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## THE INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISOR PHUBBING ON COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION, TRUST AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE (Correlation Study on State Civil Apparatus At The Regional Secretariat Of North Tapanuli Regency)

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of supervisor phubbing on employee communication satisfaction with supervisor, employee trust in supervisor and employee performance at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency. A quantitative approach with an explanatory method was used in this study. The theories used in this study are Expectancy Violation Theory, Media Dependence Theory and Social Presence Theory. The population in this study were all ASN at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency who have Functional Positions (staff). The sampling technique in this study used the total sampling technique. The research instrument was distributed to 105 research respondents through a questionnaire. The research data were analyzed using a single table analysis, direct effect test and indirect effect test. The results of the study tested using the SmartPLS application showed that supervisor phubbing had a significant negative effect on subordinate communication satisfaction with supervisor. Supervisor phubbing had a significant negative effect on employee trust in supervisor. Supervisor phubbing had a negative and significant effect on employee performance.

**Keywords:** Supervisor Phubbing, Trust, Communication Satisfaction, Employee Performance

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh phubbing pimpinan terhadap kepuasan komunikasi pegawai dengan pimpinan, kepercayaan pegawai terhadap pimpinan dan kinerja pegawai pada Sekretariat Daerah Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara. Pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode eksplanatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Teori Pelanggaran Harapan, Teori Dependensi Media dan Teori Kehadiran Sosial. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh ASN di Sekretariat Daerah Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara yang memiliki Jabatan Fungsional (staf). Teknik pengambilan sampel dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teknik total sampling. Instrumen penelitian disebarkan kepada 105 responden penelitian melalui kuesioner. Data penelitian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tabel tunggal, uji pengaruh langsung (direct effects) dan uji pengaruh tidak langsung (indirect effects). Hasil penelitian yang

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*diuji menggunakan aplikasi SmartPLS menunjukkan bahwa phubbing pimpinan memiliki pengaruh negatif yang signifikan terhadap kepuasan komunikasi bawahan dengan pimpinan. Phubbing pimpinan memiliki pengaruh negatif yang signifikan terhadap kepercayaan pegawai kepada pimpinan. Phubbing pimpinan berpengaruh negatif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja pegawai.*

*Kata Kunci: Phubbing Pimpinan, Kepercayaan, Kepuasan Komunikasi, Kinerja Pegawai*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human life that serves to build relationships, convey information, solve problems, and achieve common goals. According to Berelson and Steiner (Humaizi & Zulkarnain, 2024). Communication includes the expression of ideas, emotions, and information through symbols, words, images, and other media. In an organizational context, effective communication is essential to build trust, work coordination, and improve employee performance (Thakur, 2023). Media Wealth Theory by (Daft & Lengel, 1986), emphasizing that face-to-face media is most effective for conveying complex messages because it allows for verbal and nonverbal interactions at the same time.

Organizational communication not only involves the exchange of information, but also creates a positive and harmonious work environment. (Shockley-Zalabak, 2012). states that organizational communication is a complex interaction between people, messages, and organizational goals (Kalla, 2005). and (Zorlu & Korkmaz, 2021). adding that effective organizational communication is able to unite various work units to achieve common goals. However, the survey (*Quantum Workplace*, 2017) revealed that 81% of employees experience miscommunication in the workplace, indicating the need to improve employee communication competence.

One of the modern communication media that is widely used in the organizational environment is smartphones. The use of smartphones allows for instant coordination and interaction without space and time limits (Farkhah, 2023). Study (Populix, 2023) shows that the majority of Indonesians use smartphones for various activities, including work and study. Within the North Tapanuli Regency Government, ASN uses smartphones for presence, reporting, and internal communication. However, the high intensity of smartphone use also gives rise to negative impacts such as phubbing behavior, which is ignoring social interaction because of focusing on mobile phones (Wardana, 2019).

Phubbing occurs when a person prioritizes their cell phone over their interlocutor, thus

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lowering the quality of interpersonal communication. Study (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018) suggests that internet addiction, FOMO, and low self-control contribute to these behaviors. Most people admit to doing or receiving phubbing several times a day, including at work (Al-Saggaf, 2021). Research shows that employees are more likely to phubbing colleagues or subordinates than leaders or clients (Al-Saggaf & MacCulloch, 2019) indicates the existence of a hierarchy in the practice of phubbing in a professional environment.

