ANALYSIS OF ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION ON STATE CIVIL APPARATUS PERFORMANCE MEDIATED BY REWARD-BASED MOTIVATION

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Abstract

In the era of globalization and the complexity of public services, the civil servants performance is one aspect that is highly considered. Good performance not only affects administrative efficiency but also public satisfaction with the services provided. Therefore, an approach that can improve civil servants performance needs to be implemented, one of which is through assertive communication. Assertive communication refers to an individual's ability to express opinions and needs in a clear, direct, and respectful manner. This is due to various things, including assertive communication, civil servant performance, and reward-based motivation. That's why this study looked at how assertive communication affects reward-based motivation, how assertive communication affects the work of civil servants performance, how reward-based motivation affects the work of civil servants performance, and how assertive communication through reward-based motivation affects the work of civil servants performance. The research method is quantitative with descriptive explanations; this study used a sample of 59 civil servants and data processing using SEM PLS. The research findings show that 1) assertive communication has a positive effect on reward-based motivation. 2) Assertive communication does not affect the civil servants performance. 3) Reward-based motivation has a positive effect on the civil servants performance. 4) Assertive communication through reward-based motivation affects the civil servants performance.

Keywords: *Assertive Communication, Reward-Based Motivation, Civil Servants Performance*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and the complexity of public services, the performance of the state civil apparatus (ASN) is a very important aspect in ensuring administrative efficiency and public satisfaction. Good performance from ASN plays a role in achieving the goals of effective governance, as well as improving the quality of public services. Therefore, it is important for every public organization to develop various approaches that can encourage ASN performance. One relevant approach is assertive communication, which can improve relationships between employees and improve communication in the context of work so that it can accelerate task completion and improve work effectiveness.

Assertive communication is defined as an individual's ability to convey opinions and needs in a clear, direct, and respectful manner. This skill is expected to help ASN to interact more openly and constructively, both with colleagues and the community. Research by (Nasution & Rizky, 2024; Syamsuddin et al., 2023) shows that the use of good communication can improve the overall quality of ASN performance. In addition, appropriate awards can motivate ASN to work harder and more dedicatedly, which in turn will improve employee performance.

In addition to assertive communication, reward-based motivation also plays an equally important role in improving ASN performance. Rewards given in a timely manner and in accordance with achievements can increase enthusiasm and a sense of job satisfaction. Research by (Haning, 2024; Nasir, 2024; Sellang & Darman, 2017) confirms that reward-based motivation contributes to improving ASN perceptions of employee performance and also the quality of service

provided. Conversely, rewards that are inappropriate or not given in accordance with achievements can have a negative impact on ASN motivation and performance.

However, although both factors have a significant influence on ASN performance, the relationship between assertive communication and reward-based motivation has received less attention in research. Many studies discuss the two separately, while the interaction between the two can open up new insights to improve ASN performance more comprehensively (Yuslaini & Supeno, 2020). This is important because an organizational culture that supports open communication and appropriate rewards can create a more positive work environment, which in turn will affect ASN motivation and performance. Research by (Fahmi et al., 2021; Haning, 2024) shows that a good organizational culture can strengthen assertive communication and lead to improved performance quality.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Assertive Communication

Assertive communication is a form of communication that emphasizes assertiveness, clarity, and openness in conveying opinions, feelings, or needs without violating the rights of others (Sazali & Siregar, 2021). According to (Hasan, 2020; Hidayat et al., 2024), assertive communication allows someone to convey opinions clearly and straightforwardly, both verbally and non-verbally, without offending others. This supports the creation of a healthy and respectful dialogue atmosphere and is important in building balanced interpersonal relationships (Hanifah et al., 2023). Assertive communication also plays a role in solving interpersonal problems, reducing stress due to conflict, and strengthening social support in facing difficult times (Maulina, 2021). In addition, assertive communication skills can help individuals resolve differences of opinion constructively and effectively, which in turn improves the quality of interpersonal relationships and increases self-confidence (Bilqis et al., 2024; Laksana et al., 2024). These assertive communication skills are not innate talents but can be continuously honed through practice and understanding of communication rights and obligations (Arizona et al., 2024; Laila, 2024).

