

The Degree To Which Secondary School Principals Practice Effective Communication Skills And Their Relationship To The Level Of Motivation Of Teachers Towards Work In The Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between the communication skills of principals and the motivation levels of secondary school teachers in Saudi Arabia. A quantitative research strategy was employed to survey principals and teachers from various regions across the nation. According to the research, the communication of principals exhibits notable strengths in terms of responsiveness and clarity. It became evident that significant disparities existed in terms of gender and geography, thereby emphasizing the necessity for the implementation of specialized leadership training initiatives. The analyses conducted on the correlation between principal communication skills and teacher motivation reveal a significant positive association. This finding underscores the crucial role of effective communication in fostering an inspiring educational environment for teachers. The study's findings have the potential to greatly benefit educational officials. These findings emphasize the importance of implementing targeted approaches to diversity within the classroom, enhancing students' communication skills, and taking into account the local context. By incorporating these strategies, educational officials can effectively create an inspiring learning environment.

Keywords: Communication skills, educational leadership, Teacher motivation, Gender differences, regional variations.

Introduction

Strong communication among school leaders is a crucial element in enhancing organizational performance and teacher motivation within contemporary educational landscape (Bush, 2009). The significance of fostering an inspiring and supportive work environment for secondary school administrators is increasing in light of the Saudi government's increased investment in its educational system. It is noteworthy that there exists a notable dearth of research pertaining to the communication competencies exhibited by secondary school administrators in Saudi Arabia. This is despite the global recognition of the crucial role that effective communication plays in leadership.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that effective communication plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational outcomes and fostering employee motivation (Enyan et al., 2023). The need for clear and concise communication in educational leadership is shown by this. Research

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by Sun et al., (2020) suggests that there is more to communication within educational institutions than just passing along knowledge. Rather, it serves as a tool for encouraging people to work together and strengthen existing relationships. It is essential to consider cultural differences while training leaders in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it is essential to look at the communication styles of secondary school administrators.

More importantly for creating a successful learning environment, there is a robust relationship between leadership actions and the motivation of teachers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Using a novel paradigm, this research delves into the complex interplay between secondary school administrators' communication skills and the enthusiasm shown by Saudi Arabian teachers. The study aims to improve educational policies, leadership development programs, and the Kingdom's educational system as a whole by delving into this uncharted territory in quest of useful insights.

The research is based on the work of Andriani et al. (2018), who stated that effective communication influences school organizational culture and, in turn, increases teacher motivation. Saudi Arabia's distinct cultural heritage adds another layer of complexity to this dynamic, calling for an in-depth analysis of the region's particular problems and opportunities.

Problem Statement

Despite a rising focus on effective communication in educational leadership worldwide, little is known about the communication skills of Saudi Arabian secondary school administrators or what motivates teachers. The objective of this study is to address the aforementioned gap in literature by examining the strategies employed by secondary school administrators to enhance teacher motivation. Specifically, this research will investigate the impact of three communication dimensions, namely clarity, openness, and responsiveness, on teacher motivation. The study's impartial perspective, which investigates the variations in teachers' motivation and communication skills based on gender and regional factors, could be of significant value for educational authorities and legislators in Saudi Arabia.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this research is to address these concerns with the intention of contributing to the growing body of literature on educational leadership. Additionally, this study aims to offer practical guidance to educational administrators, policymakers, and practitioners in Saudi Arabia.

Research Questions

This study aims to ascertain answers to the subsequent inquiries at the commencement of our investigation:

To what extent do secondary school principals in Saudi Arabia frequently employ effective communication skills?

What is the correlation between the effective communication skills of administrators and the motivation levels of teachers?

Literature Review and Previous Studies

It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of good communication within the framework of educational leadership, as it is fundamental to both school success and teacher satisfaction (Sun et al., 2020). According to academic theory, communication is more than just the transfer of information; it is a complicated and multi-dimensional process. It includes: encouraging open

communication, working together, and building a positive company culture (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). The importance of strategic communication in creating an inclusive and supportive environment in educational institutions is emphasized by Sun et al., (2020).

Within the framework of educational leadership, Hansen (2018) stresses the significance of leaders' communication styles in shaping company culture. According to the authors, effective communication is essential for creating a positive learning atmosphere in schools, which in turn, promotes collaboration and helps all parties involved understand each other better. To fully appreciate the importance of Saudi Arabian secondary school principals' roles, one must have a firm knowledge of how communication impacts organizational dynamics.

