

The Role of Principal Communication in Developing Teacher Creativity at Mis Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to discuss the importance of the role of the principal's communication as an organizational leader in supporting teacher creativity at MIS Az Zahroh Sendang. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method which is expected to be able to obtain in-depth information about the object of research. This study also uses a literature review approach (library research), namely using various literatures, both digital and non-digital, as well as previous research that has been carried out. Data collection techniques are carried out using direct observations, interview questionnaires using Google Forms to teachers and direct interviews with one of the teachers at MIS Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo school. The results of the study indicate that the role of the principal's organizational communication at MIS Az Zahroh has been running well.

INTRODUCTION

Humans need social bonds, whether within the family, community, or workplace. They tend to feel like they are part of a larger group, and this involvement provides a sense of security and acceptance. Therefore, humans are always required to build positive relationships with one another. Every individual desires recognition for their contributions and achievements. Awards, both formal and informal, can boost self-esteem and motivate them to perform better. In social interactions, especially in the workplace or in groups, good communication enables individuals to work together to achieve common goals (Dewi & Poernomo, 2022). Through open communication, each party can share ideas, discuss roles, and solve problems together. This is essential for creating synergy and strengthening teamwork. Through warm and empathetic communication, social relationships can develop into closer and deeper ones. By sharing feelings, thoughts, and experiences, individuals can forge strong emotional bonds with others. Empathetic and caring communication makes people feel valued, heard, and understood, which is crucial for strengthening social bonds.

Leaders who understand the importance of collaboration will strive to create synergy within the team, build cooperation, and support shared success. They will facilitate communication, manage conflict wisely, and motivate team members to work towards common goals. Leaders who care about individual development will provide opportunities for team members to learn, develop, and express new ideas. They will also facilitate training, skills development, and mentor employees. In this way, leaders not only support individual growth but also increase overall organizational productivity (Burhanudin et al., 2022).

In this era of globalization and rapid technological development, schools are required to produce graduates who possess not only academic abilities but also the ability to think creatively and innovatively. To achieve this goal, teachers are required to consistently employ creative teaching methods to stimulate students' interest in learning and develop their potential. Effective communication between the principal and teachers is crucial in fostering a creative environment. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the school's vision, mission, and goals are clearly communicated and understood by all teaching staff. Structured and open communication can motivate teachers to continue developing and feel supported in their creative ideas.

Not all principals possess good communication skills, and this often hinders the development of teacher creativity. For example, one-way communication or a lack of openness can limit new ideas that could foster innovation in learning. Therefore, it is important to examine how principals can overcome communication barriers to support teacher creativity. This research is relevant because it can provide practical guidance for principals and educational institutions in enhancing teacher creativity. By understanding the crucial role of communication in fostering creativity, it is hoped that the results of this study can serve as a reference for principals to refine or enhance their communication strategies to improve the overall quality of education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recognizing and Understanding the Concept of Communication in Organizations

Stewart L. Tubbs and Sylvia Moss (2012) - Human Communication: Principles and Contexts: This book describes the communication process as the exchange of information, ideas, emotions, and messages with the aim of achieving understanding, encompassing various communication methods and media. David K. Berlo, in his communication model known as the SMCR Model of Communication, communication is a process involving four main components: Source, Message, Channel, and Receiver. Berlo developed this model in 1960 in his book *The Process of Communication*, and this model is one of the most widely used foundations for understanding communication. The following is an explanation of each component in the model:

1. Source

The source is the individual or entity that generates the message (Iskandar, 2024). In an organizational context, this could be a manager, principal, or team member. The source's expertise, credibility, and attitude significantly influence how the message is received by the recipient.

2. Message

The message is the information the source wishes to convey to the recipient. The message can be words, images, or symbols. The structure, content, and method of delivery can influence the recipient's understanding and reaction (Dyatmika, 2021).

3. Channel

The channel is the medium through which the message is delivered. This can be oral communication, written communication, telephone communication, email, or social media. Selecting the right channel is crucial to ensure the message is delivered effectively (Syam & Ilmu, 2011).

4. Receiver

The receiver is the individual or group that receives and interprets the message. In an organizational context, this could be team members, students, or other audiences. The recipient's background, experience, and context will influence how they understand and respond to the message.

