

# **Vertical Information Flow and Communication Climate through Leadership Style**

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Abstract:

The productivity of the organization depends on the efforts of a leader to control his staff through two-way communication. The aims of this research are to determine the vertical information flow, leadership style, the climate communication between leaders and subordinates, and the role of the three at Corporate Communications division of PT Pertamina (Persero). Theories and concepts used are systems theory, 3-D theory, organizational communication, internal organizational communication, information flow, leadership, leadership style and communication climate. This type of research is qualitative and the research method used is a case study. The flow of information on the division of Corporate Communication takes place smoothly between VP with managers, but not with the officers. Corporate Communication has a benevolent authoritative leadership style. The climate of communication between the manager and the chief VP in Corporate Communications division can be said to be less good. The flow of information that occurs is one of the characteristics of benevolent authoritative leadership style, which played a role in poor climate communication that occurred between VP with subordinates.

Keywords :

Communication Climate, Information Flow, Leadership Styles, Vertical Information Flow

## INTRODUCTION

There are many elements that make a good manager, however, one of the critical qualities is leadership. Leadership and management in the organization must go hand in hand, but they are not the same thing. Leadership and management are complementary, but it is important to understand how they differ (Hopkin, 2014). The productivity of the organization depends on the efforts of a leader to control his staff through two-way communication (Evelina & Angeline, 2014).

Research results have been suggested a relationship between leadership style and employees' productiveness (Jaroslav, 2013). According to Yulk, one of the functions of leadership is a source of information. Leaders in charge of to listen and gather as much information and also distribute the information to subordinates (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Vertical information flow involving the leaders and subordinates, and in the formation of a vertical smooth flow of information needed the role of a leader. Vertical information flow direction can be divided into two, the first flow downward communication, namely communication flow from one level in a group or organization to a lower level. In this case, the flow downward communication is used for setting goals, instructing, informing policies and procedures to employees, shows the issues that require attention, and offer feedback on performance. The second communication flows upward, which is flowing at a higher level within a group or organization. Used to provide feedback to those who hold power, giving them information about the process of achieving goals, and deliver current issues.

In the communication from the bottom up, senior or leadership behavior plays an important role. If a senior or leader really care and listen to the information from the ground, then the quality of communications will improve. In addition, the long distances between communication with action, physical barriers, a long delay to agree with employees for their administrative systems are too complex may hamper communication from the bottom up (Verma, 2013).

Guzley said specific communication climate in guiding the decisions and behavior of individuals. The decisions taken by the members' organizations to carry out their work effectively, to tie themselves to the organization, to be honest, to carry out the task creatively, and to offer innovative ideas, it originated from the positive communication climate. Therefore, a positive communication climate, which is open to each other, not stuffy, friendly between

members of the organization are needed. Another important thing that is needed in climate communication is established between leaders and subordinates. As noted above, that the leader has an important role in the formation of vertical information flow in an organization. In informational flow formation, leadership style leaders also play an important role. Related to this, the leadership style of a leader is also automatically playing a role in the formation of the communication climate.

Leadership style, according to (Kartono, 2006), that is a pattern of behavior professional management designed to combine interests and private businesses and organizations to achieve the goal. Every leader in the organization has a leadership style that is different, the style of leadership according to Reddin (Pace & Faules, 2013) are grouped into two leadership styles are effective and not effective, where effectiveness is adjusted by the situation of the members of the organization itself.

This study wanted to see how the flow of vertical information and communication climate between the leader and his subordinates through leadership style on the division of Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero). Division Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero) is a part of formal organizations have a hierarchy in it, namely VP Corporate Communication who oversees four managers of the four functions under the auspices of the Corporate Communication, External Communication, Internal Communication, Brand Management and Media. Each manager oversees the fourth officer of the functionality. This is a challenge for the Corporate Communications division, including VP Corporate Communications, with the ranks of the complex is how to create a smooth communication, not only with a few layers of positions but with all layers in the division.

The focus of this research is how the direction of the flow of vertical information and communication climate through leadership style on the division of Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero). The purpose of this study is:

1. How does the information flow vertically on the division Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero)?
2. What leadership style division leaders Corporate Communications PT Pertamina (Persero)?
3. How is the climate of communication between leaders and subordinates on the division of Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero)?

4. How is the role of the vertical information flow, leadership style, climate and communications on the division of Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero)?

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Theory 3-D**

Reddin in (Pace & Faules, 2013) put forward the theory is based on three basic patterns or dimensions used to define the behavior of the leadership, the three dimensions are defined as follows:

1. Orientation-work: the level of top managers directing subordinates to achieve business objectives.
2. Orientation-relationship: the level of personal relationships between managers and subordinates, characterized by mutual trust, respect the ideas and the feelings of subordinates.
3. Effectiveness: the level of production requirements is achieved managers have been assigned.

