

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS OF THE PROTOCOL AND LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION IN SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES IN METRO CITY

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Abstract:

The research method used is descriptive qualitative research. This method is used to describe the performance analysis of the Protocol and Communications Section of the Leadership in Supporting Leadership Activities in Metro City. All data was obtained directly from informants in the field using interviews and document studies. The results of the study indicate that employee performance has generally been quite good, but not yet fully optimal. (a) The quantity of work, the high task load, has not been fully balanced by the availability of adequate resources. (b) The quality of work indicates the need to improve the consistency of task implementation. (c) Timeliness remains an obstacle influenced by changes in the leadership agenda. (d) Initiative and responsibility: some employees have not yet fully demonstrated a proactive attitude. (e) Leadership cooperation has not been optimal due to ineffective coordination and communication. (f) Work attitudes and behaviors: Strengthening employee discipline, work ethics, and professionalism is still needed to support the smooth running of leadership activities.

Keywords: Performance, Division, Protocol, Leadership

INTRODUCTION

The performance of public sector organizations has become an important concern in contemporary public administration because government institutions are increasingly required to deliver services that are responsive, accountable, and professionally managed. In local government, organizational performance is not only reflected in the achievement of administrative targets but also in the capacity of bureaucratic units to support leadership functions, coordinate public agendas, and communicate government policies effectively. Van Dooren, Bouckaert, and Halligan emphasize that performance management in the public sector is closely related to the use of performance information for improving organizational effectiveness, accountability, and decision-making.

Within this context, the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division of the Regional Secretariat plays a strategic role in supporting the activities of regional leaders. This division is responsible not only for protocol arrangements but also for ensuring that leadership agendas, public communication, documentation, and institutional image-building are implemented in a professional and coordinated manner. Therefore, its performance cannot be assessed merely from routine administrative outputs,



but must also be examined through its contribution to leadership effectiveness, inter-agency coordination, public communication quality, and institutional responsiveness.

From a theoretical perspective, employee performance is influenced by several interrelated factors, including competence, work systems, organizational culture, leadership support, facilities, and technology utilization. Aguinis defines performance management as “a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing” individual and group performance in alignment with organizational goals. This means that performance should not be understood as a one-time assessment, but as a continuous managerial process involving planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and improvement.

Employee competence is also a critical determinant of organizational performance. Boyatzis argues that competence refers to individual characteristics, skills, and behaviors that enable effective job performance. In the context of protocol and leadership communication, competence includes technical understanding of protocol standards, public communication skills, ethical sensitivity, responsiveness, accuracy, and the ability to manage dynamic leadership agendas. Uneven competence among staff may affect the quality of service delivery, especially when activities require speed, precision, and coordination across different government units.

Organizational culture also shapes how employees work, coordinate, and respond to institutional demands. Schein explains that organizational culture consists of shared basic assumptions learned by members of an organization in solving problems of external adaptation and internal integration. In a protocol and leadership communication unit, culture is reflected in work discipline, responsiveness to leadership needs, coordination habits, communication ethics, and commitment to service standards. When organizational culture does not support collaboration, professionalism, and accountability, the performance of the division may become less optimal.

In addition, coordination is a major issue in public sector organizations. Public administration scholars argue that fragmentation among units often creates coordination problems, particularly when work requires cross-sectoral collaboration and rapid decision-making. Christensen and Lægveid describe the whole-of-government approach as a response to fragmentation and weak coordination in public administration. This is highly relevant to the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division because leadership activities often involve multiple sub-divisions, regional agencies, external stakeholders, and rapidly changing schedules.

The use of information technology is another important factor affecting performance. Digital government studies emphasize that public sector organizations need to use digital technology and data to improve service delivery, policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. For the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division, technology can support agenda management, documentation, information dissemination, digital archiving,

media monitoring, and public communication. Limited technology utilization may result in slow information flow, weak documentation, and less effective communication with the public.

Leadership communication is also central to the performance of this division. Public communication is no longer merely a supporting function but a strategic government function that contributes to public trust, better policies, and stronger democratic governance. Grunig's excellence theory of public relations also emphasizes the importance of engagement and two-way communication in building effective relationships between organizations and their publics. Therefore, the effectiveness of leadership communication should be assessed not only from the number of publications or ceremonial activities, but also from the clarity, consistency, responsiveness, and public value of government messages.