The results of a pre-research survey of ASN structural officials in the North Tapanuli Regency Government show a high tendency for phubbing behavior in leaders. As many as 94-100% of respondents admitted to having nomophobia, such as being anxious if they are away from their mobile phones. In addition, 66% experienced interpersonal conflicts due to smartphone use that interfered with interaction, and 56% admitted that they tend to isolate themselves from employees because of their focus on their phones. In fact, 87% of leaders realize that they have a tendency to phubbing behavior. This shows that uncontrolled smartphone use can interfere with the effectiveness of communication in the work environment.

The functional civil servants surveyed also showed a negative perception of the phubbing behavior of their leaders. As many as 79–96% stated that their leaders actively use smartphones during working hours, even when meeting or interacting in person. Most employees feel overlooked, with 92% stating leaders check their phones when there is a pause in a conversation. Although only 17% reported open conflict, 79% stated communication became ineffective when leaders used mobile phones during interactions. The impact felt includes miscommunication, repetition of information, and reduced clarity in work instructions.

These findings are consistent with various studies that highlight the negative impact of phubbing on employment relationships. (Aagaard, 2020) calling phubbing a disruptive and disrespectful behavior, while (Ridho, 2019) and (Vetsera, 2019) emphasizes that phubbing creates feelings of neglect and triggers interpersonal conflict. The results of interviews with employees show that when leaders focus on mobile phones when talking, communication becomes unfocused, inefficient, and degrades professionalism. Employees also expressed frustration because they had to repeat questions or instructions due to lack of attention from the leadership.

Overall, leaders' phubbing behavior has a significant impact on employee relationships, trust, and performance. Study by (Roberts & David, 2020) and (Yasin et al., 2021) show that boss

phubbing decreases trust in superiors, job satisfaction, and individual performance. Research (Nanda, 2023) in Indonesia also confirmed that phubbing reduced work engagement. Therefore, phubbing behavior in a bureaucratic environment must be a serious concern because it can damage organizational culture, reduce communication effectiveness, and weaken employee trust and productivity.

Effective communication between leaders and subordinates is an important element in creating communication satisfaction, building trust, and encouraging employee performance. Communication satisfaction includes vertical and horizontal exchange of information, feedback, and clarity of task roles in the organization (Pongpipat & Sid, 2019). Trust is the foundation of working relationships, as it affects leadership effectiveness and long-term success (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004). Employee performance as the main factor of organizational success must be measured based on the effectiveness, efficiency, and achievement of work goals (Scott, 2020). (Utama, 2010) Performance evaluation in the North Tapanuli Regency Government showed an average of "Good" category with a score of 66.13, but weaknesses were still found in the implementation of tasks and cross-unit coordination. The Inspectorate recommends improvements through tiered performance monitoring, quarterly reporting, and awards as motivation for employees' work.

In the context of modern bureaucracy, civil servants are required to be adaptive, competent, and service-oriented, but challenges such as phubbing behavior need attention. Phubbing, which is the tendency to ignore social interaction because of a focus on smartphones, can disrupt communication, decrease trust, and have an impact on employee effectiveness and job satisfaction. This phenomenon is increasingly relevant in the digital era, but it is still often considered natural so that it requires an in-depth study of the psychological, social, and professional impacts it causes (Emeraldien & Hidayat, 2019). Research on phubbing in a bureaucratic environment is very important to identify strategic solutions so that ASN can carry out their duties optimally in a healthy and competitive work ecosystem.

The urgency of this research lies in the need for a deep understanding of the impact of phubbing in the bureaucratic environment, especially on superior-subordinate relationships. Until now, studies on supervisor phubbing in the government sector are still very limited, even though the public bureaucratic structure has different characteristics compared to the private sector,

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especially in terms of service orientation, local work culture, and relatively homogeneous organizational structure. If not addressed, phubbing behavior carried out by leaders can lead to a decrease in the quality of communication, weaken mutual trust, and hinder the achievement of agency performance targets.