The SMCR model focuses on a linear communication process, where understanding and communication success are heavily influenced by the similarity or alignment between the source and receiver. Berlo emphasizes that the greater the similarity in communication skills, attitudes, and socio-cultural background between the source and receiver, the more effective the communication will be. This model also recognizes the importance of feedback, but in the SMCR, Berlo focuses more on the elements that influence the message and the process of its delivery.

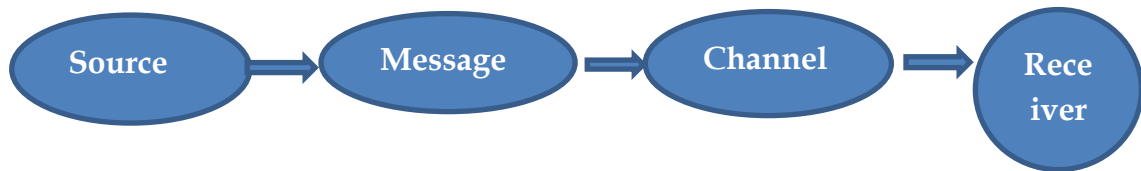


Figure 1. SMCR Model of Communication

- a. Source:
On the left, depicts the individual or entity producing the message.
- b. Message:
In the middle, shows the information or content being conveyed.
- c. Channel:
Connects the message to the recipient, depicting the communication medium used (e.g., oral, written, email).
- d. Receiver:
On the right, depicts the individual or group receiving and interpreting the message.

Communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, emotions, and messages between two or more individuals or groups (Caropeboka, 2017). This process can occur through various means or media, both verbally (through spoken or written language) and nonverbally (through gestures, facial expressions, body language, or other visual cues). The essence of communication is the effort to create a shared understanding so that the message conveyed can be accurately understood by the recipient. Organizational communication is understood as the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships to address environmental uncertainty (Gerald M. Goldhaber, *Organizational Communication*, 4th ed. (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm.C. Brown, 1986). The characteristics of organizational communication include structure, where the structure is related to authority, namely the authority inherent in positions.

Communication within organizations plays a crucial role and can impact various aspects of operations and performance (Furqon, 2003). Here are some reasons why effective communication is crucial in an organizational context:

1. Coordination and Collaboration
Good communication helps coordinate actions and direct individual or group efforts toward common goals. This facilitates collaboration between team members, which in turn increases efficiency and productivity.
2. Decision Making
Accurate and timely information is crucial for effective decision-making. Clear communication allows organizational members to obtain the data and perspectives necessary to make informed decisions.
3. Relationship Building
Open and transparent communication helps build good relationships among organizational members. This It creates strong bonds and increases mutual trust, which is essential for a positive work environment.

4. Conflict Resolution

Effective communication can help identify and resolve conflicts before they escalate into larger issues. By discussing issues openly, organizational members can find solutions that satisfy all parties.

5. Improved Employee Morale

When communication within an organization is effective, all members feel more engaged and valued. This can increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and loyalty to the organization.

6. Adaptation to Change

In an ever-changing world, organizations need to adapt quickly. Effective communication allows organizations to clearly communicate changes in policies, procedures, or strategies to members, thereby minimizing confusion and increasing adaptability.

7. Learning and Innovation

An open communication environment encourages organizational members to share ideas and learn from each other. This creates a culture of innovation that allows the organization to continue to grow and compete in the marketplace.

8. Customer Satisfaction

Good communication is not only important within the organization, but also in interactions with customers.

The Principal's Role in the Organization

Schools, as organizational units, play a crucial role in coordinating all educational activities to achieve educational goals. As an institution led by a principal, who serves as a learning leader in accordance with Ministerial Regulation No. Law No. 25 of 2024 stipulates, among other things, managerial duties as outlined in Article 9, paragraph 1 (a). In their managerial roles, principals carry out tasks such as planning, organizing, managing human resources, supervising and evaluating, creating a positive learning environment, and much more. Human resources are crucial for realizing the noble dreams and aspirations of the Indonesian nation, namely to educate the nation. These human resources include teachers, including principals, students, and educational staff. The learning process is an educational interaction between teachers who create a learning atmosphere and students who respond to their efforts (Tobing & Hasanah, 2022).

The Principal's Leadership Role in Managing the Organizational Climate is crucial (Rusdiyani, 2023). The principal acts not only as a manager but also as a leader capable of guiding and inspiring teachers. Through good communication, the principal can build positive professional relationships with teachers, provide clear direction, and open up dialogue that encourages creativity. A principal who is able to act as a facilitator, support initiatives, and provide constructive feedback will create a comfortable working atmosphere for teachers to innovate.

