

The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Conflict Management and Organizational Culture Formation in the Badung Regency General Election Commission Agency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze in depth the strategic role of interpersonal communication in the conflict management process and its contribution to the formation of organizational culture in the General Election Commission (KPU) of Badung Regency. In the context of high-complexity public organizations such as the KPU, interpersonal communication not only functions as a channel of information but also as the main instrument in creating mutual understanding, strengthening social cohesion, and encouraging the creation of a harmonious and productive work atmosphere. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a literature study method, where data is collected and analyzed narratively through relevant scientific literature. The results show that interpersonal communication plays a very vital and strategic role in supporting the effectiveness of conflict management while contributing significantly to the process of forming organizational culture within the Badung Regency General Election Commission. Communication between individuals in organizations, both formal and informal, has proven to function not only as a means of information exchange, but also as a relational instrument that creates mutual understanding, builds trust, and strengthens social cohesion between employees. More specifically, this study found that open, empathetic, and participatory interpersonal communication patterns are able to be an effective medium in preventing, mitigating, and resolving internal conflicts that arise as a consequence of organizational work dynamics.

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1. Introduction

An organization consists of various activities and relationships that involve each individual in it. In order for an organization to form and develop properly, each individual involved needs to interact and work together effectively (Smollan & Mooney, 2024). In this case, communication plays a very important role, as it not only serves as a means of conveying information but also becomes the main foundation in building mutual understanding, strengthening coordination, and creating a harmonious environment to support various organizational activities (Ahmad et al., 2024). In an organizational environment, effective communication will help smooth the execution of tasks, while lack of communication can hinder organizational development (Suhairi et al., 2023). The communication process that begins with the delivery of information by the sender of the message



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needs to be managed optimally until the message is received by the recipient and understood according to the intention that the sender wants to convey.

Interpersonal communication has a very important role in forming a harmonious work environment in various organizations, facilitating the exchange of information, ideas, and values that form a common identity and a solid organizational culture can increase employee engagement and create a more comfortable work environment, which ultimately contributes to the achievement of the overall performance of the organization including the institution of the General Election Commission (Rantung et al., 2023). As a complex electoral institution, the KPU not only focuses on the general election aspect, but also involves close social interaction between leaders, employees, and the community (Nyathi & Kekwaletswe, 2024). If not managed properly, this interaction can cause various forms of conflict that affect the overall performance of the institution. Conflict management in organizations, including in the General Election Commission (KPU), is a crucial aspect in maintaining stability and work efficiency. Conflicts that are not resolved properly can lead to decreased productivity, increased tensions between individuals or groups, and weaken the organizational culture that has been built (Chadir et al., 2024). Therefore, interpersonal communication plays a key role in resolving conflicts, both through open dialogue, mediation, and empathy and understanding-based approaches.

In addition to playing a role in conflict management, interpersonal communication also contributes to the formation of organizational culture in the Badung Regency KPU agency. As an organization organizing General Elections at the district level, the Badung Regency KPU needs a conducive organizational culture to support general election activities at the district level including collaboration, innovation, and openness in exchanging ideas that reflect the values, norms, and habits embraced by all members of the institution and emphasizing honest and constructive communication to help build closer relationships between members of the organization. So that they are more motivated to work together in achieving common goals. In addition, with the space to discuss and resolve differences in a healthy way, organizations, especially the Badung Regency KPU agencies, become more flexible in dealing with changes, more innovative in finding solutions, and more resilient in facing challenges. Ultimately, an organizational culture like this not only creates a positive work atmosphere but also strengthens the organization as a whole, making it more dynamic, competitive, and sustainable in the future (Porkodi, 2024). By strengthening the core values upheld in the organization's culture, such as integrity, collaboration, innovation, and results-orientedness, organizations can build a solid foundation to deal with the ever-changing dynamics of the external environment and ensure institutional adaptability and resilience in the long term (Jin et al., 2024). In addition, a strong organizational culture that is well internalized by all elements of human resources will drive improvement in individual and collective performance, accelerate strategic decision-making processes, and create sustainable competitive advantages at the national and international levels (Ibrahim et al., 2024).

However, in practice, the Badung Regency KPU agency faces challenges in building effective interpersonal communication. Factors such as differences in cultural backgrounds, differences in interests, and hierarchy in the organization can be an obstacle to the creation of open and constructive communication. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of interpersonal communication in conflict management and how this communication contributes to the formation of organizational culture in the Badung Regency KPU agency. The objectives to be achieved from this study include: to analyze the study of the Role of Interpersonal Communication in Conflict Management and Organizational Culture Formation in the KPU Agency of Badung Regency.

