



ACTIVATING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS IN BASIC EDUCATION IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

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Abstract:

The study aims at identifying the reality of communication practices between school principals and supervisors in basic education in the Sultanate of Oman. It aims also at identifying the reality of communication between the school principal and the supervisor at Basic Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman, and identifying differences according to job position, gender, academic qualifications, years of experience, educational district, the number of schools the educational supervisor supervises, the size of the school, and the number of head teachers in the school. Finally, the study aims at reaching recommended processes to activate the communication between school principals and supervisors in basic education. The most significant findings of the field study are as follows the estimates of the responses of the study sample regarding the four aspects of the activation of communication between school principal and educational supervisor in Basic of Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman, varied between high and low. In the light of the study findings; the researcher has reached a number of proposed procedures to activate the communication between school principals and educational supervisors in the Basic Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman. A number of further research studies have also been proposed.

Keywords: School Principals; Supervisors; Communication; Educational Communication.

Cite This Article: Al Farsi Hakam S. H., Dr. Juma, N., and Dr. Issan, S. (2018). "ACTIVATING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS IN BASIC EDUCATION IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN." *International Journal of Engineering Technologies and Management Research*, 5(8), 54-63. DOI: 10.29121/ijetmr.v5.i8.2018.280.

1. Introduction

The ancient man began the process of communication through gestures, signals and silent motor expressions. Then came the verbal communication with the practice of sounds and words. Then the stage of recording ideas and incidents through the written writing started. After that the word and the written forms entered as the best way to convey information in the field of human communication (Hamdan, 2000). Thus communication is a means to facilitate human relations in society and to consolidate the values of interdependence, communication and harmony between individuals and groups in the human society as a whole (Ayazra and al-Fadel, 2006).

Al-Ghafri (2002) notes that in the light of the outcomes of cultural accumulation, the large size of societies, the intertwining of human activities and the different political, social and economic systems, there is a greater need to know the aspects of the conduct of human communication at various levels, especially in institutions and organizations. Increasing in all institutions and organizations in all its forms and objectives, the success of any institution depends on its effectiveness of communication.

To develop any group, the means of communication must be developed, because the harmony of this group depends primarily on the participation of its members in the goals, all of this needs to be connected. For individuals to overcome superficial contact, communication must become more than mere speech; they should share their feelings, their solidarity and their information with others (Salama, 2003).

The importance of communication is underscored by Peter F. Druker in the statement of the importance of communication and the mutual understanding among members of a single organization that each institution consisting of people with different knowledge and skills performs different types of work, and that is why it must be built based on communication, activated through the exchange of information to make appropriate decisions in the institution (reported in Kharabsheh, 2008).

The communication and exchange of information is very important and necessary for the administrative process in its various functions; either planning, organizing, directing or controlling, where the director cannot perform any of these functions without relying on information, instructions, directives, and orders (Al-Anati, 2006).

Abu Abed (2006) states that communication is based on principles that must be adhered to in various institutions based on good communication. The most important of these are the principle of freedom and security, the principle of motivation of achievement, the principle of clarity of communication, the principle of communication, and the principle of shared purpose. These principles serve to provide the ground for effective communication that will motivate employees to perform the required work and achieve common goals.

Many studies have examined 'communication' in the administrative process in general, such as the study of Kharabsheh (2008), Al-Manji (2004) and Luxin-an (2001). These studies have highlighted the importance of human relations between management and employees through social activities such as recreational parties that bring together individuals to co-operate, build and strengthen relations between them. The studies emphasized the provision of modern means and mechanisms of communication to cope with change and development, which increases the efficiency and effectiveness of communication such as computers, activating the global information network and conducting further research and studies in other aspects related to the subject of communication.

The communication process in the educational administration is an important component of the teaching and learning process, and of the administrative processes of the educational institution as a whole, because of the time and effort, as it has appeared in many literature and studies since 1940, all of which resulted in the development of a theory of communication system.

The school administration plays an important role in preparing and educating the generations. Therefore, the management of their operations is very important and requires the competence, ability and special preparation of those who carry out their various operations and tasks. The principal has an important role in developing relations in the school environment and beyond. S/He is responsible for the growth and maturity of staff members, administrators and students. Her/ His role includes creating a good school environment based on mutual respect and trust among the school family. S/he deals with heads, administrative staff, educational supervisors, teachers, students, parents and community members (Spring, 2006).

