

# The Relationship of School Administrators Communication Styles and Teachers Motivation Among Senior High Schools in Sulu

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**Abstract:** The focus of this study was the relationship of the communication styles on the motivational variables. Specifically, the communication styles are the Assertive Communication Style; Aggressive Communication Style; Passive-Aggressive Communication Style; Submissive Communication Style; and Manipulative Communication Style. The motivation variables in terms of Existence Needs; Relatedness; and Growth Needs. The result revealed a significant positive relationship of the communication styles on motivational variables on teachers' teaching performance. This result confirmed the communication style of the school administrators as perceived by the randomly selected teachers from the thirteen different National High Schools in Sulu. The one hundred respondents no one said that they use Assertive Communication Style; Aggressive Communication Style; Passive-Aggressive Communication Style; Submissive Communication Style; and Manipulative communication style extensively and at all times or always. Aggressive communication style is consistently utilized in few times by the school administrators to their teachers and other school stakeholders and was applied occasionally by the Administrators of the schools in the Town of Jolo only. Passive Submissive Communication Style are used by the administrators from the remote areas occasionally, while the administrators from the town of Jolo and Maimbung employed this communication style in few times. Assertive communication style was applied by administrators often, while administrators from Luuk and Parang used it occasionally. The teachers highly motivated in terms of Existence Needs; Relatedness; and Growth Needs. In closing, the communication styles were used by different group of people in different manner and at different extent; however, an effective communicator is one who could transmit his message accurately regardless of his communication style. The implication of this findings means that administrators who apply different styles of communications appears to be related to the motivational strategies to motivate in terms of existence needs; relatedness; and growth needs their teachers highly, would in turn enjoy high teaching performance among teachers.

**Keywords:** Aggressive communication style, assertive communication style, communication styles, existence needs, growth needs, manipulative communication style, motivation, passive-aggressive communication style, relatedness, submissive communication style.

## 1. Introduction

School administrators are holding capacity to develop

effective teaching-learning processes. Effective teaching capabilities are assigned to teachers undergo reforms for improvement of learning. Learning is accounted to the body of knowledge the pupils in the elementary schools acquired as manifested in the evaluation process of the teachers. Pupils who have low measurement identifies as the low achievers while pupils got high measurement identified as high achievers. Both the teaching and learning processes dramatically circumscribe the administrators' leadership to administrate the school.

One of the elements in leadership competency is communication. The concept of communication involves the process where messages are created and exchanged. This competency is a tool, behavior, and capability that a person needs to be successful at motivating and directing others. According to Stephen (2011), communication could be a crucial key in conducting and organizing the manpower in the direction of accomplishing the targets and objectives of one organization. Based on Okotoni & Akinwale (2019), communication in any organization is vital to the survival, smooth running and success of the organization. In fact, the ability to communicate is not the only factor necessary for an instructor to meet success in delivering knowledge but also a critical factor or attribute in effective classroom management (Teoh, et. al., 2017).

In schools, just like any other organizations, a series of communication skills which comprises the formal and informal skills is applied by the principal. Similarly, communication can exist in many forms; be it through planned or ad hoc; digital or non-digital; virtual or face to face; verbal, video or written. Communication at schools also takes place between and among principals, teachers, auxiliary support staff, students as well as other stakeholders. Communication that is efficient will establish the knowledge, competence, and constitution as required by the principals to exert either direct or indirect influence on teachers and the school's community. The school objectives are shared by the principals with the school's community through communication. It could be said that without effective communication, the school achievement of educational goals may not be successful. Other than communication, principals must be conscious of their school culture of which they have become a part of (Schein, 2003).

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Besides, Leah (2018), expressed that many principals are intuitively mindful of the fact that the culture of one organization could be the foundation of the school success. In addition, school culture is one of the important elements to move schools in the direction of empowerment, and a framework was developed as a guideline in future work by identifying the types of school culture that could contribute to teachers' psychological empowerment (Leele, et. al., 2019).

In the "Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025" the emphasis on leadership of great quality as a feasible approach to strengthen and transform education is highlighted whereby Shift five stresses on the quality of leadership within a school principal. It basically highlights the aim on the strategy that equips top leaders to the schools in enhancing students' performances. In any schools including the vocational colleges in Malaysia, communication occurs from all directions. Junior principals or experienced principals are all faced with various challenges in communication, and they have certain styles of communication too. A communication style is a method by which it negotiates situations involving others. Negotiation is based on the scenarios involving others such as using proper words gently but still being firm or willing to consider other opinion before making any decision. Hence, principal-teacher communication at school comprises the interpretation of a teacher towards the figurative behavior of a school principal. Due to the diversity of school leaders and teachers, it can be quite difficult to create shared meaning at schools.

