

# The relationship between communication skills and organizational culture and employee work effectiveness: a case study of UPT Balai Yasa Pulubrayan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero)

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of communication skills and organizational culture on employee work effectiveness at UPT Balai Yasa Pulubrayan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The population and sample amounted to 91 employees determined through a total sampling technique (census). Data were collected using a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1–5 that has met the validity and reliability requirements with a Cronbach's Alpha value between 0.810 and 0.875. Data analysis was carried out using a Multiple Linear Regression model using IBM SPSS software version 25, which has passed the classical assumption test including the normality test. The research findings indicate that partially, communication skills and organizational culture have a positive and significant effect on work effectiveness. Simultaneously, both variables have a significant effect on employee work effectiveness. This regression model has a coefficient of determination (R-Square) value of 38.9%, which indicates the model's ability to explain variations in work effectiveness, while the remaining 61.1% is influenced by factors outside this study. This study confirms that strengthening organizational culture and improving interpersonal communication skills are key drivers of work effectiveness in the railway industry. Practically, the management of UPT Balai Yasa is advised to intensify communication training programs and internalize work culture values to minimize operational errors and improve service quality.

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## Introduction

PT. Kereta Api Indonesia plays a highly strategic role as one of the State-Owned Enterprises in providing public transportation in Indonesia. The sustainability and quality of the railroad sector's services are highly dependent on its operational units, one of which is the Technical Implementation Unit of the Pulu Brayan Medan Workshop. This UPT has a crucial responsibility for the maintenance, periodic care, repair, and modification of railroad facilities in the North Sumatra Regional Division

I area. The success of this UPT directly determines the level of safety, comfort, and punctuality of railroad services, which in turn has a significant impact on user satisfaction (Mustkim & Hendarsjah, 2021; Puswiartika et al., 2019).

In the face of the challenges of globalization and fierce competition in transportation services, PT. Kereta Api Indonesia is required not only to rely on technological advancements and the availability of infrastructure but also to ensure the quality of its superior human resources. Human resources are a fundamental factor in achieving organizational goals (Sabuhari & Irawanto, 2020), because no matter how good the facilities and work systems a company has, they will not yield optimal results without the support of competent and effective employees (Wildan, 2020). Therefore, human resource management is a strategic issue that determines the sustainability and competitiveness of a company (Nopriyanto, 2021). Employee work effectiveness, particularly in the field of railroad facility maintenance and upkeep, has a direct impact on operational safety and service quality (Mustkim & Hendarsjah, 2021). High employee work effectiveness can complete tasks according to time and quality standards, minimize technical errors, and support the smooth operation of trains (Azizi et al., 2022). Work effectiveness is not only determined by technical skills, but is also heavily influenced by internal organizational factors such as communication skills and organizational culture. Effective communication skills enable clear and timely information delivery between colleagues, supervisors, and departments, which is crucial for efficient collaboration and decision-making (Alyami et al., 2023; Shrestha et al., 2019). Good communication builds trust and integrates various units within an organization toward a common goal. Meanwhile, a positive organizational culture, characterized by teamwork, openness, discipline, and support for individual development, can create a conducive work environment and encourage increased employee productivity and effectiveness (Abane et al., 2022; Aggarwal, 2024; Uddin et al., 2012).

Despite the widely recognized importance of communication skills and organizational culture in enhancing employee work effectiveness, there is still limited research that specifically and in-depth examines the influence of these two factors within the unique context of the Indonesian railroad industry, particularly at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. A lack of in-depth understanding in this sector can hinder efforts to improve operational efficiency and service quality. Therefore, this study aims to empirically investigate how communication skills and organizational culture influence employee work effectiveness in that environment.

This research is expected to make a dual contribution: practically, these findings can help the management of PT. Kereta Api Indonesia UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan in designing more targeted employee training and development programs, as well as formulating effective policies to improve overall work effectiveness and service quality. (Azizi et al., 2022) Academically, this research is expected to enrich the human resource management literature particularly that related to the railroad industry in Indonesia and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of internal organizational factors in achieving employee effectiveness in state-owned enterprises.

Employee effectiveness is a key pillar of organizational success. This is the cumulative value of employee behaviors that contribute to organizational goals. (Masimane et al., 2022) Organizational success, including that of state-owned enterprises like PT. Kereta Api Indonesia, heavily relies on the extent to which employees can meet their job criteria (Gazi et al., 2024) and make a tangible contribution to achieving company goals (Masimane et al., 2022). Common indicators for measuring employee performance include efficiency, work quality, productivity, and employee retention rate. Overall organizational productivity is also closely linked to employee satisfaction and attention to their physical and emotional needs (Uddin et al., 2012). An organizational culture that promotes high performance tends to produce productive employees, which in turn increases overall productivity (Nzuva, 2022) in the journal. There is only one name.

