



Organizational Communication Review: Job Satisfaction of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency Employees During the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT. Effective organizational communication has a role in increasing employee job satisfaction. This study aims to determine how organizational communication at the Banjarnegara Regency Communication and Informatics Agency (Dinkominfo) increases employee job satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, with research data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis uses the stages of data reduction, presentation, and conclusions or verification. The results showed that the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency has optimized and established proper communication between superiors to subordinates, subordinates upward, and co-workers in selecting information, interpreting information and coordinating the relationship between superiors with other employees. Employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency are satisfied with the division of labor for employees following their fields. They also know their roles as stated in the main tasks and functions.

KEYWORDS: organizational communication, job satisfaction, pandemic

1 INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the fabric of human life both in terms of health, economy, society, and organization, with many people having experienced difficulties in their life aspects (Geni, Briandana, & Umarella, 2021). From an organizational perspective, employees must modify their performance by changing working conditions, daily work routines, and physical meetings between employees (Salim et al., 2021; Zito, 2021). The changes were made based on the government's decision regarding social distancing. With social distancing, almost every organization implements a work from home (WFH) policy (Sampepajung, 2021). The implementation of the WFH policy causes employees to endure a communication crisis (Sanders, 2020). The crisis involves stakeholders in problem-solving, strategy, and effective interpersonal communication (Marsen, 2020a).

According to Junaedi (2020), if interpersonal communication is not practical, it will create destructive relationships between organizations and the public. Marsen (2020) also added that a communication crisis affects the organization's management, employees, stakeholders, and the community in which the organization operates. Thus, organizations must innovate to face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by changing the communication approach (Junaedi, 2020b). Communication is the spearhead of a relationship whose activities share information with two or more people to reach a common understanding (Bojadjiev, 2021a). It is also the primary source of all activities in an organization (Katuuk, 2016a) because communication aims to achieve development in a better direction by creating cooperative relationships between leaders and their subordinates (Bojadjiev, 2021b).

Communication between leaders and subordinates must be reciprocal to achieve the goals of an organization. Thus, communication has a significant role in an organization (Susmita, 2022a). This statement follows the organizational theory developed by Karl Weick, which states that communication

is the basis for organizing (West, 2007a). It means that communication is necessary for an organization, both technical such as clarity of orders from superiors to subordinates, clarity of work instructions, delivery of ideas, work discussions to informal matters such as support, attention, appreciation, and giving criticism to superiors. Therefore, leaders must strive to create effective communication because, with effective organizational communication, there would be an increase in employee job satisfaction (Desa, 2019a).

Job satisfaction is a person's attitude regarding the work being carried out as expected (Akpinar, 2013a). It arises from employee satisfaction in the work situation and relationships between employees (Safari, 2019a). Job satisfaction can also be obtained if employee expectations match the reality obtained at work (Herizal, 2019; Salim, 2018). This statement follows the basic theory of job satisfaction according to (Van Eerde, 1996), namely Vroom's Expectation Theory. Relation between job satisfaction and communication is a significant matter in an organization (Desa, 2019b). According to Bulutlar (2008), communication plays a significant role in employee job satisfaction because employees will see how the organizational communication system and organizational communication style affect the satisfaction received from the job. The role of communication is essential both within and outside of the organization. If the communication is hampered, it will interfere with employees at work and impact job satisfaction (Desa, 2019b). An organization must maintain effective communication to create employee satisfaction based on these conditions.

The Banjarnegara Regency's Communication and Informatics Agency (Dinkominfo) is one of the organizations in the information and communication services field that must maintain its continuity in this pandemic situation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dinkominfo implemented a WFH policy so that communication between leaders and subordinates, and fellow employees was carried out online. However, the policy hampered communication between leaders and subordinates. According to Diskominfo (2020), if the pandemic condition causes a change in communication strategy, according to Desa (2019), it could decrease employee job satisfaction. The meetings between the leadership and subordinates are also getting smaller even though the subordinates expect more meetings to clear the work direction.

Furthermore, there is a lack of feedback between leaders and subordinates when carrying out work. According to Desa (2019), the absence of a task evaluation from the leaders for their subordinates could decrease job satisfaction levels. In addition, working from home reduces work relationships with other employees. According to Felix (2021), this results in communication disestablishment between employees and only working on their own respective duties, resulting in diminishing job satisfaction.