However, based on recurring field phenomena, the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in Metro City still faces several challenges. First, leadership activity planning has not been fully optimal, as shown by sudden changes in schedules, overlapping agendas, and limited anticipatory planning. These conditions may disrupt the effectiveness of leadership tasks and reduce the quality of protocol services. Second, coordination among sub-divisions within the Regional Secretariat and regional agencies remains insufficient, leading to delays, technical inconsistencies, and potential deviations from established protocol standards.

Third, human resource capacity in protocol and leadership communication has not been evenly distributed. Some personnel may have adequate technical skills, while others still need improvement in public communication, digital literacy, protocol ethics, and agenda management. Fourth, information technology has not been fully utilized to support leadership activities, particularly in documentation, digital publication, agenda integration, and information dissemination. Fifth, leadership communication functions have not yet been implemented optimally, causing government messages, policy narratives, and the public image of regional leaders to be less effectively conveyed to the public.

Another important issue is the absence of a structured and sustainable performance evaluation mechanism. Performance evaluation is essential because it provides evidence-based feedback on whether organizational activities have achieved their intended objectives. Without systematic evaluation, it is difficult for regional leaders and the Regional Secretariat to identify performance gaps, formulate improvement strategies, and ensure accountability. As Aguinis argues, performance management requires continuous measurement and development, not merely administrative reporting.

Based on these conditions, this study is important because it provides a comprehensive analysis of the achievements, constraints, and determining factors of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division's performance. The study is expected to contribute both theoretically and

practically. Theoretically, it enriches the discussion on public sector performance, particularly in the context of protocol and leadership communication functions at the local government level. Practically, it provides recommendations for improving planning, coordination, human resource competence, technology utilization, public communication, and performance evaluation within the Regional Secretariat of Metro City.

Research Problems

Based on the background above, several main problems can be identified:

1. Leadership activity planning has not been fully optimal, as indicated by sudden schedule changes and overlapping agendas that may disrupt leadership effectiveness.
2. Coordination among sub-divisions and regional agencies remains insufficient, resulting in delays, technical inconsistencies, and less effective implementation of leadership activities.
3. Human resource competence in protocol and leadership communication is not evenly distributed, particularly in terms of protocol ethics, public communication, digital literacy, and agenda management.
4. The use of information technology remains limited in supporting documentation, agenda integration, information dissemination, and public communication.
5. Leadership communication has not been fully effective in conveying government messages, strengthening public trust, and building the institutional image of regional leadership.
6. Performance evaluation has not been implemented in a structured, measurable, and sustainable manner.

Research Questions

Based on these problems, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What is the performance profile of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in supporting regional leadership activities in Metro City?
2. What factors support and hinder the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in carrying out its duties?
3. How can the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division be improved to strengthen leadership support, protocol services, and public communication in Metro City?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to systematically, empirically, and comprehensively describe employee performance in the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in supporting regional leadership activities. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because the study seeks to explore organizational processes, work dynamics, coordination patterns, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the meaning of performance as experienced by the actors involved.

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is used to

understand a social or organizational phenomenon by exploring the perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of participants within a particular context. In this study, employee performance is not only viewed as the achievement of formal work targets, but also as a process involving planning, coordination, responsiveness, communication, professionalism, and service quality in supporting the activities of regional leaders.

The descriptive qualitative design enables the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of how the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division carries out its functions, how employees respond to dynamic leadership agendas, and what internal and external factors influence their performance. This is in line with the view of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), who argue that qualitative research is useful for explaining processes, identifying patterns, and understanding complex social interactions in organizational settings.

Therefore, this research does not aim to measure performance statistically, but to provide a rich and contextual description of the actual conditions of employee performance. Through this approach, the study is expected to reveal the achievements, constraints, and improvement needs of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in supporting effective, professional, and accountable leadership activities in Metro City.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews, field observations, and document analysis, the performance of employees in the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division of the Regional Secretariat of Metro City can be described through six main dimensions: work quantity, work quality, timeliness, initiative and responsibility, cooperation, and work attitudes and behavior. These dimensions reflect how the division supports leadership activities, manages protocol services, and strengthens public communication functions.