Communication is the heart of organizational operations and is the most important entrepreneurial skill (Musheke & Phiri, 2021). Effective communication skills are crucial for organizational performance, facilitating clarity, alignment, collaboration, employee engagement, feedback, conflict resolution, customer satisfaction, and sound decision-making (Jerab, 2024). Good communication enables clear and timely information delivery, which is crucial for employee motivation and work performance (Desta & Chamiso, 2023). Research shows that effective communication skills can significantly impact employee commitment, profitability, and overall organizational performance (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Conversely, poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and errors, which can ultimately hinder work quality. Managers need to have strong skills in speaking, listening, and understanding both verbal and non-verbal cues to support effective communication within the organization (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Communication is also crucial for resolving problems within teams and work groups (Musheke & Phiri, 2021). In more complex jobs, organizational communication has a stronger positive impact on employee productivity (Jerab, 2024)

Organizational culture is a set of basic assumptions, values, and norms that guide individual behavior within an organization. (Aggarwal, 2024) This concept is highly dynamic and varies across organizations. Organizational culture has a significant and positive impact on employee job performance (Aggarwal, 2024; Fareed et al., 2016; Nzuva, 2022). A culture that is (Uddin et al., 2012). A high-performance orientation directly fosters the creation of high-performing employees, thereby increasing productivity (Nzuva, 2022). Additionally, organizational culture influences employee satisfaction and attention to their needs, which contributes to organizational productivity (Uddin et al., 2012). A positive organizational culture can also impact employee professional development and provide opportunities for improvement and teamwork (Jakubauskytė-Andriulienė, 2024). However, it should be noted that not all cultural dimensions contribute significantly to employee performance, suggesting the presence of other potentially influential factors (Hamkar & Watanyar, 2024). A strong culture is characterized by a deep understanding and commitment to shared values, creating a sense of belonging while a weak culture reflects a lack of employee commitment to those values (Ramadhani et al., 2024)

Interaction of Communication Skills and Organizational Culture Communication skills and organizational culture do not operate in isolation, but rather interact and reinforce each other to achieve employee effectiveness. Effective communication contributes to building a strong organizational culture, helping employees understand company values, evaluate their roles, and develop professional skills (Jakubauskytė-Andriulienė, 2024). Organizational culture, in turn, can influence other organizational concepts related to organizational structure (Özpehlivan, 2019). Specific characteristics of organizational culture can be pragmatic predictors of employee effectiveness (Fareed et al., 2016). Experts emphasize the strategic importance of organizational culture, which positions employees as strategic partners who can enhance effectiveness through communication and teamwork (Fareed et al., 2016). Research indicates that organizational culture, along with shared values, has a positive and significant relationship with effective communication among employees (Valiyeva & Thomas, 2022). Furthermore, organizational communication has a positive impact on employee safety, especially in organizations with a culture that values safety (Jerab, 2024). Therefore, effective communication and a supportive organizational culture are important factors in achieving overall organizational goals (Nurismilida et al., 2021).

In the context of state-owned enterprises in Indonesia, such as PT. Kereta Api Indonesia, employee effectiveness is of significant importance considering the substantial contribution of state-owned enterprises to economic development and public welfare (Ariwibowo et al., 2024). The railroad sector plays a global and strategic role in the transportation complex, providing high capacity, safety, and the movement of materials and people over long distances (Guzenko &

Bekbergeneva, 2024; Niu et al., 2022). Rail transport serves as an engine for development, a catalyst for economic growth, and a fundamental economic component for many countries, stimulating trade, connecting markets, facilitating access to essential services, and creating jobs (Bouraima et al., 2020; Da Fonseca-Soares et al., 2022; Kravchenko, 2019). In the management structure of SOEs, the communication process is based on sustainable capacity development and free ideas for organizational performance (Ananda, Fortunisa. Urip et al., 2018). Communication management in SOEs, supported by information technology, directs employe capacity toward optimal organizational performance. Internalizing core values (e.g., AKHLAK BUMN) is crucial in creating a culture that drives company performance in Indonesian SOEs (Abd. Wahid Wijaya, Inta Hartaningtyas Rani, 2024; Ramadhani et al., 2024). Leadership and work culture have also been shown to influence the performance of state-owned enterprises (Ananda, Fortunisa. Urip et al., 2018; Ariwibowo et al., 2024). The performance of state-owned enterprise employes is influenced by achievement-oriented leadership styles and work motivation, although work discipline and the work environment also require attention. Therefore, research examining communication skills and organizational culture in improving employe effectiveness at PT. Kereta Api Indonesia is highly relevant for enhancing service quality and operations in this strategic sector.

