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Empirical Causality of Employee Work Productivity

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study aims to determine the relationship between superior-subordinate communication on work productivity with work enthusiasm and positive work attitudes as mediating variables at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province.

Methodology: This research uses associative research type with quantitative paradigm. The population and sample used in this study, namely all employees/staff at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province, totaling 118 staff. The saturated sampling technique is used to determine the research sample. Path analysis research design is used as an analytical tool to determine the direct or indirect relationship, between independent and dependent variables. Descriptive statistics are also used to discuss the research findings in greater depth. Primary data were processed using IBM SPSS 23 software.

Finding: The superior-subordinate communication has a positive significant impact on work productivity either directly or indirectly through work enthusiasm and positive work attitudes. The results justify the significant contribution of superior-subordinate to work enthusiasm.

Conclusion: The results of research related to superior-subordinate communication relations, work enthusiasm, and positive work attitudes towards work productivity in general have shown good conditions. However, in particular, there needs to be a better improvement regarding the communication relations between superiors and subordinates, work enthusiasm, and positive work attitudes of employees to increase the work productivity of employees at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province.

Keywords: Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship; Work Enthusiasm; Positive Work Attitude; Work Productivity.

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INTRODUCTION

Work productivity lies in the human factor as the executor of work activities. High employee work productivity is the main target of every organization to realize the goals that have been determined. Various factors were identified as antecedents of employee productivity. Each antecedent variable has an interrelationship with each other in producing employee work productivity. Communication between superiors and subordinates is one of them. The relationship between leaders and subordinates is very important in establishing a good communication relationship. Matin et al. (2010) suggested that interpersonal communication is the ability to influence other people so that people can be invited to work together. If communication is well established, the company's goals can be achieved as well. Research results prove that superior and subordinate communication can increase employee work productivity (Soelton et al., 2021; Kusdiyanti et al., 2017; Anggraeni and Uliana, 2018; Pangumpia, 2013).

Superior-subordinate communication can also help raise work enthusiasm Superior-subordinate communication has a great contribution to employees' work enthusiasm (Simamora and Frima, 2019; Laoe, 2021). The identification of a positive feeling in carrying out the task is work enthusiasm (Alexandermaramis et al., 2019). Work enthusiasm will be interpreted by the desire and sincerity of a person to do his job well and be disciplined to achieve maximum productivity (Hasibuan, 2013). Work enthusiasm will be known as sincerity, namely a disciplined and hardworking attitude in achieving organizational goals (Khamri and Heryanto, 2019). Employees who are enthusiastic about work will be seen carrying out their daily tasks. Companies that have employees with more enthusiasm for work will be directly proportional to the productivity and work performance of employees which will lead to company growth. Previous research results prove that work enthusiasm has a significant contribution to employee work productivity (Mafra, 2017; Khoiriyah, 2015; Nurcahyanti, 2018; Lutfi, 2018; Laoe, 2021).

Superior-subordinate communication also has a great contribution to positive employee attitudes. Work attitudes are a collection of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about how to behave towards work and the organization (George and Jones, 2012; Robbins and Judge, 2013; Issakh, 2014). Positive work attitudes can be measured from various dimensions. Robbins (2008), suggests 3 main attitudes at work, namely job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee involvement. This research focuses on aspects of positive work attitudes, namely organizational commitment, and work involvement. Superior-subordinate communication contributes significantly to job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, work engagement, work participation, and job involvement as a variation of the dimensions of employees' positive work attitudes (Soelton et al., 2020; Proctor, 2014; Dasgupta et al., 2013). Previous research have proven that positive work attitudes of employees can contribute to employee productivity. This is followed by the research results of Asmuni (2012), Manurung (2020), Putra et al. (2019), Proctor (2014), and Dasgupta et al. (2013).

