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EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF HEAD TEACHERS ON
SCHOOL CLIMATE

Shahida Perveen^{1*} Dr Hamid Nawaz²

¹PhD (education) scholar The University of Lahore

²Assistant professor The University of Lahore

^{1*}shahida_ch20@yahoo.com, ²hameed.nawaz@ed.uol.edu.pk

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Keywords: Communication skills, Head teachers, School Climate, Dimensions of School Climate, Public secondary schools

ABSTRACT

Communication is the best way to know the intentions, goals, or plans of others and also very suitable for the resolution of conflicts (Hitt, et al., 2006). When head teachers have excellent communication skills, they can keep their team morale high and help to resolve conflicts in time before they go out of hand. To improve performance of teachers and students and want to create a healthy climate in school, it is important for head teachers to hone their communication skills. Research holds a foremost aim to evaluate the effects of communication skills of head teachers on school climate in public secondary schools. The goal of the paper is to focus attention on the communication skills of head teachers acquire or needs to acquire in order to maintain a favorable school climate in any sphere of life. Also the dimensions of school climate will be discussed along with the safety climate, academic climate and community climate. For this purpose data were collected from 432 head teachers working in public secondary schools all over Punjab. On a wider note, the study aims to explore the difference between communication skills of head teachers considering their gender, male and female and location rural and urban. The results show that communication skills are strong predictor of school climate, solid relationship between communication skills of head teachers and school climate and no difference of skills on gender and location bases.

Keywords: Communication skills, Head teachers, School Climate, Dimensions of School Climate, Public secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Communication skills are the vital for head teachers of schools because they have to deal with so many people at a time. Good communication by school head teachers is imperious for better presentation, motivation, and enthusiasm and conflict resolution in all affairs of schools. This skill can help the head teachers to get feedback and in maintaining healthy relationship with all staff members (Dean, 2020). Head teachers have to communicate with teachers, students, helping staff, higher authorities and community. This skill enables

school head teachers to accomplish their duties efficiently. Communication skill eventually develops and forms a bond between people residing in a particular place, eliminating any differences or grudges between people. Neil (2018), "the main ones are role models and leaders in a school community who are responsible for creating a communication bridge between teachers and students in order to achieve a friendly school environment".

School head teachers consider communication as the supreme skills so they pay great attention to developing their coaching skills. Therefore, they work hard to develop this skill set, recognizing the benefits it will bring from facilitating a variety of meetings throughout the school. They must communicate effectively to the staff, students, community and higher authorities. Communication isn't a single skill. It's actually a complex set of skills that build upon one another, presentation, expression; non-verbal communication and explaining are also included as parts of communication. Negotiation is the means by which people deal with their differences. Negotiating is seeking mutual agreement through dialogue. It also presents a form of conflict resolution that is more consciously controlled. It also involves more controlled communication than other conflict situations; the overall process is marked by greater ambiguity due to the lack of stakeholder control over the outcome (Anderson et al. 2003). Duncan, (2009), head teachers must expert all forms of communication like individual, departmental, and all-staff conversations, as well as communication by phone, email, and social media. A large part of communication involves listening. Therefore, head teachers must establish a constant flow of communication between themselves and their staff or team members, whether through an open door policy or regular conversations with workers. Head teachers must be available regularly to discuss problems and concerns with all staff members of school (Mattheis, et al., 2012).

Communication gap between head teachers, teachers and students are maintained in order to achieve a favorable school climate that can be healthy for students, teachers and community. Moreover communication can actually make a big difference when maintained in schools. Proper communication skills applied by head teachers are literally a game changer. This can lead to the creation of trustworthy bond among students, teachers and head teachers that can help develop a satisfactory school climate (Tyler, 2016). Greene, Kreider & Mayer, (2005), suggesting how better communication skills by teachers can actually develop a better school climate. The writers have displayed great importance of communication in schools and how this helps to develop the climate around the school. Communication barriers exist between head teachers and students which are a hurdle in proper school climate and teacher satisfaction. Lack of communication skills of head teachers can lead to various serious problems.

