

# The Influence of Communication Climate on the Employees' Performance at Government Agencies in Gorontalo City (An Indonesian Case Study)

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**Abstract** - *Improvement of employees' performance at government agencies can be done in several ways, for instance, through giving appropriate compensation, motivation, creation of conducive work environment, and through education and training. In addition, comfortable work environment, coordination and communication are factors supporting the performance of the employees in order to reach goals and objectives decided. This research was conducted to find out to what extent the influence of communication climate in an organization on the employees' performance at Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city. This research uses survey method and correlational analysis. The result from this research expected to develop employees' performance development model through organizational communication climate. This research revealed that there was a significant influence of organizational communication climate toward the employees' performance at the agency of at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment of Gorontalo city. Through a simple linear regression formula of  $Y=21.811 + 0.359 X$  and the correlation value of 0.476 and the determinant coefficient of 0.227 which means that there was a significant influence of organizational communication climate toward the employees' performance of 22.7% and the rest 77.3% was influenced by other factors that were not investigated in this research.*

**Keywords:** *Organizational Communication Climate, Performance, Gorontalo*

## INTRODUCTION

Government employees' performance are basically influenced by certain conditions, which are, the condition from inside an individual called individual factors and condition came from outside the individual called situational factors. The individual factors consist of gender, health, experience and psychological characters which consist of motivation, personality, goal oriented and locus of control. On the other hand, the situational factor consists of leadership, work achievement, social relationship, organizational culture, and organizational communication.

The researcher has conducted a research on organizational communication especially to find out the process of organizational communication climate and its influence toward the performance of employees at the Industry, Trade, and Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency

of Gorontalo city. This research was based on the identification of problem on organizational communication climate in which it consisted bureaucracy (control system in an organization) which is quite a complex issue; however, it is structured in units, where the job description is divided into industry, trade, cooperation, and investment units. Therefore, it is clear that many working activities within these units face obstacles due to the lack of coordination in organizing the jobs, message or information, which is an important and needed in all the frontlines and often it does not working efficiently and effectively. This condition has been going on for sometimes and has become a habit, thus it influences the employees performance. As an example if the communication between the followers and leader are not effective, a non-conducive climate would be created and of course, it would influence the employees' performance.

Based on those problems, the researcher felt it is necessary that the communication process and the creation of good organizational communication climate play a very important role in an organization, which in turn would influence the employees' performance. Communication climate should consider the perception (a macro evaluation) of a communication event, human behaviour, employee's report to other employee, expectation, interpersonal conflicts, and chance for growth within that organization. Communication climate with organizational climate in a sense that communication climate consists of perception of messages and events related to the message that happens within the organization [1].

The researcher current observation showed that there is a perception that the improvement of organizational communication climate toward the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city was still not maximized. This suspected due to the lack of organizational communication climate and the employees' performance to implement their tasks and functions. In addition to that, the employees were complaining of the lack of their superior/leaders attention, whether it is in the implementation of their daily tasks but also in the development of the employees' performance

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Organizational communication climate**

The term climate here is a metaphor; the phase of organizational communication climate metaphorically refers to a physical climate. Just as the weather formed physical climate of an area, meanwhile, the people ways of interacting toward the aspects of organization creates a communication climate, which is a symbol to describe the situation and what felt by the people within the organization thus, it enables them to react variously toward the organization through communication process.

Falcione and Herden [2] stated that, "communication climate is a macro image, abstract and conversion of a global phenomenon which is called organizational communication. The climate develops from interaction among attitudes of an organization and individual perception or those attitudes. Climate is viewed as a quality of subjective experiments from the perception of those characters that tends to be perpetual in an organization".

To analyse the communication climate of an organization, Pace and Faules (2001: 159-160) stated six main factors that can be used to analyse the communication problem in an organization as follows: (1) trust, (2) collegial decision; (3) honesty; (4) openness; (5) willingness to listen and (6) performance oriented.