Indicators of assertive communication according to (Hanifah et al., 2023) include 1) use of clear and direct language, 2) active listening skills, 3) respecting other people's opinions, 4) expressing needs and desires, 5) maintaining eye contact, 6) managing emotions, 7) giving and receiving feedback, 8) setting healthy boundaries, 9) using appropriate voice intonation, and 10) building positive relationships.

Reward-Based Motivation

Motivation plays an important role in encouraging someone to take action, both from internal and external factors. According to (Terry, 2020), motivation is a desire that drives individuals to act, while (Siagian, 2019) defines motivation as an external encouragement given to subordinates so that employees work sincerely to achieve goals. In this case (Hasibuan, 2020) also stated that work motivation is a way to direct the power and potential of individuals to work harder to achieve company goals. Motivation in an organization can be achieved through a combination of organizational and personal needs (Amelia & Arimbi, 2023; Wahdini, 2024), as well as through giving awards that are relevant to employee achievements (Ardita et al., 2019; Hee et al., 2019; Yunalia & Haryuni, 2020). Rewards, as reward-based motivation, focus on material and non-material rewards to encourage individuals to achieve goals and behave as expected, which has been shown to increase employee engagement and productivity (Astika, 2024; Cahyani & Alamsyah, 2024; Meirinhos et al., 2023). However, the challenge in its implementation is maintaining a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation so that motivation remains sustainable (Balakrishnan et al., 2021; Hee et al., 2019; Riyanto & Prasetyo, 2021). Factors that influence reward-based motivation include distributive justice, reward relevance, reward

consistency, organizational culture, non-material rewards, clear goals, and social support (Haning, 2024; Irawan et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2024). The benefits of reward-based motivation include increasing performance, engagement, creativity, and job satisfaction, and reducing stress and burnout in the workplace (Ardita et al., 2019; Rahmadhon et al., 2024).

Reward-based motivation indicators according to (Hamdani & Ali, 2023; Kumari et al., 2021; Sugiarti, 2023; Uka, 2021) included: 1) frequency of receiving awards, which measures how often employees receive awards; 2) perception of reward fairness, which assesses the extent to which awards are considered fair; 3) relevance of awards, which measures the suitability of awards to employees' personal goals; 4) level of employee involvement in tasks after receiving awards; 5) relationship between awards and increased employee performance; and 6) employee satisfaction with the reward system.

Civil Servant performance

The State Civil Apparatus (ASN) plays an important role in driving the implementation of effective, efficient, and accountable government, which functions as an implementer of general administration and development (Fauzan, 2024; Karina et al., 2024). ASN performance, which includes the quality and quantity of work results achieved, is greatly influenced by various factors, including the individual's ability to carry out tasks in accordance with the responsibilities given (Harahap, 2023; Siagian, 2019). Good ASN performance not only reflects the individual's contribution to the organization but also affects the achievement of the organization's overall goals (Aisyah et al., 2024; Mangkunegara, 2020; Widyasari et al., 2024). ASN performance assessment, as regulated in Government Regulation Number 30 of 2019, aims to improve the quality of public services, efficiency of resource use, and improve more transparent decision-making (Amirsyah et al., 2024; Nurul Haq & Prabawati, 2022). This assessment can also increase ASN motivation, which in turn can improve accountability, productivity, and quality of service to the public.

Employee performance indicators according (Siagian, 2019) include: 1) work quality that measures the quality of work results in numerical terms; 2) work quantity that measures the amount of work results; 3) cooperation as a basic principle in achieving organizational goals; 4) responsibility as a moral and professional foundation in work behavior; and 5) initiative that measures the ability to act without direction and face challenges to complete tasks.

Hypothesis Development
Relationship between Assertive Communication and Reward-Based Motivation

Assertive communication is a way of conveying thoughts, feelings, and needs clearly and respecting oneself and others, which can improve relationships within an organization and create a positive work environment. Assertive communication is important in a reward system because it helps increase employee self-confidence and motivation by recognizing employee performance. Research shows that assertive communication strengthens perceptions of reward fairness and increases motivation. In addition, assertive communication is also effective in providing constructive feedback, which improves employee performance and job satisfaction. Organizations that implement assertive communication can achieve higher goals and create a productive work culture. (Aprilistyan & Ikhwan, 2022; Wang et al., 2020). Penelitian (Ardita et al., 2019; Aulia & Setiawan, 2023; Rahman et al., 2022) asserts that assertive communication has an influence on employee motivation.
H1 : Assertive communication has a positive effect on reward-based motivation.