In addition, the school hierarchy can distort the message (Wee, 2011). Based on past studies by Ibrahim & Mahmoud (2016), they generalized that there is a lack of communication at schools. Teachers complained that they are less motivated by principals in decision-making (less supportiveness) and their principals are also not expressing expectations for the achievement of educational goals (lack of preciseness). It shows that there is an absence of appropriate communication styles implemented by the principals in timely manner to help the schools. Besides communication problem, issues regarding the motivation of teachers also illustrate the success of the school that the principal leads to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Teaching effectiveness can be enhanced by primarily putting into practice two approaches. One is teachers are required to be well-prepared and possess essential knowledge and information in terms of subjects and teaching methods. The other is, students are required to be attentive in class and work diligently and enthusiastically towards the achievement of desired academic outcomes. Apart from possession of adequate knowledge and information in terms of the academic concepts, the teachers need to adopt suitable approaches to teaching, teaching practice and instruction behaviors in relation to the teacher motivation factors (Han & Yan, 2016).

In order to perform their job duties in a well-organized manner and achieve personal and professional goals, the teachers are required to be motivated towards their job duties. To be motivated towards their job duties, it is vital for them to form constructive viewpoints and perspective in terms of working environment condition and form good terms and relationships.

The school administrators adopt conditional communication styles to make motivation more appropriate and effective. Sherman (1999) pronounced that there are three basic communication styles: aggressive, passive, assertive. In aggressive communication style the communicator is close minded, poor listener, has difficulty seeing the other person's point of view, interrupts, and monopolized. In passive communication style the communicator is indirect, always agrees, does not speak up, and hesitant. Whereas in assertive communication style the communicator is effective and active listener, states limits or expectations, states observations and no labels or judgments, expresses self directly, honestly, and as soon as possible about feelings and wants, and checks on others feelings. Sherman (1999) further added that "each of these styles has some effects".

Vivyan (2018) described aggressive communicator as sarcastic, harsh, always right, superior, know it all, interrupts, talks over others, critical, put-downs, patronizing, disrespectful of others. In passive style, the communicator is compliant, submissive, talks little, vague non-committal communication, puts self-down, praises others. In the assertive style, the communicator's actions and expressions fit with words spoken, firm but polite and clear messages, respectful of self and others.

Claire (2023) specified five communication styles, namely: The assertive style, aggressive style, passive-aggressive style, manipulative style and submissive style. These styles of communication are dependent on the situations and conditions of communicator. Thus, this research aims to investigate the relationship between administrators' communication styles and motivation of teachers from the perceptions of teachers at Ministry of Basic Higher and Technical Education in Sulu.

#### *A. Statement of the Problem*

Since, communication styles and teachers' motivation rarely studied in the formal school system, this researcher attempted to conduct this study to inspire and motivate both the teachers and the school administrators towards development of the communication styles they used to motivate and experienced by the teachers. Thus, the following research questions was answered. What is the level of communication styles of school administrators among National High Schools in Sulu in terms of: Assertive Communication Style; Aggressive Communication Style; Passive-Aggressive Communication Style; Submissive Communication Style; and Manipulative Communication Style? What is the extent of motivation among teachers in National High Schools in Sulu in terms of: Existence Needs; Relatedness; and Growth Needs? Is there significant correlation on the subcategories subsumed under the school administrators' communication styles between assertive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, submissive and manipulative?

#### *B. Hypothesis of the Study*

This study tested the following research hypothesis: There is no significant correlation on the subcategories subsumed under the school administrators' communication styles between assertive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, submissive and manipulative.

### C. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are beneficial to the school administrators, teachers, students, parents and community. The school administrators can identify their styles of communication when they motivate teachers under their command responsibilities. They adopted the most appropriate styles of communication when motivating staff, teachers, students, and the community. The teachers can be aware of the communication styles of their school administrator. They understand their school administrator through their communication styles. They can adjust themselves to accept the nature of their administrator in terms of their communication styles to minimize the conflict between them. Now-a-days, parents became part of the educational process through the organization of the PTCA. The parents can be more aware of the communication styles of the school administrator. They understand that the school administrator is using such and such style of communication to be more effective in the administrative process, especially the parents are part of it. The students are the main subject of the school administration. They are core of the administrative processes by reformation of their behavior and development of their academic performance. The pupils can adopt the communication styles of the school administrator in the sense that they can adjust to follow rather than to act in the opposite. Communication styles is very essential when motivating the students today. They are very sensitive individual at their tender ages; therefore, the styles of communication can affect their behavior as well as their academic performance. Today, community became part of the school. The peace and order, beautification and other supplementary activities during Brigada Eskwela, the community is highly involved. The communication styles of the school administrator can affect the relationship with the community. The community can understand the communication styles of the school administrator to be aware of their responses, at aspect, the school administrator is authoritative in nature because decision is coming from the school administrator whenever launches certain program. In this respect the school administrator can use a style of communication suited to establish better relationship with the parents and the community.