Research related to organizational communication on employee job satisfaction has been conducted by Safari (2019) at the Bayongbong district branch of People Credit Bank in Garut, West Java (PD BPR LPK Bayongbong). The result showed that organizational communication affects performance satisfaction. It is supported by research conducted by Desa (2019), which states that communication has a positive relationship with employee job satisfaction. Hence, organizations need to ensure that communication is good, precise, and effective. Thus, researchers are interested in knowing how the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency's organizational communication could increase employee job satisfaction during the pandemic.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Organizational Communication

Organizational communication delivers information and orders from individuals or groups (Suminar, 2001). Identical communication is carried out in an organization so that communication is seen as a source of causes for all activities in the organization (Katuuk, 2016b). Organizational communication has an essential role in supporting organizational activities (Susmita, 2022b), which follows the organizational information theory developed by Karl Weick, which focuses on communication as the basis for organizing (West, 2007b). This type of communication is also delivering and receiving messages within an organization that comes from all directions to realize organizational goals (Katuuk, 2016b) and relates to frequency, which is an essential aspect because it relates to the information effort conveyed by the leadership to all employees (Susmita, 2022b). According to

(Christina et al., 2021), organizational communication is measured based on indicators of the information environment, information ambiguity, rules, and cycles.

Organizational communication does not just use conventional media. Digital media can also be used to maintain the interaction cycle of each member of the organization (Samiaji et al., 2022). Organizational communication using digital media is also increasingly prevalent as the COVID-19 pandemic requires global citizens to avoid physical contact. This policy increases the popularity of the digital world to interact with organizational members who must continue their activities (Hani, 2021a).

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a person's attitude regarding the work being carried out as expected (Akpinar, 2013b). This statement follows Vroom's Expectation theory which describes employee attitudes between employee suitability and expectations with the reality obtained at work (Van Eerde, 1996b). The intended expectations are the social aspects of work, communication, and facilities (Syardiansah, 2020a). Syardiansah (2020) follows the organization's efforts to increase employee job satisfaction by improving organizational communication in interpersonal, group, and organizational communication. Factors that affect employee job satisfaction are measured based on job content, management, work environment, compensation, job promotion, and job training (Pitasari, 2018).

3 METHODS

This study utilizes qualitative research with a descriptive approach that aims to understand the existing phenomena about what is experienced by the informants, such as behavior, perceptions, and actions (Lumampauw et al., 2020). This study presents the organizational communication of the Banjarnegara Regency's Dinkominfo to increase employee interest in their work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was conducted at the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency, located in Banjarnegara Regency, Central Java Province. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Researchers asked questions related to organizational communication and employee job satisfaction to the Head of the Dinkominfo, Head of Information Management and Public Communication, Information Management Section, Dinkominfo staff, and the people of Banjarnegara Regency. The results of the data obtained are then described in the form of words by going through the stages of data analysis, such as data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions or data verification (Latukolan et al., 2021).

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Organizational Communication

The COVID-19 pandemic has hampered communication at the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency due to the implementation of the WFH policy. Thus, it is necessary to understand how organizational communication is conducted at the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency during the COVID-19 pandemic viewed from the information environment, unclear information, and rules (Septiarysa et al., 2021).

When viewed from the organizational environment, Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency, during the COVID-19 pandemic, received more information from outside of the organization and the community. The Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency did not immediately accept the information but selected it by filtering it into valid, accurate, and reliable information. To obtain valid, accurate, and reliable information, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency coordinates with the external environment, such as the Local Health Agency, Local COVID-19 Task Force, and the Police. In addition, the superiors of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency always urge the journalists to cross-check information with official sources. The study results by Hani (2021) confirmed that information received from various sources is not immediately accepted but is analyzed by selecting information from official sources.

When viewed from the ambiguity of information, journalists always coordinate with the superiors of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency if they receive unclear information. Therefore, superiors always direct journalists to cross-check information through official sources to obtain valid, accurate, and reliable information to avoid hoaxes. The study results are in accordance with research previously

conducted by Ali (2015), which shows that, in dealing with confusing information, superiors conduct monitoring and evaluation to direct them to obtain valid information. Journalists, the Head of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency, and staffs always coordinate to achieve mutual agreement regarding the processed information. The study results follow research by Hani (2021) regarding the frequent discussion with colleagues in one field to reduce disinformation.

