

Knowledge Sharing as a Mediator between Emotional Intelligence, Communication, and Employee Performance in the Agrotourism Sector

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the effects of emotional intelligence and communication on employee performance, with knowledge sharing serving as a mediating variable in the agrotourism sector.

Method: This study employs a quantitative approach using primary data collected through offline questionnaire distribution. A total of 152 employees of the PTPN IX Kaligua region participated as respondents. The data were analyzed using SEM-PLS with the support of SmartPLS version 4.

Result: The findings indicate that emotional intelligence, communication, and knowledge sharing each have a significant positive effect on employee performance. Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between communication and employee performance. However, knowledge sharing does not mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance.

Practical Implications for Economic Growth and Development: These findings highlight the importance of emotional intelligence, communication, and knowledge sharing in improving employee performance. Strengthening communication practices and fostering knowledge sharing among employees can enhance productivity, which may benefit organizational performance and, in the broader context, contribute to economic growth and development.

Originality/Value: This study proposes a model that positions knowledge sharing as an intervening mechanism linking emotional intelligence and communication to employee performance in the agrotourism sector.

Keywords: *Communication, Emotional Intelligence, Knowledge Sharing, Employee Performance, Agrotourism*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is widely recognized as an agrarian country due to its extensive agricultural land and diverse topographical conditions. These characteristics provide substantial potential for the development of agrotourism. As a growing sector in Indonesia, agrotourism integrates the country's rich agricultural heritage with tourism opportunities, offering visitors educational and recreational experiences related to rural life, sustainable farming practices, and the appreciation of natural landscapes (Smart Agriculture Institute Indonesia, 2024). According to the World Bank Group (2023), Indonesia's agricultural land area reached 551,222 km², indicating significant opportunities to integrate agricultural and tourism activities in ways that support economic growth. In addition, shifts in tourist preferences following the COVID-19 pandemic have increased public interest in nature-based tourism destinations (Pasxmedia Holding, 2024).

As one of the most dynamic industries globally, the tourism sector relies heavily on effective human resource management to maintain resilience and competitiveness (Wardhana et al., 2024). Nevertheless, studies addressing the human resource strategies and competencies required for agrotourism development, particularly in developing contexts, remain limited (Bhatta et al., 2020). Data from the Data Center and Information System of the Republic of Indonesia (2025) show a substantial increase in employment in the tourism sector, from 18,762,235 workers in 2018 to 38,229,737 in 2023. This trend suggests a growing workforce contribution to the tourism industry, which has the potential to strengthen tourist attraction and, ultimately, support national economic performance.

Human resources play a central role in organizational performance because employees constitute one of the most valuable assets of any organization (Ahmed, 2025). Employee performance is a multidimensional construct that is essential to organizational success, encompassing individual contributions to productivity as well as broader economic outcomes (Dlamini et al., 2022; Sai et al., 2025). It is shaped by various internal and external factors. From the perspective of Performance Theory, performance is understood as measurable work behavior rather than merely the outcomes produced. Such behavior is determined by several factors, including employees' knowledge, skills, and motivation (Campbell et al., 1993).

This study is grounded in Human Capital Theory (HCT). Originating from the works of Schultz (1961) and Becker et al. (1990), HCT conceptualizes individual knowledge, skills, and abilities as forms of capital that can generate economic value through increased productivity (Becker, 1994). Within this framework, emotional intelligence and communication competence may be understood as strategic forms of psychological and social capital that can be developed and invested in to enhance employee performance. Knowledge sharing, in turn, represents the organizational process through which such human capital is exchanged, utilized, and amplified across individuals (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005). HCT therefore provides a strong theoretical basis for explaining how the development and mobilization of interpersonal capabilities can produce measurable performance outcomes.