Trust is condition, where employees at every level encourage developing and maintaining the relationship within the organization, the trust, the faith, and the credibility supported by the statement and the action. The situation, where all employees have to be invited to communicate and consult about all the problems in all areas of organizational policies related to their position is an effort to improve the collegial decision. In order to product a quality decision, the employees in all level have to be given chance or opportunity to communicate and to consult with their immediate supervisor to in order for them to be involved decision making process and creating objectives. Honesty is general condition consists of honesty and frankness has to be present in relationships within the organization. And the employees are able and free to communicate their idea without considering whether they talk to their fellow employees, their followers, or their leader. In addition, openness in communication to the subordinates, except for the classified information, members of an organization should be relatively easy to access information that directly related to their tasks, which influences their ability to coordinate their jobs with other people or other units, and which hugely related to the company, organization, the leaders, and the planners. Finally, focus on high performance targets means that personnel in all level of organization should show commitment for high performing objectives, high productivity, high quality, low cost, as well as high focus should be shown to other members of organization.

**Employees' performance.** Performance is the result of work that can be achieved by someone or a group of people in an organization according to each of their authority and responsibility, and in order to achieve that organizational objective legally, and not violating the law and according to the morals and ethics. The term performance derived from the job performance or actual performance which means work achievement or the real achievement achieved by someone [3].

Hasibuan [4] stated that performance is a result of work achieved by someone in implementing the tasks

that has been given to him/her based on his/her competency, experience, commitment, and time. Performance is a combination of three important factors namely, employee's ability and interest, ability and acceptance of the explanation of job delegated tasks, and the role and motivation level of an employee. The higher those three factors, the higher the employee's performance (p.94).

Performance is an ability or condition that has to be known and informed to certain stakeholders in order to find out the level of achievement of an agency toward a vision of an organisation and to find out the positive and negative impact of a policy that has been taken. Performance is a description of level of achievement of an activity/program/policy in achieving the target, objective, vision, and mission of an organisation, which manifested in the strategic planning of that particular organisation. Performance can also mean as an achievement achieved by an organisation for particular period. Organizational achievement is the representation of an organisation in implementing its activities. Through performance, an organisation would be able to find out the extent of its success or even the extent of its failure in implementing the mandate given by its members. Performance is a description of the extent of success or failure in implementation of main tasks and function of the organisation.

Sedarmayanti [5] stated that performance indicator is a quantitative measurement and or qualitative measurement to describe the level of achievement of particular target. Performance indicators should be something that can be assessed and measured, and can be used as the basis of implementation, even before the activity is completed and functioned. The performance indicators are used to ensure that daily performance of an organisation/unit shows the ability to achieve the decided objective and goals (p.198).

Without the performance indicators, it is hard to measure performance (success/failure) of a policy/program/activity, and at the end performance of an organisation/ implementing units. In general, performance indicators have the following functions: (a) to clarify what, how much, and when an activity will be implemented. (b) To develop a consensus made by different parties to avoid misinterpretation during the implementation of a policy/program/activity and in assessing the performance. (c) To establish a baseline for

measurement, analysis, and performance evaluation of an organization/ work unit.

According to Lenvine (cited in Dwiyanto, 2006) there are three indicators of performance assessment for public services, namely: (1) responsiveness, which indicate the ability of an organisation to recognize the public needs develops agenda and service priority and develop public services program according to public needs and aspirations; (2) responsibility is a concept that describes the suitability of public organisation's activities with the appropriate administration principles or with the implicit and explicit policy of the organisation and (3) accountability: external responsibility of an organisation of whether the policies and activities implemented by the public organization is in line with its stakeholders [6].

According to Mahsun (in Sinambela, 2012:187) there are four elements of organisation's performance measurement, namely: (1) setting goals, objective, and organisational strategy; (2) formulating indicators and performance indicators; (3) assessing the level of goals and targets' achievement; and (4) evaluation performance (feedback, assessment of organisational progress, improving the quality of decision making and accountability) [7].

To analyse the employees' performance, Bernardin and Russell (in Sutrisno, 2009: 179-180) proposed six points of performance evaluation which can be used to analyse the problem, namely: 1) quality; 2) quantity; 3) timelines; 4) cost effectiveness; 5) need for supervisor; 6) interpersonal impact [8].