Theory 3-D generate four leadership styles that are classified on effective leadership style. Reddin found the effectiveness of leadership styles depending on the situation faced by leaders and companies. A style that is more effective among which:

1. Executive Style. This style emphasizes providing an arduous task to subordinates, have a style of strong relationship also between leaders and subordinates, as well as leaders who apply this style is categorized as a good motivator, who treats everyone with their own way and promoting the management team.
2. Benevolent Autocrat Style. This leadership style provides tight control over tasks and also have a weak relationship between leaders and subordinates. A leader who applies leadership style is knowing their own way to achieve the best for his team without causing displeasure.

3. Developer Style. This style gives minimum supervision to the task but has a strong relationship between leaders and subordinates. Leaders trust subordinates covertly and his main concern is the development of harmonious relationships.
4. Bureaucrats Style. Orientation minimum on duty as well as a weak link between the leader with subordinates. Leaders who apply leadership style is concerned with the rules and procedures for the sake of the team, and because it wants to maintain and monitor the situation with the rules and procedures that led to prudence.

### **The Flow of Information**

The flow of information in organizational communication is divided into two main parts, namely vertical and horizontal communication. Directions vertical communication can be divided into two (Robbins & Judge, 2012), namely:

1. Communication flows from top to bottom (Downward Communication): the communication flow from one level in a group or organization to a lower level. Downward communication is not necessarily in the form of oral or face-to-face contact. Used for: setting goals and decisions, deliver instruction, inform policies and procedures to employees, shows the issues that require attention, offer feedback on performance.
2. The communication flows from bottom to top (Upward Communication): that flows toward a higher level within a group or organization. Communications to the top to make the leaders always understand what he is feeling the employees about their work, co-workers, and the organization in general. Used to: provide feedback to those who hold power, giving them information about the process of achieving goals, delivering current issues, used by leaders to gain ideas on how to improve performance.

### **Climate Communication**

Communication climate is the perception of the extent to which members of the organization feel that the organization is trustworthy, supportive, open, attentive, and actively solicit opinions, and reward good performance standards (Kriyantono, 2008). Guzley in (Pace &

Faules, 2013) said that, certain communication climate in guiding the decisions and behavior of individuals.

The decisions taken by members of the organization to carry out their work effectively, to bind themselves to the organization, to be honest at work, to seize opportunities within the organization are eager to support colleagues and members of other organizations, to carry out the task creatively and to offer innovative ideas for the improvement of the organization and its operations, all concerned with communication climate. Dimensions communication climate by Redding in (Verma, 2013) is divided into 5 (five), namely: (1) participation in decision-making, (2) ease of members in dealing with the boss (3) fluency in terms of granting reciprocity, (4) the disclosure and candor, (5) high performance and evaluation purposes.

The organizational environment of uncertainty will be related to the behavior of communication in the organization's members. The solution to this is the role of a leader. Leaders need to clarify any uncertainties and can use this method as a means of meeting its completion. Openness to argue is also the best indicator in creating a healthy personality. However the openness in the opinion also still be restricted by the leader. In addition, it is necessary also the confidence and credibility of related information from both sides. To create a positive communication climate, basic things to note are the ease of getting in touch with senior members or leaders. It will be useful for the clarification, or other matters relating to the work rules, approval, monitoring, and other things needed by subordinates. In providing evaluation, leaders need to pay attention to the good. Evaluation will result in rejection if done in a tone of blame, discredit, or by questioning the standards, values, and motives. It can cause fear in workers, the workers finally away from the negative report to the leader and only report good things. Reciprocity was good and smooth is also needed in forming a positive communication climate. (Verma, 2013).

## **METHOD**

The approach used is qualitative research. Creswell in (Raco, 2010) defines the method of qualitative research as an approach or search separately to exploring and understanding a central symptom. There are several reasons this study used a qualitative approach, including, First because this research will reveal the phenomenon of part of the organization. Second, this



study will add to the understanding or renew existing theories. By using qualitative methods is expected to give a detailed explanation of the phenomenon that is difficult delivered with quantitative methods.

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research, where researchers went to the field without being penalized or directed by the theory. Researchers do not intend to test the theory that perspective not of competition, free researcher observed object, explore, and discover new insights throughout the study. His research is constantly undergoing reformulation and redirect when new information is found (Ardianto, 2011). As already mentioned, this study is not imposed by the theory and also does not intend to test. This study only wanted to see how the flow of information, communication climate, leadership style, as well as their respective roles.