Identifying the Importance of Creativity in Learning for Students

According to Ronald A. Beghetto (2014), creativity is the process of generating meaningful new ideas and thoughts, often arising from engagement with real-life challenges or problems. He developed the concept of "mini-c creativity," which are small forms of creativity in everyday life that don't have to be spectacular or widely recognized, but are important for individual development and learning. This includes moments when students learn or understand something from a new perspective that is relevant to them. Beghetto also argues that creativity in the classroom is not just about generating extraordinary ideas, but also includes exploration, the courage to take risks, and an openness to possibilities. For him, teachers can support creativity by creating an emotionally safe environment where students feel comfortable experimenting and making mistakes as part of the learning process.

According to James J. Gallagher (1985), creativity is a mental process by which an individual creates new ideas or products, or recombines existing ideas and products, in a way that is novel to them. Creativity is defined as a mental process carried out by individuals in the form of new ideas or products, or a combination of the two that ultimately becomes embedded in their lives. (Nanik Rahayu, Saniyya Putri H, Masitha Nunlehu, Mia Sumiani Madi, and Nurbani Khalid, 2023).

Creativity in learning plays a crucial role for students. Here are some reasons why creativity is important in education:

1. Improves Critical Thinking Skills
Creativity encourages students to view problems from multiple perspectives. By honing critical thinking skills, students can solve problems in more effective and innovative ways.
2. Encourages Innovation and Initiative
When students are given the opportunity to think creatively, they are encouraged to innovate and take initiative. This can lead to new ideas that are useful for solving real-life problems.
3. Increases Motivation and Learning Engagement
Creative learning that involves elements of play, experimentation, and engaging challenges can increase student motivation. They become more interested and active in learning activities, which positively impacts their understanding of the material.
4. Developing Adaptability and Flexibility
Creativity teaches students to be open to change and challenges. This makes them more adaptable in an ever-changing environment and able to face new situations with confidence.
5. Encouraging Emotional and Social Development
Creative learning allows students to express their ideas and emotions, which is important for emotional development. It also helps build social skills, as creative activities often involve collaboration with classmates.

6. Forming a Positive Mindset Toward Learning

When students perceive that learning can be fun and engaging, they will develop a positive mindset toward education. This is crucial for fostering a passion for learning and a lifelong interest in exploration. Thus, creativity not only makes learning more engaging but also equips students with important skills that will be useful in their daily lives and future careers.

Assessing the Extent to Which the Principal's Communication Role Influences Teacher Creativity at MIS Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo

Ronald A. Beghetto (2014) Although Beghetto is better known for his research on educational creativity, he also highlights the importance of communication in building a supportive environment for creativity. Beghetto states that a principal who communicates support and trust in teachers can help encourage them to develop creative approaches to learning without fear of failure.

Assessing the extent to which the principal's communication role influences teacher creativity at MIS Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo can be done by considering the following aspects:

1. Principal Communication Style

The principal's open, supportive, and collaborative communication style tends to enhance teacher creativity. When principals communicate effectively, they can create a supportive atmosphere where teachers feel heard and valued. This is important because feeling appreciated often motivates teachers to try new teaching approaches (Rusdiyani, 2023).

2. Providing Support and Feedback

Effective communication from the principal can provide moral support and constructive feedback to teachers. This support can take the form of providing direction, providing resources, or even rewards for innovative efforts. Positive feedback from the principal also encourages teachers to experiment with creative teaching methods without fear of failure.

3. Creating an Inclusive Work Environment (Musa et al., 2022)

Good communication from the principal can create a safe and inclusive environment for teachers to express their ideas. For example, if the principal encourages regular group discussions or creative meetings, teachers may feel more encouraged to contribute new and innovative ideas.

4. Strengthening Teacher Self-Confidence

A principal who provides support through communication can strengthen teacher self-confidence, which is an important factor in creativity. With proper guidance and appreciation, teachers will feel more confident in challenging the boundaries of traditional teaching and designing more creative and engaging learning activities for students (Ismail & Sulaiman & 2023).