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This research was conducted to find out to what extent the influence of communication climate of an organization on the employees' performance at Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city

## **METHOD**

Quantitative approach and survey method with correlational technique is used in this research. Survey research is a research that takes samples from population and uses questionnaire as a method of collecting the primary data [9]. Singarimbun and Effendi, 1995:3).

SPSS was used for the statistical procedures: Co relational technique is a technique of analysis used to determine the level of correlation among different variables in a population. This method is an effort to calculate the relationship and not merely the

description [10]. Meanwhile, the survey method with correlational technique is a method used to describe an event that has happened or currently happening. In this research, the researcher would like to see the extent of the influence of organisational communication climate toward the performance of the employees at the Industry, Trade and Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city.

This research studied two variables namely the organizational communication climate as independent variable (X Variable) and employees' performance as dependent variable (Y Variable). These two variables are the focused of this research.

Due to the number of population at Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city is not too large, the researcher took the saturated sampling method. Saturated sampling is a technique of sampling when the total population is also the total samples and also known as the census [11]. Therefore, the number of samples in this research were also 41 people as the total population at the office. The data for this research were data from: (1) primary data obtained from related respondents in this research such as the head of agency, the secretary, head of unit, sub-units, and staffs at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city. (2) secondary data obtained from other relevant and available sources and documentation of the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city such as the office profile, organizational structure.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The result of validity and reliability test of 16 items are presented in table 1. Validity test of organisational communication climate variable (X) and employees' performance variable (Y). In validity test, a statement is valid when the  $r_{count}$  is more than the  $r_{table}$ . The value of  $r_{table}$  for  $n=41$  and the significance level of 5% (0.05) was 0.301. Therefore, from 18 questions asked to assess the influence of organisational communication variable, 18 variables have the  $r_{count}$  more than the  $r_{table}$  0.301; thus, the questions stated as valid. From 12 questions asked to assess the influence of employees' performance variable, all the 12 statements have the  $r_{count}$  value more than the  $r_{table}$  value of 0.301; therefor, stated as valid.

Reliability test of organizational communication climate variable (X) and employees' performance variable (Y).

Table 1: The result of reliability test of items

No	Variable	Reliability coefficient	Notes
1	Organisational communication climate	0.883	Reliable
2	Employees' performance	0.747	Reliable

Sources: *primary data processing*

Reliability coefficients are the statements of the independent and dependent variables, meaning that those statements can be used to assess the dependent and independent variables with the good level of consistency.

1. Hypothesis testing
  - a. Normality test

Normality test designed to test whether in the regression model of dependent and independent variables both has normal distribution or not.

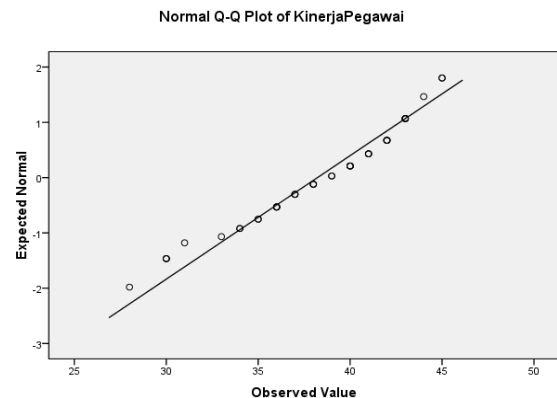


Figure 1. Normal Q-Q plot of employees' performance

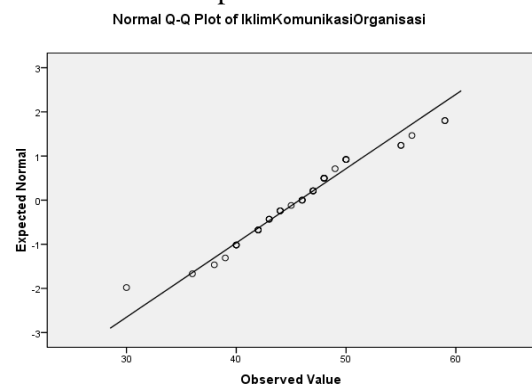


Figure 2. Normal Q-Q plot of organisational communication climate.