One of the factors frequently associated with employee performance is emotional intelligence (Alferaih, 2021; Kharismasyah et al., 2021; Azmy, 2023; Ginoga & Mangkona, 2022; Elmario et al., 2024; Rasyid et al., 2025; Sinlae et al., 2024). Goleman (1995) defines emotional intelligence as the capacity to recognize one's own emotions and those of others, to motivate oneself, and to manage emotions effectively in both personal and social relationships. Its key dimensions include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, all of which are closely linked to employee performance (Goleman, 1998). Employees with high emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate better emotional regulation, stronger interpersonal relationships, and more adaptive work behaviors, which can improve performance (Alferaih, 2021; Azmy, 2023). Furthermore, emotional intelligence has broader implications for organizational dynamics and employee well-being, making it an important factor in workplace effectiveness (Wonda, 2024). Despite its relevance, many organizations, particularly in the service sector, have not fully recognized the potential of emotional intelligence in supporting employees' achievement of performance targets (Cherniss, 1999). It is also important to note that previous findings remain inconclusive, as studies by Sjahruddin

(2024) and Adha (2021) reported that emotional intelligence did not significantly affect employee performance.

Communication is another factor that has been shown to influence employee performance (Kemala et al., 2023; Ma & Akhmad, 2021; Mutua et al., 2023; Nirmala et al., 2024; Paulus et al., 2022; Narlan & Wati, 2022). Stevens (1950) defines communication as the discriminatory response of an organism to a stimulus. In organizational settings, however, communication is more meaningfully understood as a process through which individuals exchange information, ideas, and understanding to coordinate action and maintain productive relationships. Effective communication fosters employee participation, reduces conflict, and strengthens collaboration, all of which contribute positively to performance (Wiwa et al., 2023; Elok et al., 2024). Communication dimensions such as openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, equality, self-awareness, and awareness of others have been identified as important in shaping performance outcomes (Tubbs & Moss, 2002). However, communication is not always effectively practiced within organizations. Poor communication among employees may result in misunderstandings, weakened coordination, and reduced performance (Mishra et al., 2014). In contrast to the dominant view, several studies have also found no significant relationship between communication and employee performance (Akbar Cahya et al., 2023; Resta & Endratno, 2022), indicating the need for further investigation.

To explain the relationship between emotional intelligence, communication, and employee performance more comprehensively, this study introduces knowledge sharing as a mediating variable. Knowledge sharing may serve as a mechanism through which emotional intelligence and communication influence performance outcomes. Helmstädter (2003) defines knowledge sharing as an interaction among human actors in which knowledge serves as the primary resource being exchanged. Prior studies have shown that higher levels of emotional intelligence can encourage stronger knowledge-sharing behavior among employees (Li & Li, 2024; Zhang & Xu, 2024). Employees who are better able to understand and regulate emotions are generally more willing to collaborate, build trust, and exchange valuable knowledge with colleagues.

Communication also plays a vital role in facilitating knowledge sharing. Meaningful knowledge exchange within organizations requires an open, supportive, and responsive communication climate. When communication is transparent and inclusive, employees are more likely to feel valued and encouraged to contribute their ideas and experiences. Effective communication ensures that knowledge is conveyed accurately and efficiently, thereby accelerating the exchange of information within the organization (Mkhize & Lourens, 2025). Bagieńska (2024) further argues that communication is a fundamental component in the successful transfer of knowledge, while Bougherza et al. (2025) identify communication responsiveness as one of the strongest predictors of knowledge-sharing behavior.

Studies by Sanosra et al. (2022) and Swanson et al. (2020) demonstrate that knowledge sharing significantly enhances performance outcomes. According to Öngel and Taşkiran (2025), employees who share knowledge are better able to address problems and challenges by generating more effective solutions, which ultimately improves job performance. Similarly, Makmur et al. (2025) note that employees who actively assist one another and exchange knowledge are more capable of completing a variety of tasks successfully. These findings suggest that knowledge sharing is not only an outcome of strong interpersonal capabilities, but also a strategic mechanism that supports improved employee performance.

Based on this background, the present study examines the effects of emotional intelligence and communication on employee performance, with knowledge sharing functioning as a mediating variable in the agrotourism sector. This study extends previous research by Supramaniam and Singaravelloo (2021) by incorporating communication as an additional independent variable and positioning knowledge sharing as a mediator. This relationship remains relatively underexplored in the agrotourism context.

