



HEAD TEACHERS' COMMUNICATION SKILLS TOWARDS TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN DODOMA PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Head Teachers' Communication Skills towards Teachers' Job Performance. It addressed one research question: What was the common method used by head teachers in communicating with teachers? The study was conducted in eight primary schools in two District of Dodoma Region. Study was used case study design. Data was collected through interview and documentary review. Results show that teachers used different methods of communication, thus effective communication within school institution provides a multiple of benefits for the whole community. It is recommended that head of schools should choose a certain method based on the nature of information that to be shared

Keywords: *Communication, communication skills, effective communication, job, performance.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Communication can be described as the process of conveying a message. It involves skills during the process such as reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. The elements that are involved include sender, receiver, medium, message, context and feedback. Effective skills of communication in any institution are very important to be well understood so as to facilitate job performances in public primary schools. According to Koopmans et al (2011), job performance is an individual influence to reach the overall performance of an organization development. Further, it can be promoted through appropriate communication skills, job planning, inspecting and evaluating of individual involvement with the organizational goals. Studies emphasize that effective communication enhances organizational outcomes Adeyemi (2010). Communication can facilitate perceptions and opinions about persons, communities, organizations, governments, and even society.

Theory on public primary schools' communication has evolved from the concept as a tool of management designed to facilitate task completion and as such was to operate as one of many

organizational variables (Feldman, 2010). As a tool of management, communication is the central means by which individual activity is coordinated to devise, disseminate, and pursue organizational goals (Bardas and Bekiari, 2019). From the scientific management viewpoint, communication is a tool of organizational design to facilitate and operate task completion so that the theorists have emphasis on communication flow from head teachers to teachers (Vroom, 2010). Taylor's scientific management was operated by a well-defined chain of command and specific division of labour (Turan, 2015). These two principles were developed based on work standards and measurement of standards. From his point of view, communication can be explained as a tool to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the chain of command, rules, and regulations.

Communication skills are those skills which are needed to speak and write properly (Komba, 2015). A person who is able to speak appropriately whilst maintaining eye contact with the audience, uses varied vocabulary and articulate speech to suit the need of the audience is generally said to be an effective speaker (Harris, 2016). Similarly, an effective head teacher should be able to use written words in various styles and techniques to communicate his/her message and ideas to the teachers (Vroom, 2010). One should have the ability to listen carefully, write and speak clearly in any situation. This is the one of communication skills features that head teachers should possess. Therefore, good reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are essential for effective communication and head teachers' needs. This is essential to communicate with teachers to influence and facilitate teachers' performance.

On the other hand, many scholars view communication as a core process of organizing (Igbaekemen, 2014). As the human behaviour perspective has been important in the atmosphere to emphasize cooperation, participation, satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships among workers, communication skills-related issues have also been recognized for organizing processes. Effective communication was a cornerstone of the human behaviour perspective. So theorists emphasized interactive communication among employees to improve mutual trust. They also recognized the importance of both formal and informal communication. This perspective has provided an idea about communication as an organizing process of human interaction and has influenced the theoretical backgrounds of communication theorists.

The study shows that communication breakdown was the greatest barrier to cooperate excellent. Inefficient communication skills in any organization (school) are symptomatic of a faulty cooperation chain (Tlaiss and Kaiser, 2010). Effective communication skills could promote good working relationship between the head teachers and teachers. It also enhances good environment between head teachers, teachers and everybody working in a particular organization. It must be noted that public primary schools' efficiency depends on the effective communication skills patterns adopted by the school to help teachers' job performance.

Proper management by head of school can produce efficient and effective work force among the teachers for the achievement of educational goals and objectives through appropriate communication skills. It is consideration of the fact that the teacher has a statutory responsibility of realizing the educational dreams of the society that the researcher sought to find out the extent to which communication skills contributes to teachers work performance

in public primary schools. Communication is an essential part of any school to attain its goals and development. Good communication skills of heads of schools are important in any institution especially in schools among the head teachers and teaching staff. Head teachers need to facilitate teachers in their job performance. Thus, communication skills are among the factors of job performance at school. The methods used in communication skills of heads of schools could facilitate teachers' performance in the school. Therefore, there is paucity of knowledge regarding communication skills on how to facilitate teacher's job performance in public primary schools in Tanzania.