Majority of the head teachers tend to create poor communication skills due to which the academic climate, safety climate and community climate of the school also suffers. It was revealed that when head teachers communicate harshly with the teachers and students, lose their confidence and create conflicts among them. Also many of the teachers while facing poor communication from head teachers often hide incidents that are supposed to be reported immediately. For example any student facing bullying, harassment, abuse tends to hide this from his/ her teachers can lead to drastic

safety climate of school. This can also give way to certain dangerous outcomes that can actually turn out to be horrific. Head teachers, often fails to create that communication bridge with their students (Kutsyuruba, Klinger & Hussain, 2015).

A healthy school climate is attained when all the stake holders of school have cultural and social relationship, and this result from good communication skills (Omar, et al, 2012). Communication has an important role to play in conflict resolution. It has been observed that poor communication always results in misunderstandings and eventually conflicts. Communication must be clear, direct and precise to avoid conflicts. First, be very clear what you intend to convey to the other individual (Snodgrass & Blunt, 2009).

Statement of the problem

Communication skills permits head teachers to share what they want to share, ask what they want to ask, convey the message which need to convey and can guide for what is expected from others. Successful school head teachers are frequently self-assured communicators and narrators. They are talented to involve the hearts and minds of those they lead. Good communication skills support to grow an improved thoughtful and trust between people that stimulates them to follow the principles and values that their leader wants to instill. For the improvement of school climate and satisfaction of all stakeholders of the schools, communication skills work like a ladder (Klinger, 2015). According to the National School Climate Council, a healthy school climate endorses students' academic, psychological and social development. Healthy school climate, provide excellent learning opportunities, psychologically safe and physically secure for all students. The study highlights the vital effects of communication skills on school climate and how communication is truly a game changer.

Objectives of the study

Objectives are as under.

1. To highlight the effects of communication skills of head teachers on school climate
2. To find out the relationship between communication skills and school climate

Research Questions

1. What are the communication skills of head teachers of secondary schools?
2. What are the main dimensions of climate for secondary schools?
3. To what extent communication skill of head teachers effect the safety climate of secondary schools?
4. To what extent communication skill of head teachers effect the academic climate of secondary schools?
5. To what extent communication skill of head teachers effect the community climate of secondary schools?
6. Is there any difference in communication skill of head teachers of male and female secondary schools?

7. Is there any difference in communication skill of head teachers of rural and urban area secondary schools?

Research Design

Quantitative research methodology was used in this research. The determination regarding this research design was to discover the effects of communication skills on school climate. Henceforth causal comparative design was selected for the study.

Population for the study was all the working head teachers of public secondary schools in Punjab. The study was about communication skills of head teachers of public secondary schools in Punjab. There are 7404 (Male; 3882+ Female; 3522 = 7404) Public secondary schools positioned in the rural and urban area of Punjab (Govt enrollment report, 2019). All male and female head teachers working in public secondary schools were considered as members of the population. Multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. The study was conducted in Punjab Province, Pakistan. Criteria for selecting the sample are first determined by the category of geographical area and location. Punjab province is divided into three regions: North, Central and South. There are 36 districts in all regions of the Punjab so at first stage researcher randomly selected 2 districts from each region of Punjab province. In this way 6 districts were selected. Each District is divided into Tehsils as an administrative unit and on average each District has 3 divisions. At the second stage from each Tehsil, 12 male secondary schools (Rural 6, Urban 6 = 12) were conveniently selected. In this way from each Tehsil (12 + 12 = 24) 24 schools and 72 schools were selected from the total area. So out of 6 districts in Punjab Province, 432 schools were selected (72x6 = 432). Head teachers are appropriate personnel who can provide related data for the study. The head teachers from each selected school were therefore contacted to collect the data, so the sample of the study was 432 leaders.