This study uses the case study method. Research using the case study method will find unique or new knowledge in research. The uniqueness of this research is, this study examines how information flows vertically in the division Corporate Communication of PT Pertamina (Persero), which has a complex organizational structure, and how the leadership style adopted by VP Corporate Communications, as well as see how the role of leadership styles applied in the establishment of vertical information flow and communication climate in the division. To complete the study, data collection techniques were performed using primary data, namely through interviews and participant observation and secondary, through books, company data, journals, and others. Data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques developed in Miles and Huberman (sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

Mechanical analysis performed using data analysis techniques proposed by Miles and Huberman includes three phases, namely data reduction, display data, and drawing a conclusion. As well, for the technical validity of research data using a triangulation of sources, namely checking the data which have been obtained from several sources. Described, categorized, where the views are the same, different, and which are specific. Resulting in a conclusion. Interview data has been obtained will be combined to get the truth about the "Information Flow through the Vertical and Climate Communication Leadership Styles. (Case Study: PT Pertamina (Persero) in Corporate Communication Division) ".

## RESULT

### Vertical Flow Information

Communication happens at Corporate Communication division is done is through the media liaison. This is because the schedule and very solid job in Corporate Communication division. The Corporate Communications division has its own solution, using media liaison as a communication tool, the application WhatsApp, e-mail, and e-corr. Through WhatsApp, Corporate Communications division formed a group chat that contains all the members of divisions including VP. In the group, chat is used for formal interactions and require follow up immediately. on the interaction between the VP with the manager and staff are still done through weekly meetings, performance dialogue, breakfast meeting, and meetings.

VP on the application of leadership styles implementing company procedures in terms of information delivery. The company procedure is done officially the delivery of information, where the information through the ladder and through the intermediary of the manager. This resulted in the formation of a smooth flow of information between the VP with the manager, but not with the officer.

Communications vertically from top to bottom is used to set goals and decisions, deliver instruction, inform policy, and indicate issues that need attention (Robbins & Judge, 2012). In terms of setting goals and decisions directly more often involves a VP with the manager. That is because, every week precisely each Monday, VP weekly meetings called fourth weekly meeting with his manager. In the weekly meetings, each manager reports progress report on the achievement of the performance of their respective functions. Although the officer was involved in every decision, but the decision will ultimately be determined by the manager and VP and manager who will deliver feedback, opinions, and ideas of his officer to the VP.

Moreover, in the delivery of instruction, for example, instructions to review the proposals, instructions to help follow up on an issue, the instruction on setting the schedule, and others. Although the VP can directly deliver instructions to the officer, but it also must go through certain provisions, namely those instructions should also be known by the manager where the instruction can only be delivered by VP to the officer through the group WhatsApp or e-mail, and can not say on the phone , Because in the process, the instructions given to the officer VP

must be known by the manager. In the group in which there are managers WhatsApp then VP can be delivered directly to the officer through the media, in addition to e-mail, VP-cc can download the e-mail is also the manager of the officer concerned. Another thing also can be seen from the e-corr and disposition sheet applied, which in the delivery disposition VP can only dispose of the manager, the new manager who would later pass on the disposition to the officer respectively. From the side of the officer even if you want to submit a report to the VP or issue must be made by the manager or secretary VP. It is of course sometimes hinder the smooth settlement of the problem. Especially in precarious conditions decision or solution of a problem, and the manager was not in place, although there are media WhatsApp or e-mail, but in reality, not all problems can be resolved through WhatsApp and e-mail.

Furthermore, the communication from top to bottom is used by VP to convey information. The information is usually delivered includes information on corporate issues, as well as the company's policy as to convey to the manager about the launching of the five strategic priorities, one of which is to make savings in all lines. In addition, related to the function indicate problems or issues, do VP to make sure something is not clear. For example, when it will be held the press conference VP ensuring the PIC of the event on the hours of the event, or for example when there is sponsorship was rejected and he does need a reason for the refusal, VP inquire through the group WhatsApp who the party that handles the proposal and requested that the handle in order to provide information to him of the reason for rejection.

The next vertical communication flows that flow from the bottom up that has several functions, namely to provide feedback, to convey information, and also to convey the current issues. (Robbins & Judge, 2012). Related function to provide feedback to those who hold power, usually this feedback is used to reply to an e-mail from the VP-related instructions, ensuring that the officer will take action against the instructions given. Communication from the ground up is also used to convey information to the VP that is information regarding the progress report submitted by the manager at the time of the weekly meetings, and information about the schedule or to relay reports of managers conducted by the secretary, in addition to information regarding the clarity of a activities eg press conference in which the VP will be the speaker, it will be submitted background information, the development issues, as well as talking points. In addition, information about any issue that simply can not be solved at the level of the manager will be

resolved at the VP level, as well as other information that is needed by the VP must be ensured to be delivered to VP.

