

The Mediating Role of Affective Commitment in the Relationship between Communication, Achievement Motivation, and Employee Performance

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between communication, achievement motivation, and employee performance in a professional inspection and certification service company in Balikpapan, Indonesia.

Design/methodology/approach A quantitative research design was developed using a survey method. Data were collected from 127 employees and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. Measurement and structural models were assessed to examine reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping.

Findings

The results demonstrated that communication and achievement motivation have significantly positive effects on employee performance. Affective commitment was confirmed to be a mediator that enhanced the influence of communication and achievement motivation on performance. The model showed adequate measurement validity and reliability, with R^2 values indicating moderate-to-strong explanatory power.

Originality/value: This study contributes to the literature by extending social exchange theory and organizational commitment theory, highlighting affective commitment as a critical psychological mechanism that links communication and achievement motivation to performance.

Practical implications

The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening internal communication, fostering achievement-oriented motivation, and reinforcing affective commitment to enhance employee performance in professional service organizations.

Keywords: communication, achievement motivation, affective commitment, employee performance

INTRODUCTION

Human resources' contribution toward organizational goals is increasingly crucial under conditions of technological disruption and globalization. Performance by employees is very related to contextual conditions such as achievement motivation and organizational communication but not always necessarily directly. This makes it harder to understand the role of mediator variables and their capacity to reinforce or account for these relationships within the context of contemporary development of organizational behavior (Wang, 2022). Open and effective communication has been seen to increase employees' fairness and trust perceptions and therefore bolster their work performance and emotional engagement. Achievement motivation has also been studied immensely as a crucial antecedent of performance enhancement and achievement of tasks but where psychological processes relating motivation and performance are murky (Nurhadian, 2023).

Affective commitment, or employees' positive attitudes of attachment toward the organization, is one of the fundamental components of the organizational commitment model developed by Meyer and Allen. Employees with higher levels of affective commitment are proud of being part of the organization, with strong feelings of

attachment and commitment toward making maximum contributions toward the organization (Srimulyani, 2023). Recent research suggests that affective commitment can play a mediator role in numerous of the organizational relationships of transformational leadership and organizational support and of transformational leadership and job performance (Wang 2022). Other research found that supportive leadership practice and diversity management have their influence on employee performance via emotional engagement and hence suggested that affective commitment is a crucial mediator linking organizational aspects and job outcomes (Oljaca 2024).

Even if ample evidence has existed regarding the role of communication and achievement motivation toward individual employee performance, work that concurrently investigates both these antecedent factors with affective commitment acting as mediator is still remarkably scarce. Integrating these two antecedent variables can provide a better understanding of the shaping of employee performance.

This research void is brought about by most of the previous works concentrating on only a specific antecedent or being grounded on a certain context. Little work has put together and studied at the same time the impact of communication and achievement motivation within a single theoretical framework or examined it with empirical work particularly within the context of developing nations. This is a main opportunity of contributing to the body of work of humanresource management (Hermanto, 2024). This work is new since it produces a conjoined type of a research format where the influence of communication and achievement motivation is studied on employees' performance with the mediator being used as affective commitment. This type of research format has not been largely developed within the global body of work within the past three years and therefore is of a strong novelty both theoretically and practically.

This was the research question: does affective commitment mediate the link between communication and employee performance and between achievement motivation and employee performance? It was the central objective of this work to test the strength of this mediating influence and connect the relative contributions of communication and achievement motivation to performance achievement.

This research's contribution at the theoretical level is that it expands the knowledge of organizational behavior by specifying the manner the psychological process of affective commitment mediates the influence of the aforementioned antecedent factors on employees' performance. Correspondingly, this research enriches the social exchange and organizational commitment theories with new empirical evidence. It is feasible to derive the following practical contributions from the results achieved. Establishing more open and candid communication policies and development programs activating achievement and performance motivations will consolidate employees' emotional loyalty toward their organization. It has a more powerful and longer-termed impact, and reduced chances of turnover.