Male ; Rural + Urban 108+108=216 Total = 432
 Female; Rural + Urban 108+108=216

Table. 1: Selected Districts from each region of the Punjab province

Sr	Regions	Total Districts	Selected Districts	Sampled Districts
1	South	07	02	Rahimyar khan & Khanewal
2	Central	18	02	Kasur & Okara
3	North	11	02	Attock & Rawalpindi
	Total	36	06	

Instrumentation

Five point self-designed Likert type questionnaires was used to collect data from the sample head teachers. The questionnaire was divided into 2 separate sections, which appropriately covered all study variables as presented in the format thinking.

Part A of the questions was based on human data such as; Qualifications, professional qualifications, training, teaching and leadership experience, gender and location.

Questions section

Part B answered five points of the type of 'Likert'; 1, Strongly Agree 2, Agree 3, undecided 4, Disagree 5, Strongly Disagree.

Pilot Testing

The validity of the face and the content of the questionnaire were applied at the request of an expert group. After entering them, the questions were adjusted accordingly and data were collected for pilot testing. The reliability of the instrument was Cranach's alfa 0.966. In order to test the instrument, researcher was personally visited with these respondents and administers the questionnaires. These respondents were not comprised in the sample population of the study. Pilot testing of the questionnaire provides information on deficits and enhancement of statements. All feedback has been studied and carefully considered, and the necessary changes have been made in accordance with the reliability of instrument was .882.

Scoring Procedure

The questionnaire used in the study consisted of a five point Likert type statements. The answers in each statement define weightage Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Data is encoded and a code is assigned to each student. The maximum score is 5 and the minimum supply is 1. That means the higher score is reflecting the strong relation and effect.

Data Collection

Firstly list of all schools was collected from Chief Education Officers (CEO) of each district, rural and urban and male and female schools were identified. Researcher was written a letter to the heads of selected secondary schools for seeking permission and help in data collection. Questionnaires were distributed to secondary schools head teachers. Data were collected personally, and via email.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21). To analyze the views of the respondents, frequency was counted on each answer. The mean score on each statement was calculated to find out the effects of communication skills on school climate in secondary schools in Punjab. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample and central tendency (mean score, standard deviations and sample size). Regression analysis was also applied to measure the factors effects the school climate. Relationship between communication skills and school climate were also calculated by applying Pearson Correlations Coefficient. Inferential statistics including t- test were also be used to test relationships between the study variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Minimu	Maxi	Mean	Std.
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		m	mum		Deviation
Gender	432	1	2	1.50	.501
Location	432	1	2	1.50	.501
Comm Skills	432	1.00	4.00	1.769	.49385
				3	
Safety Climate	432	1.00	4.00	1.7442	.52210
Academic Climate	432	1.00	3.50	1.8492	.36982
Community Climate	432	1.00	3.64	1.7788	.37918

Current table is describing information about the participants. It is evident that there was a total of 432 participants participated in this research. The mean of 1st two rows is showing that based upon location and gender there were equal number of samples were taken. Communication skills were taken as independent variables in this study to check their effects on dependent variable school climate. Independent variables were Communication skills (1.77 out of 1.0 minimum and 4.0 maximum with std. deviation of .494), three dependent variables in this study were safety climate (1.74 out of 1.0 minimum and 4.0 maximum with std. deviation of .52), academic climate (1.8 out of 1.0 minimum and 3.50 maximum with std. deviation of .37), and community climate (1.78 out of 1.0 minimum and 3.64 maximum with std. deviation of .38).

Table 2. Effects of Communication skills of head teachers on Safety climate

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Df	F	Sig
.130	.128	1	64.333	.000 ^b

Regression (Simple linear) was carried out to test if communication skills of head teachers significantly predicted safety climate. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 13% of the variance and that the model was significant, R Square=.130, Adjusted R Square=.128 and F(1, 430)=64.333, p<.000).

Table 3: Regression Coefficients of Communication skills on Safety Climate

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
SC	1.069	.087		12.245	.000
C S	.381	.048	.361	8.021	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Safety Climate (SC)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Comm Skills(CS)

This table shows that communication skills of Head school teacher serve as a strong predictor of safety climate of secondary schools. It was found that communication skill significantly predicted safety climate ($b_1 = .381$, $t = 8.021$ and $p < .000$). The final predictive model was: proportion of safety climate = $1.069 + .381$. So, we can say that communication skills effects safety climate. It means one unit increase of communication skill can create 38.1% safety climate.