5. Implementing Policies that Support Creativity

Communication from the principal that reflects support for policies that support innovation in teaching can help foster teacher creativity. These policies might include professional training, freedom in teaching methods, and space for experimentation.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, which is expected to provide in-depth information about the research object. This study also employed a literature review approach (library research), utilizing various digital and non-digital literature, as well as previous research. Data collection techniques included direct observation, interview questionnaires using Google Forms with 29 teachers, and direct interviews with four teachers at MIS Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo. This research was conducted from October 22, 2024 to November 26, 2024 at MIS AZ Zahroh, Sendang Rejo Village, Binjai District, Langkat Regency.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal that organizational communication conducted by the principal at MIS Az Zahroh plays a strategic role in fostering teacher creativity through effective communication of the school's vision and mission and a leadership approach that supports freedom and innovation in the learning process.

1. How does the principal communicate the school's vision and mission effectively to encourage teacher creativity in the learning process?

The results of this study indicate that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh plays a crucial role in effectively communicating the school's vision and mission to encourage teacher creativity in the learning process. The principal implemented several strategies, such as providing teachers with the freedom to explore and use various learning media, including methods like cartsort, mind mapping, and video visualization. Furthermore, the principal provided regular examples, supervision, and motivation to ensure teachers felt supported in developing their creative ideas. With this approach, teachers were empowered to adapt their learning to suit the independent curriculum, which demands innovation and flexibility. As a result, teachers were more motivated to be creative in designing engaging and effective learning for students, ultimately contributing to improving the quality of learning at the school.

2. How does the principal provide information regarding organizational interests to teachers?

The research findings indicate that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh plays an active role in providing information regarding organizational interests to teachers, thus encouraging stronger engagement in supporting the school's goals. This information is conveyed through regular meetings, discussions, and open forums, where teachers can share opinions and receive clear and accurate explanations. The principal also encourages teachers to attend seminars and training outside of school to broaden their

knowledge and support the development of organizational competencies. Through open and detailed communication, the principal ensures that each teacher understands the importance of the organization in improving the quality of learning.

3. From the teachers' perspective, how does the principal create a communication climate that supports the exploration of new and creative ideas in the school?

The research findings indicate that teachers at MIS Az Zahroh view the principal as an active figure in creating a communication climate that supports the exploration of new ideas and creativity in the school. The principal regularly holds weekly meetings, providing a space for teachers to dialogue and share ideas, and provides constructive feedback to support the development of creative learning media. Through an open and non-judgmental approach, the principal creates a flexible and trusting environment where teachers feel valued and encouraged to continuously innovate. The principal also leverages technology, such as sharing resources through social media, to inspire teachers to create engaging lessons for students, thus creating a more dynamic and meaningful learning environment.

4. How does the principal provide space for teachers to engage in dialogue and share creative ideas in developing learning?

The results of this study indicate that the principal at MIS Az-Zahroh provides a supportive space for teachers to engage in dialogue and share creative ideas in developing learning. The principal provides time and opportunities each week for teachers to design and discuss learning media. Through special meetings and forums, teachers can present their ideas, which then receive feedback and input from the principal. Furthermore, the principal provides resources, such as time and funding, as well as a conducive environment to foster creativity and collaboration among teachers. With this approach, teachers feel supported and have more freedom to develop innovative and engaging learning methods for students.

5. How does the principal at MIS Az-Zahroh respond to differing opinions or creative ideas proposed by teachers?

The results of this study indicate that the principal at MIS Az-Zahroh responds to differing opinions and creative ideas from teachers with wisdom and openness. The principal listens to all opinions fairly and values the views expressed, so that teachers feel their ideas are valued. When differences of opinion arise, the principal gathers teachers in a collaborative discussion to find solutions that accommodate diverse perspectives. In decision-making, the principal often considers the majority opinion without neglecting individual interests, and focuses on solutions that positively impact the school and students. This approach creates a respectful and collaborative work climate, which strengthens teachers' motivation to continue innovating in the learning process.

6. How does the principal's open communication influence teachers' comfort in expressing their creative ideas?

The results of this study indicate that the open communication implemented by the principal at MIS Az Zahroh has a positive impact on teachers' comfort in expressing their creative ideas. The principal's openness and listening to every teacher's opinion creates a safe and conducive working environment. The principal's acceptance and appreciation of every idea make teachers feel valued and supported in their innovation. With transparent communication, teachers feel more confident in expressing new ideas without fear of negative judgment. This encourages active teacher participation in the development of creative learning media and teaching methods, which impacts the quality of learning at the school.

7. How does the principal facilitate the development of teachers' abilities in utilizing technology as part of the creative process?

