

The Importance of Effective Communication in Supporting Teacher Empowerment in Schools: A Literature Reviews

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication is a key element in fostering synergy among teachers, principals, and the broader educational community. This article aims to examine the importance of effective communication in supporting teacher empowerment within schools. Using a literature review method, this study explores the concept of effective communication, its strategic role in enhancing teacher engagement, and its impact on educational success. Findings from various literature analyses reveal that effective communication in teacher empowerment is essential for improving work effectiveness in teaching activities, such as fostering teachers' creative ideas, conducting teacher training, facilitating communication in discussion groups, and simplifying the delivery of teaching materials to students. This study also highlights that effective communication not only serves as a tool for transmitting information but also functions as a medium for sharpening creativity, solving problems, and enhancing competencies, particularly for teachers. In the context of empowerment, strategic communication helps address common challenges faced by educators. Therefore, continuous efforts are necessary to enhance communication skills at all levels of school management to achieve optimal teacher empowerment.

Keywords: *Effective communication, Teacher empowerment, Educational success, Strategic communication, School management.*



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INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the primary foundation for building high-quality human resources; however, establishing this foundation requires responsible institutions such as schools. Schools play a crucial role in creating an innovative and conducive learning environment that fosters the development of each individual's potential. In today's globalized era, education systems worldwide are undergoing significant transformations. This requires schools to adapt to these substantial changes. Additionally, the increasing complexity of 21st-century education further underscores the critical role of schools, particularly the educators within them.

The role of schools extends beyond merely functioning as a community of learners involved in education. Schools also act as organizations equipped to offer solutions to educational challenges. These challenges must be addressed by schools through comprehensive service programs and full-service initiatives (Warner, 2024). To implement such programs effectively, all components within the school must collaborate synergistically, with communication playing a pivotal role in this effort. Effective

communication is a fundamental element in fostering productive and harmonious working relationships among various stakeholders in the school environment, including teachers, principals, students, and parents.

Good communication not only serves as a medium for disseminating information but also as a strategic tool to drive collaboration, enhance performance, and empower educators. Empowering teachers is essential, as the effectiveness of a school's services heavily relies on their contribution. Teachers are seen as the cornerstone of advancing a nation through education (Rahmawati & Permana, 2019). Consequently, empowering educators becomes a critical priority in building an effective educational system. Teacher empowerment efforts are often influenced by the effectiveness of communication within the school. Hence, fostering effective communication becomes a necessity for teachers as agents of change, particularly in this era of globalization.

Effective communication is vital to maintaining the enthusiasm of young learners. This enthusiasm enables teachers to shape structured thinking, influence engagement, and produce self-directed learners (Dhillon & Kaur, 2021). Such enthusiasm also requires teachers to adopt communication styles that are relevant to contemporary times, making them appear innovative and encouraging both teachers and students to think creatively, leverage technology, and adapt to change. Furthermore, effective communication creates opportunities for teachers to voice their aspirations, challenges, and needs to school leaders, enabling the design of targeted empowerment policies and strategies.

This literature review aims to explore the critical role of effective communication in supporting teacher empowerment in schools. While previous studies have extensively discussed the importance of communication in education, few have specifically linked it to teacher empowerment. This article seeks to address this gap by highlighting how effective communication can serve as a key to overcoming future challenges and as a practical strategy for school leaders in managing their institutions.

METHODS

This article was developed using a literature review method, aimed at identifying and analyzing effective communication in supporting teacher empowerment within the school environment. The data collection process involved gathering, reviewing, and synthesizing relevant literature from various sources, particularly scholarly articles, journals, and books pertinent to the topic. The collected data were systematically organized and analyzed using various academic databases to ensure broad and diverse literature coverage.

The primary focus was on recent and relevant scholarly articles or journals from 2015 to 2024, along with books discussing communication, schools, and teacher empowerment. The data were analyzed by identifying key themes related to innovative communication and its application in empowering teachers, as well as patterns emerging from previous studies. This study's limitations lie in its reliance on secondary data, rendering the results theoretical. Further empirical study is recommended for validation and practical implementation.

RESULTS

3.1 Effective Communication in the Context of Education

Fundamental Concepts of Effective Communication

Communication can be defined as the transmission of information or messages involving mutual understanding between individuals within a specific context. Communication activities include various forms such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Khan, 2017). These activities are vital for building relationships and exchanging ideas, contributing to the development of civilizations, communities, and even nations (Tuhovsky, 2018). According to Abidin (2017), three key aspects of communication are: 1) Communicator for the individual delivering information to the recipient; 2) Communicant for the individual receiving information from the communicator; and 3) Medium for the channel through which information is conveyed.

Knowledge of effective communication, coupled with deliberate actions, serves as a strong foundation for progress and transformation. This transformation may involve innovations aimed at addressing problems, whether personal or societal (Tuhovsky, 2018). In the book *Skills for Communicating with Patients* by Silverman *et al.* (2013), three areas of communication are identified: skills, attitudes, and issues.