In this research, the normality test was tested using the Kolmogorov Smirnov test in order to find a more reliable result.

Table 1. Tests of Normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov<sup>a</sup>)

	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Employees' performance	.118	41	.162	.950	41	.069
Organizational Communication Climate	.116	41	.188	.970	41	.341

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Normality test for employees' performance variable was conducted in the following manner:

1. Establishment of Hypothesis  
 H0: data of dependent variable (employees' performance variable) have normal distribution  
 H1: data of dependent variable (employees' performance variable) have abnormal distribution
2. Establishment of Significance Level  
 Significance level that would be used in this research was 95% or the level of significance (alpha) was 5%.
3. Establishment of statistical test  
 H0 would be rejected if the P-value <  $\alpha$  (alpha)
4. Establishment of testing criteria  
 P- value (0.162) >  $\alpha$  (0.05)
5. Decision  
 Because P-value (0.162) >  $\alpha$  (0.05) therefore, H0 could not be rejected.
6. Conclusion
7. With the level of significance 95%, then the decision to accept the H0 was due to the P-value >  $\alpha$ , thus, it was concluded that the employees' performance data have normal distribution.

Normality test for organisational communication climate was conducted in the following manner:

1. Establishment of hypothesis  
 H0 : data of independent variable (organisational communication climate variable) have normal distribution  
 H1 : data of the independent variable (organisational communication climate variable) have abnormal distribution.
2. Establishment of level of significance  
 Level of significance that would be used in this research was 95% or the level of significance (alpha) was 5%.
3. Establishment of statistical test  
 H0 would be rejected if the P-value <  $\alpha$  (alpha)
4. Establishment of testing criteria  
 P- value (0.188) >  $\alpha$  (0.05)
5. Decision  
 Because P-value (0.188) >  $\alpha$  (0.05) therefore, H0 could not be rejected.
6. Conclusion  
 With the level of significance 95%, then the decision to accept the H0 was due to the P-value >  $\alpha$ , thus, it was concluded that the data of the organisational communication climate variable have normal distribution.

- a. Regression analysis result  
 To find out how did the organisational communication climate influence the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, the analysis was conducted using the regression analysis. The result of that regression analysis was obtained with the assistance of SPSS version 21 program for windows and the result is as follow:

Table 2. The Result of Regression Analysis Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					Collinearity Statistics		
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1 (Constant)	21.811	4.894			4.457	.000		
Organisational Communication climate	.359	.106	.476		3.380	.002	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' Performance

Based on the above analysis, then the regression model of the organisational communication climate toward the employees' performance is as follow:

$$Y=21,811+0.539X$$

Meanwhile the interpretation of the above regression model is:

1. The Constanta value of 21.811 is a constant value, which means that if the influence of organisational communication climate were ignored, then the value of employees' performance variable is 21.811 units.
  2. The coefficient value of the organisational communication climate variable is 0.359, which means that the better the organisational communication climate at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, the better it is to support the performance of the employees at that office. In other words, one unit improvement of organisational communication climate would be followed by the improvement of the employees' performance for 0.359 units.
- b. Interpretation of determinant coefficient

The determinant coefficient (R square) used to find out the variation extent of the independent variable in describing the dependent variable. The determinant coefficient ranged between zeros to one. The small value of  $R^2$  means that the ability of the independent variables to describe the dependent variables is very limited. The value that closes to one means that the independent variable has almost all information needed to predict the dependent variable. The value of determinant coefficient for the regression model is as follow:

Table 3. Determinant Coefficient Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.476 <sup>a</sup>	.227	.207	3.986

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Communication Climate

Based on the estimation of the regression model presented above it was obtained that the determinant coefficient  $R^2$  is 0.227. This value means that 22.7% of the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city is influenced by

the implementation of good organisational communication climate. From the value obtained from the analysis of regression model above, it was concluded that the independent variable has good ability in describing or providing information needed to predict the dependent variable. The influence of other variable for the employees' performance is 77.3%.

The data analysis showed that the regression coefficient for organisational communication climate has positive value of 0.359. This positive coefficient regression showed that the organisational communication climate has positive influence over the employees' performance. The better the organisational communication climate at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, the better the result of the employees' performance, therefore, all the objective, goals and target of this agency would be achieved.