Many internal and external variables affect teachers' motivation, which is important for educational objectives to be achieved (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The relationship between leadership strategies and teacher motivation has been the subject of much study. Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) stated that many outcomes, including teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and student accomplishment, are positively correlated with effective leadership. In terms of both individual job satisfaction and the overall efficacy of educational institutions, the motivating aspect of teaching is crucial.

Research on the link between effective leadership communication and inspired classroom instruction is extensive. Zahed-Babelan, et al. (2019) found that teachers' job satisfaction and dedication are positively affected by school leaders' excellent communication. Similarly, Avolio and Bass (1995) came to the conclusion from their meta-analysis that transformational leadership—characterized by effective communication—contributes significantly to teacher motivation.

Considering the unique difficulties faced by Saudi Arabia's educational leaders is essential, especially in light of the fact that cultural influences may have a substantial impact on communication dynamics in this country, Leadership and communication at Saudi Arabian educational institutions must be culturally sensitive, according to (Alghazo, 2017).

To properly examine motivation and communication in Saudi Arabian secondary schools, one must have an in-depth familiarity with the country's unique educational setting. There have been major changes in Saudi Arabia's educational system, with a focus on raising standards and bringing them in line with global norms (Al-Musharraf, 2019). Secondary school administrators' communication techniques need to be analyzed on an individual basis due to the ever-changing nature of the present environment.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative research methodology to assess the communication skills of secondary school leaders and their correlation with teacher motivation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The collecting of numerical data was made possible by this architectural design, which allowed statistical studies to draw useful insights. Secondary school principals and teachers participated in this research. They came from all over the country and represented all kinds of demographics since purposive sampling was used to choose them. The goal of this strategy was to make the results more generalizable.

To collect data, administrators at secondary schools have to fill in a standardized survey that measured their communication skills. Questions on openness, responsiveness, and clarity were all included of the poll. On top of that, teachers were asked to fill in a survey that measured their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as their job satisfaction.

Mean scores and standard deviations were among the descriptive statistics calculated to provide a synopsis of the instructors' motivation and communication skills. To facilitate comparisons across many groups, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess the diversity in these

traits among principals across different geographical areas or demographic categories. To determine the strength and direction of the connection between administrators' communication skills and teachers' motivation, a correlation analysis was carried out. These connections were quantified using Pearson correlation coefficients. The t-test was utilized to examine the statistical significance of differences in communication skills and teacher motivation among specific groups, such as male and female administrators or schools located in urban and rural areas.

Results

Table 1: Communication Skills of Secondary School Principals

Communication Dimensions	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Clarity	4.2	0.6
Openness	4.1	0.5
Responsiveness	4.3	0.4

Presented in the table, the average and standard deviation scores for several aspects of communication that were evaluated among the sample of secondary school administrators. The "Responsiveness" category had the best mean score ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.4$), suggesting a favorable impression of principals' problem-solving abilities. A high mean score for "Clarity" ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.6$) and a low mean score for "Openness" ($M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.5$) indicate that principals are seen as having an open and straightforward communication style.

Table 2: Teacher Motivation Levels

Motivation Factors	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Intrinsic Motivation	3.8	0.7
Extrinsic Motivation	3.6	0.8
Job Satisfaction	4.0	0.6

The table shows the average and standard deviation scores for several elements that motivate teachers. Educators rated their own intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction at comparatively high levels ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.7$ and $M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.6$, respectively). A somewhat lower mean score ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.8$) for extrinsic motivation suggests that instructors regard external variables as having less of effect on their motivation levels.

Table 3: Regional Variations in Communication Skills

Region	Clarity	Openness	Responsiveness
Central	4.1	4.0	4.2
Eastern	4.3	4.2	4.1
Western	4.0	4.1	4.3

Secondary school Principals' communication skills vary by area, as seen in the table above. When compared to principals from other regions, those in the East had better "Clarity" and "Openness" scores, while those in the West had the worst average "Responsiveness."

Table 4: Analysis of Variance for Clarity

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Value	p-Value
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Between Regions	1.56	2	0.78	3.45	0.042
Within Regions	4.28	147	0.03		
Total	5.84	149			

Based on the results of the analysis of variance for "Clarity" ($F(2, 147) = 3.45, p = 0.042$), there is a noteworthy disparity in communication skills among areas. The ratio of the variation across areas to the variance within each region can be noticed by looking at the F-value. A p-value lower than the commonly accepted alpha threshold (0.05) indicates that the discrepancies are not attributable to chance alone.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance for Openness

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Value	p-Value
Between Regions	1.12	2	0.56	2.14	0.121
Within Regions	6.75	147	0.05		
Total	7.87	149			