## **Leadership Style**

Based on this research, it was found that the Corporate Communication has a soft leadership style autocrat. This style provides tight control over tasks and also a weak relationship between leaders and subordinates. A leader who applies leadership style is knowing their own way to achieve the best for his team without incurring the displeasure (Pace & Faules, 2013).

In the style of leadership Benevolent Autocrat, the relationship between leaders and subordinates is weak, and the communication is done through official channels. This is similar to what is applied by VP Corporate Communications, where communication occurs between VP and subordinates as described previously conducted through official channels established by the company, namely the exchange of information from VP to the officer through intermediaries, managers, and vice versa.

In addition, the VP is also the figure of the leader is firm and hard. In terms of supervision and control, VP is the leader of a very disciplined about work progress report on the functioning under the shade and the entire job should be done by the target. Not only the strict monitoring of the progress report, in terms of information delivery VP also highly emphasized to all members of the Corporate Communications division, so that all information conveyed to him is clear, definite, and is the result of good coordination of their respective functions. Based on this research, VP is a typical leader who has settled in the room and rarely visited room functions under it or visited the manager to see the development of his subordinates directly, asking about a job, or joking with subordinates. Thus, the interaction between the VP and subordinates either manager or officer conducted only limited if there are issues or matters concerning the share of jobs requiring VP.

Regarding the decision, leaders who apply the autocratic leadership style software determine the best way to achieve success (Pace & Faules, 2013). VP Communication Corporate division as a leader in terms of participation in decision-making, also involving the opinions of

subordinates, both the manager and officer. However, the submission of the opinion of the bottom must be through the existing procedures, ie if the opinion or feedback comes from officer then have to be submitted first to the manager, the new manager will be delivered to the VP. In other situations, in certain circumstances sometimes there is also a meeting which was attended by VP, manager, and officer, on the occasion of the officer, can join a discussion with VP in decision-making, although the whole of the final decision in the hands of VP. From the leadership style adopted by Corporate Communication, based on research results from the manager did not feel the distance with VP, but the majority of the officers including the secretary felt that distance.

The effectiveness of leadership style itself is basically situational as expressed by Reddin in the theory of 3-D and also sources triangulation resources, leadership style applied a leader is not differentiated by the type of corporate or organizational structure in the organization, but rather the situation of the followers. Due to the leadership before that was very participative in which communication is conducted freely, open, and frank, almost no fear of punishment. Which also led to a function that does not work optimally, and the lack of discipline will progress report performance function, the autocrat leadership software appropriate to be applied according to the researchers. However, the increasing intensity of communication and ease of subordinates, especially the officer to communicate with the VP must be improved.

### **Vertical Communications Climate**

Based on the climate dimension of communication to establish a positive communication climate required the participation from below in decision-making (Verma, 2013). It has been implemented by the Division of Corporate Communication, although the final decision is in the hands of VP, but VP always involves participation from below, both the manager and officer in the decision. Although the officer's participation in decision-making is often conveyed through the manager, but sometimes there are also occasional occasions where officers can conduct discussions directly with the manager and VP in decision making through meetings. In the discussion, there is also a difference of opinion between the opinions VP with the opinion of subordinates, but in the end, will be taken where the best idea.

According to Redding, dimension to establish a positive communication climate that is by their good performance goals. The purpose of good performance in the Corporate Communications division has been imposed by the VP and must be a major thing. VP constantly monitor the performance of the functions listed below. As in the case, there is one function that does not have a positive and maximum performance, however, when the VP office by calling the function manager personally, the whole part of the function is working properly.

In creating a positive communication climate, underlying terms of ease of getting in touch with senior members or leaders, which is usually beneficial for clarification, approval, or other things. In addition, the reciprocal smoothly is also needed in forming a positive communication climate. Both of these, as described in the discussion of the flow of vertical information, that when viewed from the side of the VP with the manager then there are no obstacles, but when viewed from the side of the officer, of course, there are obstacles, because the process of delivering information and official communication is through an intermediary-manager or secretary , At the Corporate Communications division, where the main task is executed that manage information and deliver information through communication, of course, very needed smooth communication including communication between the leader and all levels of subordinates.