Work productivity of employees at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province is measured by the level of achievement of the performance targets specified in the annual Employee Performance Targets. Each employee has different abilities in achieving performance targets. Therefore, this research was conducted to empirically observe the antecedent variables that contribute significantly to bringing up employee productivity. The results of the research are expected to provide empirical justification for the interrelationships between the antecedent variables forming employee work productivity identified based on

theoretical studies and previous research. In addition, this research focuses on the impact of superior-subordinate communication on work enthusiasm where work enthusiasm is generally an indicator of the work spirit variable. Because of the stated fact, this research examines the direct impact of superior-subordinate communication on the work enthusiasm variable research which is still relatively rare. These are the significance of this research. Based on this background, this research aims to analyze the causal relationship between the antecedent variables forming employee productivity. Is there a significant direct and indirect influence between superior-subordinate communication on work productivity involving enthusiasm and positive work attitudes, especially in the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The literature review was conducted on the observed variables which will be the basis for developing research hypothesis and conceptual frameworks.

Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship

Superior-subordinate communication is a form of internal organizational communication especially downward communication. According to Setiadi and Sitohang (2013), internal communication is the single most important factor affecting employee work. Superior-subordinate communication is a communication process that flows from superiors-subordinates in the organization which is expected to lead to understanding, change in attitudes, and establish a harmonious relationship in the work between superiors - subordinates. Indicators of superior-subordinate communication include various things, among others in the form understandable commands, procedure, reprimand, and praise (Purwanto, 2011).

The effectiveness of superior-subordinate communication will have implications for many things, including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and performance (Golden and Veiga, 2008; Winska, 2010; Dasgupta et al., 2013; Babalola et al., 2014; Steele and Plenty, 2014; Proctor, 2014; Tanner and Otto, 2016; Lantara, 2019), positive reaction to organizational change (Tannaer and Otto, 2016), work spirit (Widiastuti, 2010; Simamora and Frima, 2019; Laoe, 2021; Soelton et al., 2021; Aurora and Robin, 2022; Afrina, 2020; Boonpadung e al., 2020; Arianto and Nugroho, 2014). Different results were found by Febrial and Herminingsih (2020) and Esthi (2021) which proved that organizational communication does not directly affect employee performance, but needs to go through intermediary variables including work engagement.

This research focuses on the impact of superior-subordinate communication on work enthusiasm where work enthusiasm is generally an indicator of the work spirit variable. Therefore, research that examines the direct impact of superior-subordinate communication on the work enthusiasm variable is still relatively rare. This is one of the significance of this research.

Work Enthusiasm

Excitement, passion, and great interest in something are enthusiasm. Work enthusiasm can be seen in the high motivation to carry out and complete the work that is his responsibility. Andrie (2009) stated enthusiasm is an extraordinary feeling of pleasure to achieve something, which

means that when someone has enthusiasm or passion in him, he will be made extremely happy to achieve his dream. Indicators of work enthusiasm include (Afifah, 2014; Erwina and Amri, 2020): the ability to complete work well and on time, work hard on tasks, feeling proud of the work done, and taking the initiative in completing his work or helping work in other divisions. Work enthusiasm is empirically proven to contribute greatly to positive work attitudes (Bagis, 2020; Jayanti, 2020), work productivity (Khoiriyah, 2015; Mafra, 2017; Lutfi, 2018; Nurcahyanti, 2018; Sjafitri et al., 2019).

Positive Work Attitude

Work attitude is a collection of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about how to behave that people have about their work and organization (George and Jones, 2012). A positive work attitude towards work is indicated by a greater willingness to take responsibility for what is assigned to him. Indicators of work attitudes include many concepts namely, work involvement and organizational commitment.