Based on the initial data and findings, the researcher is interested in examining the influence of supervisor phubbing behavior on communication satisfaction, trust, and performance of ASN employees at the Regional Secretariat of the North Tapanuli Regency Government. This study aims to investigate how leaders' reliance on smartphones, especially when interacting in the work environment, can violate ideal communication expectations and impact employee relationships and performance. The phenomenon of phubbing in the government environment is still rarely researched, even though the context of bureaucracy that is oriented towards public services is different from profit-oriented in the private sector requires effective communication and strong professional relationships. With a strong local culture and a relatively homogeneous organizational structure, this research is expected to fill the gap in academic studies related to supervisor phubbing in local government institutions.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational method. The quantitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to measure social phenomena objectively through data that can be observed, calculated, and categorized into certain variables (Scott, 2021). The correlational method is used to determine the relationship between variables without manipulating or providing certain treatments, with the aim of identifying possible relationship patterns between variables and providing a basis for further research (Humaizi et al., 2024). Researchers want to know if *Phubbing* leadership during working hours affects the satisfaction of subordinate communication with the leader, subordinate trust in the leadership and the performance of ASN employees at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency.

The specification of this study is a causal associative research, which is to see the cause-and-effect relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variable in this study is *leader phubbing* (X), while the dependent variable consists of three components, namely communication satisfaction with leaders (Y1), trust in leaders (Y2), and

employee performance (Y3). All variables were measured using a four-point Likert scale so that respondents did not choose a neutral answer.

The reason for selecting these data characteristics is based on the nature of the phenomenon being studied, namely phubbing and its impact on psychosocial aspects and performance. All three are subjective constructs but can be quantified through respondent perceptions. Therefore, the perception data collected through the questionnaire is very relevant to measure the extent to which leader phubbing impacts interpersonal relationships and ASN productivity. The Likert scale was chosen because it is flexible, easy for respondents to understand, and suitable for use in multivariate statistical analysis models such as SEM-PLS.

The population in this study is all civil servants with functional positions or staff working at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency as many as 105 people (Financial Planning, 2025). The researcher used the total sampling technique because the population is relatively small and it is possible to sample it as a whole. Therefore, the number of samples used in this study is 105 ASN (Scott, 2021).

The data collection technique was carried out through two stages, namely initial observation and questionnaire distribution (Kriyantono, 2021). Observations are made to understand behavioral phenomena *Phubbing* in the ASN work environment, while questionnaires are used to obtain primary data from respondents. The questionnaire instrument consists of four scales, namely the *Phubbing* leadership (8 items), communication satisfaction scale (5 items), trust in leadership scale (10 items), and employee performance scale (12 items), with a total of 35 statements (Pujiati, 2024)

Before being used in the main study, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability on 30 respondents using the SmartPLS application version 4. Validity was tested through *convergent validity* with a *loading factor* value of  $\geq 0.7$ , while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha value with a threshold of  $\geq 0.7$ . These eligible instruments are considered worthy of use in the study.

The data analysis method used is *Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square* (SEM-PLS), through the SmartPLS application version 4.1.1.2. SEM-PLS was chosen because it can test complex theoretical models with small sample sizes and data that are not normally distributed (Iba & Wardhana, 2023). The analysis was carried out in two stages, namely

descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive analysis is used to classify, bully, and explain data based on respondents' answers. Meanwhile, inferential analysis is carried out through measurement *Outer model* (validity and reliability of indicators), *Inner model* (relationship between constructs), and hypothesis test using statistical t-values and p-values with a significance level of 0.05 ( $t > 1.96$ ) (Santoso, 2011).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Research Finding

The researcher conducted a descriptive analysis of the data from the findings regarding each variable in this study. The data is presented using a table on each variable indicator so that it can make it easier for readers to understand the findings of this study. The descriptive analysis is presented in four parts, namely descriptive analysis of the variables of *Leader Phubbing*, Communication Satisfaction, Trust in Leadership and Employee Performance.

