

Leadership Communication Practices of Public School Heads and Teachers' Motivation

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Abstract: *The development of productive working relationships between school heads and teachers heavily depends on their ability to communicate effectively. Teaching staff who possess high motivation levels, together with effective learning-influencing capability, create dynamic learning spaces that deliver better results for their learners. The study explored how educational outcome-dependent school head communication practices affect teacher motivation in an academic context. The research focused on discovering which leadership communication practices school heads in public elementary schools commonly use while investigating their relationship with teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation levels. The study used a researcher-made questionnaire to investigate the selected n=124 public elementary school teachers through purposive sampling within the convenience-based research design. A Pearson's correlation test and descriptive statistics analyzed the gathered information to check the validity. The research showed that proper leadership communication approaches, followed by public school heads, produced positive motivational effects in teachers. The results of the study demonstrated that school heads should build effective communication strategies with consistent application to improve teacher motivation, leading to better educational quality.*

Keywords: communication styles, decision-making, feedback, leadership practices, teacher motivation

1. Introduction

Leadership communication is the key to well-organized institutions such as schools. Effective leadership communication can foster a deep sense of belonging, drive, and commitment among teachers, which is crucial for enhancing their performance and the overall success of educational institutions. This study highlights the communication practices used by school heads that significantly influence the motivation levels of teachers in public schools.

The manner of providing effective communication practices by school heads to teachers plays a significant role in handling schools regardless of size. Current studies highlight that effective leadership communication positively affects organizational commitment and performance. Teachers who feel valued and informed by their school heads tend to be more motivated, which in turn, positively benefits learners' outcomes.

The role of the leader is so important that the issue of leadership has become a factor that has attracted the attention of researchers in the field of organizational behavior. When leaders demonstrate good leadership, employees will always have the chance to learn proper behavior when dealing with work. Likewise, with the public bureaucracy, the leader plays a very strategic role. In public organizations, subordinates always depend on the leader. (Sudiarditha et al., 2022)

With the kind of leadership that school heads in the education sector exhibit, the work landscape has witnessed a lot of changes throughout the years. How teachers are managed and led by their superiors is somehow a big deal on their part. The success of achieving the desired goals of the school is through the joint and cooperative effort of all educators concerned. Educators, with different perceptions, are motivated to be of full support to the school and learners. (Manlapaz, 2022)

Despite the recognition of the importance of leadership communication, there is a noticeable gap in research that seeks the specific practices of communication most effective in motivating teachers. Current studies on leadership practices often overlook the specific impact of communication channels on teacher motivation. This identified gap emphasizes the importance of conducting a more detailed analysis of the relationship between specific communication practices of school heads and teachers' motivation (Salutan & Oco, 2025).

Communication and collaboration are key elements in every organization that help to ensure accomplishment for all stakeholders, especially in the development, articulation, and implementation of plans, ideas, and concepts. Communication is an essential tool in accomplishing goals or achieving productivity, and maintaining cohesion at all levels of an organization. A teacher who has high performance expectations requires communication and organizational resources to establish a culture that values success. (Mull, 2021). It is still unknown how the communication practices of school heads motivate or demotivate teachers in fulfilling their assigned tasks or doing their job as a whole.

The current problem is that, while leadership styles have been extensively studied, the nuanced aspects of communication within leadership, especially in educational settings, remain obscure. Thus, this research is necessary to determine the most effective communication practices in enhancing teachers' motivation in public schools. Addressing this problem can provide school heads with actionable insights to improve their communication practices, boosting teachers' morale and performance. This research sought to identify the underlying phenomena on how teachers' motivation is affected by the school heads' way of communicating to them as far as schoolwork is concerned

Effective communication enhances organizational relationships and minimizes strikes and lockouts. Organizational purposes and goals are sometimes defeated when communication is not effective. Wastes and costly mistakes have been made due to communication gaps. Lack of effective communication is one of the major reasons that may lead to confusion and poor planning in many organizations (Mukelabi M. & Jackson P., 2021).