1. Work Quantity

The findings indicate that the workload of employees in the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division is relatively high. This condition is caused by the large number of leadership agendas that must be supported on a daily basis. These agendas include internal coordination meetings, official ceremonies, working visits, regional events, public receptions, leadership documentation, and the dissemination of government information.

Interview data show that almost all official activities involving regional leaders require the involvement of this division, either in terms of protocol arrangement, agenda preparation, documentation, publication, or communication support. This indicates that the division has a central role in ensuring that leadership activities run smoothly and professionally.

From the results of observation, employees often handle more than one activity in a day, especially when there are overlapping agendas involving the mayor, deputy mayor, regional secretary, and other government officials. This high workload requires employees to be adaptive, responsive, and able to work

under time pressure.

Qualitative finding: The work quantity is high because the division functions as the main supporting unit for regional leadership activities. The intensity of work increases when leadership agendas are sudden, simultaneous, or involve external stakeholders.

2. Work Quality

The quality of work is reflected in the ability of employees to organize leadership activities according to protocol standards and communication needs. In general, the findings show that activities supported by the division are carried out in an orderly, formal, and professional manner. Employees are able to prepare event arrangements, seating protocols, master of ceremony materials, documentation, and leadership communication materials.

However, the study also finds that work quality still requires continuous improvement, particularly in maintaining consistency across different types of activities. Some activities are well-prepared because they are planned in advance, while sudden agendas tend to create technical challenges, such as incomplete supporting materials, limited coordination time, or adjustments in protocol arrangements.

The quality of leadership communication is also an important finding. The division contributes to preparing information materials, documenting leadership activities, and disseminating public messages through available communication channels. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of public communication still needs to be strengthened so that government messages are not only delivered, but also understood by the public.

Qualitative finding: Work quality is generally good, especially in formal protocol implementation. However, quality consistency is affected by agenda changes, limited preparation time, and the need for stronger communication planning.

3. Timeliness

Timeliness is one of the most important aspects of protocol and leadership communication work. The findings show that employees generally demonstrate the ability to complete tasks on time, especially for scheduled activities. Preparation of venues, coordination with related agencies, documentation, and publication are usually conducted before the activity begins.

However, sudden changes in leadership schedules remain a major challenge. Changes in time, venue, sequence of events, or leadership attendance may affect the readiness of the division. In some cases, employees must quickly revise event arrangements, adjust protocol positions, coordinate with other agencies, and update communication materials within a short period.

This situation shows that timeliness is not only determined by employee discipline, but also by the quality of agenda planning and coordination among organizational units. When information is received late, the division has limited time to prepare technical and communication support.

Qualitative finding: Timeliness is relatively well maintained, but sudden schedule changes and late information from related units may reduce the

effectiveness of preparation and implementation.

4. Initiative and Responsibility

The findings indicate that employees demonstrate initiative in carrying out their duties. This can be seen from their efforts to prepare leadership activities before receiving detailed instructions, anticipate technical needs, and respond quickly to changes in the field. Employees also show responsibility by ensuring that assigned tasks are completed, even under pressure.

In dynamic situations, such as sudden visits, changes in event format, or urgent leadership agendas, employees are required to make quick decisions and coordinate with relevant parties. This reflects a form of practical initiative that is important in protocol work. Employees are not only expected to follow formal procedures, but also to adapt to real-time conditions.

Nevertheless, the level of initiative is not evenly distributed among all employees. Some employees are highly proactive, while others still depend on direct instructions from superiors. This indicates the need for capacity building, clearer division of tasks, and stronger work culture that encourages employee autonomy and responsiveness.

Qualitative finding: Employees generally show responsibility and initiative, particularly in urgent situations. However, initiative still varies among individuals and needs to be strengthened through training, supervision, and clearer standard operating procedures.

5. Cooperation

Cooperation is a key factor in the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division. Leadership activities usually involve many parties, including sub-divisions within the Regional Secretariat, regional apparatus organizations, security personnel, media teams, community representatives, and external institutions. Therefore, effective coordination is necessary to ensure that activities run smoothly.

The findings show that teamwork within the division is generally supportive. Employees are accustomed to working collectively in preparing events, managing protocol arrangements, documenting activities, and supporting leadership communication. Coordination with external parties also helps the division complete its tasks.

However, several coordination problems remain. These include late confirmation from related agencies, unclear distribution of responsibilities, overlapping information, and last-minute changes in activity arrangements. Such problems may create technical inconsistencies during implementation.

