The Impact of Effective Principal Communication on Elementary School Teacher Performance

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Abstract—This study focuses on examining the impact of effective communication by school principals on teacher performance at Primary School 4 Cileunyi Bandung. The research methodology employed is qualitative, utilizing a phenomenological approach and conducting structured interviews with teachers who have more than 10 years of experience. The findings indicate that clear, transparent, and respectful communication between principals and teachers fosters a supportive and conducive work environment, leading to enhanced trust and collaboration. Teachers reported that receiving constructive feedback from the principal helps improve their performance and motivation. The discussion underscores the significance of principals who demonstrate empathy, actively listen, and effectively communicate goals, as they play a pivotal role in fostering effective communication and realizing the school's vision. The study underscores the importance of implementing effective communication strategies by school principals to enhance teacher performance and motivation, thereby contributing to the overall success of elementary education.

Keywords—Educational environment; Effective Communication; Qualitative Approach; School Principal; Teacher Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental aspect of human development, influencing the character and intellect of individuals and, in turn, the evolution of society. In the context of basic education, principals bear significant responsibility for creating an optimal learning environment and supporting the performance of teachers [1]. The quality of communication between principals and teachers is a significant factor that can influence teacher performance and student achievement, even when these factors are not directly observed [2]. The effectiveness of teachers in primary schools is contingent upon a number of factors, including their professional competence, motivation, and the support they receive from school management. School principals, as educational leaders, occupy a pivotal position in guiding and directing teachers through effective communication [1]. Effective communication between principals and teachers can enhance motivation, clarify expectations, and facilitate collaborative relationships [3].

Effective communication is an interaction activity that can alter the attitudes, behaviors, and views of others in accordance with the goals desired by the communicator, utilizing various media [4]. Additionally, it elucidates the fundamental tenets of efficacious communication. Efficacious communication encompasses the REACH principles of respect, empathy, clarity, listenability, and humility [5]. In addition to the REACH principle, the SOUL principle (Spirit for Servicing, Spirit for Giving an Outstanding Performance, Spirit for Understanding, Spirit for Loving) also serves to enhance the principal's leadership in fostering an exemplary educational environment. Spirit for Servicing ensures that the needs of the client are met in a comprehensive manner. Spirit for Giving an Outstanding Performance improves the quality of management and teaching. Spirit for Understanding creates open and inclusive communication. Spirit for Loving creates an atmosphere of warmth and support.

In the context of elementary schools, the role of the principal is to convey the school's vision, mission, goals, and expectations to teachers in a clear and unambiguous manner. In addition, the principal should be responsive to the needs and problems faced by teachers, provide constructive feedback, and create open and honest two-way communication channels [3]. Nevertheless, it is not uncommon for principals to lack adequate communication skills. When communication is inadequate, it can result in misinformation, confusion, and dissatisfaction among teachers [2]. Consequently, it is of paramount importance for principals to engage in ongoing training and practical experience in order to enhance their communication skills.

Previous studies, including studies by Sopandi [6] Rahman [7] and Adawiah [8], indicates that communicative leadership has a beneficial effect on employee performance. Furthermore, research by Utami [9] indicates that effective communication can facilitate conflict management, enhance teamwork, and advance teachers' professionalism. This, in turn, can contribute to the professional development of teachers.

This research differs from previous research in several key respects. Primarily, this research focuses on the impact of effective communication by school principals on the performance of elementary school teachers, whereas previous research has often been more general or focused on different educational levels. Secondly, this research also explores

strategies for enhancing communication effectiveness, which has been less extensively addressed in previous research.

Consequently, this research endeavor aims to provide more specific and practical contributions to enhance communication quality in the context of elementary education.

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of effective communication by school principals on the performance of elementary school teachers. The study will assess the role of various communication elements, including clarity of messages, feedback, and empathy, in influencing teacher performance. Additionally, it will identify principal communication strategies that can be utilized to enhance teacher effectiveness.

