



**THE INFLUENCE OF HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION,
VERTICAL COMMUNICATION AND DIAGONAL
COMMUNICATION ON EMPLOYEE WORK
MORALE AT THE RANTAU UTARA
DISTRICT OFFICE**

**PENGARUH KOMUNIKASI HORIZONTAL, KOMUNIKASI
VERTIKAL, DAN KOMUNIKASI DIAGONAL TERHADAP
SEMANGAT KERJA KARYAWAN DI KANTOR
KECAMATAN RANTAU UTARA**

Umairi Ritonga¹, Elida Florentina Sinaga Simanjorang^{2*}, Pitriyani³

^{1,2*,3}Labuhanbatu University, Email : buclida.dosenku@gmail.com

*email koresponden: buclida.dosenku@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of horizontal communication, vertical communication, and diagonal communication on employee morale at the Rantau Utara District Office. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method. The study population consisted of 33 employees, all of whom were sampled through a saturated sampling technique. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using validity tests, reliability tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression, partial tests, simultaneous tests, and coefficients of determination using SPSS 27. The results showed that horizontal communication, vertical communication, and diagonal communication each had a positive and significant effect on employee morale. Simultaneously, the three variables also had a significant effect on morale. Vertical communication was the variable that had the greatest influence compared to the other two variables. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.840 indicated that 84% of the variation in morale could be explained by the three forms of organizational communication, while 16% was influenced by other factors outside the research model. These findings confirm that effective organizational communication plays an important role in increasing employee morale and supporting the creation of more optimal public service performance.

Keywords : Horizontal Communication, Vertical Communication, Diagonal Communication, Work Morale.



Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh komunikasi horizontal, komunikasi vertikal, dan komunikasi diagonal terhadap semangat kerja pegawai di Kantor Kecamatan Rantau Utara. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari 33 pegawai, yang semuanya dijadikan sampel melalui teknik sampling jenuh. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner dan dianalisis melalui uji validitas, uji reliabilitas, uji asumsi klasik, regresi linear berganda, uji parsial, uji simultan, serta koefisien determinasi dengan bantuan perangkat lunak SPSS 27. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi horizontal, komunikasi vertikal, dan komunikasi diagonal masing-masing berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap semangat kerja pegawai. Secara simultan, ketiga variabel tersebut juga berpengaruh signifikan terhadap semangat kerja. Komunikasi vertikal merupakan variabel yang memberikan pengaruh paling besar dibandingkan dengan dua variabel lainnya. Nilai Adjusted R Square sebesar 0,840 menunjukkan bahwa 84% variasi semangat kerja dapat dijelaskan oleh ketiga bentuk komunikasi organisasi tersebut, sedangkan 16% sisanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor-faktor lain di luar model penelitian. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa komunikasi organisasi yang efektif berperan penting dalam meningkatkan semangat kerja pegawai serta mendukung terciptanya kinerja pelayanan publik yang lebih optimal.

Kata Kunci : Komunikasi Horizontal, Komunikasi Vertikal, Komunikasi Diagonal, Moral Kerja.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sub-district governments, which are government administrators under the auspices of a district or city, play a crucial role in implementing various government policies for the community. This role is realized through the provision of quality public services as an effort to improve the welfare of the community within the sub-district. Simanjorang et al. (2021) wrote that the quality of service provided is highly dependent on employee performance in carrying out their duties, providing professional services, and meeting community needs. Therefore, improving the performance of sub-district officials is a crucial factor in creating public satisfaction while realizing effective, service-oriented governance.

Human resources are the main pillar that drives all organizational activities in achieving the vision, mission, and goals that have been set. The success of an institution is determined not only by technological advances, capital availability, or the development of information media, but also by the quality of employees and their work ethic. Work ethic is one of the employees behaviors that is one of the driving forces that enable someone to perform their work better (Manihuruk & Tirtayasa, 2020). Better work means more productive, which can be seen in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Work ethic is necessary for employees because it will affect the work process. Employees who do their work with morale will strive to complete it effectively and efficiently (Basri & Rauf, 2021). Work ethic is a spiritual condition or behavior of individual workers and groups that creates deep pleasure in workers to work harder and consistently in achieving the goals set by the company.