Despite the increasing research on leadership and communication, the specific impact of various communication methods like group chats, memo feedback, and direct calls or texts on teacher motivation in public schools requires further analysis. By addressing this gap, the study sought to provide insights into the most effective communication practices leaders may employ to enhance teachers' motivation, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes.

The theoretical backbone of this study rests on the interconnected principles of Transformational Leadership Theory and Goal-Setting Theory. These frameworks help examine how the communication styles of school heads can influence the motivation levels of their teachers.

Envisioning visions and motivating are two core jobs of effective leadership. According to traditional transformational leadership literature, transformational leaders guide and encourage employee mindfulness by enunciating a vision that escalates employees' consciousness and consideration for the significance of organizational values, goals, and performance. Thus, fundamental theory on transformational leadership is a strong accentuation on the part of a combined vision; that is, an idealized arrangement of objectives that the organization seeks to accomplish one day. Transformational leaders, through clear enunciation, have their utmost influence on the followers' sentiments by cultivating a feeling of success and proficiency in them. Transformational leaders are much capable of improving organizational outcomes according to the market requirements by developing human resources and creating justified modifications. (Khan et al., 2020)

In the context of this research, it is posited that school heads who embody transformational communication practices such as maintaining open dialogue, offering developmental feedback, and acknowledging individual contributions will find an impact on their teachers' motivation and overall performance.

Complementing this perspective is Goal-Setting Theory, Edwin Locke initially developed Goal Setting Theory in the 1960s, and it has since become one of the most widely studied and applied theories in organizational behavior. The core premise of Goal Setting Theory is that setting specific, challenging, and attainable goals leads to higher performance levels than vague, easy, or non-existent goals. This theory is grounded in empirical research that has consistently shown that individuals who are given clear, challenging goals are more likely to be motivated and perform better than those who are given easy or ambiguous goals. (Rozen et al., 2025)

Goal-setting theory indicates that there is a positive relationship between setting explicitly high goals and academic performance. When one is committed and invested in setting a goal, no matter the difficulty of the goal, performance is increased, and attainment is probable. (Sides & Cuevas, 2020)

This study aims to identify how specific communication strategies used by school heads influence the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of public elementary school teachers. Leadership communication is considered the independent variable, encompassing key dimensions such as the effective dissemination of information through channels like group chats, the provision of feedback on policy implementation, for instance, clarifying memoranda, and personal engagement through calls and text messages. The dependent variable, teachers' motivation, is explored in terms of both its extrinsic and intrinsic facets.

As Hadijah (2024) suggests, leadership serves as the essential conduit through which plans are communicated to teachers, translating into positive behaviors and fostering a willingness to embrace new ideas. Leadership is the capability to guide and shape teachers through inspiration rather than coercion, unlocking potential that might otherwise remain untapped.

Furthermore, Olusola & Addeh (2021) highlight the crucial role of recognition and rewards in sustaining teacher motivation. When teachers feel valued and appreciated, their intrinsic drive to contribute to the school's success is amplified, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes. Motivation, in this context, acts as a catalyst, energizing the workforce and enhancing both efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Methodology

The researcher used the correlational research design to examine the relationship between leadership communication practices and teachers' motivation. A correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them. A correlation reflects the strength and/or direction of the relationship between two or more variables. The direction of a correlation can be either positive or negative. (Bhandari, 2021). By utilizing surveys and questionnaires, data were collected from the teachers to investigate the extent to which various leadership communication approaches, such as providing clear and consistent expectations, offering constructive feedback, actively listening to teacher concerns, and fostering open and honest dialogues, are associated with different levels of teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Descriptive statistics, such as Mean and Standard Deviation, were employed to characterize the variables of the study as reflected in Problems 1 and 2. Inferential statistics were then used to test the hypotheses and assess the significance of relationships between those variables. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was employed to assess the strength and direction of the linear association between leadership communication styles and teachers' motivation. A positive coefficient signifies a positive relationship, and a negative coefficient, a negative relationship.