### Descriptive Analysis of Supervisor phubbing Variable (X)

Table 1 Distribution of Answers on Leader Phubbing

Yes	Statement	TP (%)	J (%)	S (%)	SS (%)	Mean
1	Leaders use mobile phones during work/meeting hours	1	10	92	2	2,90
		1,0%	9,5%	87,6%	1,9%	
2	Leader opens the phone while talking	1	8	90	6	2,96
		1,0%	7,6%	85,7%	5,7%	
3	Leaders use mobile phones in their spare time	3	7	86	9	2,96
		2,9%	6,7%	81,9%	8,6%	
4	Leaders answer while using mobile phones	6	12	85	2	2,79
		5,7%	11,4%	81,0%	1,9%	
5	The leader's phone is always visible	5	16	79	5	2,80
		4,8%	15,2%	75,2%	4,8%	
6	Leaders use mobile phones when speaking directly	2	13	84	6	2,90
		1,9%	12,4%	80,0%	5,7%	
7	Communication becomes less effective if leaders focus on mobile phones	3	9	86	7	2,92
		2,9%	8,6%	81,9%	6,7%	
<b>Average</b>						<b>2,89</b>

Source: Research questionnaire results, 2025

Based on the tabulation of the distribution of answers related to *leaders' phubbing*

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behavior, items number 2 and 3 showed the highest mean value (2.96), indicating that *phubbing* most often occurred when leaders answered calls in the middle of a conversation and when interacting informally. On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean value (2.79) still shows a fairly high frequency, indicating that *phubbing* is a repetitive behavior even though it is not extreme.

Most respondents chose the "Frequently" and "Rare" options, indicating *phubbing* occurs consistently but varies in intensity. An overall mean value of 2.89 confirms that this behavior is quite frequent and can be considered a violation of face-to-face communication expectations that has the potential to decrease communication effectiveness, trust, and performance.

The highest scores in the context of informal communication indicate that *phubbing* affects not only the professional realm but also the interpersonal relationships that are important for building trust. In addition, the findings support theories of violation of expectations, media dependence, and social presence, which explain how mobile phone use by leaders disrupts focus and lowers the quality of interactions in a bureaucratic environment.

### Descriptive Analysis of Variable (Z<sub>1</sub>) Communication Satisfaction

Table 2 Description of Answers on Communication Satisfaction

Yes	Statement	STS (%)	TS (%)	S (%)	SS (%)	Mean
1	General satisfaction with communication with leaders	16	70	16	3	2,06
		15,2%	66,7%	15,2%	2,9%	
2	Availability of leaders when needed	10	72	20	3	2,15
		9,5%	68,6%	19,0%	2,9%	
3	Leaders understand the work problems of employees	9	69	25	2	2,19
		8,6%	65,7%	23,8%	1,9%	
4	Leaders value the potential of employees	5	73	22	5	2,26
		4,8%	69,5%	21,0%	4,8%	
<b>Average</b>						<b>2,17</b>

Source: Research questionnaire results, 2025

Descriptive results showed that communication satisfaction between employees and leaders was relatively low, with an average score of only 2.17. The majority of employees expressed dissatisfaction, especially on the statement "I am satisfied with the communication I had with the leadership," which received a negative response from more than 81% of respondents. Although

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leaders are considered to recognize the potential of employees (point 4), this is not enough to increase overall communication satisfaction.

These findings show a gap in vertical communication. Recognition of employee potential is not accompanied by open, responsive, and respectful interactions. Violations of subordinates' normative expectations of leadership support and attention lead to low communication satisfaction. Therefore, it is recommended to have leadership communication training based on empathy and *mindful interaction* to increase the effectiveness of interpersonal communication in a bureaucratic environment.

### Descriptive Analysis of Variable (Z<sub>2</sub>) Trust in Leadership

Table 3 Description of Answers about Trust in Leaders

Yes	Statement	STS (%)	TS (%)	S (%)	SS (%)	Mean
1	I believe in leadership knowledge	2	10	84	9	2,95
		1,9%	9,5%	80,0%	8,6%	
2	I believe in leadership experience	2	15	77	11	2,92
		1,9%	14,3%	73,3%	10,5%	
3	I believe in the work discipline of leadership	1	13	86	5	2,90
		1,0%	12,4%	81,9%	4,8%	
4	Leaders master their jobs well	2	11	81	11	2,96
		1,9%	10,5%	77,1%	10,5%	
5	Leaders organize work well	1	10	81	13	3,01
		1,0%	9,5%	77,1%	12,4%	
6	Leaders loyal to employees	1	12	81	11	2,97
		1,0%	11,4%	77,1%	10,5%	
7	Leadership as a safe haven	1	15	78	11	2,94
		1,0%	14,3%	74,3%	10,5%	
8	Fair leadership in giving awards	1	19	77	8	2,88
		1,0%	18,1%	73,3%	7,6%	
9	The most trusted thing from the leadership is his justice	1	18	78	8	2,89
		1,0%	17,1%	74,3%	7,6%	
10	Leaders assess staff performance fairly	1	16	79	9	2,91
		1,0%	15,2%	75,2%	8,6%	
<b>Average</b>						<b>2,93</b>