The main factor that is very important in efforts to improve employee morale, namely communication. Communication is the process of transferring understanding in the form of ideas or communication from one person to another. Good communication in a government agency, especially in the service sector, must run horizontally, vertically and diagonally. Horizontal communication is the exchange of information or messages within an organization or company that occurs between individuals, teams, or divisions with equal levels of position, authority, or hierarchy. Vertical communication is the process of exchanging information and messages that occurs between different hierarchical levels in an organization, such as between superiors (leaders) and subordinates (employees) and diagonal communication is a two-way interaction between members of the organization who have different functions (departments) as well as different hierarchical levels (positions).



Good communication must always be maintained in any government agency, including the Rantau Utara District Office. Maintaining ongoing communication within the Rantau Utara District Office is crucial for fostering collaborative relationships between employees within a government agency and plays a significant role in achieving the agency's goals. Communication is carried out to ensure that every employee within the government agency can assist and interact. Communication at the Rantau Utara District office can be successful if the sender and recipient understand each other and can improve performance, especially in the area of managing public documents.

The phenomenon that researchers saw in the Rantau Utara District office was that horizontal communication had not run well among all employees, there were still employees who received information incorrectly from fellow coworkers and there were employees who only actively communicated with a few people, this showed that there were still problems regarding horizontal communication. Researchers also saw that in carrying out vertical communication there was still less than optimal, this was seen from there were still employees who were less motivated by the leadership so that the work morale that wanted to be implemented in the Rantau Utara District office did not run well, as well as diagonal communication had not been optimal in efforts to implement work morale and achieve the company's vision and mission.

Based on the background that has been described previously, the problem formulation in this research is how big the influence of horizontal, vertical and diagonal communication is on the work morale of employees at the Rantau Utara District office.

Horizontal communication, often referred to as lateral communication, is communication that occurs between parties with equal positions within an organization. Its purpose is to persuade, influence, and provide information to parties with equal positions (Sumantri et al., 2023). Horizontal communication is a form of horizontal communication where messages are exchanged sideways and is carried out by two parties who have the same position, the same position, the same level of position, or the same echelon within an organization (Mashyuni, 2022). Indicators of horizontal communication according to (Tarigan & Agung, 2020) are (1). Openness (2). Trust (3). Equality (4). Cooperation (5). Frequency of Interaction

Vertical communication is communication that occurs between superiors and subordinates in an organization that is used to convey information, direct, coordinate, motivate, lead and control various activities at the lower level (Sari et al., 2020). From top to bottom, such as leaders giving instructions or directions, instructions, information, explanations and so on to their subordinates (Andriany, 2021). Communication from top to bottom is communication between leaders to subordinates such as giving instructions, orders, instructions, and information (Jubaedah et al., 2025). Indicators of vertical communication according to (Wiryany et al., 2022) are (1). Clarity of Instructions (2). Understanding of Goals (3). Providing Motivation (4). Submission of Complaints.

Diagonal communication is communication that cuts across the chain of command of an organization. Diagonal communication involves communication between two different organizational levels. Diagonal communication is used by two parties who have different levels but do not have direct authority over the other party (Chiandita et al., 2024). Diagonal indicators according to (Astuti, 2022) are (1). Speed of Information Delivery (2). Collaborative Activities (3). Joint Problem Solving (4). Cross-Function/Department (5). Cross-Level

Work morale is the mental attitude of an individual or group that shows morale for carrying out their work, thus encouraging them to be able to work together and be able to complete tasks on time with a sense of responsibility for the work assigned to them (Manihuruk & Tirtayasa, 2020; Syafrizal et al., 2021). Work morale is also a reflection of the feelings, desires or sincerity of individuals or groups towards the organization which will influence the discipline and willingness of individuals in organizational activities to carry out tasks better and faster. Work morale indicators according to (Sanaba et al., 2022) are (1). Work Productivity (2). Discipline (3). Teamwork (4). Dedication



Sugiyono (2023) stated that a conceptual framework is a conceptual model of how theory relates to various factors that have been identified as important. This research framework can be described in the following figure:

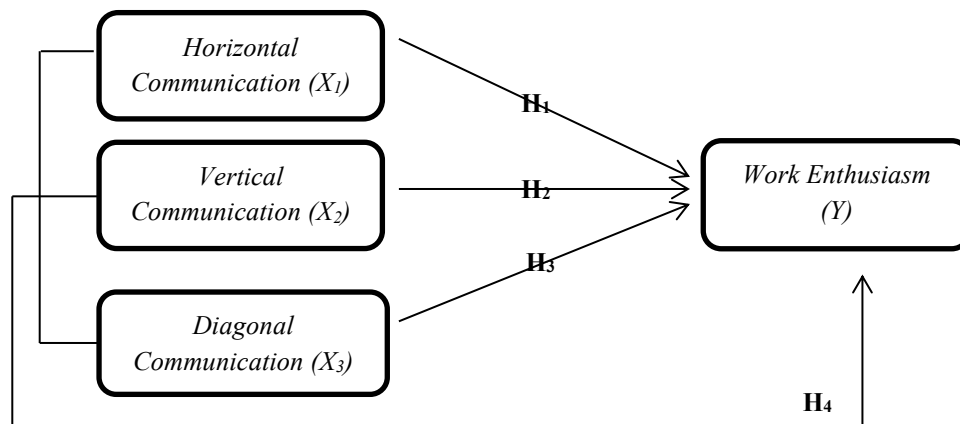


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the formulation of the problem and conceptual framework, the hypothesis in this study is:

H_1 = It is suspected that horizontal communication has a positive and significant influence on employee work morale at the Rantau Utara District Office.

H_2 = It is suspected that vertical communication has a positive and significant influence on employee work morale at the Rantau Utara District Office.

H_3 = It is suspected that diagonal communication has a positive and significant influence on employee work morale at the Rantau Utara District Office.

H_4 = It is suspected that horizontal, vertical and diagonal communication has a positive and significant influence on employee work morale at the Rantau Utara District Office.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach to test hypotheses and explain causal relationships between variables objectively and measurably. The population in this study is all employees of the District Office. The North Rantau region during the period of 2026 consisted of 33 people, consisting of 16 civil servants and 17 honorary employees. The sample is a portion or representative of the population being studied. If the number of subjects is less than 100, it is better to take all of them. Conversely, if the number of subjects is greater than 100, 10-15% or 20-25% can be taken (Arikunto, 2021). Based on the opinion of above, the author used a saturated sampling technique, namely 33 people from the existing population. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using validity tests, reliability tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression, partial tests, simultaneous tests, and coefficients of determination using SPSS 27.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity Test and Reliability Test

The research instrument was obtained from the results of distributing questionnaires and tested using the SPSS application. To test the feasibility of the research variables studied, the instrument test is as follows.

Table 1. Instrument Quality Test Results

Validity test					Reliability	
Variables	No item	R count	R table	Information	Cronbach's alpha	Information
	1	.853	0.355	Valid	0.924	Reliable



Horizontal Communication	2	.782	0.355	Valid		
	3	.853	0.355	Valid		
	4	.840	0.355	Valid		
	5	.667	0.355	Valid		
Vertical Communication	1	.804	0.355	Valid	0.797	Reliable
	2	.493	0.355	Valid		
	3	.539	0.355	Valid		
	4	.639	0.355	Valid		
Diagonal Communication	1	.370	0.355	Valid	0.666	Reliable
	2	.406	0.355	Valid		
	3	.363	0.355	Valid		
	4	.381	0.355	Valid		
	5	.364	0.355	Valid		
Work Morale	1	.380	0.355	Valid	0.635	Reliable
	2	.738	0.355	Valid		
	3	.401	0.355	Valid		
	4	.401	0.355	Valid		

Source: Data processed by Spss 27 (2026)

The determination of the calculated r value is: $df_1 = nk$ (sample-total number of variables) = $33-4 = 29$, with a significance level of 0.05 so that the r table can be seen in the r table in column 0.05 in row 29, which is 0.355. From the table above, it can be seen that all calculated r values are > from the t table value (0.355) so that all statements are declared valid and have a Cronbach Alpha value above 0.60 so that all research variables are declared reliable. With valid and reliable validity and reliability testing, all research questionnaires are suitable to be used as a basis for conducting further testing.