However, based on the researcher observation of the channel of formal communication in this office, especially within the vertical flow of communication that it consists of all transactions of information flow of the top down and bottom up communication among the leader and the staffs, is still not effective. For instance, there is a lack of information from the leader on why certain jobs needs to be done, or the leader too often delegates the staffs to attend the meeting at the agency level, especially when the community urgently needed the information on the price of basic commodities, they were served by the staffs only, meanwhile, what mostly needed is the office leader to be able to explain the policy and to avoid the misinterpretation. This condition was also mentioned by the head of the Trade Division, Mr. Adriano Abdullah, SE as follow: "currently, the people are confused with the price of nine basic commodities for this Ramadhan month, because the price from the government is so different with the price in the market, therefore, the people need information from our agency. The head of the office and the trade staffs should always monitor and do the field check together. It would be so much better if the head of office could go to the field sometimes, thus, when the community ask or during the hearing session with the members of parliament the head of office knows the condition in the field, or at least the head of office could facilitate the staffs to do monitoring and market operation". (Interview, June 18, 2015).

The same also opined by the head of the Industry Division, Mrs. Ha. Delfia Akase, that adds on: "we often find obstacles in organisational communication, for instance, in the disposition from the head of office about who would participate in the industry exhibition to Java or other areas. I suspect that the obstacles is due to the lack of honesty in personal communication, the lack of openness in the top down communication, and lack of staffs involvement in decision making process. These all have correlation with the employees' performance in this office." (Interview, June 18, 2015).

This condition is related to the result of work achieved by someone in implementing the tasks given to him/her based on his/her ability, experience, and earnestness. Performance is collaboration of three major things, ability and willingness to work, ability and acceptance of the description of a tasks delegation, and the role and level of motivation of a worker. The higher those three factors the bigger or the better the performance of that particular worker.

Therefore, the demand for the employees' performance becomes a very important part to maintain the performance and professionalism of the employees of the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city. This is can be concluded that (1) He higher the level of responsibility and autonomy given to a person in implementing his/her jobs, the more interesting the job for that person and the higher his/her commitment, (2) The wider the opportunity to work in other agencies or the wider other alternative jobs the lower the employees' commitment, (3) Personal attitude, such as level of satisfaction toward the current job, would influence the level of commitment and (4) Organisational situation, such as closeness or the kindness of the leader could make the employees' commitment higher, as well as the organisational attention toward the level of welfare, etc.

With result of the hypothesis test, it can be said that the hypothesis of the research on the significant influence of the organisational communication climate variable (X) toward the employees' performance variable (Y) was proven and accepted. This research finding showed that the organisational communication climate has positive correlation with the employees' performance variable with the regression coefficient value of .467, which means that the organisational communication climate has moderate and positive influence toward the employees' performance at the

Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city. This is supported by the determinant coefficient value of .227, which means that 22.7% of the Y variable (employees' performance) can be explained by the X variable (organisational communication climate).

This research finding is also fit with the explanation given by Mr. Hafid Yahya, S.Ag, the secretary of the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, which said: "That to create the organisational communication climate of all the staff in this office, it is strongly determined by the leadership pattern, therefore, in this office, the staffs always await for the order/commands and there is very little initiative to elaborate their jobs. This condition is also supported by the role of the leader in this office, in which, when the staffs have initiation, the leaders rarely responded positively, thus, the staffs and the employees in this office felt they are not appropriately respected and listened to, and therefore, this would diminish the employees' performance and it would impacted on the lack of employees' commitment. In addition to that, this office often experienced change of leader and staffs that do not match the competency and do not know their standard and functions." (Interview, June 25, 2015)

The statement finding is also showed that "the lack of employees' commitment would bring a negative impact for the organisation, in which, the low performance of an organisation would bring an impact on the low quality of services provided and the high cost that the organisation should pay for it."