Statement of the Problem

Communication is an essential part of any school to attain its goals and development. Good communication skills of heads of schools are important in any institution especially in schools among the head teachers and teaching staff. Head teachers need to facilitate teachers in their job performance. Thus, communication skills are among the factors of job performance at school. The methods used in communication skills of heads of schools could facilitate teachers' performance in the school. Therefore, there is paucity of knowledge regarding communication skills on how to facilitate teacher's job performance in public primary schools in Tanzania.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the facilitation of head teachers' communication skills towards teachers' job performance in public primary schools.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to achieve the common methods used by head teachers in communicating with teachers

Research Question

What was the common method used by head teachers in communicating with teachers?

Significance of the Study

The study may help to promote good working relationship within the school since communication is a tool for achieving both interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship between head teachers and teachers. The findings of this study are to educate the school administrators the need to ensure good communication skills as an important tool for public primary school administration. Also, serve as a guide for proper public primary school coordination. It has enlightened the school administrator on how to ensure efficiency within the school. Lastly, the study has served as a model for academicians who may wish to do research on communication skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study was guided by two theories namely, Lasswell Theory (1948) and Shannon Theory (1948). The description of each theory was given below.

Lasswell Theory provided five element of communication recognized from his experience in the Second World War. The theory provided five elements that are who says what, what says,

using which channel, to whom, and to what effect. Where by Shannon model was designed to develop the effective communication between sender and receiver and found that there is a factor that could hinder the communication break down between the two. Noise was the factor that can breakdown the communication to occur. Example, in school when a head teacher sends a message to teachers and noise occurs, then communication was break down. Shannon model resembles with Lasswell modal where Shannon also considered element such as source, channel, message, receiver and noise.

Methods Used in Communication

Active listening was among the methods employed by head teachers in communicating with teachers in schools (Tagiuri, 2018). While a head teacher talks to teachers and trying to get some any potential information, a head teacher needs to be able to use active listening skills and ask questions when she or he needs to have teachers to clarify something. According to Von Bertalanffy (2019), declared that writing memos and emails do enhance effective communication was one of the communication techniques that managers need to have. There are many situations in which managers simply cannot have face-to-face communications with employees. This was when being able to effectively and clearly communicate with workers via memo or email is crucial.

Tayler (2016), found that the presence of verbal, nonverbal and written communication was used such as face to face, visibility, small group meeting, positive communication, mindful listening practices, students centered, relationship building with teachers in communication, and use of meeting at minimal. Tayler concludes that strong communication skills relationship should be established for better effective communication in the institution. (Shonubi and Akintaro 2016), the study investigated the impact of effective communication on organization performance and found communication methods used in the organization was one to one method, small group communication, large group communication and mass communication. The study suggested that communication should be top down and bottom up, and all facts must be implicit and explicit, and consider the elements of communication. The sender and a receiver was suggested to be good listeners. In this study, communication methods should be top to down and down to top for the effective communication skills. Head teachers and teachers should provide feedback.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was used multiple case study design as it allows the researcher to gain information from different schools in order to establish thinking, perception and contribution towards research problem. In this study, multiple case study design was used because it allows gaining depth information about a study, exploring the methods, meaning and implication of the study. Also, case study was tested whether the theory is applicable in the study.

Area of the Study

This study was carried out in Dodoma region. The area was obtained through ballot system. The process was carried through writing in piece of paper then closed it regions which surrounds Iringa region where the Iringa University is located, and asked my friend to pick one piece of paper and open it to get the region. The region is in central zone side of

Tanzania Mainland. Two districts were involved in the study, Dodoma urban and Chamwino district. Dodoma urban has been chosen to represent the town area district and Chamwino rural to represent the rural area.

The Target Population

The target population consisted of all public primary school teachers in the study area.