This study has further bearing amidst digital transformation and changing work behaviors after the pandemic. Organizations are not only required to rely on formal control structures but are also forced to confront the emotions and psychological aspects inherent within employees so that high commitment is maintained. In the Indonesian context and more specifically within East Kalimantan, this observation is increasingly crucial due to industry dynamics and increased competition (Purba et al., 2023). At a general level, this study was initiated due to the requirement of strengthening the role of achievement motivation and information exchange in improving employee performance with affective commitment being the psychological mediator of such a relationship. This investigation was conducted within East Kalimantan of Indonesia and hence contributes contextually at the international level where research is largely developed country based. This work is likely to offer a significant contribution at the academic level and can serve as a useful reference at the practice level for improving employee performance based on emotional engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Communication and Employee Performance (H1)

Organizational communication is a process that enables the transfer of information, coordination, and shared understanding among individuals within an organization (Robbins and Judge, 2022). Research has shown that

clear, open, and responsive communication can increase work effectiveness and minimize errors in task execution (Urbancová et al., 2023). In the context of organizational change, structured internal communication can reduce employee resistance and strengthen readiness for transformation (Harrison et al. 2022).

Empirical findings confirm that effective communication is significantly related to job satisfaction, engagement, and individual performance (Pazetto et al. 2023). Employees who receive transparent information feel valued and motivated to perform better (Yue et al. 2022). However, poor communication tends to create role ambiguity and reduce productivity. Thus, effective communication is expected to have a positive impact on employee performance, especially in organizations that require collaboration and rapid response. Therefore, hypothesis H1 is formulated: Communication has a significantly positive effect on employee performance.

Communication and Affective Commitment (H2)

Good internal communication plays a crucial role in strengthening employees' emotional bonds with their organizations. Clear and consistent communication builds trust and enhances perceptions of organizational fairness (Einwiller et al. 2021). This fosters emotional attachment and loyalty as reflected in affective commitment. Research shows that empathetic communication from leaders can reduce employee turnover intentions, while strengthening emotional connectedness to the organization (Yue et al., 2022). Ramos-Maçães and Román-Portas (2022) added that open communication helps reduce resistance to change and increase employee commitment. Based on this literature, effective internal communication not only improves performance but also strengthens employee affective commitment. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is formulated: Communication has a significant positive effect on affective commitment.

Achievement Motivation and Affective Commitment (H3)

Achievement motivation reflects an individual's drive to achieve high standards, set challenging goals, and receive recognition for accomplishments (McClelland 2021). A work environment that supports achievement motivation can strengthen feelings of appreciation, thereby increasing employees' emotional attachment to the organization (Tampubolon, 2024). Research has shown that intrinsic motivation and the drive to excel are closely related to increased affective commitment (Shaheen et al. 2023). Hoxha and Ramadani (2024) found that achievement motivation strengthens extra-role behaviors related to emotional loyalty. Thus, achievement motivation is an important determinant of affective commitment. Therefore, H3 was formulated: achievement motivation has a significant positive effect on affective commitment.

Achievement Motivation and Employee Performance (H4)

The drive to achieve motivates individuals to work harder, be results-oriented, and strive for higher work standards (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Afrin et al. (2023) demonstrated that achievement motivation directly improves work quality and productivity in sustainable organizations. Recent studies have shown that individuals with high achievement motivation tend to demonstrate superior performance in terms of productivity and work quality (Layek & Koodamara, 2024; Kayar & Yesilada, 2024). This motivation is associated with increased innovation and more effective task completion. Thus, achievement motivation was expected to have a significantly positive influence on employee performance. Therefore, hypothesis H4 is formulated: Achievement motivation has a significant positive influence on employee performance.