Hypotheses Development

Emotional Intelligence and Employee Performance

Emotional intelligence (EI) is widely regarded as a factor that positively and directly influences employee performance. Drawing on Goleman's competency-based model, EI consists of a set of learnable competencies, namely self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, all of which contribute to effectiveness in the workplace (Goleman, 1998). Employees who demonstrate high levels of these competencies are generally better able to manage stress, navigate social interactions, and respond empathetically to others. These capabilities enable them to maintain focus, regulate their behavior, and perform work tasks more effectively. In this sense, the practical application of emotional intelligence contributes directly to improved job performance. In addition, emotionally intelligent employees are more capable of controlling their emotions in high-pressure situations, thereby preserving the psychological stability needed for problem-solving and decision-making, which ultimately enhances performance outcomes (Mayer et al., 2004).

H1: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Communication and Employee Performance

Communication, which encompasses the exchange of thoughts, ideas, and feedback, is a fundamental process that shapes workplace relationships and employees' understanding of organizational tasks and expectations. From the perspective of Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT), individuals seek to minimize ambiguity in social interactions through increased communication, thereby enhancing predictability and mutual understanding (Berger & Calabrese, 2005). In organizational settings, effective communication serves as a vital source of information that managers rely on when making decisions that influence both individual and organizational performance (Musheke & Phiri, 2021). By reducing uncertainty, communication helps minimize errors, facilitates faster learning, and strengthens coordination within the workplace. These conditions improve employees' task competence, support better decision-making, and ultimately enhance overall performance.

H2: Communication has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Emotional Intelligence and Knowledge Sharing

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotional information in oneself and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (SET), interpersonal relationships are governed by norms of reciprocity, in which trust becomes a crucial foundation for voluntary and cooperative behavior (Blau, 1964). In the workplace, employees with high emotional intelligence are better able to interpret social cues, manage their emotional responses, and demonstrate empathy toward their colleagues. These abilities help foster trust-based relationships and encourage reciprocal exchanges among team members. As a result, emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to engage in knowledge-sharing behaviors, both in terms of frequency and quality. When individuals feel psychologically safe, valued, and connected to others, they tend to be more willing to contribute their knowledge for the benefit of the team and organization. Empirical findings also support this argument, showing that higher emotional intelligence significantly promotes knowledge sharing (Li & Li, 2024).

H3: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Communication and Knowledge Sharing

Communication is the process through which information is created and exchanged to achieve mutual understanding, and it serves as a fundamental mechanism for transferring

knowledge within organizations. Its influence on knowledge-sharing behavior can be understood through Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which posits that individuals acquire appropriate behaviors through observation, imitation, and social reinforcement within their environment (Bandura, 2001). In organizational settings, when employees observe leaders and colleagues communicating openly and actively sharing knowledge, they are more likely to adopt similar behaviors. Open, responsive, and supportive communication not only provides the channels through which knowledge can be exchanged, but also establishes the social norms that encourage such exchanges. Consequently, effective communication fosters an environment in which employees are more willing to share insights, experiences, and expertise with one another (Cormican et al., 2021).

H4: Communication has a positive and significant effect on knowledge sharing.

Knowledge Sharing and Employee Performance

Knowledge sharing, defined as the exchange of job-related information, experience, and expertise among employees, is widely considered an important factor in improving employee performance (Kim & Hang, 2024). This relationship can be explained through the Knowledge-Based View (KBV), which emphasizes that knowledge is a strategic organizational resource and that the effective integration and application of knowledge are essential sources of competitive advantage and performance improvement (Grant, 1996). In this context, employees who actively share and acquire knowledge are likely to perform their tasks more efficiently, avoid unnecessary errors, and generate more innovative solutions to work-related problems. Through access to broader and more relevant knowledge, employees can enhance their competencies and achieve better individual performance outcomes.

H5: Knowledge sharing has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing: Emotional Intelligence on Employee Performance

The relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance may not always occur directly, but can also operate through an intervening mechanism such as knowledge sharing. This mediating relationship can be explained by integrating Goleman's competency-based model of emotional intelligence with the Knowledge-Based View (KBV). Goleman's model emphasizes that emotional intelligence consists of developable competencies, particularly self-management and relationship management, which enable individuals to regulate emotions, build trust, and maintain positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Goleman, 1998). At the same time, the Knowledge-Based View argues that the integration and application of knowledge are central drivers of individual and organizational performance (Grant, 1996). Within this framework, employees with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to create an environment characterized by psychological safety, trust, and constructive social interaction, all of which support open knowledge exchange. As knowledge sharing increases, employees gain access to broader information, strengthen collaboration, and improve their problem-solving capabilities, which in turn enhances performance (Zulfadil et al., 2020).