Source: Research questionnaire results, 2025

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The results showed that the level of trust in employees in leaders was relatively high, with an average score of 2.93 on a four-point scale. Employees generally assess leaders as competent and have good managerial skills, as seen from the highest score on the item "leaders organize work well" (mean 3.01). However, items related to justice in awarding recorded the lowest score (mean 2.88), indicating that the justice aspect is still a concern.

These findings indicate that competency-based trust is stronger than justice-based trust. Low communication satisfaction and high phubbing behavior also have the potential to hinder the development of closeness and loyalty of subordinates. Therefore, leaders are advised to increase communication openness, avoid using mobile phones when interacting, and improve the reward system to be more fair and transparent.

### Descriptive Analysis of Variable (Y) Employee Performance

Table 4 Description of Answers on Employee Performance

Yes	Statement	STB (%)	TB (%)	B (%)	SB (%)	Mean
1	The output of the work I produce	0	81	22	2	2,25
		0,0%	77,1%	21,0%	1,9%	
2	My thoroughness in getting the job done	0	7	88	10	3,03
		0,0%	6,7%	83,8%	9,5%	
3	Time to finish my work	0	7	88	10	3,03
		0,0%	6,7%	83,8%	9,5%	
4	Quantity of work according to the completion time	0	99	6	0	2,06
		0,0%	94,3%	5,7%	0,0%	
5	Efforts to increase the quantity of work results	0	36	59	10	2,75
		0,0%	34,3%	56,2%	9,5%	
6	Efforts to improve the quality of work results	1	47	46	11	2,64
		1,0%	44,8%	43,8%	10,5%	
7	Ability to cope with job obstacles	0	6	89	10	3,04
		0,0%	5,7%	84,8%	9,5%	
8	Suitability of knowledge with the type of job	4	86	15	0	2,10
		3,8%	81,9%	14,3%	0,0%	
9	Ability to operate work aids	0	8	82	15	3,07
		0,0%	7,6%	78,1%	14,3%	
10	Communication between fellow employees in completing work	0	5	88	12	3,07
		0,0%	4,8%	83,8%	11,4%	

Yes	Statement	STB (%)	TB (%)	B (%)	SB (%)	Mean
11	Communication with superiors in completing work	2	44	47	12	2,66
		1,9%	41,9%	44,8%	11,4%	
12	Communication with external parties in performing tasks	2	3	90	10	3,03
		1,9%	2,9%	85,7%	9,5%	
<b>Average</b>						<b>2,73</b>

*Source: Research questionnaire results, 2025*

The data shows that employee performance in general is in the "Good" category with an average score of 2.73. The highest score was found in the aspects of technical ability and communication between employees (score 3.07), indicating strength in cooperation and operation of work aids. However, time efficiency (score 2.06) and knowledge fit with tasks (low score) are still weaknesses.

These findings show that even though employees are technically competent, the effectiveness of time and task placement is not optimal. Therefore, direct guidance, evaluation of work distribution, and intensive face-to-face communication from leaders are needed to encourage performance improvement.

### **Evaluation of Measurement Models (*Outer Model*)**

An outer model or measurement model describes the relationship between indicators and latent variables, and is used to measure the validity and reliability of the model. The validity test assesses the extent to which the instrument measures what should be measured, while the reliability test assesses the consistency of respondents' answers (Jogiyanto, 2011). Although initial tests were conducted, the researchers again tested the validity and reliability of the data from 105 respondents to ensure the feasibility of the data before further statistical analysis.