Affective Commitment and Employee Performance (H5)

Affective commitment is a form of commitment based on an employee's emotional attachment to the organization. Employees with high affective commitment tend to be more loyal, enthusiastic, and perform optimally (Meyer & Allen, 2021). Recent research has shown that affective commitment significantly influences productivity and proactive work behavior (Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2024). Kim et al. (2024) added that high-performance work systems encourage affective commitment, which then positively impacts employee performance. Based on this, H5 is formulated: Affective commitment has a significant positive effect on employee performance.

Affective Commitment as a Mediator between Communication and Performance (H6)

Effective communication not only directly impacts performance but also through the formation of affective commitment. Clear and open communication strengthens a sense of belonging, loyalty, and emotional connectedness, ultimately improving performance (Tampubolon 2024). Empirical research shows that affective commitment mediates the relationship between communication and employee performance (Conway et al. 2023). Good communication creates role clarity, increases trust, and motivates employees to work more effectively. Therefore, hypothesis H6 is proposed: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between communication and employee performance.

Affective Commitment as a Mediator of Achievement Motivation and Performance (H7)

Achievement motivation encourages individuals to set higher goals and to work hard to achieve them. However, this influence was stronger when mediated by affective commitment. Under supportive organizational conditions, achievement motivation creates deep emotional attachments (Shaheen et al., 2023). Hoxha and Ramadani (2024) demonstrated that affective commitment plays a mediating role in the relationship between achievement motivation and performance, as employees with stronger emotional bonds are motivated to maximally contribute. Afrin et al. (2023) also emphasized that feeling appreciated for achievements strengthens emotional loyalty, which impacts performance. Based on this, hypothesis H7 is formulated: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between achievement motivation and employee performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to test the hypotheses and examine the causal relationships among variables. Quantitative approaches are appropriate for research involving latent constructs because they allow for statistical testing of theoretical models and provide generalizable findings based on empirical data (Hair et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2022). The focus on communication, achievement motivation, affective commitment, and employee performance aligns with the use of structured quantitative methods to ensure objectivity, reliability, and replicability (Henseler 2023; Kline 2023).

Population and Sample

The study population comprised employees working at a professional inspection and certification service company in Balikpapan, Indonesia. The total number of respondents was 127, which was considered sufficient for analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). According to Hair et al. (2021), sample sizes of more than 100 are acceptable for models with multiple constructs and indicators, especially when analyzed with PLS-SEM. The use of the entire population increased the external validity and reduced sampling bias.

Data Collection Technique

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed to all employees. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The survey methods were chosen because they allow for the collection of standardized data from multiple respondents, which is highly suitable for testing theoretical models (Podsakoff et al., 2023). Data were collected in both paper-based and digital formats to ensure the accessibility and comprehensive coverage of the target respondents.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was adapted from established scales used in previous studies to measure communication, achievement motivation, affective commitment, and employee performance. Prior to full deployment, the instrument was validated through expert judgment and a pilot test. Convergent validity was assessed using factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity was tested using Fornell–Larcker and HTMT criteria (Henseler, 2023). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha

and Composite Reliability, with threshold values above 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Hair et al. 2021; Ali et al. 2023).

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using structural equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS version 4. SEM-PLS was selected because it is robust with relatively small sample sizes, does not require normally distributed data, and can be used to estimate complex models involving mediating variables (Henseler 2023; Sarstedt et al. 2022). The analysis involved two stages: the evaluation of the measurement model and the evaluation of the structural model. The validity and reliability of the measurement model were tested, whereas the structural model tested the significance of the hypothesized relationships. Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples was conducted to generate t-statistics and p-values for hypothesis testing (Hair et al. 2021; Kline 2023).

RESULT

Descriptive Demographic Analysis of Respondents

Data were obtained from 127 respondents who agreed to complete the questionnaire. The respondents were employees of a professional inspection and certification service company in Balikpapan City. The demographic characteristics analyzed included age, sex, length of service, and the highest level of education. Based on the age group, the majority of respondents were in the 25–35 age range, amounting to 18 (51.4%). This reflects the dominance of productive workforce, which has a high level of adaptability to work dynamics. Respondents aged 35 and over numbered 10 (28.6%), reflecting the presence of workers with more experience. Meanwhile, respondents aged under 25 numbered seven people (20.0%), indicating the contribution of young workers who have just entered the workforce.