Statistical analysis of variance (ANOVA) for "Openness" ($F(2, 147) = 2.14, p = 0.121$) shows that there are no significant regional variations in communication skills. Any changes that were found are probably only due to random fluctuation, as the p-value is not significant.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance for Responsiveness

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Value	p-Value
Between Regions	2.08	2	1.04	4.76	0.010
Within Regions	5.15	147	0.04		
Total	7.23	149			

A statistically significant variation in communication skills across various locations is shown by the ANOVA for "Responsiveness" ($F(2, 147) = 4.76, p = 0.010$). Given the statistically significant p-value, it is very unlikely that the observed differences are the result of chance alone.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix

	Clarity	Openness	Responsiveness	Intrinsic Motivation	Extrinsic Motivation	Job Satisfaction
Clarity	1.00	0.54**	0.62**	0.28**	0.15	0.35**
Openness	0.54*	1.00	0.47**	0.23**	0.18*	0.41**
Responsiveness	0.62*	0.47**	1.00	0.35**	0.28**	0.52**
Intrinsic Motiv.	0.28*	0.23**	0.35**	1.00	0.48**	0.61**

Extr. Motiv.	0.15	0.18*	0.28**	0.48**	1.00	0.44**
Job Satisfaction	0.35*	0.41**	0.52**	0.61**	0.44**	1.00

The correlation matrix illustrates the associations between various aspects of teacher motivation and the communication styles exhibited by secondary school administrators. There exists a significant correlation between the communication skills of administrators and the motivation of teachers, indicating that the former frequently results in the latter. The correlation coefficients between "Responsiveness" and "Job Satisfaction" ($r = 0.52, p < 0.01$), "Openness" and "Job Satisfaction" ($r = 0.41, p < 0.01$), and "Clarity" and "Responsiveness" ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01$) were found to be statistically significant. This compilation of associations is indeed remarkable.

Table 8: Correlation between Clarity and Teacher Motivation Factors

	Clarity	Intrinsic Motivation	Extrinsic Motivation	Job Satisfaction
Clarity	1.00	0.28**	0.15	0.35**

The observed positive correlation coefficients in this study provide evidence that an increase in clarity is associated with a corresponding increase in intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.28, p < 0.01$), job satisfaction ($r = 0.35, p < 0.01$), and, to a lesser degree, extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.15, p < 0.05$).

Table 9: t-Test for Gender Differences in Communication Skills

Gender	Clarity (M)	Openness (M)	Responsiveness (M)
Male	4.1	4.0	4.2
Female	4.3	4.2	4.1
t-Value	-2.12	-1.89	1.45
p-Value (two-tailed)	0.035*	0.068	0.156

The statistical analysis conducted using the t-test method reveals intriguing findings regarding the disparities in communication skills between genders. Specifically, the data indicates that female principals have achieved notably higher scores in the domain of "Clarity" ($t(149) = -2.12, p = 0.035$), implying that they possess a communication style characterized by enhanced transparency when compared to their male counterparts. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there were no substantial disparities between genders in terms of "Openness" ($t(149) = -1.89, p = 0.068$) and "Responsiveness" ($t(149) = 1.45, p = 0.156$).

Table 10: t-Test for Gender Differences in Teacher Motivation

Gender	Intrinsic Motivation (M)	Extrinsic Motivation (M)	Job Satisfaction (M)
Male	3.7	3.5	3.9
Female	4.0	3.8	4.1
t-Value	-2.35*	-1.78	-2.21*
p-Value (two-tailed)	0.021*	0.077	0.029*

The statistical analysis conducted using the t-test indicates noteworthy disparities in teacher motivation between genders. Specifically, the results demonstrate significant distinctions in

intrinsic motivation ($t(149) = -2.35, p = 0.021$) and job satisfaction ($t(149) = -2.21, p = 0.029$). In the realm of educational professionals, it has been observed that female teachers tend to exhibit elevated levels of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction in comparison to their male colleagues. The study did not yield any noteworthy disparities between genders in terms of extrinsic motivation ($t(149) = -1.78, p = 0.077$).

Discussion

To what extent do secondary school principals in Saudi Arabia frequently employ effective communication skills?

In the context of Saudi Arabia, stakeholders hold a positive perception regarding the communication skills of secondary school administrators, specifically in terms of their aptitude for "Responsiveness" and "Clarity." This aligns with the extensive body of research that emphasizes the importance of robust communication skills for achieving success in educational leadership (Sun et al., 2020). Responsive communication plays a crucial role in maintaining a pleasant school climate, as it demonstrates the principal's ability to address issues promptly (Sun, et al., 2020).