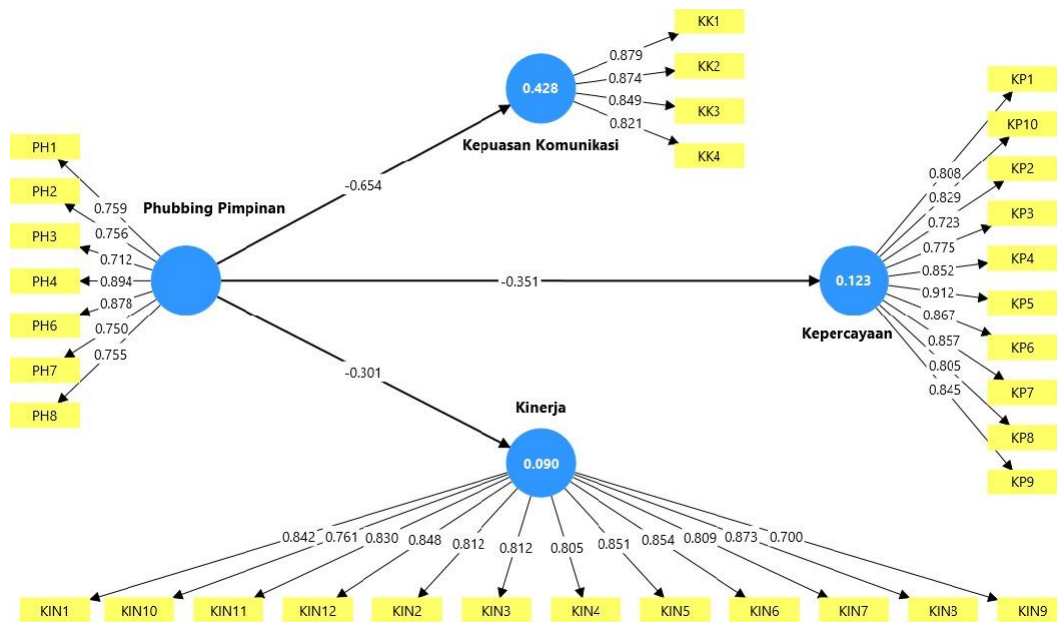


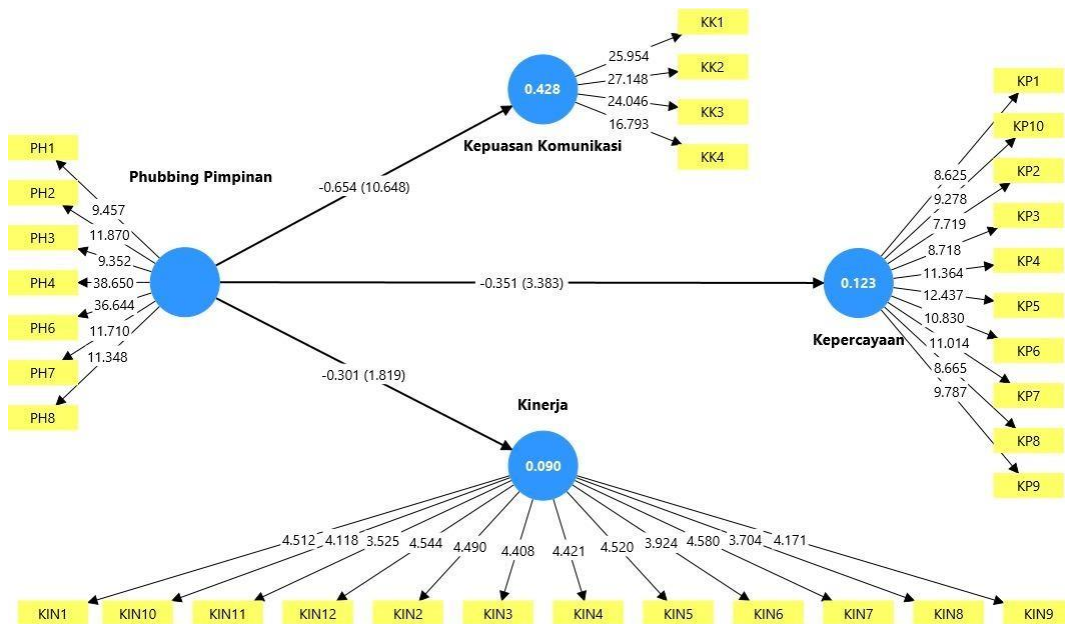
Figure 1 Outer Model Results  
 Source: SmartPLS Data Processing Results, 2025

The results of the outer loading showed that all indicators in the supervisor phubbingconstruct, communication satisfaction, trust, and employee performance had values above 0.70, indicating a significant contribution in explaining the latent variable. The validity of the convergence is also fulfilled because the indicator consistently measures the construct in question. These findings reinforce that the instruments used are able to accurately represent measured concepts.