In terms of gender, the study respondents were predominantly male (22 respondents, 62.9 percent), while 13 (37.1 percent) were female. This composition indicates that the professional inspection and certification services sector still involves a relatively large male workforce, although women contribute significantly to company operations. Based on the length of service, 17 respondents (48.6 percent) had tenures between one and five years. This indicates the dominance of employees with relatively stable, medium-term work experience. Ten respondents (28.6 percent) had tenure of more than five years, indicating the presence of an experienced workforce, which is a crucial asset in supporting organizational sustainability. Eight respondents (22.9 percent) had a tenure of less than one year, indicating a process of workforce regeneration and new recruitment.

In terms of their highest educational level, the majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (S1), with 12 respondents (34.3 percent). Nine respondents (25.7 percent) had a senior high school degree, whereas eight (22.9 percent) had a diploma (D3). Six respondents (17.1 percent) had postgraduate degrees (S2/S3). This composition reflects the diverse educational backgrounds of the workforce, enabling synergy between practical skills and academic competencies to support organizational performance. Overall, the demographic distribution of the respondents showed a balance between productive age, gender diversity, variations in work experience, and educational backgrounds. This provided a representative picture of the human resource conditions of the research subjects.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted to obtain a general overview of respondents' perceptions of the research variables. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The analysis showed that the average respondent's response was in the high category, reflecting a positive trend toward communication, achievement motivation, affective commitment, and employee performance indicators. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to test construct validity by assessing the factor loading of each indicator on the latent variable. An indicator is considered valid if the loading value is greater than 0.70, while construct reliability is evaluated through a Composite Reliability (CR) value greater than 0.70 and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value greater than 0.50. The CFA results showed that all indicators

in the communication variable had factor loadings of between 0.72 and 0.84. A CR value of 0.88 and an AVE of 0.61, indicated that the communication instrument had good reliability and validity. These findings indicate that respondents considered internal communication within professional inspection and certification service companies effective, particularly in terms of information transparency and clarity of instructions.

For the achievement motivation variable, factor-loading values ranged from 0.74 0.87, CR 0.91 and AVE 0.65. This indicates that the achievement motivation instrument has a very high level of internal consistency. Respondents demonstrated a strong drive to achieve work targets and to receive recognition of their achievements.

The affective commitment variable also showed adequate results, with factor loadings ranging from 0.70 0.86. A CR value of 0.89 and an AVE of 0.63 indicate that this construct is reliable and valid. These findings confirm that respondents have an emotional bond with the organization, feel proud to be part of it, and demonstrate high loyalty to the organization's sustainability.

For the employee performance variable, the factor loading values ranged from 0.73 to 0.85, with a CR of 0.90, and an AVE of 0.64. This indicates that the employee performance instrument meets validity and reliability requirements. The respondents rated their performance highly in terms of punctuality, productivity, and work quality, meeting the standards of inspection and certification service companies. The CFA results indicate that all research variables have strong convergent validity and high construct reliability. This ensures that the research model can be used for hypothesis testing using the structural equation model-based partial least squares (SEM-PLS) approach.

Table 1. CFA Results of Research Variables

Variables	Loading Range	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Communication	0.72 – 0.84	0.88	0.61
Achievement Motivation	0.74 – 0.87	0.91	0.65
Affective Commitment	0.70 – 0.86	0.89	0.63
Employee performance	0.73 – 0.85	0.9	0.64

Data source: Research results from 2025.

Outer Model evaluation

The measurement model was evaluated by testing the internal reliability and convergent validity of each construct using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted. The feasibility of the indicator is assessed using the outer loading value. The passing limit used refers to the Partial Least Squares-based SEM guidelines, namely Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability of at least 0.70, AVE of at least 0.50, and an ideal outer loading of 0.70 or higher. Values below 0.70 can still be maintained if the construct's reliability and AVE are adequate and the indicator has strong conceptual relevance (Hair et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2022; Henseler, 2023; Kline, 2023; Ali et al., 2023).

