A Structural Model of Manager-Subordinate Communication and Job Performance

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Abstracts: The paper presents a model of the communication relationship between managers and subordinates to explain the complex nature of the interactive process of communication by superior and subordinate; and the link with job performance. The model consists of two main types of information paths, the instruction path and the feedback path. Both subordinate and manager give feedback while instruction is strictly the domain of the manager. An influence path is also indicated which links communication with job performance, with job satisfaction as an intermediary variable between communication and employee job performance. The model posits that communication between the manager and subordinate is interactive and circular in nature, and that communication is equal and reciprocal, i.e. both manager and subordinate are equally engaged as sender and receiver. It was considered that feedback in communication relationship between the manager or supervisor and the subordinate is critical to job performance by the subordinate because it allows the subordinate to be involved in the decision process, and therefore, makes him more receptive to the directives/instructions as he feels his opinion is being taken into account, and consequently, strives to meet performance expectations.

Keywords: Communication Model, Job Performance, Manager, Subordinate, Feedback.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication in organization has been researched greatly particularly with reference to work situations. A number of the research findings showed that communication problems are the causes of break down in work relations and job dissatisfaction by employees in organization. Several authors have suggested that it is imperative that effective communication flow exist between management and the workforce. It is argued that no company performs optimally if the role of communication is undermined and there is faulty communication process. In essence, organizational teams require effective communication to achieve a common goal.

In every organization, employees' job performance is a critical issue and a source of concern for management. When workers perform below optimal level on their jobs, it has effect on their productivity, and this cumulatively affect organizational productivity downward. Thus, at the unit level, optimal job performance is critical for organizational productivity. Every worker is expected to perform at his best, jobs that are assigned to him/her. But very often, many workers are unable to meet that expectation even under close supervision. A number of factors, ranging from the employee's personal weaknesses, supervisor's inadequacies to organizational problems, or a combination of these factors, account for the situation. Every worker has a job description, that is, a written information of what is expected of him to do, routinely. Besides, he receives on the spot instructions and explanation on non-routine assignments that may be given to him by his supervisor or superior officer, to enable him carry out his task effectively, to achieve the set goal of the unit/department/organization. However, the extent to which a worker effectively performs his job is greatly depended on his understanding of what he is to do, aside from the provision of the necessary facilities and the enabling environment. This makes communication a central and very important determinant of employee's job performance in any organization. Communication is a two-way traffic, for any job situation, it is both top-to-down (from managers/supervisors to subordinates) and bottom-to-top (from subordinate to their superior officers). Thus, the problem of communication on task in work setting can result from either top or bottom or both simultaneously. In any case, the problem, when it exists, bears on the performance of both the subordinate and the superordinate, with an effect on overall organizational productivity, ultimately.

Evidently, there are two levels of research in communication in organization. These are the macro level which deals with communication between entire workforce and organization/management or the industry in general on

welfare concerns; and the micro level which deals with communication between subordinates and their supervisors/managers on operational duties and relationships. Research at both levels have been more prominent on the effect of communication on job performance, and have in all the studies hypothesized a positive effect of effective communication on job performance. However, the complex communication relationship between the manager and the subordinate in the context of job performance has not been given so much clarity. This paper is, therefore, designed to address the complex communication relationship between individual managers and their subordinates with a focus on the actions and reactions of both parties as they relate to job performance. Accordingly, the paper presents a structural model that explains the communication process between managers/supervisors and their subordinates in organization and the path to employees' (subordinates') job performance. The proposed model suggests that although Communication between managers and subordinates may appear on the surface as very simple and straight forward process of providing instructions on what is to be done in work situation, but it actually involves a very complex interactional relationship between a manager and his subordinates far beyond what it is assumed to be. Since communication is the lifeblood of any organization, modeling it to understand how it works is worthwhile.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Concept of Communication