The discriminant validity test with the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method also showed that all values were below the 0.85 threshold, which indicates that there was no problem of discrimination between constructs. This shows that each construct has a distinct identity and does not conceptually overlap each other.

The results of the construct reliability test through Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE show that all constructs meet the reliability and validity requirements. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are above 0.70, and AVE is above 0.50, which means that more than half of the variance of the indicator can be explained by constructs. Thus, the measurement model is declared feasible and can be used for further structural analysis.

### Inner Model Evaluation



The results of the path coefficients analysis showed that the phubbing behavior of leaders had a negative influence on all dependent variables: communication satisfaction (-0.654), trust in leaders (-0.351), and ASN performance (-0.301). This means that the more often leaders phubbing, the lower the satisfaction of communication, trust, and employee performance. The three coefficients indicate a consistent negative relationship direction.

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) showed that communication satisfaction was moderately affected by leader phubbing ( $R^2 = 0.428$ ), while the influence on trust ( $R^2 = 0.123$ ) and performance ( $R^2 = 0.090$ ) was relatively weak. This shows that phubbing behavior plays a greater role in influencing communication perception than building trust or improving the performance of ASN, which is most likely influenced by other factors outside of the study.

Hypothesis testing with *SmartPLS* showed that the entire direct effect of phubbing on all three variables was significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The H1 hypothesis (phubbing → communication satisfaction), H2 (phubbing → trust), and H3 (phubbing → performance) are all accepted. Thus, supervisor phubbing has been proven to have a real negative impact, although to varying degrees on important aspects of the leader-subordinate work relationship in the ASN environment.

## Discussion

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## **The Influence of Supervisor phubbing on Employee Communication Satisfaction with Leaders at the North Tapanuli Regency Regional Secretariat**

The results of the study showed that the phubbing of leaders had a significant effect on the communication satisfaction of employees at the North Tapanuli Regency Regional Secretariat. The *path coefficient test* showed a value of -0.654 with a p-value of 0.000 and a T-statistic of 10.648, meaning that the more often the leader phubbing, the lower the employee communication satisfaction. These findings are in line with DeVito's concept of interpersonal communication, where phubbing causes noise, disrupts the context and ethics of communication, and causes affective effects in the form of discomfort, feelings of disrespect, and decreased quality of interaction.

According to the Breach of Expectations Theory, employees feel that their expectations of leadership attention are not met when their boss is more focused on their phones, leading to disappointment and decreased communication satisfaction. Social Presence Theory also asserts that effective communication requires a psychological presence that is lost when phubbing occurs. Support for these findings comes from research (Kadylak, 2020), (Roberts & David, 2019), and (Istawa, 2024) showing that phubbing negatively impacts trust, social presence, and interpersonal communication satisfaction.

The Media Dependency Theory makes it clear that ASN's dependence on smartphones in the work environment can interfere with direct interaction, even though it supports bureaucratic efficiency. Studies (Wardana, 2019) and (Gouwtama, 2024) states that high smartphone usage triggers phubbing behavior. Therefore, to minimize its impact, organizations need to encourage the implementation of digital ethics, such as limiting the use of mobile phones when interacting directly, as well as building awareness to maintain the quality of face-to-face communication in a bureaucratic environment.

## **The Influence of Supervisor phubbing on Employee Trust in the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency**

The results of the study show that the phubbing of leaders has a significant effect on employee trust in the North Tapanuli Regency Regional Secretariat. Test *Direct Effects* showed a coefficient value of -0.351 with a p-value of 0.000 and a T-statistic of 3.383, which means that any increase in the leader's phubbing behavior decreases subordinates' confidence by 35.1%.

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These findings are in line with research (Roberts & David, 2020) and (Yuda & Suyono, 2024) which shows a negative relationship between boss phubbing and subordinate trust.