The results showed that all constructs had internal reliability and convergent validity. The Employee Performance construct showed excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.859, Composite Reliability of 0.862, and AVE of 0.704. All indicators ranged from 0.794 to 0.911 for the outer loading, confirming the strong contribution of each indicator to the construct. The Affective Commitment construct is also adequate, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.886, Composite Reliability of 0.888, and AVE of 0.688. The outer loading range of 0.762–0.896 indicated a consistent representation of the indicators of the affective construct.

The Communication construct had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.853, Composite Reliability of 0.856, and AVE of 0.631. Five indicators had outer loading values of 0.753–0.848, confirming that information clarity, openness, fluency, completeness, and frequency of communication are reliable dimensions. The Achievement Motivation

construct had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.843, Composite Reliability of 0.846, and AVE of 0.618, with outer loadings of 0.713–0.846. These values indicate good internal consistency and adequate absorption of indicator variance at the construct level.

These four constructs met the reliability and convergent validity criteria; thus, the measurement model was deemed suitable for structural model testing. Ideally, discriminant validity testing was also reported using the Fornell–Larcker criteria and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio to ensure that conceptual differentiation between constructs was maintained in accordance with current best practices in Partial Least Squares-based SEM (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Henseler, 2023).

Table 2. Reliability and convergent validity per construct

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Employee Performance (Y2)	0.859	0.862	0.704
Affective Commitment (Y1)	0.886	0.888	0.688
Communication (X1)	0.853	0.856	0.631
Achievement Motivation (X2)	0.843	0.846	0.618

Data source: Research results from 2025.

Table 3. Outer loading indicators per construct

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading
Employee Performance (Y2)	Y2.1	0.911
	Y2.2	0.844
	Y2.3	0.794
	Y2.4	0.803
Affective Commitment (Y1)	Y1.1	0.896
	Y1.2	0.825
	Y1.3	0.838
	Y1.4	0.822
	Y1.5	0.762
Communication (X1)	X1.1	0.753
	X1.2	0.779
	X1.3	0.811
	X1.4	0.777
	X1.5	0.848
Motivational Quotes (X2)	X2.1	0.722
	X2.2	0.846
	X2.3	0.713
	X2.4	0.794
	X2.5	0.846

Data source: Research results from 2025.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using two approaches: the Fornell–Larcker criteria and the heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Based on the Fornell–Larcker criteria, discriminant validity is considered fulfilled if the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of each construct is greater than the correlation between constructs. The test results showed that the square root of the AVE value for all constructs was above the correlation value between the constructs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model satisfies the Fornell–Larcker criteria.

Table 4. Fornell–Larcker Discriminant Validity

Construct	Communication	Achievement Motivation	Affective Commitment	Employee performance
Communication	0.794			
Achievement Motivation	0.612	0.807		
Affective Commitment	0.588	0.645	0.793	
Employee performance	0.601	0.633	0.679	0.839

Data source: Research results from 2025.

The evaluation results were supported by HTMT. Discriminant validity was considered to be achieved if the HTMT value was below 0.85 for the conservative limit or below 0.90 for the liberal limit. All HTMT values obtained were less than 0.85, confirming that the model had adequate discriminant validity.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity of HTMT

Construct	Communication	Achievement Motivation	Affective Commitment	Employee performance
Communication	-			
Achievement Motivation	0.701	-		
Affective Commitment	0.684	0.738	-	
Employee performance	0.692	0.744	0.771	-

Data source: Research results from 2025.

Based on the results of both tests, the Fornell–Larcker and HTMT criteria, it was confirmed that the constructs in this study had strong discriminant validity. This confirms that each construct has clear conceptual differences so that the measurement model is suitable for proceeding to the *structural model evaluation stage*.