Although the importance of organizational culture and communication has been widely recognized, there is inconsistency in the literature regarding which dimension is most dominant in the technical and high-risk railway industry. Some studies emphasize that technical skills are far more crucial than interpersonal skills, while others suggest that operational failures are often rooted in communication barriers. In Indonesia, research specifically combining these two variables in railway workshop units (Balai Yasa) is still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by testing a model at the Pulubrayan Balai Yasa UPT.

#### Research Hypotheses

- H1: Communication skills have a positive and significant effect on employee work effectiveness.
- H2: Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee work effectiveness.
- H3: Communication skills and organizational culture simultaneously have a significant effect on employee work effectiveness.

#### Methods

This study aims to analyze the influence of communication skills and organizational culture on employe work effectiveness at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the causal relationship between the independent variables (communication skills and organizational culture) and the dependent variable (employee work effectiveness). The population and sample in this study are all employes of the UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia, totaling 91 employes. This study used a census method (total sampling) considering the limited population size, namely 91 employees. The research instrument was measured using a Likert scale of 1–5 (1: Strongly Disagree, 5: Strongly Agree). For communication skills and organizational culture, each consists of 5 questions, while for Work Effectiveness, it consists of 6 questions. The research instrument was adopted from (Desta & Chamiso, 2023; Fareed et al., 2016). Data was collected thru questionnaires that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis was performed using multiple regression with the assistance of IBM SPSS software version 25. The analysis techniques used include t-tests (partial) and F-tests (simultaneous) to determine the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

#### Results and Discussion

This research involved 91 employees of UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. Data was collected thru a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The results of the validity and reliability tests are shown in the following table 1:

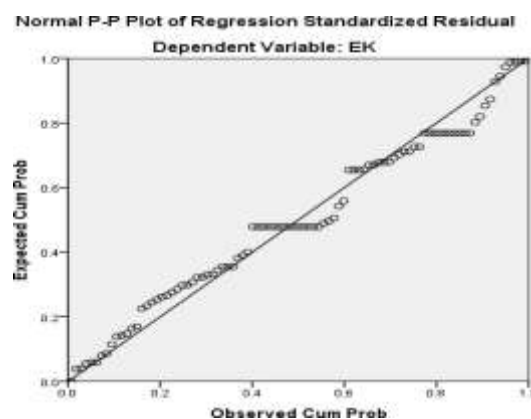
Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
X <sub>1</sub>	.810	5
X <sub>2</sub>	.875	5
Y	.815	

Source: Research Results Data processed, 2024

Based on the table above, the questionnaire instrument for variable X<sub>1</sub>, Communication Skills, which was administered to 91 respondents with 5 questions, showed that Cronbach's alpha was greater than 0.6, namely 0.810, which means the data is reliable. Next, a reliability test was conducted with 4 question items on 91 respondents, with 5 items for variable X<sub>2</sub>, Organizational Culture, which showed a result of 0.875. This data is considered reliable because Cronbach's alpha is above 0.6, which is the reliability threshold for a reliability test on data. The reliability test conducted on 91 respondents with 6 research-related question items for variable Y, Work Effectiveness, showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.815, meaning this data is reliable because the result is greater than 0.6, which is the reliability threshold.

The normality test was performed using a normal probability plot with the assistance of the IBM SPSS version 25 statistical computer program. This study uses the One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with a significance level of 0.05. The decision rule is that if the sig value is > 0.05, the data is normally distributed, and if the sig value is < 0.05, the data is not normally distributed. The normality test aims to determine whether the data distribution follows or approximates a normal distribution. The histogram graph in the image above shows that the bell-shaped data distribution is not skewed to the left or right. Therefore, the data can be said to be normally distributed. Based on Figure 1 below, the normality test plot shows that the variable is normally distributed. This can be seen in the figure where the data points are not scattered to the left and right. It can also be seen that the points follow the data along the diagonal line, which means the data is normally distributed.



Analysis multiple linear regression analysis is used to test the influence of communication skills (X<sub>1</sub>) and organizational culture (X<sub>2</sub>) on employee work effectiveness (Y). Here is the regression equation obtained:

$$Y = 7,091 + - 0,353X_1 + 0,498X_2 + \varepsilon$$

The interpretation of this equation is that the constant value is 7,091, indicating that if communication skills and organizational culture are zero, employee work effectiveness is 7,091. The coefficient value for communication skills is 0.353, indicating that for every one-unit increase in communication skills, employee work effectiveness will increase by 0.353, assuming other variables are constant. The positive sign indicates a direct relationship. Meanwhile, the coefficient value for organizational culture is 0.498, indicating that for every one-unit increase in organizational culture, employee work effectiveness will increase by 0.498, assuming other variables are constant. A positive sign also indicates a unidirectional relationship. The t-test was conducted to determine the partial influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 2. T-Test Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.091	2.484		2.855	.005
	CS	.353	.119	.291	2.975	.004
	OC	.498	.116	.419	4.284	.000

a. Dependent Variable: WE

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the influence of communication skills on work effectiveness can be observed from the t-statistic value for communication skills, which is 2.975, greater than the t-table (1.986). Additionally, the significance value (0.004) is smaller than the significance level. This indicates that communication skills partially and significantly positively influence employee work effectiveness. Furthermore, the influence of organizational culture on work effectiveness can be seen from the t-statistic value for organizational culture, which is 4.284, also greater than the t-table (1.986) with a significance value of (0.000). This indicates that organizational culture partially and significantly positively influences employee work effectiveness.