H6: Knowledge sharing mediates the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance.

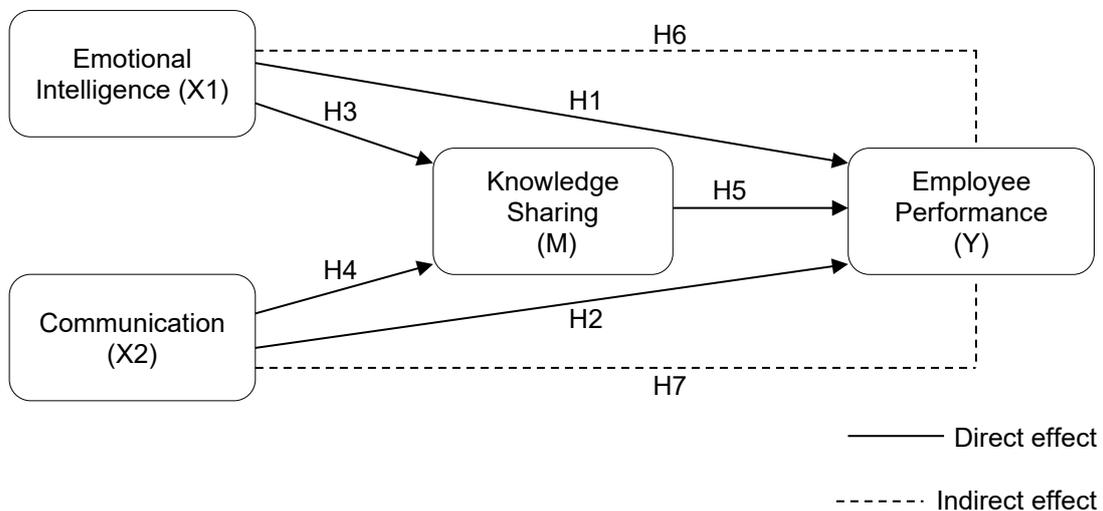
Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing: Communication on Employee Performance

Communication is widely believed to enhance employee performance, particularly when its effects are transmitted through knowledge sharing. This relationship can be explained by integrating Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) and the Knowledge-Based View (KBV). URT posits that communication reduces ambiguity and increases predictability in social and

organizational interactions (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). In the workplace, clearer communication enables employees to better understand tasks, expectations, and shared objectives. Meanwhile, the Knowledge-Based View emphasizes that the integration and application of knowledge are essential sources of effectiveness and improved performance (Grant, 1996). Within this framework, effective communication facilitates the exchange of relevant knowledge among employees, thereby transforming communicative clarity into productive work practices. Through knowledge sharing, employees are able to solve problems more quickly, adapt more effectively, and produce higher-quality outcomes. Previous studies also suggest that communication tools, including job-related social media, can strengthen knowledge-sharing practices and thereby improve employee productivity and adaptability, which ultimately contribute to better performance outcomes (Chen et al., 2023; Pitafi et al., 2025).

H7: Knowledge sharing mediates the effect of communication on employee performance.

Figure 1. Research Framework



Source: Developed by the authors (2026)

METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach. Data were gathered through accidental sampling, whereby respondents were selected based on their availability at the research location. The data collection instrument consisted of a questionnaire measured using a five-point Likert scale and administered to employees of the PTPN IX Kaligua region. The study population included all 245 employees of the PTPN IX Kaligua region working across various departments. Using Slovin’s formula with a 5% margin of error, the required sample size was determined to be 152 respondents (Hair et al., 2019). Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 4. The analytical procedure involved two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to test construct validity and reliability, followed by evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to examine the hypothesized relationships among the variables in the proposed model (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 1. Operational Variables