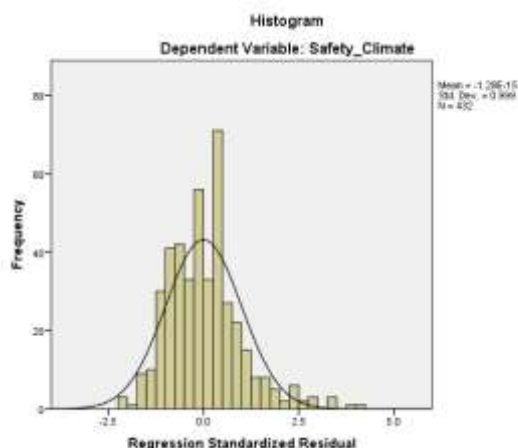


Fig. 7.2: Histogram of Communication skills on Safety climate

Table 4: Effects of Communication skills of Head School Teacher on Academic Climate of Secondary Schools

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Df	F	Sig.
.194	.192	1	103.587	.000 ^b

A simple linear regression was carried out to test if communication skills of head teachers significantly predicted academic climate. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained almost 19.4% of the variance and that the model was significant, R Square= .194, Adjusted R Square=.192 and F(1, 430)=103.587, $p < .000$.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients of Communication skill on Academic Climate

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
A C	1.265	.060		21.252	.000
C S	.330	.032	.441	10.178	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Climate

b. Predictors: (Constant), Comm Skills

The table shows that communication skills of Head school teacher serve as a strong predictor of academic climate of secondary schools. It was found that communication skills significantly predicted academic climate ($b_1 = .330, B = .330, t = 10.178$ and $p < .000$). The final predictive model was: proportion of academic climate = $1.265 + .330$. So, we can say that communication skill effect academic climate. It means one unit increase of communication skill can create only 19.4% of academic climate.

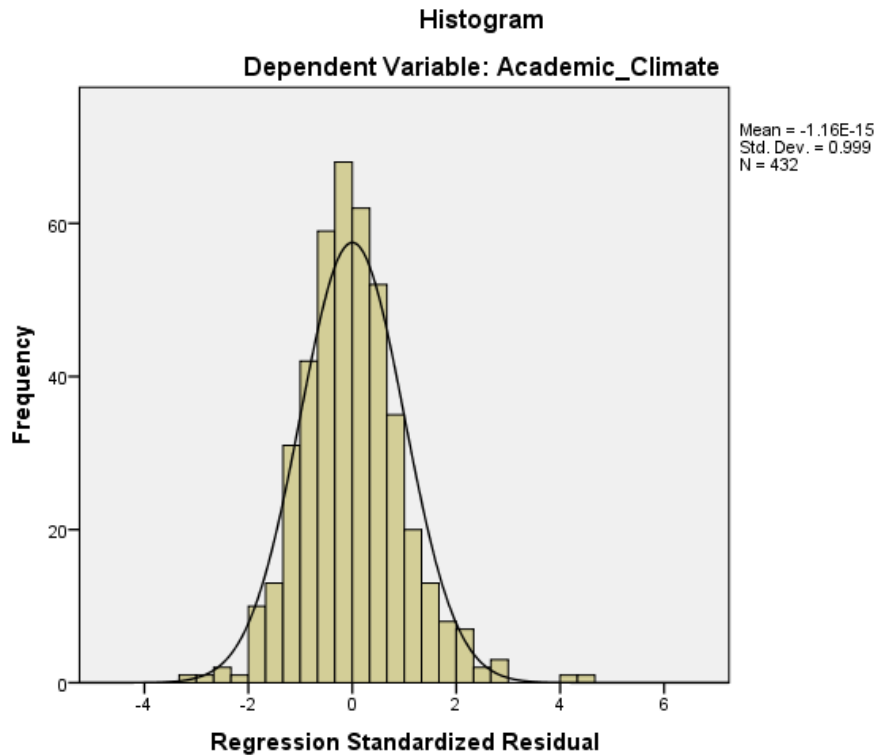


Fig. 8.2: Histogram of Communication skill on academic climate

Table 6: Effects Communication skills of Head Teachers on Community Climate of Secondary Schools