Relationship between Assertive Communication and Civil Servant Performance

Assertive communication has a positive impact on the performance of state civil servants (ASN) by allowing employees to convey ideas and input effectively, without pressure from the organizational hierarchy. Research shows that assertive communication encourages ASN

participation in decision-making, strengthens relationships with superiors, and increases collaboration and mutual trust within the team. Assertive communication also plays a role in providing constructive feedback that improves performance and creates a productive work culture. The application of assertive communication can improve ASN performance and the quality of public services (Balakrishnan et al., 2024; Fikri et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2024). Research conducted (Ardita et al., 2019; As et al., 2024; Hee et al., 2019) found that communication affects employee performance.

H2 : Assertive communication has a positive influence on the performance of state civil servants.

Relationship between Reward-Based Motivation and Civil Servant Performance

Reward-based motivation is effective in improving the performance of state civil servants (ASN). Appropriate rewards, both material and non-material, can encourage ASN to excel and improve performance in public services. Research shows that relevant rewards increase ASN's attachment to the organization and create a positive work atmosphere that supports collaboration. In addition, rewards play an important role in improving the quality of public services, with ASN motivated to provide better services. (Amellya et al., 2022; Fahmi et al., 2021; Rahmadhon et al., 2024; Utami & Winarno, 2023). Research findings (Haning, 2024; Shefani & Jaya, 2024; Ulpah et al., 2024) show a strong influence of motivation on the performance of civil servants.

H3 : Reward-based motivation has a positive effect on the performance of state civil servants.

Relationship between Assertive Communication and Reward-Based Motivation through Civil Civil Servant Performance

Assertive communication plays an important role in linking reward-based motivation and civil servant (ASN) performance. With clear communication, ASN understands the reward criteria and feels more involved and motivated to achieve high performance. Research shows that assertive communication increases transparency in the reward system, strengthens perceptions of fairness, and builds positive relationships between ASN and management. This encourages ASN to collaborate and contribute optimally, thereby improving performance in public service. The integration of assertive communication in the reward system supports the achievement of optimal performance. (Murgianto et al., 2016; Rahman et al., 2022; Rofingah et al., 2023). Research (Ardita et al., 2019) found that assertive communication plays an important role in employee performance, and research (Ulpah et al., 2024) found that employee performance is influenced by motivation. Thus, hypothesis 4 is as follows:

H4 : Assertive communication mediates reward-based motivation towards the performance of state civil servants.
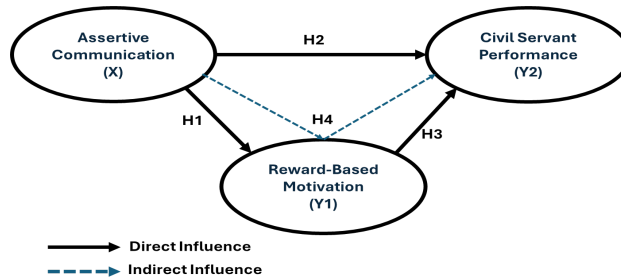
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.Conceptual Framework
Source:Data obtained (2024)

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach to analyze the relationship between different variables, with the aim of testing the theoretical framework experimentally (Ghozali, 2019). verification techniques are used to analyze the relationship between variables systematically and verify the hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2022). The cross-sectional survey method was applied to collect data on assertive communication, reward-based motivation, and civil servant performance in Rantau Kopar District and Tanah Putih District, with systematic data collection and analysis. The sample size was determined by the census method (Sugiyono, 2022) which amounted to 59. Data processing used Partial Least Squares (PLS) software to analyze data and used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Various research variables can be examined simultaneously with SEM, a type of multivariate analysis often used in the social sciences (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2013). EM gives researchers more flexibility to combine theory and data compared to previous multivariate techniques such as multiple regression, discriminant analysis, factor analysis, or principal component analysis (Ghozali & Latan, 2020), Furthermore (Ghozali, 2015) states that structural models (inner models) are used for causality tests or hypothesis testing for predictive model tests.