A positive work attitude does not just appear but is triggered by various factors. The emergence of employee involvement is a positive reaction to conditions in the work environment (Ekmekci, 2011). Work involvement and commitment are two attitude variables that are the focus of this research. Work involvement is the employee's activity in carrying out their duties as well as possible as a form of appreciation for themselves and the work that is important to them (Robbins and Judge; 2017; Rivai and Mulyadi, 2012). The work involvement component consists of active participation in carrying out work, the importance of work, and work as a determinant of self-esteem (Nasution, 2019). Organizational commitment is a feeling of attachment of employees to the organization because of a psychological contract. Organizational commitment is measured by indicators of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment is measured by the employee's desire to remain a member of the organization. Continuance commitment is measured by employees' perceptions of the risk of loss if they leave the organization. Normative commitment is measured by employees' feelings about the obligations that must be given to the organization (Allen and Meyer, 1994). The existence of a positive work attitude in employees will bring up various positive work behaviors, namely work performance/productivity (Susanty and Miradipta, 2013; Junita, 2017; Offorbike et al. 2018; Cabrera and Estacio, 2022), organizational effectiveness and change (Arifin, 2019; Mansur et al., 2020), work productivity (Gomathy et al., 2022; Mazayed et al., 2014; Maria and Ansel, 2015; Thevanes and Dirojan, 2018; Prasetyo et al, 2021). However, several previous research findings prove otherwise that positive work attitudes do not always contribute significantly to work productivity (Hendri, 2019; Frastika and Franksiska, 2021; Prasetyo et al., 2021).

Work Productivity

Sedarmayanti (2009) said that productivity is a mind that is eager to improve the organization. Indicators of work productivity are as follows: the ability to improve the results achieved, self-development, the quality of work that is the result of the work quality of the employees, and efficiency which is defined as the ratio achieved by the overall resources used. Inputs and outputs are aspects of productivity that have a significant impact on employees. (Sutrisno, 2016).

Based on the theoretical and empirical studies, the research hypothesis is stated as follows:

- H₁ : Superior-subordinate communication contributes directly and significantly to bringing up work productivity.
- H₂ : Superior-subordinate communication contributes indirectly and significantly to raising work productivity through work enthusiasm.
- H₃ : Superior-subordinate communication contributes indirectly and significantly to bringing up work productivity through positive work attitudes.
- H₄ : Superior-subordinate communication contributes indirectly and significantly to raising work productivity through work enthusiasm, and positive work attitude.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This study focuses on the analysis of the causal relationship of the antecedent variables that give rise to the work productivity of employees at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province. Based on previous theoretical and empirical studies, this study wants to challenge and prove whether there is a significant contribution, either directly or indirectly, between the antecedent variables of work productivity, especially superior-subordinate communication, work enthusiasm, and positive work attitudes. Diagrammatically, the conceptual framework to be tested is shown in Figure 1.

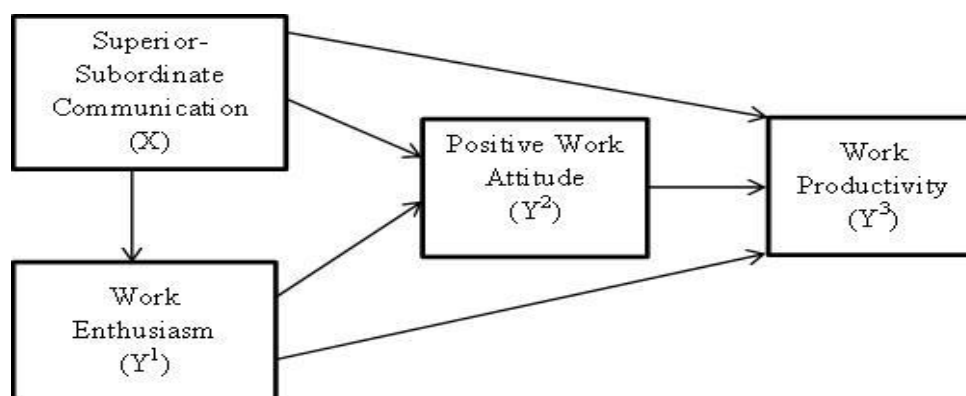


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHOD

This type of research is causality or explanatory. According to Sani and Maharani (2013) explanatory research is to test between hypothesized variables.

The sample was 118 employees at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra taken by the saturated sampling technique because all of the population was used as the research sample (Sugiyono, 2013).