Ayesh (2008) notes that the development of relationships with diverse groups of individuals imposes the need for the principal to play a humanitarian role and enrich him with human skills. The most important of these relationships is with other subsystems such as the educational supervision system, where communication in educational supervision is the basis of work and a basic concern. The proper supervisory processes are not devoid of an effective system of communication between the parties of the learning process. It is the process of transferring ideas and information from the teacher, Or school principal to the educational supervisor, or vice versa, and this is done through the use of modern communication techniques, leading to unity of efforts; to achieve the school's mission and objectives. Most studies on supervisory behavior practices suggest that educational supervisors spend between 50% and 75% of their time in a form of communication. This is done through memos, reports, briefings, meetings, personal relationships, telephone calls, or talking to others involved in educational work. One of the reasons for the large number of contacts is the center of the educational supervisor in the educational administration, which is the focus of the communication process. Most of the official communications of educational supervision go through it. It is responsible for transferring information to the educational institution - whether it is the school or the educational administration - or vice versa (Asadi and Ibrahim, 2003).

It is therefore important to activate the process of communication between the parties designated in the work of the educational supervisor of the principals of schools and teachers, students and parents; in order to achieve the ultimate goal of the supervisory process is to improve performance. This will be done through collaborative teamwork with the school principal, and all relevant groups in the educational learning process.

The head of the school and the educational supervisor are considered educational leaders; hence their contacts have an impact on the others involved; to make improvement and development in school performance. The communication is a process in which information is exchanged and understood between two or more persons, in order to motivate the other to do something. Or to refrain from doing something or to believe in something "(Al-Hawari, 2002).

The relationship between the educational supervisor and the school principal is one of the pillars of the success of the supervisory work, which will create the appropriate atmosphere for the school work, and thus the communication between them stems from the convergence of the goals where each of them aims to improve the performance of the school in general and teachers in particular in order to enhance students' performance.

The educational literature and documents emphasize the importance of the role of the educational supervisor in improving school performance through his cooperation with the school administration. This is done through lectures and preparation of bulletins, organizing training courses and educational concerns to train teachers during the service and to inform them of all the latest developments in the educational field. It is done also through informing the head of the school on the progress of work on the subject of specialization, and cooperating with him in lesson distribution between teachers and the construction of the school schedule, solving problems that teachers may face, helping school in creating its annual plan, strengthening human relations between the components of the school community and the local environment, and prepare procedural research that helps to overcome the difficulties facing the school, students and teachers (al-fadhli, 2000; Tafesh, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2007).

The communication process is one of the most important challenges facing the head of the school and the educational supervisor where they have to meet the increasing demand for education and the emergence of some of the problems resulting from it. This requires them to consult and exchange of views and suggestions between them, and with the staff in the school; to exchange views, ideas, information, attitudes, feelings and impressions among the members of the administrative body and motivate them to make decisions, and discuss them in solving the problems that face the educational work in the school, and hear their complaint, or The problems they face (Abdul Razzaq, 2005).

Research in educational communication in the Sultanate of Oman is characterized by clear interest through the studies carried out such as Al Ghafri (2002), Al-Qasimi (2000) and other studies related to educational communication such as Shizawi (2007) (2000). There are also other Arab studies such as Ayazrat and Al-Fadel (2006), Abdul Razak (2005) and Al-Fadhli (2000). Foreign studies on aspects of educational communication include Jones (2006), Hunt, O. et al (2000), Dodd (1997), and Fantozzi (1997).

The communication process plays an important and effective role in achieving the objectives of joint work between the school principal and the educational supervisor in the light of the developments sought by the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman, especially in the development of school leadership skills and educational supervision of school principals and educational supervisors.

The success of the school administration in achieving its objectives is strongly related to the success of the communication process with the educational supervision system, by activating communication and cooperation with the educational supervisor, as a link between the educational administration and the school, where the communication process provides feedback for the various activities in the field of education, both at the level of planning, organization, leadership, development and evaluation, and relations with the local environment (Alamri, 2003).

In spite of the Ministry of Education's interest in the Sultanate of Oman in developing the process of communication between school principals and educational supervisors in order to raise the level of their performance, provide them with knowledge and equip them with skills related to the development of supervisory work in the field of education and training them on various educational subjects in school administration and educational supervision, which is done through

the training courses, educational concerns, diploma programs in school administration, educational supervision and postgraduate studies in cooperation with Sultan Qaboos University or other educational institutions, however, some of the final reports, and field visits to the field of education by specialists and followers of the system for the development of school performance, pointed to the lack of coordination and communication between the groups involved in the implementation of the system of the development of school performance at the level of the educational district, "There is a need for coordination and integration between the specialists in supervising the system of development of school performance, and work to find the appropriate mechanism for the integration of the departments and sections of the Directorate in the educational district, and the schools to highlight the pros and priorities of development and procedures Brilliantly; to overcome them for any follower of the work of the school supervisor or administrative ... etc, And benefiting from them in helping the school overcome development priorities "(School Performance Development Department, 2008).