Qualitative finding: Cooperation supports the smooth implementation of leadership activities, but inter-unit coordination needs to be improved, especially in information sharing, agenda confirmation, and technical preparation.

6. Work Attitudes and Behavior

The findings show that employees generally demonstrate professional work attitudes, discipline, politeness, and ethical conduct. These attitudes are important because protocol and leadership communication work is closely

related to public image, government dignity, and institutional representation.

Employees are expected to maintain proper behavior, communicate politely, dress appropriately, and respond quickly to leadership and public needs. In most activities, employees show commitment to maintaining the formal standards of government events.

However, challenges remain in terms of consistency and responsiveness. In certain situations, especially when the workload is high or agendas change suddenly, employee responsiveness may vary. Some employees are able to respond quickly, while others still require stronger direction. This indicates the importance of strengthening discipline, professional ethics, emotional control, and service orientation.

Qualitative finding: Employees generally show discipline, professionalism, and ethical behavior, but consistency in responsiveness and service orientation still needs improvement.

Summary of Research Findings

Performance Dimension	Main Finding	Supporting Data
Work Quantity	Employee workload is relatively high	Employees support various leadership agendas such as meetings, ceremonies, working visits, documentation, and public communication
Work Quality	Work is generally professional but requires consistency	Protocol arrangements are mostly well-organized, but sudden activities may affect preparation quality
Timeliness	Tasks are generally completed on time	Delays may occur when leadership schedules change suddenly or information is received late
Initiative and Responsibility	Employees show responsibility and field initiative	Employees often anticipate activity needs and adjust to dynamic situations
Cooperation	Teamwork is generally effective	Coordination with internal and external parties supports implementation, but communication gaps remain
Work Attitudes and Behavior	Employees show discipline and professionalism	Ethical conduct is visible, although responsiveness is not always consistent

Overall, the findings reveal that the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division in supporting leadership activities in Metro City is generally positive, particularly in terms of workload

management, protocol implementation, responsibility, and teamwork. The division plays a strategic role as the main supporting unit for leadership activities, including formal events, working visits, public communication, documentation, and institutional representation.

However, the performance of the division is still influenced by several constraints. Sudden changes in leadership agendas, limited coordination among related units, uneven employee competence, and limited use of information technology affect the consistency of service quality. These findings are consistent with the background of the study, which emphasizes that employee performance is not only determined by individual ability, but also by organizational systems, work culture, facilities, coordination, and evaluation mechanisms.

The findings also confirm the importance of a structured and sustainable performance evaluation system. Although employees generally perform their duties responsibly, the absence of systematic evaluation makes it difficult to measure performance achievements, identify weaknesses, and formulate improvement strategies. Therefore, strengthening planning systems, coordination mechanisms, human resource capacity, digital support, and performance evaluation is necessary to improve the effectiveness and professionalism of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications Division of the Regional Secretariat of Metro City is generally effective in supporting regional leadership activities. The division plays a strategic role in ensuring that leadership agendas, protocol services, public communication, documentation, and institutional representation are carried out in an orderly and professional manner.

The findings show that employee performance can be seen through six main dimensions: work quantity, work quality, timeliness, initiative and responsibility, cooperation, and work attitudes and behavior. In terms of work quantity, employees face a relatively high workload because almost all leadership activities require support from this division. Work quality is generally good, particularly in protocol implementation and leadership communication, although consistency still needs improvement. Timeliness is mostly maintained, but sudden changes in leadership schedules often create technical challenges.

Furthermore, employees demonstrate initiative and responsibility in preparing and implementing leadership activities, especially in dynamic and urgent situations. Cooperation within the division is relatively strong, but coordination with other sub-divisions and regional agencies still needs to be improved. Employees also show professionalism, discipline, and ethical behavior, although responsiveness and service consistency remain areas that require further strengthening.

Overall, the performance of the Protocol and Leadership Communications

Division is influenced not only by individual employee competence, but also by planning systems, coordination mechanisms, organizational culture, technological support, and performance evaluation. Therefore, improving the division's performance requires more systematic agenda planning, stronger inter-unit coordination, continuous human resource development, optimal use of information technology, and the establishment of a structured and sustainable performance evaluation system. These improvements are expected to enhance the effectiveness, professionalism, and accountability of leadership support services in Metro City.

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