### D. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study will focus on the relationship of the school administrators' communication styles and the motivation of teachers in the field of education. The communication styles focused on the Assertive Communication Style; Aggressive Communication Style; Passive-Aggressive Communication Style; Submissive Communication Style; and Manipulative Communication Style. These communication styles brought effect on the motivation process which focus on Existence Needs; Relatedness; and Growth Needs. The data was delimited to the perception of the high school teachers of the National High Schools: that includes Sulu National High School, Jolo National High School, Jolo School of Fisheries, Jolo Agricultural School, Patikul National High School, Indanan National High School, Parang National High School,

Maimbung National High School, Luuk National High School, Kalinggalan Kaluang National High School, Panglima Estino National High School, Panamao National High School, and Talipao National High School.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the theory of communication styles and theory of motivation for teachers' excellence. This study was anchored from Sherman (1999, cited by Bocar, 2017) as she pronounced that there are three basic communication styles: aggressive, passive, assertive. In aggressive communication style the communicator is close minded, poor listener, has difficulty seeing the other person's point of view, interrupts, and monopolized. In passive communication style the communicator is indirect, always agrees, does not speak up, and hesitant. Whereas in assertive communication style the communicator is effective and active listener, states limits or expectations, states observations and no labels or judgments, expresses self directly, honestly, and as soon as possible about feelings and wants, and checks on others feelings. Sherman (1999) further added that "each of these styles has some effects". The aggressive communicator may challenge the other and get counter aggression. It will place the aggressive communicator in isolation, cause some ill-feelings of others and resentment. On the other hand, the passive communicator does not know where he or she stands and slowly loses his self-esteem. Furthermore, Sherman (1999) articulated that "the effects of assertive style are: increased self-esteem and self-confidence, increased self-esteem of others, feels motivated and understood, will let others know where they stand". The behavior of the communicator may express his communication style.

According to Sherman (1999): The aggressive communicator puts others down, does not ever think they are wrong, bossy, know-it-all attitude, and does not show appreciation. The passive communicator sighs a lot, asks permission unnecessarily, complains instead of taking action, and lets others make choices. The assertive communicator operates from choice, action-oriented, firm, fair and just, consistent, takes appropriate action toward getting what she wants without denying rights of others. Good communication underpinned long-term successful relationships. Verbal communication is an imperative tool for people to get to know each other. To feel a connection of friendship or intimacy through communication is highly enjoyable in order to work out problems and misunderstandings ("Match Matrix", n.d.).

This study is also anchored on Ellis (1984) who carried out a study on "motivating teachers for excellence" emphasized that teachers were primarily motivated within the school system by intrinsic rewards such as self-respect, responsibility, and sense of accomplishment, praise and commendations. Therefore, school administrators can boost morale and motivate teachers to excel by means of participatory governance, in-service education and systematic supportive evaluation. As cited by Yang, et. al., (2011) stressed that Alderfer (1969) expanded Maslow's basic needs and refined to existence needs, relatedness needs and growth needs. He proposed the ERG

theory based on the results of empirical studies to explain the relationship between satisfaction of needs and human desires. It explained further that Existence needs include various forms of safety, physiological and material needs. Safety needs mainly refer to the prevention of fear, anxiety, threat, danger and tension. Relatedness needs include senses of security, belonging, and respect. Growth needs involve needs for self-esteem and self-actualization.

### 3. Conceptual Framework

This study investigates the relationship of the communication styles of the school administrators and the motivation of teachers towards better teaching performance. The interplay of the relationship conceptually assumed that the school administrators communicate in different styles to motivate teachers towards better teaching performance. So, the independent variables are the communication styles such as Assertive, Aggressive, Passive-Aggressive, Submissive, and Manipulative Communication Style that extends to motivate teachers in the forms of Existence, Relatedness, and Growth Needs as the dependent variables. The interplay of the variables is shown in figure 1.

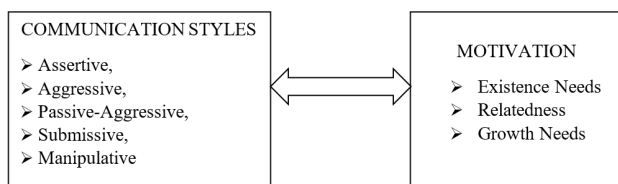


Fig. 1.