3. Results

Table 1 presents the correlation between leadership communication and teachers' motivation. Dissemination of information exhibits a low positive correlation of 0.256 with a statistically significant p-value of 0.021. This finding

indicates that when school heads effectively share information, it is associated with a marginal increase in teacher motivation. While keeping teachers informed appears to have a positive influence, the modest correlation suggests that this singular communication practice may not be a robust driver of substantial motivational gains.

Table 1: Correlation Between Leadership Communication and Teachers' Motivation

Variables	r-value	p-value	Level of Correlation	Decision	Interpretation
Dissemination of information	0.256	0.021	Low Positive Correlation	Reject Ho	Significant
Providing Feedback	0.228	0.047	Moderate Positive Correlation	Reject Ho	Significant
Engagement in Decision-making	0.518	0.001	Moderate Positive Correlation	Reject Ho	Significant

Note: 0.91 - 1.00 Very High Positive Correlation

0.71 - 0.90 High Positive Correlation

0.51 - 0.70 Moderate Positive Correlation

0.31 - 0.50 Low Positive Correlation

0.00 - 0.30 Negligible Positive Correlation

Significant when computed p-value < 0.05

The provision of feedback, on the other hand, demonstrates a moderate positive correlation of 0.228 with a p-value of 0.047. This result underscores the meaningful impact of timely and constructive feedback on teachers' responsiveness and overall motivation in their professional roles. When educators receive specific guidance and acknowledgment of their efforts, it significantly contributes to their drive and commitment to their teaching responsibilities. This suggests that actively engaging in feedback processes is a more potent motivator than simply disseminating information.

Notably, the engagement of teachers in decision-making reveals the strongest positive correlation among the examined communication practices, registering at 0.518 with a highly significant p-value of 0.001. This robust correlation highlights the substantial benefits of involving teachers in school-level decisions, extending beyond mere motivation to positively influence the entire educational environment. When teachers feel their voices are heard and valued through active participation, it cultivates a sense of ownership and commitment, ultimately leading to heightened job satisfaction, reduced instances of burnout, and improved teacher retention rates.

The consistent pattern of these positive correlations across different communication styles strongly emphasizes the crucial role that various leadership communication practices play in nurturing a motivated teaching workforce. These findings resonate with existing scholarly work, as evidenced by Demirdag's (2021) research establishing principal leadership as a predictor of teacher motivation, emphasizing the importance of leadership in fostering professional and personal growth. Similarly, the 2022 study by Alazmi and Al-Mahdy highlighted the significant impact of principal leadership on teacher engagement, underscoring the vital roles of open communication and inclusive decision-making.

In conclusion, the data presented in Table 8, in conjunction with supporting research, firmly establishes leadership communication as a key determinant of teacher motivation. School leaders who prioritize transparent information sharing, provide timely and constructive feedback, and actively involve teachers in decision-making are likely to cultivate a more committed and energized teaching staff. Furthermore, these communication strategies contributed to a

more positive and supportive school climate, empowering teachers to perform at their optimal levels and ultimately enhancing overall educational outcomes.

4. Conclusions

Based on the findings presented, the following conclusions are formulated:

- 1) School heads possess the ability to disseminate information, facilitate giving of feedback, and engage teachers in decision-making.
- 2) Teachers demonstrated a high degree of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
- 3) Effective communication practices are essential in motivating teachers to perform their tasks efficiently.

The study further concludes that school heads who implement effective communication practices particularly those involving feedback and shared decision-making can significantly enhance teacher motivation. It is evident that motivated teachers are more committed, resilient, and likely to contribute positively to student success. These insights underscore the importance of professional development for school leaders in communication strategies that prioritize engagement and clarity.

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