Variable	Dimension	Statement	Source
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I realise the things that can make me lazy at work - The fear of failure always affects me more than the hope of success - I can recognise my own emotions when facing problems 	Goleman (2009)
	Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Even in a tense situation, I can still think calmly - I am able to manage my own emotions when conflicts arise with my superiors, colleagues, or outside the office - I am highly self-motivated at work 	
	Social Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am always willing to listen to my friends' complaints even though I have my own problems - I have empathy for my superiors, colleagues and those around me in the workplace 	
	Relationship Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When given an assignment, I prefer to work on it by discussing it with friends rather than doing it alone - I can accept criticism with an open mind if it is constructive 	
Communication (Com.)	Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I try to listen and understand what my coworkers' problems are 	(Tubbs & Moss, 2000)
	Awareness of Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I can understand messages and take action in accordance with the content of messages communicated by leaders/superiors - When communicating with my superiors, I pay close attention to the situation, conditions and also my superiors' moods 	
	Relationships in Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The communication that takes place today is capable of creating good relationships between employees in the office - My coworkers and I have mutual trust in each other when completing our work 	
	Interpersonal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My communication process, which takes place on a daily basis, occurs in a comfortable atmosphere - My current communication process can influence the attitudes of other coworker at work 	
	Conflict and Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If there are obstacles at work, I always ask for feedback from other employees/superiors 	
	Ethics and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have the freedom to express matters related to work - I always convey information related to work honestly 	
	Organizational Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I always support innovative ideas at work - I always receive positive feedback when my work is completed correctly 	

Variable	Dimension	Statement	Source
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I feel that my coworkers and I have equal rights to express our opinions - My coworkers and I have equal opportunities to communicate with our superiors 	
Knowledge Sharing (KS)	Knowledge Donating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I actively share knowledge with other coworkers because it has become the norm - I share knowledge with coworkers within a department - I share knowledge with coworkers from other departments - I share my skills with coworkers within a department - I share my skills with coworkers from other departments - When I learn something new, I share it with my coworkers within a department - When I learn something new, I share it with coworkers outside my department 	Van Den Hooff & De Ridder (2004)
	Knowledge Collecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My coworkers are willing to share their knowledge with me - My coworkers in the same department shared what they knew when I asked them - Coworkers from other departments shared what they knew when I asked them - Coworkers in the same department shared their skills when I asked them - Coworkers from other departments shared their skills when I asked them - When my coworkers learn anything new, they share it with me 	
Employee Performance (EP)	Work Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I work in accordance with the company's quality standards - I am able to work diligently and minimize errors in my work - The quality of work is measured based on effectiveness and time efficiency - I am an honest employee 	Mangkunegara (2019)
	Work Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I work according to the quantity of work set by the company - Salaries are paid based on the quantity of work completed - I completed the work according to the set targets 	
	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I use my working time wisely - Being effective and efficient with time is my working principle - I tend to procrastinate on tasks that I dislike 	
	Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I use the tools according to my needs - The supervision by my superiors makes me work harder 	
	Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have a supportive work team 	

Source: Compiled by the authors (2026)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Respondents

The study involved 152 respondents, the majority of whom were male (85.5%) and aged between 31 and 40 years. Most respondents had completed high school education and had more than ten years of work experience. This demographic profile suggests that the workforce at PTPN IX Kaligua is characterized more by practical expertise and long-term organizational experience than by higher formal educational attainment. From an organizational perspective, this profile may be viewed as both a strength and a challenge. On the one hand, employees' extensive experience and deep local knowledge can support the creation of authentic and meaningful visitor experiences in the agrotourism sector. On the other hand, the relative homogeneity in gender composition and educational background may limit the organization's adaptability to emerging demands, particularly in areas such as digital marketing and innovation. Therefore, integrating employees' practical experience with targeted training and capacity-building programs would be essential to enhance organizational sustainability in the long term. The demographic characteristics of respondents from the four departments within the PTPN IX Kaligua region are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic of Respondents

Demographic Items	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	130	85.5
	Female	22	14.5
Age (years)	< 21	1	0.7
	21–30	26	17.1
	31–40	67	44.1
	41–50	51	33.5
	> 50	7	4.6
	Education	Middle School	41
	High School	88	57.9
	Diploma	2	1.3
	Bachelor's Degree	7	4.6
	Others	14	9.2
Department	Main Office	26	17.1
	Agrotourism Office	28	18.4
	Processing Technique	51	33.5
	Tea Pickers	47	31.0
Length of service (years)	< 3	8	5.3
	4–6	12	7.9
	7–9	43	28.3
	> 10	89	58.5

Source: Processed data (2026)