Primary data is collected through questionnaires. Path analysis is used to analyze research problems as well as answer the hypothesis. Path analysis can be used to analyze the direct or indirect effect between the independent and the dependent variable (Sani and Maharani, 2013). Descriptive statistics are also used to discuss the research findings in greater depth. Primary data were processed using IBM SPSS 23 software (Ghozali, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondents Characteristics

Respondents' characteristics were focused on gender, education level, age, and work experience as shown in Figure 2.:

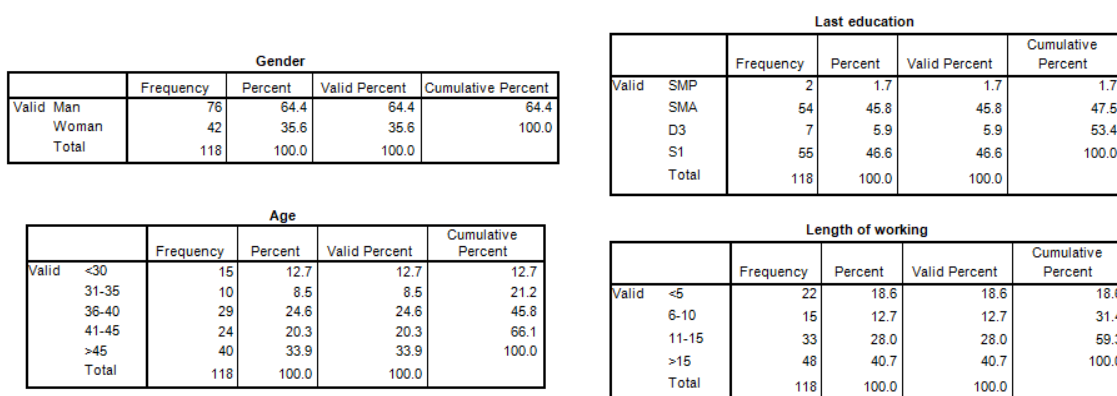


Figure 2. Respondent Characteristics

Source: Data processed, 2022

Filtered by gender with a total of 118 respondents, there were 76 male and 42 female respondents. From the sample taken from as many as 118 respondents among employees, it turns out that in terms of age there are 5 groupings, and the most taken are aged >45 years at 33.9%, then 36-40 years old at 24.6%, 41-45 years old at 20.3%, <30 years old at 12.7% and 31-35 years old at 8.5%.

From the samples taken, it turns out that most respondents' education backgrounds are Bachelor's Degree (S1) at 46.6%, followed by high school at 45.8%, Diploma (D3) at 5.9%, and junior high school at 1.7%. The longest tenure of employees is >15 at 40.7%, followed by 11-15 years at 28.0%, 6-10 years at 12.7%, and < 5 years at 18, 6%.

INSTRUMENT VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS

Based on the results of the validity test, the Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship variable has 8 questions, the Work Enthusiasm variable has 8 questions, the Positive Work Attitude variable has 8 questions, and the Work Productivity variable has 10 questions. The overall results of the items on the Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship variable were 6 items declared valid, and 2 items were invalid (item 3 and item 4). As for the Work Enthusiasm variable, the 8 question items were tested for validity, and only the fourth item was declared invalid. For the Positive Work Attitude variable that has 8 question items to be tested for validity, the third item was found to be invalid. The work productivity variable has 10 question items to be tested for validity, and only the fifth item was declared invalid. The value of the item is valid for each question item because it has a calculated r value > r table (0.179) at n = 118, df = n2, and a significance level of 5%. Meanwhile, invalid items must be removed and re-tested for validity.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Results of Research Instruments