The results of some studies, such as the study of Al-Shizawi (2007), Al-Awfi (2000) and Al-Ahmadi (1998), showed poor communication and cooperation between the educational supervisor and the school principal and little principals participation in educational conferences. Al-Qasimi (2000) recommended to conduct a study on the extent to which the principal conducts his administrative contacts with educational supervisors, students, and the community.

2. Methodology

The study aims at identifying the reality of communication practices between school principals and supervisors in basic education in the Sultanate of Oman.

It aims also at identifying the reality of communication between the school principal and the supervisor at Basic Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman, and identifying differences according to job position, gender, academic qualifications, years of experience, educational district, the number of schools the educational supervisor supervises, the size of the school, and the number of head teachers in the school. Finally, the study aims at reaching recommended processes to activate the communication between school principals and supervisors in basic education.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a descriptive method was used; where the analysis of relevant literature on educational communication was carried out .A questionnaire of (59) items, has been developed in which its validity and reliability have been tested. It has been categorized into 4 aspects: (1) strategic planning, (2) circulation and exchange of information, (3) professional development of teachers, and (4) interface with the local community.

The sample of the study consisted of (505) school principals and educational supervisors from eight educational governorates and districts. The study method used random sample with equal classification.

The data was statistically treated by using averages, standard deviations, relative importance (P), test (v) (T-test), One Way ANOVA, and Tukey HSD test.

3. Findings and Discussions

The most significant findings of the field study are as follows:

- 1) The estimates of the responses of the study sample regarding the four aspects of the activation of communication between school principal and educational supervisor in Basic of Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman, varied between high and low. The aspect of professional development for teachers received either high or medium estimates, while both the aspect of circulation and exchange of information, and the aspect of strategic planning received estimates ranging between high and low. The estimates for the aspect of interface with the local community varied between medium and low.
- 2) As for the study variables, the study has found out that:
 - There are significant differences of statistical indications between the responses of the study sample on both the aspect of strategic planning, and the aspect of interface with the local community in favor of school principals. However, there were no statistically significant differences related to the aspects of circulation and exchange of information, and professional development for teachers.
 - There are statistically significant differences between the estimates of study sample due to the variable "gender" in the aspect of interface with the local community in favor of males. Meanwhile, there were no statistically significant differences between the average of male and female practices with regard to the degree of practice of the other three aspects in the study.
 - There are no differences in the averages of the sample estimates attributed to the variable of "academic qualification" in the four aspects.
 - There are statistically significant differences in the average estimates of study sample attributed to the variable "years of experience" between those with experience of 5 to 10 years and those experienced more than 10 years on the aspects of circulation and exchange of information, professional development for teachers and interface with the local community for the benefit of those experienced 5 years to 10 years, while there are no statistically significant differences attributed to the variable "circulation and exchange of information"
 - There are statistically significant differences attributed to the variable "educational district" in all four aspects of the study.
 - There are statistically significant differences attributed to the variable "number of schools" to be supervised by the educational supervisor; between the category of the number of schools from 11 to 17 schools and from 18 schools and over in both aspects "professional development for teachers", and "interface with the local community", in favour of the category of the number of schools from 18 schools and over.
 - There are also differences between the category of the number of schools from 10 schools and less, and the category of the number of schools from 18 schools and over in the aspect of interface with the local community, in favour of the category of the number of schools from 18 schools and over.
 - There are no statistically significant differences attributed to the variable "size of the school", and the variable "number of head teachers at the school" on all four aspects of the study.

- In the light of the study findings; the researcher has reached a number of proposed procedures to activate the communication between school principals and educational supervisors in the Basic Education schools in the Sultanate of Oman. A number of further research studies have also been proposed.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The objectives of this study were to identify the reality of communication practices among principals of basic education schools and educational supervisors in the Sultanate of Oman and to identify the differences according to the variables of the study. And reaching a suggested procedure to activate the communication process between the principals of the basic education schools and the educational supervisor. Among recommendations of the study:

- The development of the vision and the mission of school and its strategic plan to take the vision in the aspects of technical supervision and the participation of the educational supervisor in the preparation of the school plan and participate in decision-making regarding the teacher and student.
- Include the supervisor's work plan in the implementation of scientific activities in the school in collaboration with the principal and the head teacher.
- Activating the use of means of communication and modern techniques in communication between the school principal and the educational supervisor in a way that serves the joint work between them.
- Work in providing and running internet service in all schools.
- The first meeting was held between the principal school and the educational supervisor at the beginning of the year to discuss the mechanism of activating the work between them.
- Apply the supervisor idea to each school.
- Clarifying the joint work between the school principal and the educational supervisor in the educational supervision manual.
- Adopting the idea of the network of nearby schools to exchange ideas, visions and proposals that serve the work of school.
- Activation of the role of the head teacher with link-circle between the educational supervisor and the school principal by granting him the powers of technical supervision work.

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