The book emphasizes the importance of a skill-based approach, which should be viewed as a universal pathway for all communication-related learning. Key principles highlighted in the book include: 1) A foundation of knowledge, communication skills, physical well-being, and problem-solving abilities enhances communication effectiveness; 2) Communication is not an optional addition but a vital skill, encompassing human knowledge and intellectual effort; 3) Communication bridges theory and practice; 4) Communication is a set of learnable and maintainable skills rather than merely an innate trait or personality feature; and 5) Communication should be taught with the same rigor as other core skills.

3.2 Teacher Empowerment

Fundamental Concepts of Teacher Empowerment

The concept of teacher empowerment can be defined as the management efforts and initiatives undertaken by schools to achieve their objectives through the active participation of teachers. School administrators empower teachers by supporting them, creating a shared vision, ensuring they feel valued, and considering their input in school activities. Teachers, in turn, can influence their peers by fostering a sense of competence and professionalism, encouraging active participation in school programs, and providing support in various activities. If schools aim to foster innovation, they must first plan thoroughly and manage teacher empowerment effectively. Study indicates that job satisfaction, work performance, productivity, motivation, and the self-perceived quality of teachers can drive them to enhance both their success and that of their students (Kiral, 2020).

Importance of Teacher Empowerment

Teacher empowerment is crucial in schools because it optimizes teacher performance to enhance quality, effectiveness, innovation, and efficiency. Furthermore, empowerment

provides teachers with the opportunity to participate actively in decision-making processes, thereby fostering inclusive learning environments and producing graduates equipped to navigate global dynamics (Wirabhakti, 2022). The primary objectives of teacher empowerment, particularly in building student knowledge, are outlined in Susiati *et al.* (2015) as follows: 1) Enhancing teachers' competencies to enable effective facilitation and teaching; 2) Improving knowledge and skills while emphasizing mentoring and guidance for students, possibly with a psychological approach; 3) Encouraging teachers to adopt an effective approach where students are treated as subjects of learning rather than objects; 4) Involving teachers in various programs aimed at identifying their capabilities and addressing student learning challenges; and 5) Facilitating group discussions among teachers to collaboratively address educational issues, exchange ideas, and find solutions.

Strategies for Teacher Empowerment

Teacher empowerment is primarily facilitated by school principals and stakeholders responsible for teacher development programs. According to Jim Cathcart, cited in Baroroh *et al.* (2023), teacher empowerment can be effectively implemented through the "8T of People Empowerment" formula, which includes:

- Target: Are teachers clear about and aligned with the school's goals?
- Tools: Do teachers have access to adequate resources and necessary information?
- Training: Have teachers received proper and sufficient training?
- Time: Do teachers have enough time for training and quality improvement?
- Truth: Do teachers understand the interconnections within the school system?
- Tracking: Is there feedback from school principals to ensure teachers stay on the right track?
- Touch: Do school leaders provide support, encouragement, or personal engagement?
- Trust: Do school leaders show confidence in teachers' skills and willingness to perform?

To make teacher empowerment efforts more effective, schools are encouraged to create the following conditions, as suggested by Widodo & Sriyono (2020):

- Participation: Teachers should take control of their work responsibilities.
- Innovation: Schools should foster an environment receptive to innovative ideas and encourage teachers to explore new approaches while taking calculated risks.
- Access to Information: Teachers must have wide access to relevant information.
- Accountability: Empowered teachers are expected to produce agreed-upon results, maintain credibility, and approach their work with a positive attitude.

According to Wisnanda & Putra (2024), several strategies can be employed to empower teachers:

- Internal Training (IHT): Training conducted internally at KKG/MGMP, schools, or designated venues to enhance teacher competencies.
- Internship Programs: Teachers participate in internships at related institutions/industries to develop professional skills.
- Partnership Programs: Schools collaborate with government or private institutions to conduct training in specific skills, either onsite or at partner locations.
- Distance Learning Training: Training conducted online without requiring instructors and participants to be in the same physical location.

- Tiered and Specialized Training: Programs conducted at designated training centers (e.g., P4TK or LPMP) with structured levels, from basic to advanced.
- Short Courses: Training at LPTKs or other institutions to enhance competencies, such as conducting classroom action study, writing academic papers, and planning and delivering effective lessons.
- Internal Mentorship: Conducted by principals and senior teachers through staff meetings, teaching rotations, additional internal assignments, and peer discussions.
- Advanced Education: Encouraging teachers to pursue further education, both domestically and internationally, for professional development. Outstanding teachers can be given study leave, and the program aims to produce mentor teachers who can support their colleagues' professional growth.