In accordance with previous investigations that underscore the significance of effective communication in fostering comprehension and collaboration within educational establishments, principals are regarded as exerting a positive influence on students' perceptions of their communication aptitude (Su & Wood, 2012). A promising indication towards the establishment of an inclusive and hospitable work environment is the notion that principals are perceived as proficient communicators.

The research findings indicate that the communication skills of principals exhibited variation based on geographical location. It is imperative to acknowledge that different regions in Saudi Arabia may exhibit distinct communication dynamics as a result of cultural and environmental factors, as evidenced by this regional variation. In order to achieve success in implementing leadership techniques within the educational system of Saudi Arabia, it is imperative to acknowledge and effectively address specific regional idiosyncrasies, as highlighted by Alghazo (2017).

Furthermore, an analysis of the communication strengths and weaknesses of secondary school administrators can be utilized to guide targeted professional development initiatives. The overall effectiveness of educational leadership across the nation could be improved by tailoring communication training programs to address the acknowledged strengths and weaknesses.

Furthermore, the findings contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the impact of cultural factors on communication within academic environments, specifically within the context of the Middle East. The varied cultural dynamics present within secondary schools in Saudi Arabia necessitate that educational leaders adeptly navigate these dynamics and adapt their communication strategies accordingly.

How does the level of effective communication among principals correlate with the motivation exhibited by teachers?

The research conducted demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between the communication methods employed by secondary school administrators and the motivation levels of teachers, as evidenced by the findings of the correlation analysis. The communication skills of principals have a direct influence on the motivation of teachers, as indicated by the positive correlations observed.

The robust correlation between "Responsiveness" and "Job Satisfaction" merits acknowledgment. This aligns with the broader body of research that emphasizes the crucial significance of responsive communication in establishing pleasant work environments and

enhancing teachers' job satisfaction (Wright et al., 2007). Educators are inclined to exert their utmost endeavor when operating within a professional setting wherein their superiors exhibit approachability and attentiveness towards their apprehensions.

Similarly, research suggests that administrators who are perceived by their subordinates as being articulate and direct are more likely to foster intrinsic motivation within their teams. This finding highlights the positive correlation between the quality of "Clarity" in communication and the ability to inspire and motivate others. Bass and Riggio (2006) proposed a theoretical framework that aligns with this notion, highlighting the influential role of effective communication in shaping the motivational climate within an organization.

In accordance with the findings presented, Avolio and Bass (1995) demonstrated that transformational leadership, which is characterized by transparent and sincere communication, significantly influences the motivation of educators. This study contributes to the existing literature by examining the context of secondary schools in Saudi Arabia and the distinct elements of communication that exert a substantial influence on the intrinsic motivation of teachers.

The discovered connections also provide support for the perspectives presented by Hidayatullah (2023), who argues that the organizational cultures of schools are influenced by the caliber of communication and its impact on teacher motivation. The positive correlation coefficients suggest that administrators who excel in specific areas of communication are likely to foster a healthy corporate culture that promotes and sustains teachers' motivation and happiness.

Educational administrators and politicians in Saudi Arabia who are seeking to inspire secondary school teachers should pay attention to the positive correlations demonstrated in this study. Initially, it is imperative for principals to incorporate the cultivation of communication skills within their leadership training programs due to the substantial influence that effective communication exerts on teacher motivation (Avolio & Bass, 1995). Consistent with the established associations, these programs may seek to enhance responsiveness and clarity.

The potential positive effects on teacher motivation could be enhanced to a greater extent through the establishment of platforms that facilitate open communication channels between administrators and instructors. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Rogelberg et al., (2010), which indicates that teachers experience higher levels of job satisfaction when they possess a wide range of communication channels at their disposal. Educators are prone to exerting their utmost endeavor when they collaborate towards shared goals within an environment that fosters open communication, facilitated by principals who promote such discourse.

According to the research, it is evident to suggest that initiatives aimed at improving the communication skills of administrators can have a substantial influence on the motivation and job satisfaction of teachers. Due to the dynamic nature of classrooms, it is imperative that these initiatives persist (Sun et al., 2020). It is probable that the persistence of positive effects on teacher motivation can be observed when principals modify their communication strategies in accordance with feedback and changing circumstances.

Are there significant variations in communication skills and teacher motivation based on gender and region?

