

## Research Paper



# The effect of vertical communication on employee performance in micro enterprises in indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to look at the influence of vertical communication or communication between superiors and subordinates on employee performance in micro enterprises in Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative research method through a survey as a data collection method which is carried out by distributing a questionnaire to 100 respondents who are a sample in this study. Data processing was carried out by a simple regression analysis method which showed that the relationship between positive and significant variables was achieved. The results of the study prove that the vertical communication (X) has a positive and significant effect on the performance (Y).



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of small and medium enterprises in Indonesia in recent years has shown a very positive trend. The latest survey shows that 84 percent of Indonesia's small businesses are expected to

grow in 2023, which is the second-highest result for the Asia-Pacific region [1]. Small and medium-sized enterprises have become one of the main pillars of the Indonesian economy, with a significant contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). MSMEs are one of the most important pillars in the Indonesian economy. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, the number of MSMEs currently reaches 64.2 million with a contribution to GDP of 61.07 percent or 8,573.89 trillion rupiah [2]. The existence of small and medium enterprises also plays a significant role in the absorption of labor, with more than 90% of Indonesia's workforce working in this sector. This shows that small and medium enterprises are not only important from an economic perspective, but also in creating jobs for millions of people in Indonesia. Micro businesses, with a maximum turnover of IDR 2 billion per year, are the most dominant in the MSME structure. Micro businesses reached 63,955,369 units in 2021 or contributed 99.62% of the total business units in Indonesia [3].

The government supports the rapid growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises by creating programs that support the sector. The Jakarta Provincial Government launched a flagship program called Jakarta Entrepreneur (Jakpreneur), which is the hope of a number of people in developing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) activities. This program, which accommodates a creative and innovative community, was formed to improve the economy of the residents [4]. Not only are that, along with the development of information technology and digitalization, small and medium enterprises in Indonesia increasingly getting opportunities to grow rapidly. Many small business actors are starting to use digital platforms to market their products, facilitate transactions, and increase competitiveness. The government has also launched various initiatives to support digital transformation for small and medium-sized enterprises, such as digital training programs and technology assistance [5]. This allows small and medium-sized businesses to not only operate locally, but also have access to international markets, expand their business network, and increase sales turnover.

Despite this, small and medium-sized enterprises in Indonesia still face a number of challenges in their development process. One of the biggest challenges is limited access to capital and funding. Many small and medium-sized businesses struggle to gain access to larger financing, especially from formal financial institutions such as banks. Although there are various microcredit programs provided by the government and non-bank financial institutions, there are still obstacles in terms of financial literacy and adequate business management among small and medium enterprises. DSInnovate's survey of 1,500 MSMEs, found that there were several obstacles experienced by MSMEs [6]. In addition, managerial problems and limited business management capacity are often obstacles to small business growth.

In addition to funding challenges, small and medium enterprises also have to face increasingly fierce competition, both domestically and abroad. Competition that comes from large businesses and multinational companies that have more resources makes it difficult for many small and medium businesses to maintain business continuity [7]. Therefore, it is important for small and medium-sized business owners to always innovate, update their products or services, and manage existing resources effectively. Innovation in products, customer service, and technology is essential for small and medium-sized businesses to survive and thrive in the midst of dynamic market competition. However, despite facing various challenges, there are many examples of successful small and medium enterprises in Indonesia that have managed to grow their businesses significantly. Communication plays a very important role in the success and continuity of a business [8].

In a business organization, communication is not only about exchanging information, but also forming a relationship between business owners, employees, and customers. In the context of small and medium enterprises or what can be called small business which is an organization, requires communication known as organizational communication. Organizational communication is an important tool in maintaining the relationship between management and employees. Communication can improve employees' understanding of organizational goals, reduce conflict, and increase job satisfaction and motivation also affects employee performance [9].