Variable	Question Item	r value	r table	Note	Invalid Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Note
Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship (X)	1	0,628		valid		0,705	Reliabel
	2	0,489		valid			
	5	0,565	0,180	valid	Item 3 and Item 4		
	6	0,576		valid			
	7	0,660		valid			
	8	0,850		valid			
	1	0,764		valid			
	2	0,621		valid			
Work Enthusiasm (Y ¹)	3	0,508		valid		0,652	Reliabel
	5	0,506	0,180	valid	Item 4		
	6	0,516		valid			
	7	0,448		valid			
	8	0,614		valid			
	1	0,771		valid			
	2	0,613		valid			
	4	0,452		valid			
Positive Work Attitude (Y ²)	5	0,452	0,180	valid	Item 3	0,651	Reliabel
	6	0,495		valid			
	7	0,450		valid			
	8	0,728		valid			
	1	0,873		valid			
	2	0,760		valid			
	3	0,683		valid			
	4	0,500		valid			
Work Productivity (Y ³)	6	0,337	0,180	valid	Item 5	0,781	Reliabel
	7	0,439		valid			
	8	0,445		valid			
	9	0,383		valid			
	10	0,840		valid			

Source: Data processed, 2022

The results show that the value of Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.705 for the Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship variable (X) 0.652 for the Work Enthusiasm variable (Y¹), and 0.651 for the Positive Work Attitude variable (Y²), and 0.781 for the Work Productivity Variable (Y³). The results of each variable have a Cronbach’s Alpha value greater than 0.6. Ghazali (2005) stated that, if the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of an instrument is greater than 0.6, then the instrument is considered reliable.

Hypothesis Testing

Substructure 1 of Path Analysis Model

The model testing in this study was using path analysis that included analysis of 3 (three) substructures that represent problem areas and research hypothesis. Substructure 1 examines the effect of the superior-subordinate communication relationship on work enthusiasm. Before testing the hypothesis, it is necessary to test the classical regression assumptions The results of the data normality test conducted with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is found the KS test value was $0.152 > 0.050$ (a) so that it was concluded that the data in the research model were normally distributed. To determine heteroscedasticity, the Glejser test was used. It is found that the significance value of the superior-subordinate communication relationship variable is $0.380 > 0.05$, based on the result, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity.

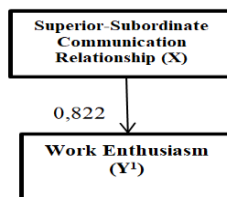


Figure 3. Test Result of Substructure 1 Path Analysis Model

Source: Data processed, 2022

Based on the result in Table 2, it is found the significant t-test value of the model is $0.000 < 0.05$ (a), so it can be concluded the superior-subordinate communication relationship has a direct and significant effect on work enthusiasm. The influence degree of the Superior-Subordinate Communication on Work Enthusiasm is 67.6%.

Table 2. Results of Sub Structure 1 t-test

Model	Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	6.281	1.215		5.170	.000
Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship	.840	.054	.822	15.543	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work Enthusiasm

Source: Data processed, 2022

Substructure 2 of Path Analysis Model Test

Substructure 2 of path analysis (Figure 4) examines the contribution of superior-subordinate communication relationships and work enthusiasm to positive work attitudes. Before testing the hypothesis, the classical regression assumption test is first performed. Based on the normality test results which is conducted with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is found the KS test value was $0.200 > 0.050$ (a) so it was concluded that the data in the research model of substructured 2 were normally distributed.

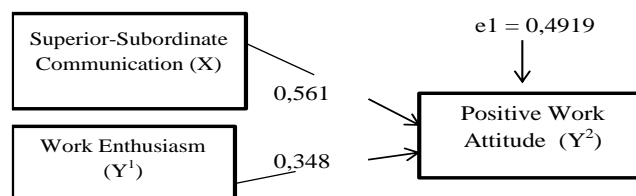


Figure 4. Test Result of Substructure 2 Path Analysis Model

Source: Data processed, 2022

Then multicollinearity test is carried out on the 2 sub structure model. According to Ghazali (2005), "the multicollinearity test aims to test whether the regression model found a correlation between the independent variables (independent)". Based on multicollinearity test, it is found the Tolerance value of Superior-Subordinate Communication variable is $0.324 > 0.1$, and the VIF value is $3.083 < 10$, then the Tolerance value of Work Enthusiasm variable is $0.324 > 0.1$, and VIF value $3.083 < 10$. Thus, it is concluded that there is no multicollinearity in each independent variable. To determine heteroscedasticity, this study used the Glejser test.