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach to understand how the principal's effective communication affects teacher performance at SDN 4 Bandung. Qualitative research is the process of collecting data from a particular area that aims to describe events with the researcher as the main instrument. Data sampling is done consistently and gradually, using a variety of data collection techniques. Data analysis is done inductively, with the results of the research focusing on the overall essence [3]. In the meantime, the Phenomenological approach, as outlined by Kuswarno (2009) in Mukaddamah [3], is an approach that seeks to comprehend the manner in which humans construct significant meanings and concepts within the context of intersubjectivity, namely our comprehension of the world shaped by our relationships with others.

The subjects of this study were teachers at SDN Cileunyi 4 Bandung. The rationale for selecting teachers as subjects was based on the criterion of having taught for more than 10 years. This was deemed appropriate as teachers with such experience are likely to have a deep understanding of school dynamics and experience dealing with various educational situations. Their long experience ensures that the data collected is more valid and rich in perspective.

The data were collected through structured interviews conducted online. The results of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify key themes that describe effective communication patterns and their influence on teacher performance. This approach provides a comprehensive insight into the dynamics of communication in primary schools and its impact on teacher performance. The methods section should be able to explain the research methods used, including how the procedures were carried out. Tools, materials, media, or research instruments should be well described. Should the necessity and importance of such a document arise, an appendix may be included, containing a grid of instruments or excerpts of materials used. This would serve to provide readers with examples of the aforementioned instruments or materials.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The respondents in this study were teachers at SDN 4 Bandung. The selection of teachers as resource persons was based on the criteria that they have been teaching for more than 10 years.

Table 1. The Teacher Respondent Data at Primary School Cileunyi 4 Bandung is presented below

No	Name	Length of Teaching	Education	Teaching Field
1	D W	19 th 5 bl	S1	Religion Teacher
2	K	19 th	S1	6
3	A H	11 th	S1	4
4	H D S	23 th	S1	5
5	T P	20 th	S1	2

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

The rationale for selecting teachers with more than 10 years of experience is based on the assumption that teachers who have taught for more than 10 years have a profound understanding of the dynamics of communication in schools and its impact on their performance and motivation. Their extensive experience allows them to provide more nuanced and accurate insights into the effectiveness of communication implemented by the principal.

A structured interview was conducted online with teachers at Primary School Cileunyi 4 Bandung. The objective was to evaluate the quality of communication between principals and teachers and its impact on teacher performance and motivation. The online survey included a number of key points, such as evaluations of the clarity of communication, constructive feedback, the ability to communicate goals, the level of trust and transparency, problem-solving, the influence of communication on motivation and performance, motivation through open communication, concrete examples of the impact of communication, and suggestions for future communication improvement.

The results of an online survey conducted at Primary School Cileunyi 4 Bandung indicate that the communication between the principal and teachers is of a high quality, characterized by effective and harmonious interaction. The majority of respondents, including D W, K, and T P, perceive the communication to be conducive to a positive work environment. The principal provides regular feedback that is beneficial and constructive, assisting teachers in improving and enhancing their performance. The feedback provided was not only beneficial but also motivating for the teachers to continue developing. The delivery of the objectives and expectations by the principal was also highly effective, with clear and respectful communication ensuring that all teachers understood and supported the school's vision and mission.

Table 2. The results of the survey are presented below

Indicator	DW	K	AH	HDS	TP
Communication Quality	Good and conducive	Very good, fluent, and aligned	Good with guidance intensity	Good and collaborative	Very good
Constructive Feedback	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delivery of Goals and Expectations	Kind and polite	Kind and polite	Kind and polite	To be better in the future	Good and clear
Trust and Transparency	Good	Mutual trust	Good	Good	Good
Problem/Conflict Resolution	Joint Consultation	Tabayun and discussion together	Deliberation with assistance	Discussion together	Discussion and deliberation together
Principal's Listening and Attention	Wise listening and solutions	Open to listening to opinions and aspirations	Responsive to problems	Listening and providing solutions	Listen and pay attention to aspirations
Influence on Motivation and Performance	Very influential	Support among teachers	Promotes harmony and comfort	Support and motivate	Motivate performance and harmonize
Motivation through Open Communication	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Concrete Examples of Communication Influence	Consultation when experiencing difficulties in learning	Support for PSAJ	Assist with problem solving	Participate in webinars	Learning problem solving
Suggestions for Improving Communication	Maintain and improve communication	Enhance communication further	Increase mentoring with teachers	Improve ongoing communication	Improve conducive working atmosphere