Normality Test

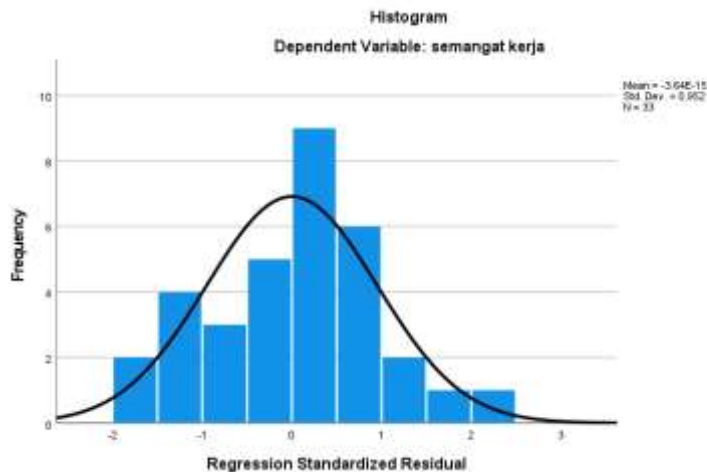


Figure 2. Normality Test

From Figure 1 above, it can be seen that the graph forms a neat pattern and forms a bell. This shows that the data is normally distributed. The graph results show that the data distribution is normally distributed with the resulting graph being neat and not forming a random data distribution.



Multicollinearity Test

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Coefficients ^a

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	horizontal communication	.194	5.145
	vertical communication	.273	3,661
	diagonal communication	.307	3,256

a. Dependent Variable: work morale

Source: Data processed by Spss 27 (2026)

From the table above, it can be seen that the tolerance value for each variable is greater than 0.1 and the VIF value has a value less than 10, so that the research results are free from multicollinearity elements.

Heteroscedasticity Test

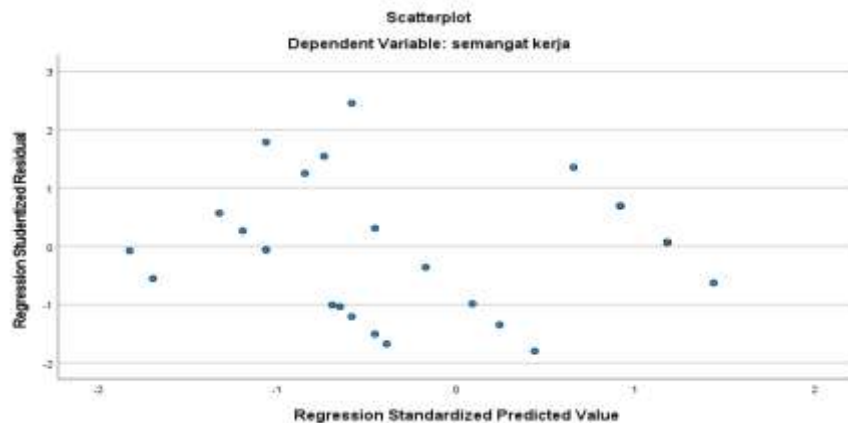


Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity Test

The image above shows a balanced distribution of data and does not form a specific pattern so that all research variables pass the heteroscedasticity test.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients ^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,901	1,452		1,309	.201
	horizontal communication	.256	.078	.526	3,277	.003
	vertical communication	.796	.108	1,002	7,402	.000
	diagonal communication	.341	.099	.440	3,445	.002

Source: Data processed by SPSS 27 (2026)

$$Y = 1.901 + 0.256 X_1 + 0.796 X_2 + 0.341 X_3 + e$$

1. The constant value in the regression equation is 1.901, meaning the fixed value that each variable has before experiencing changes.



2. The horizontal communication regression coefficient shows a positive relationship with work morale with a coefficient value of 0.256.
3. The vertical communication regression coefficient shows a positive relationship with work morale with a coefficient value of 0.796.
4. The diagonal communication regression coefficient shows a positive relationship with work morale with a coefficient value of 0.341.

Partial Test (t-Test)

Table 4. Partial Test Coefficients ^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,901	1,452		1,309	.201
	horizontal communication	.256	.078	.526	3,277	.003
	vertical communication	.796	.108	1,002	7,402	.000
	diagonal communication	.341	.099	.440	3,445	.002

Source: Data processed by Spss 27 (2026)

Based on the table above, it is known that the t-table value is 1.971, this can be known with $Df_1 = 0.05: 2 = 0.025$, $Df_2 = nk$ (number of samples-variables) = $33-4 = 29$, so the t-table can be known by looking at the confidence level of 0.025 in row 29, which is 2.045. So the results of the study are as follows:

1. The test results for horizontal communication were 3.277, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significance value of $0.003 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.
2. The test results for vertical communication were 7.402, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.
3. The test results for diagonal communication were 3.445, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significance value of $0.002 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

Simultaneous Test

Table 5. Simultaneous Test (F Test)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	54,760	3	18,253	56,919	.000 ^b
	Residual	9,300	29	.321		
	Total	64,061	32			

Source: Data processed by Spss 27 (2026)

The F table value is known, namely $Df_1 = k$ (number of variables) which is 4, $Df_2 = nk = 33-4 = 29$, so to determine the F table can be seen in the F table in column 4 row 29 which is 2.70. The results of the study show that the calculated F value is greater than the F table value ($56.919 > 2.70$) with a significant value of 0.001 which is smaller than 0.005. The results of the study show that all independent variables together have an influence on the dependent variable.