The results show that the significance value of the superior-subordinate communication relationship variable is 0.398 and the Work Enthusiasm variable is 0.077 which means it is greater than 0.05. Based on the results, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity.

Table 3. Results of Sub-Structure 2 t-test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.730	1.231		2.217	.029
Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship	.604	.087	.561	6.965	.000
Work Enthusiasm	.366	.085	.348	4.320	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Positive Work Attitude

Source: Data processed, 2022

The result on Table 3 found the significance value for each of superior-subordinate communication and work enthusiasm is $0.000 < 0.05$ (a), then it is concluded that both superior-subordinate communication and work enthusiasm have a significant direct contribution to positive work attitudes. The output results above obtained a determination coefficient (R^2) of 0.758, meaning that the Superior-Subordinate Communication (X) and Work Enthusiasm (Y^1) contribute significantly to Positive Work Attitudes (Y^2) at 75.8% while the rest is influenced by other variables that not investigated in this study.

Superior-subordinate communication variable has 0,561 the path coefficient value (P1), and work enthusiasm has 0,348 the path coefficient value (P2). The symbol e1 shows the variance of the research model which is calculated by the formula: $e1 = \sqrt{1-0,758} = 0,4919$ (Y^2). The results of the t-test become the basis for describing the substructure path analysis model 2 as shown in Figure 4.

Test Results of Sub Structure 3 Path Analysis Models

Substructure 3 examines the superior-subordinate communication, work enthusiasm, and positive work attitude on work productivity. Based on the results of the normality test conducted with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is found the KS test results value was $0.200 > 0.050$ (a) so it was concluded that the substructure 3 path analysis model is normally distributed. The results of the multicollinearity test found the Tolerance value of Superior-Subordinate Communication is $0.228 > 0.1$ and the VIF value is $4.383 < 10$. The Tolerance value of Positive Work Attitude is $0.242 > 0.1$ and the VIF value is $4.127 < 10$. It is concluded that there was no multicollinearity in each independent variable in the model. To determine heteroscedasticity, this study used the Glejser test. Based on the Glejser test results, it is known that the significance value of the Superior-Subordinate Communication is 0.922, the Work Enthusiasm is 0.261, and the Positive Work Attitude is 0.720, which is greater than 0.05. Then, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity in each variable.

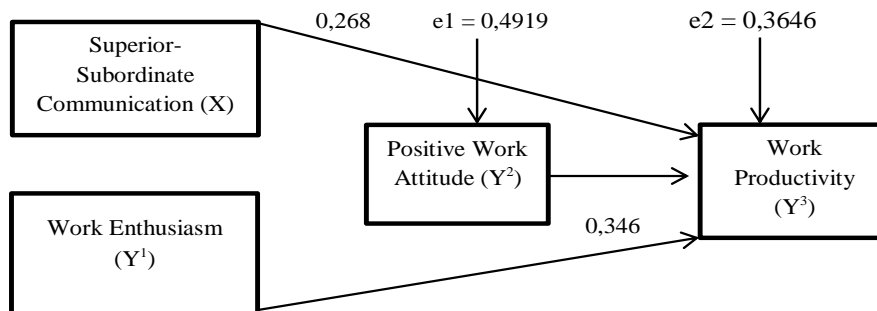


Figure 5. Test Result of Substructure 3 Path Analysis Model

Source: Data processed, 2022

Based on the t-test of the substructure 3 path analysis model (Table 4), it is found that the Sig. value of superiors and subordinates communication is 0.000, the Sig. value of Work Enthusiasm is 0.000, and the Sig. value of Positive Work Attitude variable is 0.000. The results of the study concluded that superior-subordinate communication, work enthusiasm, and a positive work attitude had a direct and significant impact on work productivity. The influence of the Superior-Subordinate Communication (X), Work Enthusiasm (Y¹), and Positive Work Attitudes (Y²) on Work Productivity (Y³) is 0.867 or 86.7%. It means 13,3% is determined by other variables. The symbol e² shows the variance of the research model which is calculated by the formula: $e^2 = \sqrt{(1-0,867)} = 0,3646 (Y^3)$ (Figure 5).