Effective communication can strengthen the internal bonds of the team, increase employee motivation, and create a harmonious and productive work environment. This is important because small and medium-sized businesses often have limited resources, so coordination and synergy between team

members is key to achieving common goals. For small and medium-sized business owners, good communication with employees is one of the determining factors in maintaining business continuity. Bottom-up communication can be used as feedback related to practices, rules, or standards in the company. On the other hand, top-down communication also affects the improvement of employee performance [10]. When business owners can clearly communicate their vision, goals, and expectations to employees, they will feel more engaged and committed to achieving those goals. Owners who are able to listen to the feedback and problems faced by employees will also create a more inclusive and open work atmosphere. Not only does this increase job satisfaction, but it also lowers turnover rates and strengthens employee loyalty, which is crucial for small businesses that rely on solid team sustainability.

Effective communication is also very helpful for small and medium-sized businesses in adapting to rapid market changes. Without effective communication, small and medium-sized businesses can struggle to respond quickly to these changes, which can hinder their innovation and competitiveness. With effective communication, employees can understand their needs for development, learn from experience, and adapt to change, ultimately improving their performance [10].

Therefore, small and medium-sized enterprises that have a good communication system, both vertically and horizontally, will be more agile in facing market challenges and implementing the necessary changes. Communication between business owners and employees is a key element in creating effective and productive relationships within a small company. In smaller-scale companies, more direct and open interaction between the two parties allows each party to understand each other's needs, expectations, and challenges. Clear and transparent communication helps reduce misunderstandings and increase collaboration, which is crucial for business continuity and growth. Business owners who can communicate well will be able to provide the right direction, while employees who feel heard will be more motivated at work.

## 2. RELATED WORK

### 2.1. Related Work

Rochajat and Ardianto's organizational communication, when talking about information that moves formally from someone with higher authority to another person with lower authority or downward communication, then information that moves from a position with lower authority to a person with higher authority or upper communication, and information that moves between people whose position is the same level of authority or horizontal communication [11]. The shape of the direction of communication flow in the information organization is very important. Up-to-bottom or vertical communication, lateral communication, vague information or bird news, and the existence of information density [12]. Gibson explained that communication flows from the higher levels to the lower levels of the organization [13]. Therefore, it can be concluded that downward communication is communication that flows from the top management then down through the levels of management to the lowest line employees and personnel to convey goals.

Communication plays an important role in creating a positive and conducive work environment, increasing collaboration, and improving employee performance [14]. Open and transparent communication between superiors and subordinates helps create a positive working atmosphere. When superiors convey information clearly and listen to input from subordinates, employees feel valued and more motivated to do a good job. In small businesses, each individual has a more visible and influential role, so smooth communication between superiors and subordinates greatly determines the overall success of the team. It also encourages better collaboration between employees, which in turn improves the company's performance. Conducted a study entitled "Analysis of the Influence of Vertical, Horizontal and Diagonal Communication on Employee Performance (Quantitative Study at Rocky Plaza Hotel Padang)". The study aimed to examine how communication flow affects employee performance at Rocky Plaza Hotel Padang showed that vertical communication has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The study concluded that all organizational communication flows simultaneously affect employee performance at Rocky Plaza Hotel Padang [15].

## 2.2. Vertical Communication

Effective communication helps superiors in providing direction and constructive feedback to subordinates [10]. Employees who receive feedback regularly, both positive and negative, can understand areas that need improvement and ways to improve better. In small businesses, where resources are often limited, the role of clear and timely feedback is becoming increasingly important to ensure that each employee can contribute to the maximum according to their abilities. Not only are that, effective superior-subordinate communication also helps in overcoming problems that arise in the workplace [16].

When a problem or performance obstacle is found, a boss who has good communication skills will find it easier to find the right and quick solution. On the other hand, employees who feel comfortable communicating with their superiors will be faster to reveal the problems they are facing, so that corrective actions can be taken immediately without waiting for the problem to develop into a bigger problem. Downward communication aims to provide direction, information, instructions, advice, suggestions, and assessments to subordinates.