2. Method

The problems studied in this study are analyzed through a qualitative descriptive approach. Therefore, the researcher chooses qualitative research methods as a guideline in designing systematic steps to search, collect, process, and analyze the data obtained. This qualitative research plays a role in providing a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the Role of Interpersonal Communication in Conflict Management and the Formation of Organizational Culture in the KPU Agency of Badung Regency, so that it can describe the relationship between the phenomenon being studied in a clearer and more meaningful way.

According to (Sugiyono, 2016), the qualitative descriptive method is a research approach that proposes a comprehensive understanding of phenomena, based on the philosophy of postpositivism, and emphasizes the exploration and description of the natural conditions of objects. This research does not use experiments, but focuses on observations of natural phenomena. The researcher acts as the main instrument in the data collection, which is carried out through various triangulation techniques. Data analysis is both inductive and qualitative, with an emphasis on revealing meaning from the collected data rather than the formation of generalizations. The purpose of qualitative descriptive research is to describe, explain, and answer the problem being researched in a more detailed way, through studies that best investigate individuals, groups, or events. This research will provide an in-depth description of the Role of Interpersonal Communication in Conflict Management and Organizational Culture Formation in the Badung Regency KPU agency.

Data is the main component in research, because through data, researchers can understand and evaluate the results that have been obtained. To ensure the accuracy and validity of the findings, the researcher relies on two data sources that serve as a basis for supporting and strengthening the results of the research that has been conducted, including: Data collected directly by researchers from primary sources without going through intermediaries. Data obtained indirectly from research subjects because it has been collected, processed, and presented by other parties. This data source can come from various institutions, such as government agencies, research organizations, companies, or scientific publications, whether for commercial or non-commercial purposes. In this study, data collection was carried out through a literature *review*, with the approach used is a *narrative review*. This approach allows researchers to compare and synthesize various data obtained from scientific journals that have been analyzed in depth, then summarized based on the author's perspective, relevant theories, and previously developed research models (Sugiyono, 2019). This research uses a qualitative method with data sources in the form of secondary data obtained from international journals, scientific articles, and previous research results that are related to the problem being studied. In the process, this research applies an analytical descriptive method, which involves collecting, identifying, compiling, and analyzing data systematically. This approach aims to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the topic being discussed.

Qualitative data analysis is carried out when the empirical data obtained is in the form of descriptive information in the form of words, not numbers, and cannot be grouped into categories or rigid classification structures. Such data can be collected through a variety of methods, including literature studies, and typically undergoes an early stage of processing such as note-taking, typing, editing, or transcribing before it is ready for analysis. However, in a qualitative approach, analysis still focuses on the extended meaning of the text without relying on mathematical or statistical calculations as the main tool. According to Miles and Huberman in (Sugiyono, 2018), the qualitative data analysis process includes three main steps that take place simultaneously, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. These three processes do not run separately, but are interrelated in a dynamic cycle. Data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing continue before, during, and after the data collection process, forming an ongoing interaction in an effort to build deep understanding. This whole process is ultimately referred to as "analysis."

3. Results and Discussion

Analysis of the Role of Interpersonal Communication in Conflict Management

The results of the study show that interpersonal communication has a significant role in managing and reducing conflicts that occur within the General Election Commission (KPU) of Badung Regency. Communication that is carried out directly, openly, and empathetically between fellow employees and between superiors and subordinates can be the main means of bridging differences of opinion and resolving misunderstandings that arise in organizational activities (Petrauskaitė-Jocienė & Korsakienė, 2024). As stated by DeVito in (Sosa & Brenner, 2021) Effective interpersonal communication involves openness, empathy, support, a positive attitude, and equality. These findings are in line with this theory, where communication that contains elements of empathy and openness is a strong foundation in relieving tension between individuals in the work environment. In the context of the Badung Regency KPU, these findings not only describe the communication patterns that form naturally in the working relationship between employees but also show how interpersonal communication is conditioned by organizational structures, local culture,

and unique institutional dynamics in the context of holding general elections. First, the findings show that the success of conflict management within the Badung Regency KPU is greatly influenced by the level of familiarity and trust between individuals established through informal communication outside the formal organizational structure.