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Df	F	Sig
.194	.192	1	103.587	.000 ^b

A simple linear regression was carried out to test if communication skills of head teachers significantly predicted community climate. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained almost 19.2% of the variance and that the model was significant, R Square=.194, Adjusted R Square=.192 and $F(1, 430)=102.451, p<.000$.

Table 7: Regression Coefficient of Communication skills on Community Climate

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
CC	1.265	.060		21.252	.000
C S	.330	.032	.441	10.178	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Community Climate (CC)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Comm Skills (CS)

It was found that communication skills significantly predicted community climate ($b_1 = .330, t=10.178$ and $p<.000$). The final predictive model was: proportion of community climate = $1.183 + .330$. So, we can say that communication skill effect community climate. It means one unit increase of communication skill can create only 19.2% of community climate. The table shows communication skills of Head school teacher serve as a strong predictor of community climate of secondary schools.

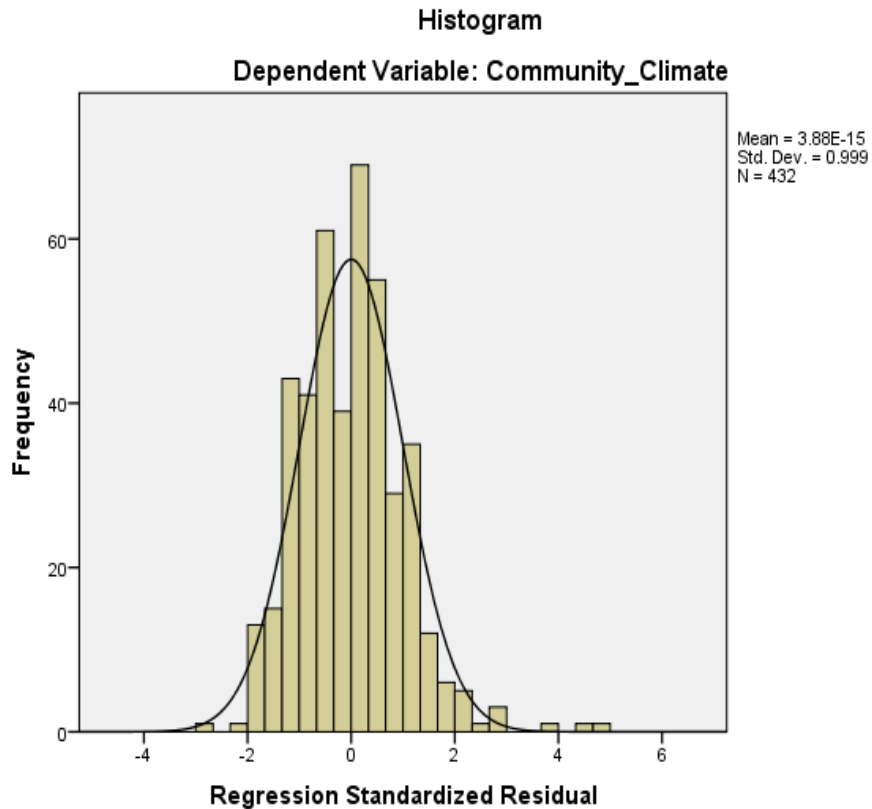


Fig 9.2: Histogram of Communication skill on community climate

Table 8: Regression Coefficients of Relationship between Communication skills and School Climate

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
SC	1.615	.212		7.605	.000
Comm_Skills	.554	.096	.314	5.778	.000

a) Dependent Variable: School climate(SC)

b) Comm_Skills

It was found that conflict resolution skills significantly predicted school climate ($b_1 = .260, p < .000$). The final predictive model was: proportion of school climate = $1.593 + .260$. So, we can say that conflict resolution skills effect school climate. It means one unit increase of conflict resolution skills can create only 28.3% of school climate.