Table 4. Results of Substructure 3 Path Analysis Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.850	1.119		4.333	.000
Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationship	.345	.092	.268	3.750	.000
Work Enthusiasm	.474	.081	.377	5.825	.000
Positif Work Attitude	.413	.083	.346	4.980	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work Productivity
Source: Data processed, 2022

Discussion

The research results found that superior-subordinate communication was able to increase work productivity either directly or indirectly through the enthusiasm and positive work attitude variables. If compared, the indirect effect of superior-lower communication on work productivity through the variables of work enthusiasm and positive work attitude has a greater total effect (0,366) than the direct effect (0,268) (Table 5).

Table 5. The Calculation Result of Direct and Indirect Effect of Superior-Subordinate Communication to Work Productivity at the Department of Transportation of North Sumatra Province

Sub Structure	Path	Path Coefficient		Total Effect
		Direct	Indirect	
Sub Structure 1	X → Y ₁	0,822	-	0,822
Sub Structure 2	X → Y ₂	0,561	-	0,561
	Y ₁ → Y ₂	0,348	-	0,348
Sub Structure 3	X → Y ₃	0,268	0,822x0,348x0,346 = 0,098	0,268+0,098 = 0,366
	Y ₁ → Y ₃	0,377	0,348x0,346 = 0,120	0,377+0,120 = 0,497
	Y ₂ → Y ₃	0,346	-	0,346

Source: Data processed, 2022

This conclusion is supported by cross-tabulation description data between Superior-Subordinate Communication Relations and Work Enthusiasm (Table 6). Based on the results

of the cross tabulation in Table 6, it appears that a high superior-subordinate communication relationship will encourage high employee work enthusiasm (49.2%), and conversely, a low superior-subordinate communication relationship will also reduce employee work enthusiasm (4.2%). Thus, these results are in line with previous research by Laoe (2021), Dasgupta et al (2013), Lutfi (2018), Sjafitri, et al (2019), Simamora and Frima (2019).

Table 6. Cross Tabulation Results Between Superior-Subordinate Communication Relationships and Work Enthusiasm

Superior-Subordinate Communication	Work Enthusiasm			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
High	1 (0,8%)	3 (2,5%)	58 (49,2%)	62 (52,5%)
Medium	4 (3,4%)	34 (28,8%)	2 (1,7%)	40 (33,9%)
Low	5 (4,2%)	10 (8,5%)	1 (0,8%)	16 (13,6%)
Total	10 (8,5%)	47 (39,8%)	61 (51,7%)	118 (100%)

Source: Data processed, 2022

The research findings also confirm the results of previous research which proves a significant contribution of work enthusiasm to employee work productivity (Pangumpaa, 2013; Khoiriyah, 2015; Mafra, 2017; Kusdiyanti, et al., 2017; Lutfi, 2018; Nurcahyanti, 2018). Cross tabulation description data between Work Enthusiasm and Work Productivity (Table 7) proves that High Work Enthusiasm will result in high Work Productivity (50.0%) and vice versa a low level of Work Enthusiasm of employees will result in low Work Productivity (0%).

Tabel 7. Cross Tabulation Between Work Enthusiasm and Productivity

Work Enthusiasm	Work Productivity			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
High	0 (0,0%)	2 (1,7%)	59 (50,0%)	61 (51,7%)
Medium	1 (0,8%)	46 (39,0%)	0 (0,0%)	47 (39,8%)
Low	0 (0,0%)	10 (8,5%)	0 (0,0%)	10 (8,5%)
Total	1 (0,8%)	58 (49,2%)	59 (50,0%)	118 (100%)