Sample Size and Technique

The sample size for this study was involved in four schools in each district in Dodoma urban and Chamwino. Head teachers was selected purposively and teachers was selected randomly due to nature of the approach does not allow to use big number of respondents. Four schools in each district and three teachers from each school was selected randomly in order to reduce bias and due to the nature of the method that was used. Therefore, total number of head teachers was eight and twenty-four teachers which was provided a total number of thirty-two of respondents. Simple random technique was used to select teachers in order to provide equal chance of participation and purposive sampling to head teachers

Methods of Data Collection

Interview

The unstructured interview was used to collect information on the methods used by the head teachers in communicating with teachers, nature of job performance and the facilitation of head teacher's communication skills towards teacher's job performance. The researcher was an unstructured interview guide where the researcher was asked questions guide and the respondents was answering them. The researcher was recording through tape recorder and through writing down in a note book. In this method a researcher was provided a short introduction about the need of the study on the facilitation of communication skills towards teacher's job performance in order to be aware on the need of the study to be conducted. This will make the interviewee to be comfortable in answering questions. The total number of interviewee was thirty-two because the nature of the approach does not allow big number of the respondents.

Documentary Review

Documents were reviewed to collect information about the methods of communication skills of head teachers and teachers. The study was used documentary review to review the delegation letters, teaching documents and evaluation form (OPRAS). The study was used documentary review to see the duty logs of the teachers and head teachers.

Data Analysis

The interview was recorded by using tape recorder and be translated from Kiswahili to English. The qualitative data was analyzed by using thematic data analysis. Where five steps were involved that are, data familiarizations, code generation, theme searching, reviewing and description. Tapes recorder was recording data and the data recorded was transcribed into themes and put together.

Discussions of the Findings

Common methods used by head teachers in communication

Face to Face Communication.

This is the distinction of being able to see the other party parties in a conversation. This method allows for a better exchange of information since both speaker and listener are able to see and interpret body language and facial expressions. In our selected schools face to face is used in staff meetings when head teacher wants to share information with their teachers. The respondents explained that Face to face communication is defining as the mutual influence of a person direct physical presence of his or her body language.

In responding to methods of communication used in this school, the respondents said that:

Usually I use different methods of communication, if it is a confidential matter, I can call a person in my office and share with the respective staff, but if it is not a confidential matter I can share with them in meeting and group messaging. Sometime it is an urgent matter so I call through mobile phones, so it depends on the nature of the message that you intend to communicate. To my understanding all methods can be used however being careful on which to use based on the message you intend to give (Head teachers from A).

We normally use face to face communication because it is easy method of communication where we share information directly and the information can be clearly understood by all at the same time (Teacher from school C).

I use face to face communication when I share some information in staff meeting when the information is urgently needed by education officer (Head teacher school E).

Discussion of the Findings on Face to Face Communication

Face to face communication is important in building strong relationship between teachers and their management, also face to face helps to build collaborative environments that inspire and energize employees to participate in meeting, brainstorming sessions and more. The environment fosters engagement and innovation, which is important for teachers' satisfaction as well as school culture and growth. Face to face communication creates more motivation and ability to convince teachers compared to mobile phones or internal memos, it provides a room for head teacher to clarify issues which are not clear. Tayler (2016), found that the presence of verbal such as face to face with positive communication and mindful listening practices enhances effective communication.

Moreover, face to face Communication makes it easier to sense what a person is really thinking and creates bonds which results to high commitment and performance. Similar study findings were obtained by Battiston, Vidal and Kirchmaier (2017) reported that productivity is higher when face to face communication is possible, and that this effect is stronger for urgent and complex tasks for homogeneous teams, and during high pressure conditions. However, in some situations it is harder to meet all people physically and it may require to give people time to get back to speaker, rather than expecting someone to give his/her

response immediately. Also putting it in an email and giving them time to consider what you are asking can be far more effective than standing in front of them waiting.

Mobile Phones Communication

Another method mostly mentioned was mobile phones communication this was the use of informational technology that permits us to communicate with other in different positions without the use of any bodily joining. Mobile communication also was the use of technology that allows us to communicate with other in different locations without the use of any physical connection (wires or cables). A mobile phone also called mobile cellular network, cell phone or hand phone) is an example of mobile communication (wireless communication). The head teacher used phones to call teacher this method they are common used when a teacher was not around the school environment.

In this case the respondents cemented that:

In our school, head teacher uses mobile phone to communicate, especially normal message and watsup messages to communicate with us. We have developed our teachers' watsup group as official way of communicating on various issues, so even our head of school uses the same group to communicate with us. This has been a good way of communication since all of us obtain information within a second, but we experience a challenge when we don't have internet bundles, you may delay to get information on time which is very dangerous if the information need immediate attention. He further added that, use of mobile phone enable quick delivery of messages and even calls you just talk to the respective staff within a short time and ability to clarify message (Teacher, G4).