### 4. Definition of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined that suit the objectives of the study. Styles of Communication – the process of delivering the message for purpose of motivation. Assertive Communication Style – refers to the communication process in which the communicator is effective and active listener, states limits or expectations, states observations and no label of judgements, expresses self directly, honestly and as soon as possible about feelings and wants, and checks on others feelings. Aggressive Communication Styles – refers to the communication process in which the communicator is closed minded, poor listener, has difficulty seeing the other person’s point of view, interrupts, and monopolized. Passive Communication Style – refers to the communication process in which the communicator is indirect, always agrees, does not speak up and hesitant. Manipulative Communication Style – refers to the communication process in which the communicator is scheming, calculating, shrewd, skilled at influencing or controlling other person to their own advantage, asking indirectly for needs to be met. Passive-Aggressive Communication Style – refers to the communication process in which the communicator appears passive in the surface but actually acting out their anger in indirect or behind the scenes ways, complaining. Submissive Communication Style – refers to the communication process in which the communicator is pleasing other people and avoiding conflict, behaves as if other

people’s needs are more important, other people have more rights and more to contribute. Existence Needs – refers to the needs of teachers for safety (prevention from fear, anxiety, threat and danger), physiological (leisure, exercise, sleep) and material needs (food, clothing). Relatedness Needs – refers to the needs that include senses of security (mutual trust), belonging (prevention from all forms of suffering: isolation, loneliness, and distance), and respect (feeling of respect from others, social status, superiority, importance and compliment).

### 5. Methods

Descriptive research design was used and stratified sampling was adopted in determining the respondents of the study. Using equation:  $N = P(100)/T$ . N represent respondents from each school. P represent population of each school. 100 represent the respondent from a population of 309 teachers from 13 National High Schools in Sulu. This study used checklist questionnaire personally prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire was validated and measures its reliability using split-half method. The Cronbach’s Alpha and the correlation values .877 and .945 respectively indicates that the questions in the questionnaire were reliable and valid. The researcher seek permission from the Division Superintendent before the launching of the questionnaire. The permission was granted the researcher asked the assistance of the High School Principal to launch and retrieve the questionnaire from the respondents. The researcher took the questionnaire from the principal’s office. The statistical tools used means for the communication styles of the school administrators and motivation of teachers. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient for the significant relationship between communication styles and motivation of teachers.

### 6. Results and Discussion

The result of the study revealed a significant positive relationship of the communication styles on motivational variables on teachers’ teaching performance. This result confirmed the communication style of the randomly selected teachers from the thirteen different National High Schools in Sulu. The one hundred respondents no one said that they use aggressive, passive, and assertive communication style extensively and at all times or always. Aggressive communication style is consistently utilized in few times by the school administrators to their teachers and other school stakeholders and was applied occasionally by the Administrators of the schools in the Town of Jolo only. Passive communication style is used by the administrators from the remote areas occasionally, while the administrators from the town of Jolo and Maimbung employed this communication style in few times. Assertive communication style was applied by administrators often, while administrators from Luuk and Parang used it occasionally. In closing, the communication styles were used by different group of people in different manner and at different extent; however, an effective communicator is one who could transmit his message accurately regardless of his communication style. The

implication of this findings means that administrators who apply different styles of communications appears to be related to the motivational strategies to motivate their teachers highly, would in turn enjoy high teaching performance among teachers. On the other hand, principals who do not motivate teachers by being rude, criticizing teachers before students, delay in the payment of salaries and other entitlements, pose a threat to their maximum teaching performance. Indeed, the stress caused by poor financial motivation of teachers, poor teaching facilities and irregular promotion/in-service training conflicted with teachers' classroom activities. Similar result obtained by previous researchers like Ukpong (2003), Emanghe (1998), Ekpoh (2003) also confirmed significant influence of motivational variables on employees' work performance. For instance, when teachers do well in their teaching task and other extra- curricular activities such as games and sports, science quiz; such teachers should be commended in order to energize and motivate them for maximum performance in school task in future. Such praise and commendation would also be a source of encouragement to other teachers to take more challenging task in order to win more praise and commendation for themselves also. The reason for the said outcome of this study

pointed to what Obi (1990) concluded, that in-service training helps the teachers to become more proficient in discharging their duties. This is because teachers who are encouraged to participate in training programmes, seminars, conferences and workshops would be kept abreast with current professional information that will help them to perform better in their teaching job. The significant influence of motivational variables on teachers teaching performance remains paramount as Ofoegbu (2001), Akpan (2001), concludes that high internal motivation by school administrators have shown that teachers are motivated more by intrinsic than extrinsic.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper presented a study on the relationship of school administrators communication styles and teachers' motivation among senior high schools in Sulu.

## References

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