Source: Processed Primay Data 2024

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The results of an online survey conducted at Primary School Cileunyi 4 Bandung indicate that the quality of communication between principals and teachers is excellent, characterized by smooth and harmonious interactions. The majority of respondents, including D W, K, and T P, described the communication as conducive to a positive working environment. Principals regularly provide useful and constructive feedback, which helps teachers to improve and enhance their performance. The feedback provided is not only useful but also motivates teachers to continue striving for improvement. Furthermore, the principal's delivery of goals and expectations is also considered highly effective. This is due to the clarity and politeness of the communication, which ensures that all teachers understand and support the school's vision and mission.

Discussion
Implementation Process

The findings of this study were obtained through a series of systematic and structured stages. First, data collection was conducted using a structured interview method conducted online, which enabled the researcher to gather in-depth and detailed information from the research subjects, namely principals and teachers who have taught for more than 10 years at Primary School Cileunyi 4 Bandung. The data obtained from these interviews were then transcribed to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information.

Furthermore, data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques, which aimed to identify and categorize the main themes that emerged from the transcribed data. This process involved repeated reading and in-depth understanding of the data, to find patterns of effective communication and its influence on teacher performance. The phenomenological approach is used in this analysis to understand how teachers and principals form important meanings and concepts in the context of their social interactions.

Each step in this process was conducted with great care to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Sampling was gradual and consistent, with a variety of data collection

techniques employed to gain rich and in-depth perspectives. Through triangulation of data and methods, and verification by research subjects, the findings are not only accurate but also contribute significantly to the understanding of communication dynamics in primary schools and their impact on teacher performance.

Interpretation of Findings
Communication Quality

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The theory of effective communication posits that a number of essential elements contribute to the perception of positive communication between teachers and principals. First and foremost, clear and transparent communication is a fundamental aspect of effective interactions. Teachers indicated that their principals communicate information in a transparent and open manner, which minimizes confusion and ensures that all parties have a common understanding of goals and expectations. Secondly, communication conducted with respect and care creates an environment of support and mutual appreciation, which is crucial for building trust and fostering a collaborative work environment. Furthermore, the use of encouraging language and tangible illustrations through the principal's behavior provides positive behavioral role models that educators can emulate [10].

Consequently, principals not only articulate values and objectives but also exemplify them in their daily conduct, thereby reinforcing their messages and enhancing communication effectiveness. Collectively, the findings align with the theoretical premise that effective communication entails clarity, transparency, respect, and consistency between words and actions, all of which contribute to the creation of a conducive and productive work environment.

Constructive Feedback

All respondents indicated that the principal regularly provides constructive feedback. This feedback was perceived as useful for improving performance and was delivered in a supportive and motivating manner. The principal's approach to providing feedback was considered an important factor in creating a positive and progressive work environment.

This approach aligns with the tenets of effective communication, which prioritize clarity, respect, and empathy. By offering feedback in a transparent and coherent manner, the principal ensures that the message is comprehended without causing confusion. Teachers are more likely to engage in effective communication and constructive interactions with their principals when they feel supported and motivated. This is

because empathic delivery helps to create a positive and respectful working environment, which in turn strengthens effective communication [11].

Delivery of Goals and Expectations

Effective principals communicate their goals and expectations to teachers in a clear and respectful manner. This is often done through direct communication, meetings, and other collaborative efforts, ensuring that all teachers are aware of the school's vision and mission. This finding reflects the principle of clarity in conveying messages, thus avoiding confusion and ensuring that all teachers are adequately informed about the school's vision and mission. Furthermore, respect in communication demonstrates appreciation for teachers, which strengthens mutual trust and motivation. The combination of open, clear, and respectful communication by principals is conducive to the creation of a positive and supportive work environment, which is essential for the effective achievement of educational goals.

Level of Trust and Transparency

The level of trust and transparency in communication between principals and teachers is generally rated high. Teachers perceive that principals are trustworthy and transparent in their interactions, which fosters an environment conducive to open communication and mutual respect. This trust serves as an essential foundation for effective teamwork and collaboration within the school.