Communication that occurs in a non-formal setting, such as during joint breaks, internal social activities, or in the form of daily spontaneous interactions, turns out to play a strategic role in reducing the escalation of conflicts that have the potential to disrupt work stability. This confirms that informal interpersonal communication can be an important bridge in facilitating conflict resolution before it enters a more complex stage and requires structural intervention. Second, this study found that the role of formal leaders in organizations is crucial in shaping a healthy interpersonal communication climate. Leadership that is communicative, open to input, and responsive to employee aspirations is able to create an equal and non-hierarchical space for dialogue, which in turn increases employees' active participation in the problem-solving process. In this case, leaders act as communication catalysts that not only convey information, but also build a shared meaning that contributes to the formation of organizational norms and values. This role is in line with the concept of "sensegiving" in leadership theory, where the leader plays a role in shaping his subordinates' perception and interpretation of the reality of the organization. Third, it was also found that differences in social, cultural, and educational backgrounds between employees in the Badung Regency KPU affected the interpersonal communication style used. Employees with local cultural backgrounds tend to prioritize communication ethics based on manners, harmony, and avoidance of confrontation, while employees with educational backgrounds or experience outside the region show a tendency to be more open, straightforward, and direct in expressing opinions. Although these differences have the potential to cause misunderstandings in communication, in practice, the two styles complement and enrich the interaction process, as long as there is a shared awareness to respect differences.

Fourth, interpersonal communication at the Badung Regency KPU also significantly contributes to the process of internalizing institutional values, especially those related to neutrality, transparency, and accountability. These values are not only transmitted through formal work regulations and guidelines, but also exemplars in the practice of daily communication between superiors and subordinates, as well as between employees at the same level. The communication process that takes place consistently in an atmosphere of mutual trust and mutual respect is an effective medium to instill a strong institutional identity and is resistant to external pressures.

The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Shaping Organizational Culture

The organizational culture at the Badung Regency KPU is not formed instantly, but is the result of a continuous interaction process between individuals in the organization. Interpersonal communication is the main instrument in shaping common values, work norms, and behavior patterns that become the collective identity of the organization (Mansour et al., 2024). Based on the results of interviews and observations, informal communication established in daily interactions between employees has a big role in implicitly transmitting organizational values. The communication not only functions as a means of information exchange but also as a medium of cultural internalization that reflects the attitude of professionalism, neutrality, and integrity, which are the basic values of the KPU. This is reinforced by the view of Schein in (Rosardi et al., 2022), which states that communication is one of the main mechanisms used by leaders and members of organizations in shaping and maintaining organizational culture. Thus, the practice of interpersonal communication in the KPU of Badung Regency is not only functional, but also symbolic in strengthening the organization's identity. The findings of this study show that interpersonal communication is a meeting point between conflict management efforts and the formation of organizational culture. Open and respectful communication encourages the creation of a conducive work environment, where conflict is not seen as a threat, but as an opportunity to strengthen organizational cohesion. In addition, healthy interpersonal communication patterns reinforce the organization's collective values, which in turn minimizes the potential for future conflicts. Thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between the quality of interpersonal communication, the effectiveness of conflict management, and the robustness of organizational culture.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted and an in-depth analysis of empirical data, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication plays a very vital and strategic role in supporting the effectiveness of conflict management while contributing significantly to the process of forming organizational culture within the Badung Regency General Election Commission. Communication between individuals in organizations, both formal and informal, has proven to function not only as a means of information exchange but also as a relational instrument that creates mutual understanding, builds trust, and strengthens social cohesion between employees. More specifically, this study found that open, empathetic, and participatory interpersonal communication patterns are able to be an effective medium in preventing, mitigating, and resolving internal conflicts that arise as a consequence of organizational work dynamics. Communication based on equality and mutual respect has been proven to encourage the creation of a healthy dialogue space, so that differences of opinion can be resolved constructively without causing disintegration or a decrease in institutional performance. In addition, the practice of interpersonal communication that runs intensively and sustainably also plays a role in shaping and reproducing organizational values such as neutrality, professionalism, integrity, and accountability which are an essential part of the work culture of the KPU as an independent public institution.

These findings confirm that interpersonal communication cannot be viewed as a mere technical skill, but rather as a complex social process that has a direct impact on the dynamics of the organization as a whole. Therefore, improving the quality of interpersonal communication through strengthening communication competence, empathy-based and open-minded training, and creating a supportive communication climate, must be an integral part of institutional strategies in building an adaptive, professional, and harmonious organization. Thus, it can be affirmed that interpersonal communication is the main foundation that supports the success of conflict management and the formation of a healthy organizational culture, especially in strategic agencies such as the Badung Regency General Election Commission.

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