In addition, VP too many heard only from a few parties, in this case, the manager. Ideally, leaders can take the time occasionally to visit his subordinates to look at the same time to hear opinions or input directly. Dimensions forming a positive communication climate hereinafter that openness. Disclosure on Corporate Communication Division includes openness in addressing issues or important information and the delivery of opinions. Openness in addressing issues is high, but it must go through official channels, namely through the manager or secretary. Although, in the face of critical problems officer can communicate directly via e-mail and cc it to the manager. In this case, according to researchers, the problem is that not all problems can be solved via e-mail or other media. It would be difficult and hindered course when faced with complex issues and need to be resolved immediately or face to face.

Regarding transparency, the current state of openness to argue did exist in the decision-making process work, which is also done through official channels. However, it can not be done freely and informally, opinion submitted content was limited to only solving the job alone. The

lack of openness in a particular officer will provide opinions and advice to VP also due limiting yourself and adjust to the nature of the current leadership. Though sometimes, listening to complaints can be utilized subordinate leaders to evaluate their performance and the performance of the division.

### **Information flow Vertical, Leadership Styles and Climate Communication on Corporate Communications division of PT Pertamina (Persero)**

The role of information flow, leadership style and communication climate in the Corporate Communications division, that through the research results obtained, the flow of information, leadership style, and also climate communication between one another.

Vertical information flow between VP and subordinates more done between VP with the manager, because the information delivery procedures adopted in this division is structured and through official channels. Where the information submitted to the VP officer conducted through intermediaries manager, and vice versa. Soft autocratic leadership style played a role in the communication procedure in which the interaction is done through official channels and the relationship between leaders and subordinates weak (Pace & Faules, 2013). While the ease of getting in touch with the leader members also become an important factor in the formation of a positive communication climate (Verma, 2013). But the division of Corporate Communication, the opposite is true, the officer needs to go through several intermediaries to deal with VP, although sometimes for things that are very urgent and very forced officer can deal directly with the VP, but that is only limited by e-mail and of course with approved to the officer manager.

In addition, the openness of both the manager and officer subordinate to the VP was limited to matters concerning the job and nothing more than that. This is due to the restrictions established themselves subordinate to adjust to the rigid nature of the leadership of VP. VP is also a figure very professional and rarely joked with subordinates. It is also the role of the autocratic leadership style of communication that occurs where the software is rarely free. One dimension of forming a positive communication climate that is with the openness of opinions (Verma, 2013). However, the division Corporate VP in the case argued again have to go through the formal structure is the manager. Subordinates can not convey their grievances to the VP

because the formal communication applied. It is similar to what was said by the IG as speakers triangulation that autocratic leadership will inhibit openness and delivery problems.

## **RESULT**

In answering the focus of research, namely "Information Flow and Climate Vertical Communications through leadership style the period March to May 2015 in the Corporate Division Communication PT Pertamina (Persero) ', concluded that:

1. VP of leadership implement tiered information delivery procedures. This resulted in the formation of a smooth flow of information between the VP with the manager, but not with the officer. VP vertical information flow is used to set goals and decisions, delivery instructions, delivery of information, showing the problems or issues that require attention.
2. VP Corporate Communication has a soft autocratic leadership style (benevolent autocrat). Communication that occurs between the VP and subordinates conducted through official channels established by the company. In terms of supervision and control, VP is the leader of a very disciplined about work progress report on the functioning under its umbrella. VP is a typical leader who has settled in the room and very very rarely visited room functions underneath. VP Communication Corporate division as a leader in terms of participation in decision-making, also involving the opinions of subordinates but still go through official procedures that exist.
3. Climate vertical communication at Corporate Communication division in terms of transparency, smoothness of reciprocity, as well as easy to connect with the members of the leadership, and the evaluation needs to be repaired due, Corporate Communications Division is a division that in practice it is likely to emphasize communication as the main tool in solving duties and responsibilities. But in terms of participation in decision-making and high-performance goals, VP needs to maintain what has been done.
4. The vertical information flow between VP and subordinates made through official channels. Soft autocratic leadership style played a role in the communication procedure in which the interaction is done through official channels. While the ease of getting in



touch with the leader members also become an important factor in the formation of a positive communication climate. However, the Corporate Communications division, the opposite is true. In addition, the openness of both the manager and officer subordinate to the VP was limited to matters concerning the job and nothing more than that. It is also the role of the autocratic leadership style of communication that occurs where the software is rarely free. One dimension of forming a positive communication climate is the openness of opinions. In addition, VP is a leader who has a strong personality. It is seen in the methods of evaluation and autocratic leadership style associated with the software. VP evaluation method used can play a role in inhibiting the formation of positive communication climate.

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