According to the Theory of Breach of Expectations, phubbing is considered a violation of social and professional expectations. Employees expect leaders to be fully present in face-to-face communication. When leaders are busy with their phones, subordinates feel ignored, unappreciated, and lose their sense of security. This lowers the perception of the three dimensions of trust, namely competence, protection, and justice. Some employees even stated that the leadership could not be a safe and unfair refuge in awarding.

From the perspective of Social Presence Theory, the use of mobile phones during interactions reduces a sense of emotional connectedness, which weakens interpersonal relationships. This decrease in trust has an impact on coordination, participation, and the effectiveness of teamwork. Therefore, leaders should implement technology-aware communication ethics, such as limiting the use of smartphones when interacting in person, especially in important meetings and conversations, to rebuild employee trust in a bureaucratic environment.

### **The Influence of *Supervisor phubbing* on ASN Performance at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency**

The results of the study showed that the phubbing of leaders had a significant effect on the performance of ASN in the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency, with a path coefficient of -0.301 and a p-value of 0.034. Although the statistical T-value of 1.819 is slightly below the threshold of 1.96, the p-value of <0.05 indicates a significant negative influence. This means that the higher the intensity of phubbing of leaders, the more the performance of ASN decreases, which is 30.1%. These findings indicate that phubbing behavior has a direct impact on decreased work effectiveness.

From the perspective of the Theory of Violation of Expectations, ASN expects leaders to be fully present in work communication. When leaders are busy with their phones, there is a violation of expectations that causes feelings of disrespect and confusion in carrying out tasks. This is reinforced by field data, where 99 ASN felt that their work results were not optimal, and 44 experienced ineffective communication. Social Presence Theory explains that the psychological absence of leaders during communication reduces the meaning of interaction,

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inhibits information, and lowers work morale.

These findings are supported by the Media Dependence theory and the results of previous studies (Xu et al., Yousaf et al., Ridwan et al.) which show that phubbing interferes with concentration, lowers motivation, and weakens employee productivity. Therefore, it is important for organizations to build a work culture that balances the use of technology and direct communication. One solution is leadership training in managing digital distractions as well as setting special times without smartphones during meetings or work evaluations so that communication is more focused and effective.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the influence of supervisor phubbing on communication satisfaction, trust in leaders, and ASN performance at the Regional Secretariat of North Tapanuli Regency, it can be concluded that phubbing behavior carried out by superiors has a significant negative impact on the quality of work relationships and organizational effectiveness. Three main findings can be formulated as follows:

1. Supervisor phubbing significantly reduces subordinate communication satisfaction. When leaders tend to focus more on digital devices when interacting, communication becomes ineffective and reduces the sense of appreciation felt by subordinates. This condition directly affects the quality of interpersonal relationships in the organization, especially in the context of daily work coordination.
2. Supervisor phubbing has a negative impact on subordinates' trust in superiors. This action is perceived as a violation of professional expectations, creates emotional distance, and reduces subordinates' perceptions of the leader's competence, fairness, and empathy. This decreased trust ultimately hinders the creation of a collaborative and healthy work environment.
3. Supervisor phubbing also causes a decrease in ASN performance. Lack of direct attention from leaders causes confusion in carrying out tasks, decreased work enthusiasm, and disruption of interpersonal coordination which overall has an impact on decreasing employee productivity and work effectiveness.

The findings of this study provide empirical contributions to the development of

communication management studies in public bureaucracy, especially in the context of Indonesia which is still minimally researched. This study broadens the understanding of phubbing as a digital phenomenon that has psychosocial and professional implications in the government environment. Different from previous studies that have been mostly conducted in the private or education sectors, this research provides a new perspective on the challenges of digital communication in a hierarchical and service-based bureaucratic structure. The practical contribution of this study lies in the implicit recommendation for organizations, especially government institutions, to reorganize internal communication patterns by balancing the use of technology and face-to-face interactions. Leaders as the center of organizational communication need to prioritize digital ethics and social presence in building healthy work relationships. As a further step, organizations are advised to design wise policies regarding the use of digital devices during working hours, especially in the context of direct interactions between leaders and subordinates. In addition, periodic training needs to be held on effective communication and adaptive leadership to technological developments.

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