This study analyzes the measurement model by validating the scale of each variable (Vinzi et al., 2010). Validity is measured through the scale of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2022), discriminant validity test, convergent validity and reliability, is a measurement model in PLS-SEM evaluating the validity of the scale, especially for reflective items. Discriminant validity is for a reflective action carried out using the criteria (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) where the correlation with each construct must be below the square root. Second, convergent validity is carried out by evaluating the loading factor and average variance extract (AVE). The factor value is above 0.70 - 0.90 and then the AVE value above the cut-off of 0.50 for all constructs is required (Chin et al., 2010). Finally, internal consistency reliability by evaluating the croncbath a (alpha) value and composite reliability. The value of each construct must be above 0.70.

acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis according (Ghozali, 2015) is as follows:
1. If the calculated t value is greater than the t table (1.96) and the p-value is smaller than alpha (0.05), then H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, meaning that the exogenous variable studied has an influence on the endogenous variable.
2. If the calculated t value is smaller than the t table (1.96) and the P value is greater than alpha (0.05), then Ha is rejected and H0 is accepted, meaning that the exogenous variable studied does not have an influence on the endogenous variable.

RESULTS

Test Outer Model (Validity)

Data validity testing in the study was conducted in one stage, with the results showing that the loading factor values of all indicators were valid because they were above 0.7. In the assertive

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communication variable, the loading factor values ranged from 0.726 (X.10) to 0.889 (X.7). In the reward-based motivation variable, the lowest loading factor value was 0.726 (Y1.3) and the highest was 0.860 (Y1.4). Meanwhile, in the state civil servant performance variable, the lowest loading factor value was 0.723 (Y2.3) and the highest was 0.886 (Y2.4). The results of the discriminant validity test can be seen more clearly in Figure 2.

In addition to checking the outer loading value, the Fornell-Larcker criteria are presented in Table 1. The calculation results show that the overall value of the variable pairs is below 0.9. This criterion assesses the extent to which a construct shows a correlation with its own indicators compared to other constructs in the model. A Fornell-Larcker score below 0.9 indicates that the variable has very good discriminant validity (valid) (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 1. Criteria Fornell-Larcker

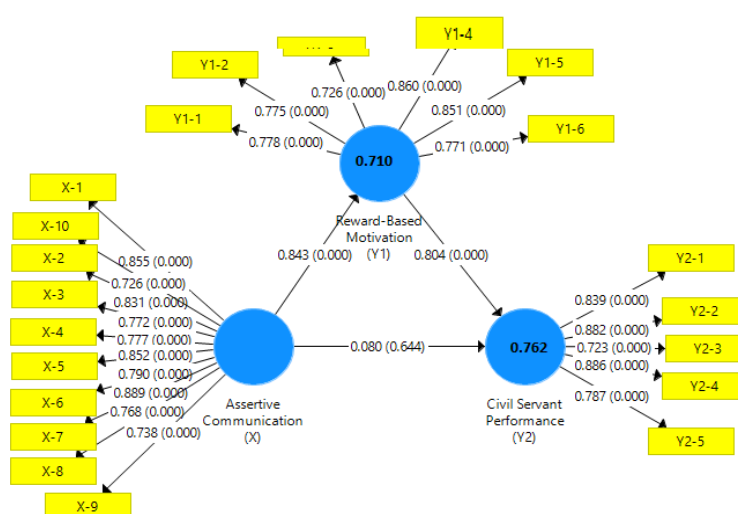| Variable	Assertive Communication_ (X)	Civil Servant Performance_ (Y2)	Reward-Based Motivation_ (Y1)
Assertive Communication_(X)	0.801		
Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.758	0.825	
Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1)	0.843	0.872	0.795

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

Figure 2. Structural Model
Source: Data Obtained (2024)

Next, convergent validity can be calculated, which measures the internal consistency of the indicators used to represent a construct, which can be seen from the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value shown in Table 2. The calculation results show that the AVE value and assertive communication (0.642), reward-based motivation (0.632), and civil servant performance (0.681) are more than 0.50, which indicates strong validity (Chin et al., 2010).