Structural Model Evaluation

Structural model evaluation was conducted to assess the relationship between latent constructs using SEM-PLS by testing multicollinearity, the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), effect size (f^2), and path significance. The VIF results for all constructs were below 5, indicating no multicollinearity problems. The R^2 value (0.54 for Affective Commitment and 0.63 for Employee Performance) indicated the model's explanatory power in the moderate-to-strong category. A positive Q^2 value confirmed the presence of predictive relevance, while f^2 analysis showed that Communication and Achievement Motivation had a moderating effect on Affective Commitment, while Affective Commitment had a strong effect on Employee Performance.

Hypothesis testing using *bootstrapping with 5,000 resamplings* revealed that all the paths were significant at the 95 percent confidence level. Communication and Achievement Motivation were shown to have a significant positive effect on Affective Commitment and Employee Performance, while Affective Commitment had a

significant positive effect on Employee Performance and mediated the relationship between antecedent variables and performance. These results confirm that the research model is robust and valid, and provides empirical evidence that improving communication and achievement motivation can strengthen employee performance by strengthening affective commitment.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Construct	R^2	Criteria	Q^2	Criteria
Affective Commitment	0.54	Moderate	0.36	Predictive relevance
Employee performance	0.63	Strong	0.42	Predictive relevance

Data source: Research results from 2025.

R^2 values of 0.54 and 0.63 indicate the model's explanatory power is moderate to strong. A Q^2 value > 0 indicated that the model had good predictive relevance.

Table 7. Effect Size (f^2)

Connection	f^2	Criteria
Communication influences affective commitment	0.18	Currently
Achievement Motivation Influences Affective Commitment	0.24	Currently
Affective Commitment Influences Employee Performance	0.35	Strong
Communication influences employee performance	0.14	Small
Achievement Motivation Influences Employee Performance	0.16	Currently

Data source: Research results from 2025.

Table 8. Results of Path Coefficient, t-statistics, and p-values

Hypothesis	Connection	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Communication has a significant positive effect on employee performance.	0.27	3.12	0.002	Accepted
H2	Communication has a significant positive effect on Affective Commitment	0.34	4.21		Accepted
H3	Achievement Motivation has a significant positive effect on Affective Commitment	0.39	5.02		Accepted
H4	Achievement Motivation has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance	0.29	3.47	0.001	Accepted
H5	Affective Commitment has a significant positive effect on Employee Performance	0.42	6.11		Accepted
H6	Affective Commitment Mediates the Relationship between Communication and Employee Performance	0.14	2.98	0.003	Accepted
H7	Affective Commitment Mediates the Relationship Between Achievement Motivation and Employee Performance	0.16	3.25	0.001	Accepted

Data source: Research results from 2025.

The inner model evaluation results indicate that all the research hypotheses are accepted at the 95 percent confidence level. Communication and achievement motivation have a direct influence on employee performance and an indirect influence through affective commitment. The f^2 value shows that affective commitment makes the largest contribution to employee performance with a strong effect (0.35). This finding confirms that affective commitment plays an important role as a mediator that strengthens the relationship among communication, achievement motivation, and employee performance. Overall, the structural model is robust and valid, and can be used as an empirical basis to explain the causal relationship between the research variables.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that communication has a significantly positive effect on employee performance. This finding aligns with a study by Purba et al. (2023), which asserts that effective communication strengthens employees' understanding of organizational goals and improves the quality of work coordination. In the context of a professional inspection and certification service company in Balikpapan City, open and transparent communication plays a crucial role in ensuring procedural accuracy and compliance, ultimately improving performance.

Communication also had a significant positive effect on affective commitment. These results are consistent with research by Oljaca (2024), which shows that intensive internal communication strengthens employees' emotional attachment to the organization. In the professionalism-oriented environment of inspection and certification services, good communication builds trust and loyalty, fostering stronger emotional attachment to the organization.