The finding that the level of trust and transparency in communication between principals and teachers was rated high reflects the principles of effective communication. Principals who are trusting and transparent in their interactions demonstrate respect and clarity, two important elements of good communication. Teachers feel heard and valued, which creates an environment where open communication and mutual respect can flourish. The trust built through this transparency becomes an important foundation for effective teamwork and collaboration in schools, allowing all parties to work together more efficiently and harmoniously toward educational goals [12].

Conflict Management

Teachers value the principal's role in mediation and conflict resolution. Conflicts or problems are often resolved through discussion, with the principal acting as a mediator to find fair and acceptable solutions. The principal's openness and willingness to listen to all parties involved played an important role in the successful resolution of the problem.

The principal's role in mediation and conflict resolution that reflects effective communication principles such as empathy, clarity, and humility. The principal actively listens to all parties involved in the conflict and demonstrates an empathetic attitude that helps understand different perspectives [13]. With clarity of communication, the principal communicates solutions transparently, ensuring that all parties

understand the steps to be taken. With humility, the principal creates an atmosphere of discussion in which the input of all teachers is valued and considered. The principal's openness and willingness to listen play an important role in finding fair and acceptable solutions, building trust, and strengthening teamwork. This approach not only solves problems well, but also creates a positive and progressive work environment where open communication and mutual respect flourish and educational goals can be achieved more harmoniously and effectively.

The role of the leader in mediation and conflict resolution also illustrates the spirit of understanding [14]. This spirit demonstrates the principal's willingness to listen and understand the needs and desires of teachers and students. By actively listening, principals can build stronger relationships and establish more open communication. This enables the principal to respond appropriately to the various issues and challenges faced by staff and students, facilitating effective conflict resolution and strengthening teamwork in the school.

Listening and responding to aspirations

Teachers feel that the principal listens and responds to their requests. The principal is known to be a good listener and often takes teachers' opinions and aspirations seriously. This responsiveness is important in creating a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Teachers felt that the principal listened and responded to their requests, reflecting the effective communication principle of empathic listening. This principle emphasizes the importance of listening carefully and empathetically to others. Principals who are good listeners and take teachers' opinions seriously demonstrate respect and empathy, two key elements of effective communication. This respect is reflected in how principals listen to teachers' wishes and create an inclusive and supportive work environment. In addition, this is consistent with the spirit of understanding in SOUL, which is a genuine spirit of listening to and understanding the needs and desires of teachers. Principal responsiveness not only promotes effective communication, but also builds trust and close collaboration among staff, creating a positive synergy within the school environment. By listening and responding with empathy, the principal helps all parties feel valued and heard, which in turn increases effectiveness and harmony within the educational team [15].

Impact on Motivation and Performance

The impact of principals' effective communication on teacher performance in primary schools is considerable, as evidenced by the findings above. The quality of communication between principals and teachers is regarded as excellent, characterised by clarity, transparency and respect. This aligns with the principles of effective communication, which emphasise the significance of clear and open communication. Respectful communication fosters a supportive and respectful working environment, which is vital for the establishment of harmonious working relationships. The clear and respectful

delivery of goals and expectations by the principal also strengthens effective communication, ensuring that all teachers understand the school's vision and mission precisely. Trust and transparency in communication between the principal and teachers are the foundation for effective and collaborative teamwork. Furthermore, the principal's role in handling conflict also reflects empathic and open communication, building trust and strengthening teamwork. Listening and responding with empathy to teachers' aspirations also helps to create an inclusive and supportive work environment. In conclusion, effective communication between principals and teachers has a significant positive impact on teacher performance and creates a conducive learning environment for school progress.

Recommendations for Improvement

The finding that teachers reported positive perceptions of the quality of communication with the principal suggests that effective communication plays a key role in creating a conducive and productive work environment. Teachers perceived the communication as good, conducive, harmonious, and effective, with the principal conveying information clearly, transparently, and respectfully.