We use mobile phones especially when we are out of school example during holiday head teacher may call teacher and share information which are quickly needed (Teacher school E).

Discussion Findings on Mobile Phone Communication

Another method of communication used by teachers in the schools was mobile phone. Mobile phones are vital piece of business equipment for many business owners and their staff. Use of mobile phones in schools can boost productivity, mobility, safety and morale because it increases mobility, productivity, allows teachers to work from home or away from office and remain contact with the office, customers and supplies.

However, it compromised work-life balance because all hours can interrupt teachers' personal life if they receive calls outside their working hours. These study findings contradict with the study done by Mohammed et al (2017) which found use of mobile phone has negative impact on both quality and the quantity of face to face communications because people are neglecting to engage personally, uninhibited by phones and devices and even when actually in the presence of others.

Internal Memo

In internal memo normally information is announced through written form and distributed to all teachers or possibly posted on a notice board: Internal memos are the type of message in which some concerns or memo is written. Such as letters this was used when head teacher delegates power to teacher, also when head teacher wants every teacher to share some information with teacher can display on notes board also the use of staff meetings where can conduct a shortly meetings during break time for sharing some information with teachers' example during closing school and opening.

The respondents respond as follows;

Our head teacher uses different methods of communication, normally he used watsup message, internal memos and staff regular meetings. All these methods are used based on the nature of the information. If he wants to communicate with us on strategies that can be used to improve something, he used to call meetings, but if it is a normal message for informing staff like death or a problem he just uses normal and watsup groups to inform us. Not only that sometime we receive letters especial if a matter is very specific you can be given a letter or he use face to face by calling you in his office though sometime this lead to conflict between two people especially when one uses provocative words (Teacher, A2).

Head teacher use letter to congratulate teacher when they perform the best in the subject teach. Also we are given letters when we have appointed to be head of department also when we are given head of department (Teacher from school F).

Discussion Findings on Internal Memo

Furthermore, the study found internal memos is used in the study areas as methods of communication. These study findings are similar to by Neves and Elisenberger (2012) email play a pivotal role in team communications, even though a variety of communication tool is available. The study also asserted that team members' satisfaction and team success can only be accomplished if the communication culture in the company takes into account the technologies used and the distributed settings.

In addition to emails, also internal memo such as letters are included for communication in schools. Similar findings were obtained by Von Bertalanffy (2019), who found at workplace there are several methods of communication used however written is mostly practices, he further explained that writing memos and emails do enhance effective communication is one of the communication techniques that managers use. Tayler (2016) also found that non-verbal and written communication relationships are built among teachers in communication.

Formal Communication and Informal Communication

Teacher uses formal communication where information provided follows rules and regulation, example head teacher may write a letter to teacher can be a letter for promotion or letter for delegating power to teachers where this will be replied formally as it received. Also during meetings example during school committee especially opening the school and during closing the school where teachers can have meetings before closing the school and can have

meeting before opening the school. This meeting is conducted by having hints and is documented. Also it involves chairperson who is head teacher and secretary who is selected among teachers.

In our school uses formal communication example when an academic teacher or vice head teacher selected uses letter to inform them and replied also through letters. It is written by following official letter document. Likewise, when is selecting a vice head teacher also uses the formal way by selecting through official letter. (teacher school D).

Our head of school when he was selecting me to become vice head teacher he gives me an official letter and also I replied by using an official letter. So in our school we use also formal communication in communication. (A teacher school H).

It is seen informal communication to be used in schools, mostly oral communication is used and assigned task has been done through informal communication. Example a teacher can be given head of department without even having a letter and can continue working on that position. Also during test and examination especially midterm, annual examination teachers are assigned to invigilate without even having a letter and teachers are invigilating in the selected classrooms.

In our school sometimes we are being assigned to a position without having any document such as letters, example I'm an environmental head of department by beings told in staff meeting without any official letter for two years now and I'm still working on that department (teacher school B).

In this school during examination we are assigning to invigilate in a certain class without even letters which shows I should be invigilating certain class. Through that situation most teacher tend to dourger during examination period. My advice to be given letters (teacher school A).

Discussion Findings on Formal and Informal Communication

In any institution evolves informal communication especially is used in meetings where head teacher can have meetings with teachers and provide information without following any rules of communication, Example any meetings needed to be documented but head teacher can't do it sometimes is due to time limit. According to Shonubi and Akintaro (2016) the communication user uses communication in non-regular atmosphere.