The goal is to ensure that employee performance is in accordance with the standards set by the company. There are two factors that affect performance achievement, namely the ability factor and the motivation factor [17]. Ability factors are seen from a psychological perspective which includes employee abilities consisting of potential abilities and reality abilities, while motivational factors are formed from employee attitudes in dealing with work situations.

## 2.3. Employee Performance

Performance comes from the word work achievement or actual achievement achieved by a person [18]. Employee performance in small business greatly affects the continuity and development of the business. In small companies, every individual has a very important role due to the limited number of employees. Therefore, the good performance of every employee can have a great impact in increasing productivity and efficiency. When employees feel satisfied with their jobs, they tend to be more motivated, productivity increases, and committed to achieving organizational goals [19].

Organizational communication and employee performance have been mostly conducted in the private sector context, with very few studies focusing on the public sector. In their article entitled "Vertical Communication and Employee Performance in Emerging Economy Public Organizations: The Imperatives of Organizational Culture" showed that vertical communication contributes significantly to employee performance as evidenced by outcomes such as employee effectiveness and efficiency. The findings of the study concluded that this study confirms that vertical communication flows across organizations drive employee performance, although this is highly dependent on organizational culture [20].

Effective communication between superiors and subordinates plays an important role in improving employee performance, especially in the context of small businesses. When communication is smooth, it is easier for employees to understand the company's expectations and goals, so they can work more purposefully. Owners or supervisors who openly provide clear instructions, constructive feedback, and listen to feedback from employees will create a more transparent and supportive work environment. This not only increases trust, but also motivates employees to give their best in every task given [10].

In addition, good communication can also reduce the occurrence of miscommunication and confusion at work, which can have an impact on decreased performance. When employers are open to discussion and provide space for employees to express ideas or challenges they face, employees feel valued and empowered.

This directly has a positive impact on their motivation and productivity. With effective communication, problems or obstacles can be immediately identified and resolved together, so that employee performance can continue to be improved and a more harmonious and productive work atmosphere can be created.

Business and industrial growth makes human resources increasingly needed to improve the quality of the company. [21] Conducted a study entitled "The Effect of Vertical Communication and Character Development on Employee Performance at Mercure Resort Sanur" due to miscommunication between management and employees and the lack of character development of employees which makes it

difficult for employee performance development to exceed targets. The results of this study indicate that vertical communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance [21].

### 3. METHODOLOGY

Paradigm has a crucial role in a research. Therefore, this study adopts the positivism paradigm, which assumes that scientific truth can be proven through empirical observation and logical analysis of the object being studied [22]. In this study, a quantitative approach was chosen by the researcher to support the positivism paradigm. Previous researchers who adopted the positivism paradigm tended to choose a quantitative approach, relying on accurate data and often using experimental, survey, and statistical analysis methods.

The data collection method used is a survey that is closely related to positivism in the social science approach. The sample in this study is micro business employees in Jakarta with a total of 100 respondents. Respondents were asked to select predetermined answers without providing explanations for each of the three sections in the questionnaire, all of which consisted of closed-ended questions.

This study uses a quantitative research method by conducting a questionnaire survey via Google form to collect numerical data from respondents. This research method is in line with the positivist paradigm which emphasizes objective measurement and evaluation of causal relationships between research variables [23].

Personal data of respondent was collected in Section A, the statement about vertical communication variable in the work environment was examined in Section B, and the statement about performance variable was examined in Section C. The questionnaire used four-point Likert scale to allow respondents to rate their opinions on the effect between vertical communication and employee performance after they were shown items.

The type of research used in this study is descriptive research, which is designed to provide a detailed description of the characteristics or conditions of a phenomenon without aiming to test causal relationships directly. In this context, descriptive research allows researchers to explore patterns and trends in data related to aspects of vertical communication in organizations and how such communication impacts employee performance.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Result

##### 4.1.1. Respondent Profile

Based on personal profile data of respondents that has been collected from the questionnaire, which includes the business sector and business capital, the data contained in the following diagram was obtained in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1 contains the profile of respondents based on business sectors. From the collected data, respondents from the food business sector consist of 21 respondents (21%), fashion industry consists of 19 respondents (19%), service sector consists of 17 respondents (17%), digital enterprise consists of 12 respondents (12%), beauty industry consists of 11 respondents (11%), agribusiness consists of 9 respondents (9%), handicraft business consists of 8 respondents (8%), and other sectors consist of 3 respondents (3%).