Determinant Coefficient

The determinant test was carried out to see the overall results of the research carried out, with the following results :

**Table 6. Determinant Model Summary^b**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.925 ^a	.855	.840	.566

Source: Data spss 27 (2026)

The final results of the study showed that the Adjusted R square value gave a value of 0.84 or 84%, meaning that the research conducted had an influence on the dependent variable, namely 84% and the remaining 16% was influenced by variables that were not the object of this study.

1. Horizontal communication has a positive and significant influence on the work morale of employees at the Rantau Utara District office.

The regression coefficient of horizontal communication shows a positive relationship to work morale with a coefficient value of 0.256. The test results for horizontal communication are 3.277, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significant value of $0.003 < 0.05$. So H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. The results of the study indicate that horizontal communication will affect how the work morale of employees. The results of the study are in line with research conducted by (Mashyuni, 2022) where: (1) There is a positive and significant influence of vertical communication on employee work morale at BPR Nusamba Mengwi Badung, with t count = $3.250 > t$ table = 1.683 and sig count = $0.002 < 0.05$. (2) There is a positive and significant influence of horizontal communication on employee work morale at BPR Nusamba Mengwi Badung, with t count = $2.926 > t$ table = 1.683 and sig count = $0.006 < 0.05$.

2. Vertical communication has a positive and significant influence on the work morale of employees at the Rantau Utara District office.

The regression coefficient of vertical communication shows a positive relationship to work morale with a coefficient value of 0.796. The test results for vertical communication are 7.402, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$. So H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. The results of the study are in line with research conducted by (Prasetyo, 2018) the results of the study show that vertical communication has an influence on work morale by looking at the value of t count > t table ($4.317 > 1.671$) and a significance value below 0.05.

3. Diagonal communication has a positive and significant influence on the work morale of employees at the Rantau Utara District office.

The diagonal communication regression coefficient shows a positive relationship to work morale with a coefficient value of 0.341. The test results for diagonal communication are 3.445, t table 2.045 (t count > t table), with a significant value of $0.002 < 0.05$. So H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. The results of the study are in line with research conducted by (Lingga, 2023) the results of diagonal communication research (X_3) have a positive and significant effect on employee work morale at the Rantau Utara District office, with a t count value of 2.907 while t table 1.703 (t count is greater than t table), with a significant value of $0.007 < 0.05$.

4. Horizontal communication, vertical communication and diagonal communication have a positive and significant influence on the work morale of employees at the Rantau Utara District office.

The results of the study show that the calculated value of f is greater than the value of f table ($56.919 > 2.70$) with a significant value of 0.001 smaller than 0.005. The results of the study show that all independent variables together have an influence on the dependent variable. The final results of the study show that the Adjusted R Square value gives a value of 0.84 or 84%, meaning that the research conducted has an influence on the dependent variable of 84% and the remaining 16% is influenced by variables that are not the object of this study.



4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that horizontal, vertical, and diagonal communication have a positive and significant effect on employee morale at the Rantau Utara District Office, both partially and simultaneously. Among these three variables, vertical communication has the most dominant influence on increasing employee morale. Together, these three forms of communication are able to explain 84% of the variation in morale, thus the study's objective of analyzing the influence of organizational communication on employee morale has been achieved. These findings emphasize the importance of building open, clear, collaborative, and continuous communication to create a conducive work environment and increase employee motivation and productivity. However, this study has limitations because it only involved 33 respondents in one government agency, so the results cannot be generalized widely. Furthermore, this study only examined three dimensions of organizational communication, while there are still other factors that could potentially influence morale. Future research is recommended to expand the scope of locations and the number of respondents, and add other variables such as leadership, organizational culture, job satisfaction, or work environment to produce a more comprehensive model.

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