3.3 The Role of Effective Communication in Teacher Empowerment

Effective communication plays a crucial role in empowering teachers, with significant impacts on improving quality. According to Setiawan (2018), positive interactions between teachers and students fostered through innovative communication contribute to enhancing and refining the quality of learning. Teachers who interact openly and actively with students can create a conducive learning atmosphere, thereby empowering themselves to strive optimally.

Challenges Faced

Not all forms of communication can be deemed effective, as certain aspects must be carefully considered due to the complex characteristics of effective communication. These characteristics include: Relative advantages, Required costs, Complexity or simplicity, Alignment with the physical environment, Compatibility with cultural settings, Ease of communication, Cost and time efficiency, and Feasibility for small-scale trials (Sumardjo & Hikmah, 2022).

Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Communication in Teacher Empowerment

- Communicator Skills: According to Kartikawati (2024), communicators with rhetorical sensitivity can tailor their delivery methods to the needs and characteristics of students. This ensures messages are well-received and highlights the importance of teachers mastering subject content and effective delivery methods for smooth communication in teaching.
- Openness and Collaboration: Arifaini & Wijayanti (2024) emphasize that communicators must establish strong interpersonal relationships to achieve educational goals effectively. This includes building trust between teachers and students, facilitating problem-solving, boosting motivation, optimizing collaboration, and enhancing teacher efficiency.
- Teaching Methods and Media: According to Maulida & Rasto (2021), selecting appropriate teaching methods and media can improve students' understanding and teachers' effectiveness in delivering material. This also supports teacher empowerment in managing the teaching process.
- School Environment: Study by Nani & Soleha (2024) highlights that a conducive environment, including adequate educational facilities and a comfortable classroom atmosphere, enhances teacher-student interactions and fosters effective communication.

3.4 Types of Effective Communication in Teacher Empowerment

One of the key aspects of teacher empowerment is the application of effective communication. The following are some types of effective communication that can be implemented to empower teachers:

- Verbal Communication: Involves the use of words, both spoken and written, to convey messages. Messages can be delivered orally or in writing using appropriate language to express thoughts, feelings, and intentions, thereby representing the individual realities being communicated. Clear, simple, and easily understandable language is crucial for verbal communication. Additionally, aspects such as tone of voice, speech pace, word ambiguity, and even humor can significantly influence the effectiveness of verbal communication.
- Nonverbal Communication: Encompasses cues without words, such as body language. Nonverbal communication reinforces or even replaces verbal messages, making it essential for teachers to be aware of and manage their nonverbal signals. Understanding emotional cues through nonverbal communication helps determine the appropriate approach for engaging with individuals (Mulyana, 2023).
- Use of Digital Media: In the digital era, proficiency in digital communication platforms is critical. Teachers need to effectively use digital tools to interact with students and parents, particularly in the context of online learning (Sulistijanto *et al.*, 2021).
- Educational Interaction: Refers to structured communication between teachers and students designed to achieve specific educational goals. Through such interactions, teachers can refine their interpersonal and intrapersonal communication skills, enhancing their ability to deliver material effectively and foster harmonious relationships. Effective educational interactions boost teacher motivation and participation in the learning process (Simanjuntak *et al.*, 2024).

Based on study by Arifaini & Wijayanti (2024), seven types of effective communication can be applied in teacher empowerment:

- Interpersonal Communication: Direct communication between individuals that facilitates two-way dialogue, such as mentoring or coaching.
- Empathic Communication: Communication based on a deep understanding of others' emotions and perspectives, is crucial in teacher-student interactions.
- Participative Communication: Engages all parties in the communication process to share ideas and make joint decisions, such as group discussions or meetings.
- Persuasive Communication: Techniques aimed at convincing others to accept ideas or take specific actions, such as motivating students.
- Collaborative Communication: Focuses on teamwork and shared responsibilities to achieve common goals, such as collaborating on curriculum development.
- Transparent Communication: Involves delivering information openly, clearly, and honestly without withholding essential facts, fostering trust between teachers and students.
- Solution-Oriented Communication: Centers on finding solutions to specific problems, aiding in overcoming challenges in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Effective communication plays a critical role in supporting teacher empowerment within the school environment. Clear, purposeful communication and discussions among principals, teachers, and all school stakeholders can foster a collaborative and harmonious working atmosphere. This study highlights that effective communication is not merely a tool for conveying information but also serves as a medium to enhance creativity, solve problems, and improve competencies, especially for teachers. In the context of empowerment, strategic communication also helps overcome common obstacles. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to enhance communication skills at all levels of school management to support optimal teacher empowerment. Key aspects of teacher empowerment through effective communication include communication training, leveraging digital technology to support interactions, and fostering a culture of innovative and educational communication. Consistent application of effective communication strengthens teachers' roles as agents of change, ultimately contributing to the comprehensive achievement of the school's vision and mission. However, this study has limitations as it is based solely on a literature review. Further study using empirical approaches, such as surveys or case studies, is needed to better understand the direct impact of effective communication on teacher empowerment.

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