The results of this study indicate that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh facilitates the development of teachers' abilities in utilizing technology as part of the creative process through various approaches. The principal regularly holds training and workshops to improve teachers' understanding of technology, including video editing and the use of other digital devices that support learning. In addition, the principal provides technological facilities such as projectors and other digital devices that can be used interchangeably by teachers. Through internal supervision and training programs, teachers who are already proficient in technology are also asked to assist their colleagues who need further guidance. With these steps, the principal strives to create a supportive environment and provide full access for teachers to continue developing their creativity in technology-based learning.

8. When providing feedback, how does the principal convey appreciation that motivates teachers to continue being creative and innovative?

The research findings show that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh expresses appreciation to teachers in various ways to motivate them to continue being creative and innovative. The principal frequently provides verbal praise and support in the form of positive feedback delivered in public forums, such as school assemblies. Furthermore, the principal demonstrates appreciation through awards, both direct and symbolic, such as sharing teachers' work, such as creative learning videos, as examples for other colleagues. In this way, the principal creates an atmosphere that supports teachers' self-confidence and encourages them to continue developing their creativity. This positive feedback not only fosters motivation but also inspires other teachers to innovate and be creative in their teaching methods.

9. How does the principal provide guidance to teachers who exhibit misbehavior that could disrupt educational progress at the school?

The research findings indicate that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh uses various approaches to deal with teachers who exhibit behavior that could disrupt educational progress at the school. The principal typically begins by issuing a private warning as an initial reprimand. This face-to-face approach is preferred to maintain the teacher's confidentiality and privacy while also providing the teacher with an opportunity to reflect directly on their behavior. In addition to the warning, the principal also provides constructive guidance and direction in a supportive environment, sometimes through face-to-face conversations or discussions focused on positive solutions.

The principal's approach also includes providing tactful and constructive advice, with the goal of enabling the teacher to improve without feeling judged. In some cases, if inappropriate behavior persists, the principal will issue further warnings, which may include administrative action, while prioritizing solutions and support to prevent recurrence of the undesirable behavior.

10. How does the principal handle conflict or differences of opinion among teachers?

The principal at MIS Az Zahroh handles conflict or differences of opinion among teachers through an open and fair deliberation approach. The initial step is to listen to both sides' perspectives, both in group and individual discussions, to understand the root of the problem. With open communication and an impartial attitude, the principal acts as a mediator who facilitates a joint solution agreed upon by all parties involved.

During the deliberation process, the principal also creates a conducive atmosphere so that each teacher feels safe to speak and express their opinions without fear of being judged or pressured. Furthermore, the principal frequently provides motivation and encouragement to teachers to achieve common goals, using conflict as a learning experience to strengthen the sense of togetherness among the teaching staff. Furthermore, the principal also strives to find the best solution that can satisfy all parties, emphasizing that every opinion has positive and negative sides. When necessary, the principal makes a fair final decision, after considering all input, and conveys it tactfully so that all parties understand the reasons behind the decision.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study indicate that the principal at MIS Az Zahroh plays a crucial role in creating effective organizational communication, which contributes to increased teacher creativity in the learning process. By clearly communicating the school's vision and mission, the principal is able to encourage teachers to innovate in developing engaging and effective teaching methods. The principal's open approach in providing information, space for dialogue, and positive feedback creates a work climate that supports the exploration of new ideas. Furthermore, the principal facilitates the development of teachers' skills in utilizing technology, which is increasingly relevant in today's education sector. The principal's actions in addressing disagreements and misbehavior among teachers demonstrate a commitment to creating a respectful and collaborative environment. Overall, the communication strategies implemented by the principal at MIS Az Zahroh have positively impacted the quality of learning and teachers' professional development.

a. **Improving Training Programs**

The principal is expected to continue developing more varied training programs and workshops, particularly on the use of technology and innovative learning methods. This will help teachers stay up-to-date with the latest developments in education.

b. **Improving Discussion Forums**

It is recommended to strengthen discussion forums and collaboration between teachers, both through regular meetings and digital platforms. This will strengthen communication and the exchange of ideas, as well as foster a sense of belonging among staff.

c. **Implementing a Structured Feedback System**

To support teacher professional development, principals can implement a more structured feedback system, including periodic assessments based on teacher achievement and innovation.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Still conducting further research to learn more about The Role of Principal Communication in Developing Teacher Creativity at Mis Az Zahroh Sendang Rejo.

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