Test Outer Model (Reliability)

The rule of thumb used for composite reliability values is greater than 0.7 (Ghozali & Latan, 2020; Hair et al., 2022). From the test results, it can be seen that the composite reliability values of assertive communication (0.947), reward-based motivation (0.911), and civil servant performance (0.914) are greater than 0.7, which can be concluded that all constructs have good reliability.

Table 2. AVE Value Result and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Assertive Communication_(X)	0.938	0.940	0.947	0.642
Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.882	0.892	0.914	0.681
Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1)	0.883	0.886	0.911	0.632

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

R-Square Test

R-squared shows the magnitude of the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables and assesses the strength of the research model. According Ghozali (2018) R-squared is grouped into 3, namely the R-squared value of 0.67 (strong), 0.33 (moderate), and 0.19 (weak). From the calculations shown in table 3, the structural R-Square value 1 is 0.710 (strong), and the structural R-Square value 2 is 0.762 (strong.

Table 3. R-Square Result

Vaiable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.762	0.753
Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1)	0.710	0.705

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

Hipotesis Testing

The findings of the direct influence path coefficient test in Table 4 indicate a positive influence between variables on the original sample value. The path coefficient data serves to answer the research hypothesis. The influence of assertive communication on reward-based motivation is quite large, as evidenced by a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a t-statistic of $26.160 > 1.96$, thus supporting the first hypothesis (H1) and having an effect of 0.843 or 84.3%. The influence of assertive communication on civil servant performance is very weak, as evidenced by a p-value of $0.630 > 0.05$ and a t-statistic of $0.482 < 1.96$, thus rejecting the second hypothesis (H2) and its effect of 0.080 or 8%. In addition, reward-based motivation influences civil servant performance, as evidenced by a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a t-statistic of $5.365 > 1.96$, thus strengthening the third hypothesis (H3), and its influence is 0.804 or 80.4%.

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Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Result - Direct

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Assertive Communication_(X) -> Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.080	0.086	0.166	0.482	0.630
Assertive Communication_(X) -> Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1)	0.843	0.849	0.032	26.160	0.000
Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1) -> Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.804	0.802	0.150	5.367	0.000

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

Furthermore, the indirect effect is seen in table 5, indicating a positive influence between variables on the original sample value. The results of the path coefficient calculation of the influence of assertive communication on civil servant performance mediated by reward-based motivation are quite large, as evidenced by the p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and t-statistic $5.128 > 1.96$, thus supporting the fourth hypothesis (H4) and having an effect of 0.678 or 67.8%. So the total effect is the coefficient value of assertive communication on civil servant performance plus the coefficient value of assertive communication on reward-based motivation times the coefficient value of reward-based motivation on civil servant performance. Total effect = 0.080 + (0.843 x 0.804) = 0.080 + 0.678 = 0.758.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Result - Indirect

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Assertive Communication_(X) -> Reward-Based Motivation_(Y1) -> Civil Servant Performance_(Y2)	0.678	0.681	0.132	5.128	0.000

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

Discussion
The Influence of Assertive Communication on Reward-Based Motivation
The effect of assertive communication on reward-based motivation in Rantau Kopar District and Tanah Putih District showed a significant impact. The results of the study revealed that open, clear, and mutually respectful communication strengthens the relationship between employees and superiors, as well as fellow coworkers, which in turn increases reward-based motivation. Assertive communication, with the ability to express opinions clearly and respect others, helps ASN feel appreciated for their contributions. When rewards are given in a transparent manner and based on effective communication, individuals feel more appreciated, which increases motivation to work better and increases productivity. This finding is in line with the results of studies (Ardita et al., 2019; Aulia & Setiawan, 2023; Rahman et al., 2022), which show that rewards given with assertive communication have a greater effect on employee motivation. In addition, research (Rahmadhon et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2022) strengthens that assertive communication not only improves interpersonal relationships in the workplace but also increases acceptance of the rewards given,

which directly increases work motivation. Overall, assertive communication can create a more productive and collaborative work climate and strengthen the relationship between rewards and motivation that supports better performance.