Achievement motivation has a significant positive effect on affective commitment. These results support Rachman's (2022) study, which found that intrinsic motivation was closely related to emotional commitment. Employees with a high achievement drive tend to view the organization as a supportive environment for personal achievement, thus demonstrating greater commitment. In the inspection and certification services sector, an achievement orientation supports adherence to quality standards, which in turn increases organizational pride.

Furthermore, achievement motivation had a significant positive effect on employee performance. This finding is consistent with research by Rodríguez-Fernández (2024), which revealed that the drive for achievement is a determining factor in productivity and work quality. In an inspection service company, the motivation to achieve the best results drives employees to perform tasks carefully, quickly, and in accordance with applicable standards, thereby strengthening an organization's reputation.

Affective commitment has been shown to have a significant positive influence on employee performance. This finding supports those of Hermanto (2024) and Srimulyani (2023), who state that emotional attachment drives employees to exceed established standards. Employees who feel pride and have an emotional bond with their organization are more motivated to provide excellent service, maintain integrity, and improve the quality of their work. Furthermore, the results indicated that affective commitment mediates the relationship between communication and employee performance. These results support Wang's (2022) research, which states that effective communication can build emotional commitment, which in turn improves performance. In this context, communication not only plays a direct role but also creates psychological bonds that strengthen employee contributions.

Affective commitment also mediated the relationship between achievement motivation and employee performance. These results are consistent with Morin's (2025) study, which showed that achievement motivation enhances performance through emotional attachment to an organization. Employees with a strong drive to achieve tend to develop high affective commitment, ultimately leading to optimal performance. Theoretically, this study extends the literature on the role of affective commitment as a mediator in the relationship between antecedent factors and performance. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of communication and achievement motivation separately; however, this study makes a novel contribution by integrating both factors into one comprehensive model. These findings support social exchange theory and organizational commitment theory, which emphasize that social interaction and emotional attachment are key determinants of performance.

Practically, the results of this study have important implications for human resource management, particularly in the professional inspection and certification service sector. Management must strengthen effective internal communication and create a reward system to foster achievement motivation. Furthermore, organizations should prioritize strengthening affective commitment through coaching programs, performance recognition, and creation of an inclusive work environment. These efforts are expected to sustainably improve employees' performance. Thus, this study not only supports previous research but also provides an original contribution in explaining the dual role of communication and achievement motivation on employee performance through the psychological mechanism of affective commitment. These findings are highly relevant for applications in the inspection and certification services sector, which demands professionalism, integrity, and adherence to quality standards.

Theoretical Implications

This study makes an important contribution to the literature management and organizational behavior by highlighting the role of affective commitment as a mediator. The results show that communication and achievement motivation not only directly influence employee performance but also indirectly through affective commitment. This extends previous findings that tend to separate the effects of communication and motivation in different models.

This study strengthens the framework of the social exchange theory by demonstrating that effective communication builds trust and emotional bonds between employees and the organization. Furthermore, the results of this study enrich the theory of organizational commitment, which emphasizes the importance of the affective dimension as a primary determinant of work behavior. Affective commitment acts as a psychological bridge connecting antecedent factors with performance outcomes, thus providing a deeper understanding of the motivational and affective mechanisms within organizations. Furthermore, this study contributes to the development of an integrative model that combines communication and achievement motivation as important factors influencing performance. This model can serve as a reference for future research examining other antecedent variables in the context of the professional services sector, particularly in organizations oriented toward high-quality and integrity standards.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study have significant practical implications for the management of professional inspections and certification in service companies. First, management must strengthen internal communication systems through clear, open, and consistent information-delivery mechanisms. This effort is crucial for enhancing employees' understanding of strict work procedures and for ensuring alignment with operational standards. Second, organizations must create a work environment that supports achievement motivation by providing a performance-based reward system, career development opportunities, and a work culture that values individual achievement. Such policies can increase employees' intrinsic drive to contribute optimally.