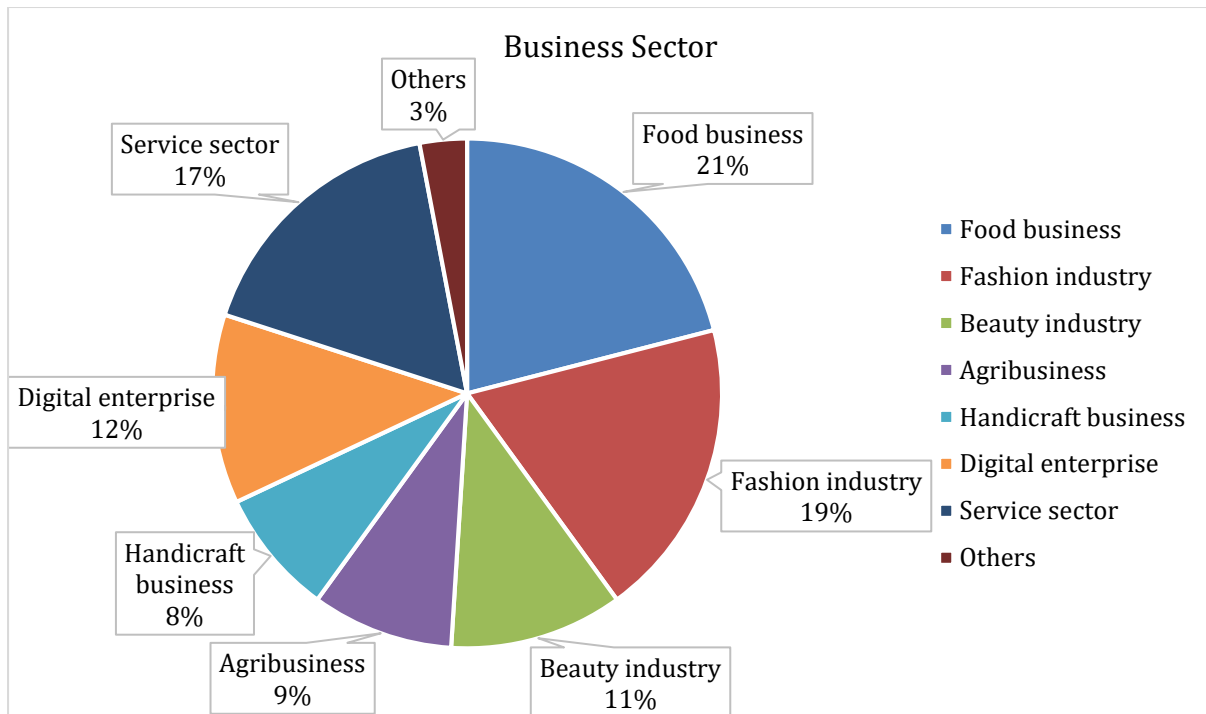


Figure 1. Diagram of Business Sector

Figure 2 below is a diagram containing the respondent profile based on business capital, which consists of micro enterprises, small enterprises, and medium enterprises. The questionnaire results data show that the respondents who are employees of medium enterprises are 73 respondents (73%), employees of small enterprises are 21 respondents (21%), and employees of micro enterprises are 6 respondents (6%).