Source: Data processed, 2022

The enthusiasm of employees was identified because of good communication between superiors and subordinates in the North Sumatra Province Transportation Service. According to Setiadi and Sitohang (2013), internal communication is the single most important factor affecting employee work. The effectiveness of superior-subordinate communication will have implications for many things, including work spirit (Widiastuti, 2010; Simamora and Frima, 2019; Laoe, 2021; Aurora and Robin, 2022; Afrina, 2020; Boonpadung e al., 2020; Arianto and Nugroho, 2014). Work enthusiasm is generally an indicator of the work spirit variable. Work enthusiasm will be made employees extremely happy to achieve their dreams, able to complete

work well and on time, work hard on tasks, feeling proud of the work done, and taking the initiative in completing their work or helping work in other divisions (Afifah, 2014; Erwina and Amri, 2020). Thus, this finding complements the state of the art field of human resource management studies in organizations, in particular examining the role of work enthusiasm as a mediating variable in the relationship between superior-subordinate communication on work productivity which is still relatively rare. This is one of the significance of this research. The findings of this research are in line with the findings of previous research (Febrial and Herminingsih, 2020; Esthi, 2021) which proved that organizational communication does not directly affect employee performance, but needs to go through intermediary variables.

Table 8. Cross Tabulation Results Between Work Enthusiasm and Positive Work Attitude

WorkEnthusiasm	Positive Work Behavior			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
High	0 (0,0%)	4 (3,4%)	57 (48,3%)	61 (51,7%)
Medium	5 (4,2%)	42 (35,6%)	0 (0,0%)	47 (39,8%)
Low	2 (1,7%)	7 (5,9%)	1 (0,8%)	10 (8,5%)
Total	7 (5,9%)	53 (44,9%)	58 (49,2%)	118 (100%)

Source: Data processed, 2022

Work attitude is also a significant intervening variable in the relationship between superior-subordinate communication and work productivity. Work attitude is a collection of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about how to behave that people have about their work and organization (George and Jones, 2012). A positive work attitude does not just appear but is triggered by various factors, in this case, the quality of superior-subordinate communication and the level of enthusiasm for individual work.

The research findings are supported by cross-tabulation description data between Work Enthusiasm and Positive Work Attitudes (Table 8). The data in Table 8 proves that high work enthusiasm will increase a high positive work attitude (48.3%) and vice versa if work enthusiasm is low it will decrease a positive work attitude (1.7%). The existence of a positive work attitude in employees will bring up various positive work behaviors, namely work performance/productivity (Susanty and Miradipta, 2013; Junita, 2017; Offorbike et al. 2018; Cabrera and Estacio, 2022), organizational effectiveness and change (Arifin, 2019; Mansur et al., 2020), work productivity (Gomathy et al., 2022; Mazayed et al., 2014; Maria and Ansel, 2015; Thevanes and Dirojan, 2018; Prasetyo et al, 2021). Thus, it can be concluded that the strategy to increase employee productivity will have greater results if the organization can increase enthusiasm and positive work attitudes in employees. The findings of this study are not in line with the findings of previous research (Hendri, 2019; Frastika and Franksiska, 2021; Prasetyo et al., 2021) which prove otherwise that positive work attitudes do not always contribute significantly to work productivity.

CONCLUSION

Research findings prove that the antecedent variables that give rise to employee productivity vary, including the quality of superior-subordinate communication, work enthusiasm, and positive work attitudes. Direct or indirect superior-subordinate communication can bring up employee work productivity. When compared, the indirect effect of superior-lower communication on work productivity through the variables of work enthusiasm and positive work attitude has a greater total effect than the direct effect.

The limitation of the study is the limited number of respondents, therefore the generalizability of the findings also has limitations. In the process of collecting primary data, the subjectivity of respondents in filling out the questionnaires allows for bias in the objectivity of individual assessments of the observed research variables.

Based on these limitations, it is recommended for further research to enlarge the object of observation so that the research findings have a more accurate generalization impact. A qualitative approach can also be taken so that the respondents' meaning of the observed variables can be captured more objectively. For the North Sumatra Provincial Transportation Agency, it is recommended to condition the antecedent factors that rise work spirit, work involvement, and high organizational commitment in employees, because these variables contribute greatly to increasing employee work productivity.

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