Validity and Reliability Tests

The table below presents the results of the validity and reliability assessment of the study constructs. Convergent validity was evaluated using factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Following the recommended criteria, a loading factor greater than 0.70 was considered the ideal benchmark (Hair et al., 2019), while an AVE value of 0.50 or higher indicated adequate convergent validity. Construct reliability was assessed using composite reliability (CR), with a minimum threshold of 0.70 as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Based on the results of the convergent validity and reliability tests, all constructs met the required criteria.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Tests Result

Construct	Code	Loading	AVE	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
Com.	Com7	0.722	0.688	0.885	0.916
	Com8	0.853			
	Com10	0.830			
	Com11	0.828			
	Com12	0.904			
EI	EI3	0.838	0.695	0.890	0.919
	EI5	0.862			
	EI6	0.814			
	EI8	0.878			
	EI10	0.774			
EP	EP2	0.777	0.595	0.830	0.880
	EP5	0.762			
	EP8	0.812			
	EP9	0.751			
	EP13	0.753			
KS	KS1	0.787	0.673	0.918	0.935
	KS6	0.734			
	KS8	0.846			
	KS9	0.896			
	KS10	0.869			
	KS12	0.846			
	KS13	0.749			

Source: Processed data (2026)

Discriminant Validity Test

The Fornell–Larcker criterion is commonly used to assess discriminant validity by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct with its correlations with other constructs. Discriminant validity is established when the square root of the AVE for a given construct exceeds its correlations with all other constructs, indicating that the construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other latent variables. In Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), this criterion is important for confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Test Result

	Com.	EI	EP	KS
Com.	0.829			
EI	0.728	0.834		
EP	0.721	0.692	0.771	
KS	0.589	0.546	0.592	0.820

Source: Processed data (2026)

R-square Value

The coefficient of determination (R-square) indicates the extent to which the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variable. A higher R-square value suggests that the model has stronger explanatory and predictive power. The following section presents the results of the R-square and adjusted R-square values obtained from the SmartPLS output. According to Hair et al. (2019), in management research, an R-square value above 0.50 is considered substantial, a value above 0.30 is regarded as moderate, and a value above 0.10 is considered acceptable.

Table 5. R-square Value

	R-square	R-square Adjusted
EP	0.605	0.597
KS	0.376	0.367

Source: Processed data (2026)

Hypotheses Testing

Based on the hypothesis testing results, emotional intelligence (EI) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, as indicated by a p-value of 0.006 (< 0.05), while communication also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a p-value of 0.001 (< 0.05); therefore, H1 and H2 are accepted. In addition, EI significantly and positively affects knowledge sharing (KS), as shown by a p-value of 0.035 (< 0.05), and communication likewise has a positive and significant effect on KS, with a p-value of 0.001 (< 0.05), which supports H3 and H4. KS also exerts a positive and significant effect on employee performance, with a p-value of 0.009 (< 0.05), indicating that greater knowledge-sharing activities among employees contribute to better performance; thus, H5 is accepted. Regarding the mediation analysis, the indirect effect of EI on employee performance through KS is not significant, as reflected by a p-value of 0.128 (> 0.05), meaning that KS does not mediate the relationship between EI and employee performance; therefore, H6 is rejected. In contrast, the indirect effect of communication on employee performance through KS is significant, with a p-value of 0.036 (< 0.05), indicating that KS mediates the relationship between communication and employee performance; thus, H7 is accepted. Since the direct effect of communication on employee performance remains significant, this mediation is classified as partial mediation.

Table 6. Hypotheses Test Result

Observed Path	T-statistics	P-values	Conclusion
EI → EP	3.062	0.002	Accepted
Com. → EP	3.773	0.000	Accepted
EI → KS	2.086	0.037	Accepted
Com. → KS	3.273	0.001	Accepted
KS → EP	2.681	0.007	Accepted
EI → KS → EP	1.527	0.127	Rejected
Com. → KS → EP	2.105	0.035	Accepted

Source: Processed data (2026)