If viewed from the rules, time limits are an absolute must for the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency to obtain, manage, and present the information. The Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency is a funnel of information for the people of Banjarnegara, so the information broadcasted to the public must be fast, precise, and actual. Employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency are divided by superiors for several tasks, such as selecting and interpreting information to obtain valid information. A direct method of obtaining information is carried out by directly visiting official sources of information. The indirect method is conducted by collecting information on social media. The employees made efforts to minimize unclear information by carrying out their work following Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

4.2. Job satisfaction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the decline in the job satisfaction of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency employees. The implementation of job evaluations is reduced, thereby reducing the opportunity for subordinates to get feedback from superiors. Another supporting reason is that the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency employees implemented a WFH policy to reduce direct physical contact between employees, resulting in decreased employee job satisfaction. Thus, it is necessary to acknowledge employee job satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic regarding job content, management, work environment, compensation, promotion, and training (Lestari et al., 2021).

When viewed from the content of the work, the employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency are satisfied with the division of employee tasks, timing, location arrangement, and the application of work flexibility. Employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency know their duties because they follow government regulations regarding each employee's job descriptions and their primary duties and functions. The government has regulated the division of employee duties as stated in Regent Regulation Number 64 of 2017 about Job Descriptions of the Banjarnegara Regency Communication and Informatics Agency. These regulations are established so that the employees know the tasks that must be carried out. The study results are in accordance with Suparna's research (2019) that finds all employees already have their respective job duties and responsibilities.

From a management perspective, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency carries out a work evaluation in December through e-performance. The employee performance appraisal is contained in the Employee Performance Target (SKP), whose results are reported to the Regional Personnel Agency (BKD) and the National Personnel Agency (BKN). Furthermore, employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency receive the same treatment from their superiors. However, the only difference is the assignment given.

In terms of compensation, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency employees is satisfied with the salary given. The salary obtained has been regulated by the Regional Personnel Agency (BKD) according to Law Number 5 of 2014 about State Civil Apparatus, in which the government pays employee salaries fairly and appropriately to employees with Civil Servant (ASN) status. Salaries earned by employees get the same salary if they belong to the same group. In addition, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency does not have a special award for outstanding employees. However, the award is carried out informally by celebrating the birthday of an employee of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency.

In terms of job promotions, all employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency with the ASN status have the opportunity to be promoted. The study results are in accordance with Article 72 of paragraph 2 of Law Number 5 of 2014 about State Civil Apparatus. Every civil servant who meets the requirements has the same right to be promoted to a higher-level position. If an employee of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency has met the requirements for a promotion, the superior of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency can directly propose to the Regent, which then proposes the promotion to the Regional Personnel Agency (BKD).

Regarding job training, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency rarely conducts on-the-job training for its employees because it is not under the authority of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency to do so. However, the superiors of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency often hold internal division meetings incidentally. The study results follow Mulawarman's findings (2014) that meetings are used to convey aspirations to superiors and coordinate between divisions. Employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency always participate in job training held by the central and regional governments. The training is very effective in improving the skills and knowledge of employees.

5 CONCLUSION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency has optimized communication between superiors to subordinates, subordinates to superiors, and co-workers by always coordinating in filtering, selecting, and interpreting information related to the information received. Suppose the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency receives unclear information. In that case, they will minimize the ambiguity of information related to COVID-19 by cross-checking official sources such as the Local Health Agency, COVID-19 Task Force, and Police. The Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency coordinates the division of employee duties following the main tasks and functions to know their roles, information time limits, and methods used to select and interpret information. Employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency constantly evaluate performance every year following the Employee Performance Target (SKP). Thus, the relationship between superiors, subordinates, and coworkers at the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency has well-established thanks to precise coordination. However, the employees are not satisfied with the existing physical environment because they do not have their own office due to WFH policies. In addition, employees of the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency always participate in job training to improve employee knowledge and skills.

Based on the conclusions outlined, the study results are expected to encourage the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency to maintain good communication between employees. In addition, it is also expected that the Dinkominfo of Banjarnegara Regency will hold job training to increase the skills and knowledge of employees. Further researchers are expected to conduct more similar in-depth research related to organizational communication in increasing employee job satisfaction.

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