The Influence of Assertive Communication on Civil Servant Performance

The influence of assertive communication on the performance of state civil servants in Rantau Kopar District and Tanah Putih District is very significant. Effective assertive communication, which is clear, firm, and respectful, has been shown to improve relationships between employees and between superiors and subordinates. When communication goes well, employees feel more appreciated and understood, which in turn increases employee motivation and productivity. The results of the study show that assertive communication helps smooth the flow of information and strengthens teamwork in completing tasks and projects, as well as reducing conflicts and misunderstandings that can hinder performance. In addition, open communication also creates an inclusive and harmonious work environment, which increases employees' sense of responsibility for their tasks and accelerates problem solving. Research conducted by (Cholimah et al., 2024; Syamsuddin et al., 2023) supports these findings by showing that assertive communication not only improves individual performance but also strengthens interpersonal relationships and improves coordination in the workplace. On the other hand, assertive communication also plays an important role in decision-making and providing constructive feedback, which creates an atmosphere of mutual trust between employees and superiors. This reflects that assertive communication not only functions as a catalyst for improving performance in the public sector but can also accelerate the completion of public administration and services, as found by (Umayrah et al., 2024). Thus, the application of assertive communication in the work environment of state civil servants has been proven to significantly improve performance and create a more productive work environment.

The Influence of Reward-Based Motivation on Civil Servant Performance

The results of this study indicate that reward-based motivation has a positive and significant influence on the performance of state civil servants in Rantau Kopar District and Tanah Putih District. Awards that are given appropriately and fairly, either in the form of material incentives or recognition of employee achievements and contributions, can increase the sense of appreciation and motivate employees to improve their performance. The award not only encourages work enthusiasm but also strengthens the sense of responsibility for tasks and increases productivity and the quality of public services. In addition, reward-based motivation also plays an important role in strengthening employee commitment to the organization, increasing loyalty, and creating a more positive and harmonious work environment. This finding is in line with research conducted by (Umayrah et al., 2024; Wahdini, 2024) which found that awards given fairly contribute to improving employee performance in providing public services. On the other hand, giving awards also strengthens the emotional bond between employees and the organization, encourages employees to work more optimally, and improves the efficiency of public services (Fahmi et al., 2021). This is also supported by research (Rahmadhon et al., 2024), which shows that awards given as recognition of achievement can improve employee performance and improve the quality of public services (Astika, 2024). Therefore, reward-based motivation has proven to be a very

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effective factor in improving the performance of state civil servants and improving the quality of services to the community.

Reward-Based Motivation Mediate The Effect of Assertive Communication on Civil Servant Performance

The results of this study indicate that assertive communication has a positive and significant effect on the performance of state civil servants (ASN) through reward-based motivation. Assertive communication that involves the ability of individuals to express opinions and feelings clearly and openly strengthens the relationship between superiors and subordinates, increasing understanding of the goals and expectations to be achieved in the organization. With open communication, ASN feels appreciated and more easily accepts feedback and rewards for their performance, which in turn increases employee motivation to work better. Awards given in a clear and directed manner, driven by assertive communication, strengthen employee confidence that employee contributions are appreciated, encouraging employees to continue to improve performance. This study is in line with the findings (Riyanto & Prasetyo, 2021), which state that open communication can improve individual motivation and performance. In addition, studies by (Ismail et al., 2024; Rahmadhon et al., 2024) found that performance-based rewards not only increase job satisfaction but also reduce employee turnover rates, which contributes to improved overall performance. This finding also supports research (Amirsyah et al., 2024; Haning, 2024; Syamsuddin et al., 2023) that emphasizes that recognition and appreciation play a major role in improving employee performance in the public sector (Dirwan et al., 2024). Therefore, assertive communication functions as a link that strengthens the positive impact of appreciation on ASN motivation and performance, creating a positive cycle that increases employee productivity and commitment in the public sector.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study reveals that assertive communication plays an important role in improving reward-based motivation and performance of state civil servants (ASN) in Rantau Kopar District and Tanah Putih District. Open, clear, and respectful communication between superiors and subordinates creates a harmonious work environment, which in turn encourages employee motivation to work harder and more productively. Awards given as a form of recognition for ASN contributions strengthen ASN motivation and commitment, create a positive and collaborative work climate, and improve the quality of public services. These findings indicate that assertive communication and performance-based reward motivation reinforce each other, contributing to increased efficiency, productivity, and job satisfaction of ASN in the public sector.

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