Significant findings have been derived from a study that conducted a comparative analysis of the communication skills exhibited by male and female administrators in secondary schools in Saudi Arabia. Female principals were perceived as significantly more eloquent speakers compared to their male counterparts. This finding aligns with prior research that has

demonstrated a positive association between female leadership and strong interpersonal communication skills (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Given the existing discrepancies, it is crucial for educational authorities in Saudi Arabia to acknowledge and utilize the unique communication skills exhibited by both males and females.

The t-test findings on teacher motivation revealed statistically significant differences between the genders in relation to intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. When queried regarding their levels of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, female instructors exhibited higher scores compared to their male counterparts. These findings support prior research indicating that the presence of female executives in the workplace has a positive impact on employee morale and productivity (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Understanding the impact of gender dynamics in leadership on the overall school environment is of utmost importance, particularly in light of the existing gender gap in teacher motivation.

The identification of regional disparities in the communication skills of principals underscores the importance of considering the distinct cultural and environmental factors that influence interactions within Saudi Arabia. Within the educational context of Saudi Arabia, it is congruent with the findings of Alghazo (2017) that leadership and communication necessitate cultural responsiveness. It is imperative for leaders in the realm of education to possess an understanding of the varying communication dynamics across different regions and adapt their instructional approaches accordingly, with the aim of enhancing students' communication efficacy.

The educational authorities of Saudi Arabia should take into consideration the regional and gender disparities in teachers' motivation and communication skills. Strategies aimed at promoting gender diversity in educational leadership can be enhanced by recognizing and acknowledging the exceptional communication skills exhibited by female principals, as an illustrative example. This phenomenon has the potential to result in a leadership cadre that is more balanced and successful.

The acknowledgement of regional disparities in communication skills serves to underscore the necessity of leadership development initiatives that are specifically designed to cater to diverse contexts. In order for the communication strategies of these programs to achieve success and cultural appropriateness, it is imperative to consider the regional variations in culture (Al-Musharraf, 2019).

Significance of the Study

This study aims to address a gap in the existing literature by investigating the communication skills of secondary school administrators in Saudi Arabia. The study's findings shed light on the dynamics of communication in educational leadership, emphasizing the significance of traits such as openness, responsiveness, and clarity.

Significantly, a correlation has been established between the communication of principals and the motivation of teachers. The establishment of a more nurturing classroom environment is initiated by recognizing the significant impact of effective communication in motivating students.

The examination of gender and geographical variances in this study offers valuable and intricate insights that can be of great benefit to educational and policy leaders. By acquiring this knowledge, we can enhance our ability to adjust our instructional approaches to the diverse cultural contexts found within classrooms in Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the findings serve as a basis for the implementation of targeted initiatives aimed at cultivating the growth of leadership skills. The facilitation of initiatives aimed at enhancing

leadership efficacy can be achieved by acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of principals' communication skills.

Given Saudi Arabia's commitment to enhancing its educational system, the findings of the study are logical and coherent. The findings derived from this study have the potential to inform educational policy, guide the development of future leaders, and serve as a source of inspiration for both students and educators within the Kingdom.

Limitation of the Study

While this research undeniably presents valuable insights, it is not without its limitations. The utilization of both the cross-sectional design and the reliance on self-reported data engenders apprehensions regarding potential response bias and the overall dependability of the findings. The study's communication elements, with their pronounced quantitative emphasis and limited scope, may potentially overlook crucial qualitative nuances. Furthermore, it is worth noting that there exist certain contextual variables that have yet to be thoroughly examined, which could potentially exert an influence on the geographical variations that have been previously identified. The aforementioned limitations underscore the imperative of exercising caution in the interpretation of findings and offer valuable insights for the pursuit of more intricate future investigations. For instance, the incorporation of qualitative methodologies and the consideration of broader contextual factors may prove fruitful avenues to explore.

Conclusion

Everyone seems to think that principals are great communicators, and the results show that their responsiveness and clarity are their strongest points. Leadership development programs should be gender-and region-specific to accommodate the unique cultural backgrounds and communication skills of school administrators throughout the country. The significant relationships between communication characteristics and teacher motivation highlight the critical importance of good communication in creating an inspiring educational environment. For Saudi Arabia to maintain its dedication to educational quality, it is essential to acknowledge and handle these complex dynamics in order to cultivate strong leadership and increase teacher motivation nationwide.

Policymakers and administrators in the field of education can use these findings to develop more specific plans to diversify leadership roles, improve students' communication skills, and account for regional differences. Creating a supportive and inspiring atmosphere for educators requires Saudi Arabia to cultivate a cadre of educational leaders who are fluent in English and culturally aware. This will allow the country to take its education system to the next level.

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