Likewise, informal communication in a school has a great impact to all member of school environment because are the most method of communication which are most used compared to formal communication where it need time and knowledge both in using it. Therefore, it is difficult to avoid informal communication since it seen as the old one but currently it is important for the institution to be known as the method of communication rather than seeing formal communication only.

Group Communication

Another method of communication is individual communication, small group communication and large group communication such as meetings. This group of communication is used differently, when a head teacher needs to share information with single teacher he can call a teacher in his office and share information. If the information head teacher wants to share with more than one person, he can call a meeting in the office and share with teachers likewise when information to be known by large group of teachers also meeting that involve all teachers in the school can be used. The effectiveness of all this group of communication it depends on the quality of the information wants to be shared.

We have different methods of communication such as individual communication, small group communication and large group of communication. Example if head teacher wants to share information with all member of staff he calls meeting in the staff room, also when he wants to share information with me directly he calls me in his office (teacher school A).

In our school we have different group of communication, head teacher like to use small group meeting where it mostly used when their department meeting, academic meeting likewise in school management team (SMT). Not only small group also large group was used in school parent meeting and it was used especially during the opening of school and closing up the school. The aim of this meeting was to put more effort on how teachers will perform their work for better result of the students (teacher school G).

Discussion Findings on Group Communication

In schools it found that there is group communication such as there was individual communication, small group communication and large group communication and this is commonly based in meetings for easy transfer of information. This kind of group communication should be understood by both users' teacher and head teacher for the success of work performance. This is in line with the study conducted by (Tayler 2016) in the study group communication discussed as communication which takes place among individuals in work place. And the information provided it depend on the information provided.

The aim of group information was to manage time management, solves conflict among member staff also it needs experience in using it, openness among themselves. Not only, has it enhanced interaction among member of the staff. In general group communication if it used positively simplifies transfer of the information.

On the challenges facing head teachers while communicating with their teachers in the schools include lack confidentiality and privacy. Lack of confidentiality occurs when information provided in confidence to you by client and is disclosed to a third party without teacher consent. Another challenge is inability to have smart phones, or lack of internet bundles and provocations which results to emotional feelings and internal conflicts.

These findings were cemented by respondents as follows:

Among the challenges that I faced is lack of confidentiality, I had private issue that I share with my head of school, but few months later, I heard the issue from someone else in my office. Also during meeting we never keep time and sometime our head dominate the meeting and give less time for teachers to talk. I think our head of school can check which method is appropriate based on the information he wants to communicate. Another teacher added... I prefer watsup message however sometime being out of network or lack of internet bundles could lead to miss information, it is hard to have internet bundle everyday (Teacher from primary school H).

Use of Watsapp group, example myself I don't have a Smart phone so I depend on my friend to notify me when there is an issue communicated through group messages. I can tell you even those with Smart phones are not always having internet bundles. To me I think head of school should use a various way of communicating with staff because we are different. Not only that another challenge that I face is poor listening skills of our head of schools, they usually distract someone which cause some to lose confidence of talking in these meeting (Teachers, F).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study finds the facilitation of head teachers' communication skills towards teachers' job performances in public primary schools in Dodoma City and Chamwino district. The study specifically found out the common method used by head teacher in communicating with teachers. The study employs qualitative approach due to the nature of the study objective. Furthermore, the study design used case study design. The sample size was 32 respondents who were obtained through interview and documentary reviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

Result on common methods of communication used by schools were face to face communication, Internal memo, Mobile phone, formal communication, informal communication, and group communication. Lastly the study recommends that since all methods of communication should be used based on the nature of the information to be shared and urgent of the issue. Also the study recommends school management to sensitize on proper communication because it has been found to have positive influence on performances of teachers.

Conclusion

Based on methods used in communication the study concludes that teachers in the study areas used different methods of communication. Effective communication within schools provides a multiple of benefits for the school organization and the whole society.

Recommendation

Based on the findings the study recommends the use of different methods of communication because every method of communication fits a certain situation and it has benefit over other method, so head of schools should choose a certain method based on the nature of information to be shared. Also the study recommends school head to continue using methods of communication because it has been found to have positive facilitation of teachers' performances.

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