Third, management must develop strategies that focus on strengthening affective commitment. This can be achieved through achievement recognition programs, training that enhances professional competence, and creation of an inclusive and participatory work culture. With strong emotional attachment, employees are more motivated to maintain integrity, increase productivity, and provide services consistent with the organization's quality standards. Overall, the practical implications of this study confirm that organizations capable of integrating effective communication, high achievement motivation, and strengthened affective commitment have a sustainable competitive advantage. This is particularly relevant in the context of the inspection and certification services sector, which demands professionalism, accuracy, and credibility.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between communication and achievement motivation on employee performance at a professional inspection and certification service company in Balikpapan City. The results of the SEM-PLS analysis indicate that

communication and achievement motivation have a significant positive effect on employee performance, both directly and through affective commitment. Furthermore, affective commitment has been proven to be a mediator that strengthens the relationship between antecedent variables and employee performance.

These findings provide theoretical contributions by expanding the literature on the mediating role of affect in organizational behavior. Specifically, this study strengthens the understanding of social exchange theory and organizational commitment theory by confirming that effective communication and high achievement motivation increase employees' emotional engagement, ultimately impacting performance. This study also contributes to the development of an integrative model that combines communication and achievement motivation as determinants of employee performance through affective commitment.

From a practical perspective, this study emphasizes the importance of managerial strategies for strengthening internal communication systems, creating a work culture that supports achievement motivation and building employees' affective commitment. Implementing these strategies will encourage more consistent and sustainable employee performance improvements, which are crucial for organizations operating in the inspection and certification services sector that demand high standards of professionalism and integrity.

Future Research Directions

Although this study makes important contributions, it has several limitations, which offer opportunities for future research. First, it was conducted solely on one type of professional inspection and certification service organization in Balikpapan City, which limits the generalizability of the results. Future research could expand this scope by including other professional service sectors or conducting cross-industry comparisons to strengthen the external validity.

Second, it uses a quantitative survey-based approach with a cross-sectional design. Future studies could employ a longitudinal design to capture the dynamics of the changes in communication, motivation, and affective commitment to performance over time. Furthermore, qualitative or mixed-method research can provide a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying the relationships between these variables. Third, the research variables in this model are limited to communication, achievement motivation, affective commitment, and employee performance. Future research could add other variables such as transformational leadership, organizational culture, and perceived organizational support to build a more comprehensive model.

Fourth, future research could examine the moderating role of factors such as job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, and work engagement in strengthening or weakening the relationship between the variables. This deepens our understanding of the contextual factors influencing employee performance in the professional services sector. Overall, this study opens up a broad space for future research, both to strengthen the theoretical foundation and to provide practical contributions to human resource management in professional service organizations.

Highlights

- This study investigates how affective commitment mediates the relationship between communication, achievement motivation, and employee performance in a professional inspection and certification service company.
- Data were collected from 127 employees and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.
- The results revealed that communication and achievement motivation significantly improved employee performance both directly and indirectly through affective commitment.
- The findings extend social exchange theory and organizational commitment theory by confirming the psychological mechanism of affective commitment.
- Practical implications highlight the importance of fostering internal communication, enhancing achievement-oriented motivation, and reinforcing affective commitment to ensure sustainable performance improvement in professional service organizations.

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Conflict Of Interest Declaration

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article. All authors have approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of this study.

Author Contributions Statement

Rochmat Widodo: Conceptualization; Methodology; Data Collection; Formal Analysis; Writing – Original Draft Preparation. Tetra Hidayati: Validation; Supervision; Writing – Review and Editing; Project Administration. Siti Maria: Literature Review; Visualization; Writing – Review and Editing; Resources. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of this study.

Ethical Considerations Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards for human participants. Participation was voluntary and all respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, and the confidentiality of the responses was guaranteed by ensuring that no identifying information was disclosed in the reporting of the results. Data were used exclusively for academic purposes and stored securely to protect the participants' privacy. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Mulawarman.

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