r^2 \times 100\%$$

R² as the coefficient of determination

r² as the correlation coefficient of the independent (X) and dependent (Y) variables

$$\text{So, } R^2 = 0.828^2 \times 100\%$$

$$R^2 = 0.685 \text{ or } 68.5\%$$

From these calculations, the coefficient of determination is 0.685 or 68.5%. d.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis is defined as a temporary answer to a problem formulation. This hypothesis test helps in analyzing statistics to determine the magnitude of the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The use of hypothesis formulation in research with provisions:

H₀ = There is no significant influence between communication soft skills on employee performance.

H₁ = There is a significant influence between communication soft skills on employee performance.

To evaluate the differences that affect clearly, it is necessary to compare using the criteria for a significant level of 5% (0.05) between the t_{count} value and the t_{table}. The provision for finding the value in the table (t_{table}) is with the number of respondents (n) = 40 - 2 = 38. From the distribution data, the value contained in the table (t_{table}) is 2.024. The results of hypothesis analysis can be found through the following formula:

$$t_c = \frac{r\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

With: t_c as the value of t_{count} r as the value of the correlation coefficient n as the number of samples

$$\text{Then: } t_c = \frac{0,685\sqrt{40-2}}{\sqrt{1-0,685^2}}$$

$$t_c = \frac{0,685\sqrt{38}}{\sqrt{1-0,469225}}$$

$$= \frac{4,22262085}{0,530775} = 7,955$$

As with the criteria for hypothesis formulation:

If t_{count} > t_{table}, this means that H₀ is rejected and H₁ is accepted.

If t_{count} < t_{table}, this means that H₀ is accepted and H₁ is rejected.

The calculation has shown that the value of the t_{count} is 7.955 > t_{table} which is 2.204. H₀ is rejected and H₁ is accepted.

2. Discussion

The results of statistical testing show that communication soft skills have a positive and significant impact on employee performance. From the validity test which is used to measure whether a questionnaire is valid or relevant, it has proven this. If the coefficient of each statement or r_{count} is greater than r_{table} then the item is declared valid. Meanwhile, if the r_{count} value is smaller than r_{table}, the item is declared invalid. It

can be seen from tables 1a and 1b that the results of the validity test show the value of r_{count} greater than r_{table} (0.312). This means that each statement sentence in the communication soft skills and employee performance variable indicators is valid, feasible and can be used in research. In other words, it is believed that the measuring instrument used in this study has the ability to measure what you really want to study. Furthermore, from table 2 the results of reliability testing indicate that the value of the communication soft skills variable and employee performance has a Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.60. This means that all statement sentences from this research instrument can be trusted because each statement is relevant and can be used in data analysis in further research.

From the results of simple linear regression analysis, the equation $Y = 2.690 + 1.011X$ is formed. With a constant value (a) of 2.690, it can be understood that when communication soft skills (X) do not develop or are zero, employee performance (Y) will remain consistent at 2.690. The regression coefficient (b) of 1.011 shows a consistent positive influence between communication soft skills and employee performance. This means that every one unit increase in communication soft skills will cause employee performance to increase by 1.011 units. In other words, the more superior and better communication soft skills an employee has, the more optimal the desired performance will be. In addition, it can also be seen from the R^2 (coefficient of determination) value of 0.685 that communication soft skills contribute 68.5% to variations in employee performance. Meanwhile, 31.5% are various other factors that influence it and are not researched by the author. These other factors can be such as leadership, work discipline, motivation, work ethics and others that can improve employee performance in a company. The 68.5% value is obtained through the calculation of the correlation coefficient which is 0.828. The figure of 0.828 confirms that communication soft skills have a very significant influence on employee performance and shows that there is a level of strength and closeness of the relationship between the two. The calculation of the t value shows that the t_{count} (7.955) is greater than the t table (2.204). Based on the hypothesis testing criteria, if the t_{count} value is greater than the t_{table} value, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. So that there is a positive and significant relationship from communication soft skills to the performance of younger generation employees in the work environment, especially in Java.

This study shows a positive and significant influence between communication soft skills on the performance of younger generation employees in the work environment, especially in Java Island, which is a relevant finding and in line with current trends in the world of work. This finding is in accordance with previous research by Marbun et al (2023) entitled “Pengaruh Komunikasi dan Lingkungan Kerja terhadap

Kinerja Pegawai pada Kantor Pemerintahan Kecamatan Sibolga Selatan Kota Sibolga” with the results of the study showing a unidirectional and significant effect of communication on improving employee performance, which emphasizes the importance of communication in the context of work in a government environment. And also research conducted by Putra & Haryadi (2022) entitled “Pengaruh Komunikasi dan

Disiplin Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan pada PT. Mackessen Indonesia” has also been conducted and supports the findings of previous research. The results of his research have indicated that there is a positive and significant effect partially which is not only coincidental but also has a strong statistical basis between communication and employee performance. So it is reliable enough to conclude that communication is a factor that can directly affect employee performance. This shows the stability of the research results highlighting how important communication skills are in improving performance effectiveness. Based on the comparison, it is found that although the focus of each study is different, all of the studies emphasize the importance of communication soft skills in improving employee performance not only in the government environment but also in the work environment of the younger generation in Java Island.

Conclusions

Based on the explanation and results of data analysis that have been presented in the previous section regarding the effect of communication soft skills on the performance of young generation employees in the work environment, especially in Java Island, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. Communication soft skills have a positive and significant effect on the performance of younger generation employees in the work environment, especially on the island of Java, from the proof that the value of t_{count} (7.955) > t_{table} (2.204). This means that the better the communication skills of an employee, the better it will improve his performance.

- b. The magnitude of the effect of communication soft skills on employee performance is 68.5%. This means that 68.5% is the contribution of communication soft skills to employee performance and 31.5% are various other factors that influence it and are not researched by the author.
- c. The level of correlation strength between communication soft skills and employee performance reaches a value of 0.828, this means that both have a very strong level of relationship.

Overall, the findings of this study show that communication soft skills have a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This research can also provide empirical evidence that improving or developing communication soft skills can be an effective strategic step to improve employee performance in the work environment. However, in this case it is important to conduct research in a sustainable and more in-depth manner with a larger sample size that includes a variety of employees working in a particular place, so that the findings can be more representative and can be extended to be general. It is also necessary to consider various other external factors that affect the level of employee performance.

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