Discussion

The findings confirm that emotional intelligence (EI) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (EP) at PTPN IX Kaligua. This result is consistent with the agrotourism context, where employees frequently manage visitor interactions and face unpredictable challenges, both of which require emotional regulation and effective collaboration. As noted by Alferaih (2021), Kharismasyah et al. (2021), Azmy (2023), Ginoga and Mangkona (2022), Elmario et al. (2024), Rasyid et al. (2025), and Sinlae et al. (2024), employees with high EI are more likely to manage stress effectively and collaborate well, thereby strengthening their work performance and supporting organizational goals. Communication also shows a positive and significant effect on employee performance at PTPN IX Kaligua. In the agrotourism context, employees must continuously coordinate daily operations with coworkers and interact with visitors. Clear communication reduces misunderstandings during daily activities and supports smoother work processes. As stated by Kemala et al. (2023), Ma and Akhmad (2021), Mutua et al. (2023), Nirmala et al. (2024), Paulus et al. (2022), and Narlan and Wati (2022), effective communication contributes to improved employee performance and is

essential for enhancing organizational performance and fostering positive workplace relationships.

The results further confirm that EI significantly influences knowledge sharing (KS) at PTPN IX Kaligua. This finding is relevant to the agrotourism context, where employees rely on shared practical knowledge related to farming, visitor management, and daily operations. Employees with higher EI are more likely to create a safe and trusting environment in which coworkers feel comfortable exchanging ideas and expertise without fear of judgment. This result is in line with previous studies by Mahmood and Toker (2021), Li and Li (2024), and Zhang and Xu (2024), which found that EI enhances KS and ultimately supports problem-solving and employee creativity within organizations. The findings also show that communication has a positive and significant effect on KS at PTPN IX Kaligua. This is consistent with the agrotourism context, where daily operations depend on employees exchanging practical knowledge about farming techniques and visitor handling. Effective communication builds trust among coworkers and makes them more willing to share experiences without hesitation. This result is supported by previous studies, including Bagieńska (2024) and Bougherza et al. (2025), which found that communication fosters the trust necessary to encourage employees to share knowledge and ideas, thereby creating a culture that promotes collaboration and organizational learning.

The study also found that KS has a positive and significant effect on EP at PTPN IX Kaligua. In the agrotourism context, employees must continuously exchange practical knowledge regarding farming methods, guest services, and operational challenges. When employees share insights openly, they learn from one another's experiences, which strengthens their individual competence. This result aligns with previous studies by Pelealu (2022), Sanosra et al. (2022), and Swanson et al. (2020), which found that KS enhances individual competence through the implementation and development of ideas within organizations, ultimately improving EP. However, the mediation analysis indicates that KS does not mediate the relationship between EI and EP at PTPN IX Kaligua. This finding reflects the nature of agrotourism work, where employees often face immediate interpersonal challenges with visitors or unexpected operational issues. In such situations, emotional self-regulation may directly influence performance without requiring knowledge exchange. This result is consistent with studies by Nurcahaya et al. (2023) and Akbar et al. (2024), which also found that KS does not function as a mediator in the performance pathway.

In contrast, the findings show that KS mediates the relationship between communication and EP at PTPN IX Kaligua. This is in line with the agrotourism context, where effective communication alone is insufficient unless employees also exchange practical knowledge about farming techniques, visitor handling, and daily operations. Communication opens the way for interaction, while KS enables the transfer of solutions and work-related insights that improve performance. This finding indicates that KS serves as a mediating mechanism linking communication and EP, as the exchange of experiences and knowledge contributes to improved performance at both the individual and organizational levels.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the effects of emotional intelligence (EI) and communication on employee performance (EP), with knowledge sharing (KS) serving as a mediating variable. The primary objective was to understand both the direct and indirect relationships among these variables within the agrotourism sector. The findings indicate that EI and communication each have a direct and significant effect on employee performance. However, KS does not mediate the relationship between EI and EP. In contrast, KS partially mediates the relationship between communication and EP. These results suggest that while EI contributes to performance directly, communication enhances performance both directly and indirectly through the promotion of knowledge sharing among employees.

Based on these findings, companies should support training initiatives that strengthen communication and emotional intelligence, as both factors contribute directly to improved

performance. In addition, organizations need to create collaborative work environments, provide open discussion platforms, and implement reward systems that encourage employees to share information across departments, given that communication promotes KS, which in turn improves performance. Further research is recommended to examine other potential mediating variables that may explain the relationship between EI and performance, such as organizational culture or employee engagement. Future studies may also investigate these variables in different sectors or apply qualitative approaches to gain deeper insight into how communication influences knowledge sharing in actual workplace settings.

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