The hypothesis in this research which stated that there was influence of organisational communication climate toward the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city is proven to be correct. The influence of the organisational communication climate toward the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city is quite moderate, however, there are several aspects that needs to be paid attention and should be increased to improve the employees' performance in the future. This can be increased through the organisational communication climate such as through the implementation of linier communication, interactional communication model, and through transactional communication model.

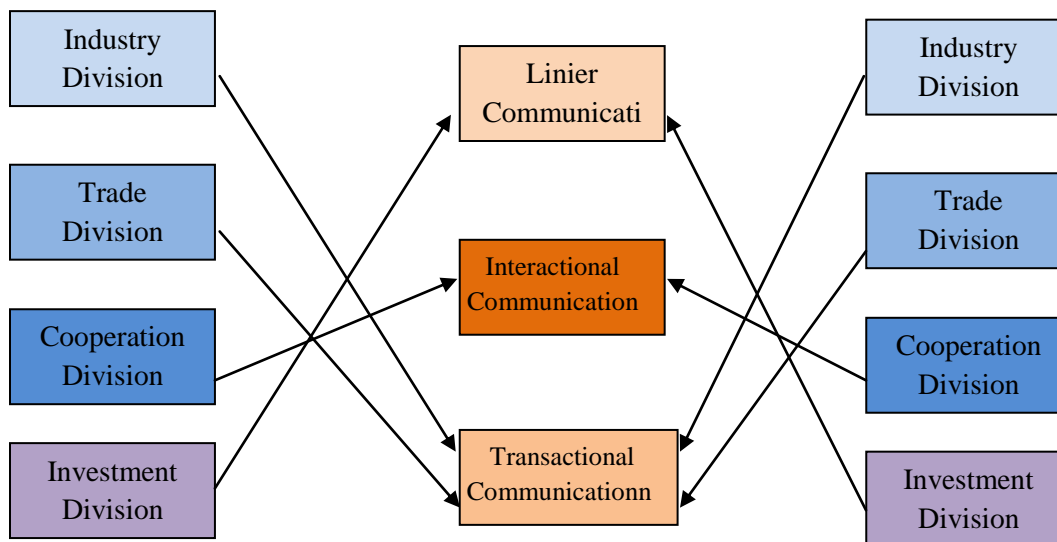


Figure 1. Organisation Communication Models at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city

Based on observation and interview with the head of industry division, trade division, cooperation division, and investment division, it was revealed that each of this division have their own signature in implementing their programs. Especially for the industry and trade divisions it can be categorised as transactional model, in which, this model emphasizes on that all behaviours are communicative. The model is based on the following communication concept: 1) communication explains the evaluation of meaning. 2) Communication is dynamic. 3) Communication is ongoing. 4) Communication is circular. 5) Communication cannot be withdrawn. 6) Communication cannot be changed. 7) Communication is complex. For the cooperation division, the communication model is more to two ways communication and dialog is evident here. Each participant has double roles as communicator and as communicant. Meanwhile, for the investment division, based on the interview with the head of this division, the researcher concluded that the communication model in this division is linier communication, in which, in this model, the communicator gives stimulus and communicant respond as expected without selection and interpretation.

The following is the communication models that happened in the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city.

This finding on communication model at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city can be further studied by postgraduate of public administration students who are also the members of the collaborative research of postgraduate in 2015 or by other students who are interested to study the variable organisational communication model or the organisational communication climate.

#### CONCLUSION

This research studies and discusses the influence of organisational communication climate toward the employees' performance at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, in which the value of  $r$  was .476 and the determinant coefficient was .227. The implementation of organisational communication climate at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city has low correlation with performance. The communication climate operated by the employees at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city can be seen by the value of determinants of the influence of organisational communication climate toward the employees' performance which was only .227; in other words, the organisational communication climate gives the 22.7% influence over the performance of the employees at the Industry, Trade,



Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city, meanwhile, the rest 77.3% is determined by other variables that were not investigated in this research such as the work culture, motivation, coordination, leadership, etc.

From those data it can be explained that the employees' performance is significantly influenced by the organisational communication climate, however, this influence of the organisational communication climate toward the employees was under the moderate category. This condition can be used to describe that the organisational communication climate at the Industry, Trade, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprise and Investment Agency of Gorontalo city is still needed to be improved.

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