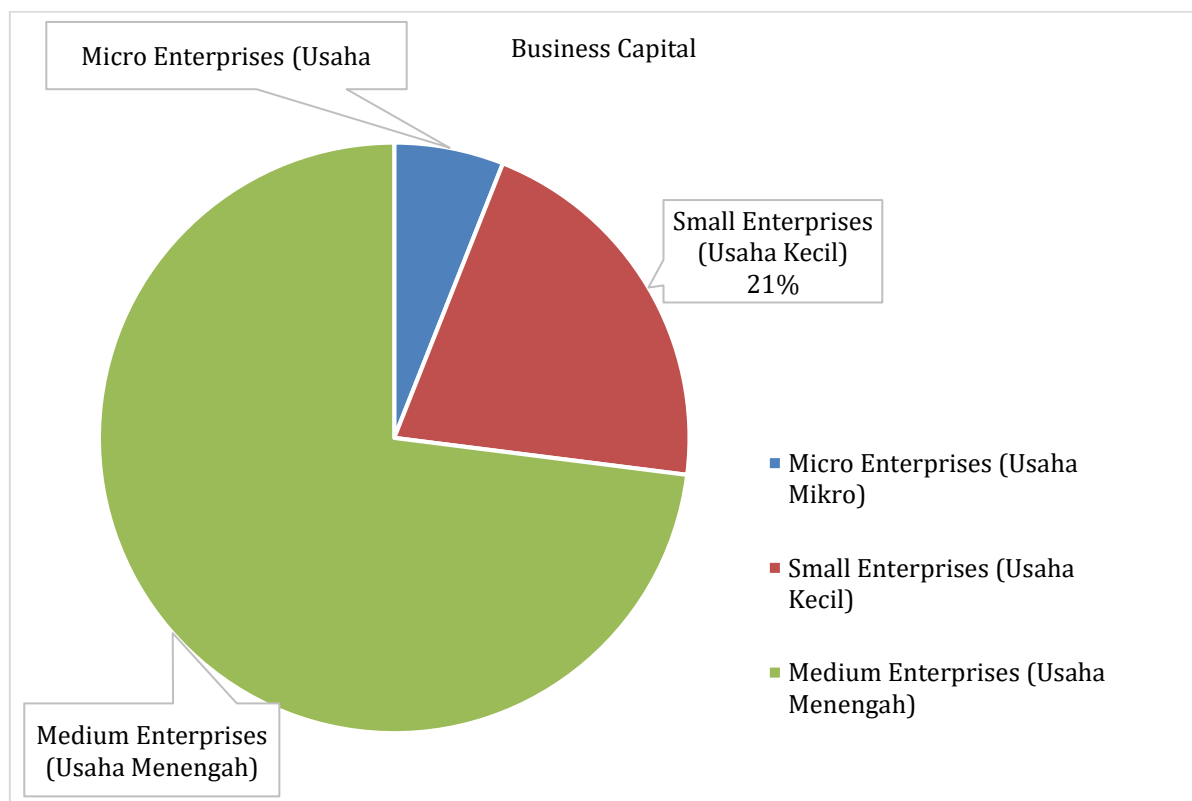


Figure 2. Diagram of Business Capital



#### 4.1.2. Test Result

Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure can reflect the true meaning of the concept under consideration [22]. In other words, validity measures the compatibility between the indicators used and the concept to be measured. This study aims to see the influence of the vertical communication variable (X) on the performance variable (Y) by using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). The data is declared valid if the value Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) is between 0.5 and 1.0 [24]. After conducting the SPSS test, the validity test shows the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of the vertical communication variable (X) is 0.650 which means it is valid. Vertical communication is communication that occurs between superiors and subordinates.

Good communication between owners and employees plays an important role in increasing motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity. When business owners openly and transparently communicate with employees, they feel valued and more involved in the decision-making process. This can increase employee morale because they feel they have a significant role in the company's success. Additionally, effective communication allows employees to understand the goals and expectations of the company, which in turn helps them to work more focused and efficiently.