The F-test is used to determine the simultaneous (combined) influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

Table 3. Simultaneous F-test

Model		ANOVA <sup>a</sup>				Sig.
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	
1	Regression	274.486	2	137.243	27.954	.000b
	Residual	432.041	88	4.910		
	Total	706.527	90			

a. Dependent Variable: EK

b. Predictors: (Constant), BO, KK

The F-test results show an F-statistic of 27.954, which is greater than the F-table value (3.10), with a significance level of 0.000 (less than). Therefore, it can be concluded that communication skills and organizational culture simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the work effectiveness of employees at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayon Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. Next, the value of the coefficient of determination is 0.389. This means that 38.9% of the variation in employee work effectiveness can be explained by communication skills and organizational culture, while the remaining 61.1% is explained by other variables outside of this research model.

The results of this study consistently show that both communication skills and organizational culture play a crucial role in determining the work effectiveness of employees at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayon Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. The finding that communication skills positively and significantly influence work effectiveness aligns with various previous studies that

emphasize the importance of communication in organizations (Jerab, 2024). The finding that communication significantly influences work effectiveness supports research by (Kalogiannidis, 2020), which states that effective communication reduces technical errors. In the context of PT KAI, this is crucial because operational safety relies heavily on the accuracy of information exchange between workshop units. Where operational safety and timely service delivery rely heavily on accurate and efficient information exchange, employee communication skills are a crucial factor. Employees who can communicate well tend to complete their work more effectively because they have a better understanding of their tasks and the ability to avoid mistakes (Nurismilida et al., 2021; Wildan, 2020). This supports the argument that good communication is the foundation for optimal performance (Musheke & Phiri, 2021).

This research also confirms that organizational culture has a positive and significant influence on employee work effectiveness. A strong organizational culture has also been shown to be a strategic driver, aligning with the AKHLAK values within state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that prioritize collaboration and professionalism. A strong and positive organizational culture, characterized by teamwork, openness, discipline, and support for individual development, is proven to create a conducive work environment and encourage increased employee productivity and effectiveness (Abane et al., 2022; Aggarwal, 2024; Uddin et al., 2012). When organizational culture supports open communication and collaboration, employee motivation and engagement can increase, which in turn improves coordination and team performance (Desta & Chamiso, 2023; Jakubauskytė-Andriulienė, 2024). This finding reinforces the view that organizational culture is not merely a "soft" aspect of management, but a strategic driver of operational effectiveness, particularly in state-owned enterprises like PT. Kereta Api Indonesia, which plays a vital role in public service.

The significant simultaneous influence of communication skills and organizational culture on work effectiveness indicates that these two factors work synergistically. An improvement in one area tends to strengthen the positive impact in the other, creating a more effective overall work environment. This means that efforts to improve employee effectiveness must consider both aspects in an integrated manner, not just partially. Although this regression model explains 38.9% of the variation in work effectiveness, there is still 61.1% of the variation that cannot be explained by communication skills and organizational culture. This indicates that there are other variables not included in this model that also contribute significantly to employee work effectiveness. These variables might include leadership, compensation, training and development, the physical work environment, or other motivational factors relevant to the context of PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. Further research can explore these factors to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Overall, these findings provide strong empirical evidence regarding the importance of investing in employee communication skills development and fostering a supportive organizational culture at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the proposed regression model has an R-Square value of 38.9%, which means that communication and culture variables are able to explain the variation in work effectiveness by that figure, while the remaining 61.1% is influenced by other factors. This study confirms that communication skills and organizational culture play a very important role in determining employee work effectiveness at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. Effective communication allows information to be conveyed clearly and timely, reducing misunderstandings and facilitating coordination, which ultimately leads to more effective task completion and avoiding errors. Similarly, a strong and positive organizational culture creates a conducive work environment and encourages increased employee productivity and effectiveness. This finding suggests that both factors work synergistically, where improvements in one area tend

to amplify the positive impact on other areas, creating a more effective overall work environment. Practically, this finding provides strong empirical evidence regarding the importance of investing in employee communication skills development and fostering a supportive organizational culture at UPT Balai Yasa Pulu Brayan Medan PT. Kereta Api Indonesia. This study has limitations in that it was conducted in a single location with a sample size of 91 respondents. The study only used internal variables. Therefore, future research is recommended to add external variables such as the physical work environment or compensation.

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