The principles of effective communication can be employed to develop a new theory that incorporates the elements of clarity, transparency, respect, and consistency between words and actions. This theory can be called "Transparent-Consistent Communication Theory," which emphasizes the importance of conveying messages clearly and openly, and acting accordingly. In addition, this theory includes the aspect of deep respect for the recipient of the message, which creates mutual respect and trust. In practice, those who apply this theory will provide clear instructions, listen attentively and respond empathetically, and demonstrate consistency between their words and actions. For instance, principals who not only espouse the value of collaboration but also engage in collaborative endeavors demonstrate to teachers how those values are applied in their daily actions. This reinforces the message conveyed and increases the overall effectiveness of the communication. Consequently, the theory not only delineates the components of effective communication but also demonstrates how their implementation can engender a harmonious and productive work environment, which ultimately has a positive impact on teacher performance and motivation.

Teachers also value constructive feedback from principals, which is delivered in a supportive and motivating manner. This aligns with the principles of effective communication, including clarity, appreciation, and empathy. This approach can be modified into the "Empathic Feedback Theory," which underscores the importance of providing clear and supportive feedback and delivering criticism with empathy. Principals who provide feedback with attention to teachers' feelings and perspectives can create a more positive and productive work environment. For instance, when offering criticism, principals can commence by expressing appreciation for teachers' efforts, then proceed to identify areas for

improvement in a constructive manner and suggest concrete solutions. This approach enables teachers to feel supported and motivated to enhance their performance without feeling intimidated or unappreciated.

Furthermore, effective principals demonstrate clarity and respect when conveying goals and expectations to teachers, ensuring that all members of the teaching staff are fully aware of the school's vision and mission. This can be described as "Visionary Communication Theory," which places great importance on the clarity of goal and expectation communication, as well as on the appreciation of each team member's contributions. Principals who employ this theory will ensure that all communications pertaining to the vision and mission are clearly articulated and accompanied by an appreciation of each teacher's role in achieving those goals. For instance, in a staff meeting, the principal could elucidate the school's long-term objectives, while acknowledging and rewarding teachers' contributions towards attaining specific benchmarks, thereby fostering a sense of motivation and appreciation among all team members.

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In the context of conflict resolution, teachers express appreciation for the role of the principal, who serves as a mediator and problem-solver. This role is exemplified by the "Empathic Conflict Resolution Theory," which emphasizes the importance of active listening to all parties involved, clear communication of solutions, and a humble attitude. Principals who utilize this theory approach conflict with an open attitude, listen to each party with empathy, and work towards a solution that is fair and acceptable to all. For instance, in the event of a conflict between teachers, the principal could facilitate a discussion in which each party has an opportunity to express their views, and then assist them in identifying a solution that is satisfactory to all parties involved.

Finally, responsive principals demonstrate the principle of "Empathic Listening" by listening attentively and empathetically to teachers' aspirations. This practice creates an inclusive and supportive work environment. For instance, principals who hold regular individual meetings with teachers to listen to their aspirations and feedback not only strengthen

working relationships but also create an atmosphere where all teachers feel heard and valued. The discussion of research results should refer to previous research results that have been published in scientific journals. Authors are advised to refer to research results that have been published in the Journal of Educational Research.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the quality of communication between principals and teachers in primary schools is a crucial factor in creating a conducive and productive work environment. Teachers reported positive perceptions of communication that was considered clear, transparent, respectful, and consistent. Furthermore, constructive feedback delivered with empathy was perceived as beneficial for improving teacher performance. The findings of this study permit the formulation of several new communication theories. One such theory is the "Transparent-Consistent Communication Theory," which incorporates clarity, transparency, respect, and consistency between words and actions. Another is the "Empathic Feedback Theory," which emphasizes the importance of providing supportive and constructive feedback by considering teachers' feelings and perspectives. A third is the "Visionary Communication Theory," which emphasizes clarity in conveying vision and mission, and the importance of transparency in building trust. With regard to conflict resolution, the "Empathic Conflict Resolution Theory" advocates for an empathic and fair approach to mediation. Finally, the principle of "Empathic Listening" underscores the significance of listening and attending to teachers' aspirations to foster an inclusive work environment. This study suggests that principals should continue to cultivate effective communication skills with the objective of enhancing teacher performance and motivation, as well as creating a more harmonious and productive educational climate.

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