Based on the results of tests conducted on the performance variable (Y), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) results show a number of 0.600 which means valid. These results show that employees are able to make a significant contribution to the development and success of the small business. The main factors that support this positive performance include high motivation, a good understanding of the company's goals, and a supportive work environment. Employees who feel valued and have opportunities to grow tend to be more productive and committed to their work. In addition, effective communication between managers and employees, as well as an appreciation for individual achievements, also improve morale and the quality of results achieved. This research indicates that even if it is a small business, employee performance can remain optimal if empowered in the right way.

Table 1. Table of Simple Linear Regression Test

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Type		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	44.928	8.725		5.880	.000
	Vertical_Communication	.788	.063	.772	9.714	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						

Regression analysis is a statistical technique for analyzing the relationship between a bound variable and one or more independent variables. A form of regression equation that allows the estimation of values on one variable from values on other variables. The regression equation is formulated with  $Y' = a + bX$  [24]. The Sig. value in the Table 1 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05. Influence is often characterized by a significance value of less than 0.05 [22]. If the value of Sig. is less than 0.05, it is concluded that the variable X has a significant effect on the variable Y.  $Y' = 44.928 + 788X$ . The equation means that the value of Y (Performance) does not change by the value of 36,224 constants if the value of X (Vertical Communication) does not change, either decreasing or increasing and if the value of the regression constant of the variable X (Vertical Communication) increases by a value of one unit, then the value of the regression constant of the variable Y (Performance) will increase by 0.788 or 7.88%. A regression coefficient, which is marked positive, indicates that this relationship is positive. Thus, it was concluded that the vertical communication variable (X) had a positive and significant effect on the performance variable (Y).

#### 4.2. Discussion

Effective organizational communication is one of the key factors in improving employee performance, especially in small businesses. Good communication between superiors and subordinates or vertical communication allows the company's goals and expectations to be conveyed clearly. In a small

business environment, where organizational structures are more streamlined and the relationship between superiors and subordinates is closer, the quality of communication is becoming increasingly important. Based on the results of the study, respondents felt that without good communication, misunderstandings could arise that hindered productivity and caused low work motivation among employees.

The communication that occurs between business owners and employees also helps in building mutual trust. This trust is the foundation that allows employees to feel comfortable expressing ideas, inputs, or even complaints they may have. The results of the study show that in micro businesses, changes or innovations can often be carried out faster if communication goes smoothly. Business owners who listen to input from employees can make decisions that are more informed and relevant to their daily operational needs. In addition, business owners who are open to discussing with employees tend to be able to identify problems early before they become major issues. Respondents also feel valued because they are invited to be involved in improving processes or achieving company goals, which in turn increases their loyalty and commitment to the company.

Business owners who use two-way communication with employees also create a more inclusive and supportive work environment. In this atmosphere, respondents within the company feel that they have an important role and are valued. When employees feel they are part of the decisions taken by the company, they will be more motivated to work hard and contribute more. This creates synergy between business owners and employees, which will reinforce a positive company culture and encourage productivity. Good communication between business owners and employees also plays an important role in improving the overall performance of the company. With effective communication, business owners can communicate the company's vision, mission, and long-term goals more clearly, which helps employees to understand the direction of the company. Based on the results of the research, respondents understood the company's goals so that they worked more focused and had a greater sense of responsibility in achieving these goals. This can have a direct impact on the company's productivity and success in the long term.

Small business owners are often directly involved in their day-to-day operations, so effective communication has a great impact on the work environment and business results. In small businesses, where the number of employees is limited, the owner has the opportunity to interact more closely with his team. Good communication makes the owner provide clear direction and ensure that each team member understands what is expected of them. In addition, effective communication also creates an open work atmosphere, where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas, problems, or feedback. This is especially important in small businesses, as owners who can listen to and respond to employee needs directly will strengthen the team and improve overall business performance.