Table 9: Differences between communication skills of head teachers of rural and urban area secondary schools

Variable	Urban		Rural		T	P	LL	UL	D
	M	SD	M	SD					
Communication	1.78	.47	1.76	.52	.55	.58	-.07	.12	

Independent sample t test was applied on the variables based upon area where the samples belong to and the above table was generated. As per the data there is no significant difference along the line of area.

Table 10: Gender difference between communication skills of head teachers of secondary schools

Variables	Male		Female		t	P	LL	UL	D
	M	SD	M	SD					

Communication	1.75	.51	1.79	.47	-.75	.46	-.13	.06
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The above table was generated in the result of independent sample t test, applied to know the gender difference on the skills of head teachers and in creating a climate in the school. The skill measured was communication skills. The climates preservation or creation was about creating or saving safety climate, academic climate, and community climate. The results show that the comm. skill ($t_{216} = -.747$ with $p = .456$ that is greater than standard p value) with mean score of male teachers 1.75, std. deviation = .51 and for female 1.79, std. deviation = .47. There is no significant difference in communication skills of head teachers on gender basis.

DISCUSSION

Climate of school is the core factor and like a backbone of the schools. It is the central attraction for teachers and students to love the school and to identify themselves with it. School climate is the uppermost powerful aspects which effect enhanced student success. Poor communication mostly fallouts in misunderstandings and ultimately create conflicts. Communication must be clear, straightforward and exact (Snodgrass & Blunt, 2009). Most people are not born as good communicator but they can make special struggles to improve and enhance their skills (Juliana, 2016). This study also proved that communication skills are basic need for head teachers of secondary schools and essential for healthy climate of schools. If Head teachers of secondary schools want supportive and healthy climate of schools, good relationships with community, they must improve all means of communication skills. Studies proved, schools that stimulate suitable communication skills can provide extra encouraging climate to the student achievement and success.

Practical Implication

Communication is an action of transmission of planned views to another individual through the use of equally understood signs and language. The style of dealing procedure and means of communication is an unusual quality of school head teachers. Head teachers or manager of institution most of the time spends in communicating with others. Communication with higher authorities, staff and community members is essential at many levels, from the top down and bottom up (Buring, et al. 2009). This study provides a lot of knowledge on the bases of results about the significance of communication skills for head teachers of secondary schools and the effects of this skill on all dimensions of school climate. Communication skills are solid predictors and have durable effect on school climate. This knowledge and information may help head teachers to perform their duties in more effective ways and provide insight and motivations for more learning for being good communicators.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that good communication is a crucial to solving the problems and a unique quality of a resilient leader. Climate of school is the greatest factor inside the school indispensable for dynamic teaching and learning. Head teachers of secondary schools are owed the responsibility of endorsing healthy climate which is auspicious for effective academic activities. Climate of school is like a heart and soul that is main attractions for teachers and students. Communication is a skill which attracts the others and become a cause of selection of the school. A good communicator proved a successful head teacher. Communication effect all the activities and climate of

the schools. Results show that communication skill serves as strong predictor of safety, academic and community climate of schools. There was a solid relationship among communication skills and school climate. There was no difference found in communication skills of male female head teachers of rural and urban area.

Recommendations for Future Research

Information, knowledge and understanding are transferred from one person to another person, and a good opportunity to express attitude, opinion communication is the process. Head teachers are given the role of safeguarding safe climates for schools. In the light of results of this study, some recommendations for further studies;

1. Communication with all its means may include in professional degree programmes of teacher education
2. Oral written and E communication tests may added in appointment procedures of head teachers
3. Trainings for enhancement of school climate may arrange time to time
4. Policy makers for public sectors pay more attention towards the climate of public schools
5. More researches on others skills of head teachers which can improve public secondary schools

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