Small and medium-sized business owners often face major challenges in establishing effective communication, given limited resources and smaller business scales. One of the main challenges is the limited time, as owners typically have to be directly involved in various aspects of operations, from management to marketing. This limitation makes it difficult for owners to give enough attention to each employee, especially when the number of employees is limited and they need more intensive guidance. In addition, limitations in communication technology and infrastructure are also an obstacle, especially for small and medium-sized businesses that may not have adequate formal communication systems, such as digital collaboration platforms or efficient project management tools. In addition, communication management in small and medium-sized businesses can also be affected by the overlapping roles between owners and employees. With smaller business scales, often owners also serve as bosses, co-workers, and even friends to employees, which can make it difficult to separate professional and personal communication.

This can lead to misunderstandings or tensions, especially if there are unclear or poorly communicated expectations. On the other hand, limitations in resources for communication training or managerial skill development often make it difficult for owners to address communication issues that arise. All of this leads to challenges in creating open, clear, and efficient communication channels within the company. A healthy communication relationship between superiors and subordinates creates a strong sense of trust, which is essential for building employee loyalty in the long run. In small businesses, where



employee rotation can greatly affect the continuity of the company, retaining competent and committed employees becomes easier by ensuring open and respectful communication. Employees who feel supported by good communication will be more likely to continue to contribute to the maximum and feel responsible for the company's success. Employees who show optimal performance not only complete their tasks well, but also have a high sense of responsibility for their work results and are dedicated to achieving the company's goals. In this case, when respondents are satisfied with their work, they tend to have higher motivation, increased productivity, and are committed to achieving organizational goals. This is critical to building a solid work culture and encouraging innovation within small businesses.

Good vertical communication is directly proportional to improving employee performance. Effective and positive vertical communication in small business will facilitate the development and utilization of potential abilities as well as the practical abilities of employees, which in turn improves individual performance and overall organizational performance. In the context of potential capabilities, positive vertical communication can create an open channel for employees to express ideas, ask questions, and ask for guidance from superiors. This can help employees recognize and develop their potential abilities. On the other hand, vertical communication in the context of real-world capabilities allows employers to provide relevant training, direction, and feedback on how employees can hone the skills they have mastered in the context of daily work.

Vertical communication that has a positive relationship in an organization can significantly affect employee motivation, which in turn has an impact on employees' attitudes in dealing with work situations. Vertical communication creates a sense of openness and transparency so that employees feel more engaged and valued. This motivates employees to have a positive attitude in dealing with various work situations, because they feel more connected to the organization's goals and can see the impact of their contributions.

Good vertical communication also builds trust between superiors and employees. This trust leads to a positive attitude of employees in facing challenges or problems that exist in their work. They feel that the support of their boss will always be there if they face difficulties, which increases their intrinsic motivation to work better. One source of motivation for employees is constructive feedback. When the boss provides constructive feedback, it gives employees the opportunity to know what needs to be improved and how they can improve. Employees who receive awards or appreciation for their achievements will also feel more appreciated, which directly increases their motivation. Employees who feel their progress and contributions are recognized tend to be more positive and proactive in facing tasks and challenges in the workplace.

## 5. CONCLUSION

After conducting the SPSS test, the validity test showed that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of the vertical communication variable (X) was 0.650 and the performance variable (Y) showed a figure of 0.600. This study also showed a regression coefficient that was marked positive, which means the relationship between the two positive variables. Thus, it was concluded that the vertical communication variable (X) had a positive and significant effect on the performance variable (Y).

Positive vertical communication strengthens the relationship between superiors and subordinates, creating a more open and supportive work environment. This directly increases employee motivation because they feel valued, empowered, and clear about expectations and feedback from their superiors. A more positive attitude of employees in dealing with work situations will also be formed, thanks to the clarity, support, and recognition received through good vertical communication.

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### Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Fathur Rahmani Sahita	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Vera Wijayanti Sutjipto	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	
Marisa Puspita Sary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

### Conflict of Interest Statement

There were no conflicts of interest during the research process.

### Informed Consent

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

### Ethical Approval

The research related to human use has been complied with all the relevant national regulations and institutional policies in accordance with the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration and has been approved by the authors' institutional review board or equivalent committee.

### Data Availability

Data availability is not applicable to this paper as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.




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