Communication is a social phenomenon and it is inherent in every social relationship. Davis (1981) defined communication as "the transfer of information and understanding from one person to another person". An earlier definition of communication was given by Bangs (1968) that it is the act or acts which produce some kind of response between two or more persons. It takes place through a system of arbitrary signs. Onasanya (1999) sees communication "as the passing of information from one person (or group) to another person (or group) so that both sides understand the message or information being passed. Impliedly, communication must either influence an action or another communication in form of a reaction. Thus, it is a system of actions and reactions. According to Asamu (2014), "communication covers all activities that an individual does when he wants to make a transformation in someone else's mind." It is a process that involves expressing, listening and understanding (Banerji and Dayal, 2005). In the context of organization, Price (1997) viewed communication as the degree to which information about job roles is transmitted by an organization to its members and among members of the organization. More pertinently, Altinoz (2008) defined communication in organization as the means through which managers make known to their subordinates the task to be performed, their roles and duties, resources required to perform the assignment, and the expected results. This definition specifies the communication about job situations and suggests the transmission of information about jobs from managers to their subordinates. But the definition is limited to the extent that it suggests that communication is a one-way traffic i.e. from managers to subordinates, without recognizing the feedback component.

Communication in organization is at three levels: Communication between managers/supervisors and subordinates; communication between management and employees; and communication between organization and its external stakeholders e.g. customers, host communities and the general public. While the first two levels consist the internal communication, the third level involves external communication. In all organizations, all three levels are required. At the first level, communication is required to give directives and direction to subordinates on their job activities and to generate feedback from subordinates on their task performance and goal accomplishment (Buchanan and Doyle, 1999). It is in agreement with this view that Altinoz (2008) defined communication from the perspective of job relations between managers and their subordinates. At the second level, communication is required to transmit and translate policies, programmes, rules and regulations to employees (Orpen,1997). At this level, communication is used to resolve the contradictions in organization in order for the organization to fulfil its purpose (Orpen, ibid). While at the external level, it is required to deal with stakeholders- customers, regulatory agencies, host communities and the general public (Nwachukwu, 2006). Through communication an organization maintains goodwill, grows and waxes. Communication is needed at all levels to establish and disseminate the goals of the organization to members and other stakeholders (Ayatse, 2005). At both levels, communication consists of both a forward flow and a backward flow of information. However, the structural model proposed in this paper for the

path analysis of the forward and backward flow of communication process is at the first level of communication (i.e. communication between manager/supervisor and subordinate). The findings of research on communication styles (e.g. Tsai & Chuang 2009) have shown that the capacity of a communicator to achieve his/her goal is a function of his/her communication style.

Given that communication is a social process, the communication style of a person would be informed by the kind of social system and the social characteristics of the individual. The supervision style of the manager, which may be either transformational or transactional, among others is usually a function of his/her social characteristics. The supervision style will determine the style of communication. However, as Berlo (1960) points out, whatever the style of communication, whether it is face to face with a single person or with a group of people, and whether it is verbal or in writing, the result is transfer of meaning from one person to another. The quality of communication skill possessed by a manager and his behavioural pattern determine the degree to which he can influence the job performance of his employee. A manager can achieve increase employee performance by setting a good communication climate between him and subordinates in organization through open communication where subordinates are encouraged to be free and frank in giving suggestions and sending out feedback.

2.2. Inhibiting Factors To Manager-Subordinate Communication In Organization

The problems of communication in organization have been classified into different forms. The most popular types of communication problems include, poor interpersonal relations, feeling of insecurity by superiors, poor presentation of information, lack of employee engagement, unfriendly and bossy behaviour of superiors, cultural effects, fear of negative reactions by the other party, conflict of interest and opinion between managers and subordinates in communication, unwillingness by subordinates to take instructions from persons considered less qualified, armchair supervision and lack of personal contact between concerned parties, lack of attention to details, poor interpretation of instructions by subordinates, distortion of message in transit, field/level of experience of both parties, and unwillingness to transmit relevant information about work situation to the concerned party. All of these can cause communication breakdown between managers and subordinates. According to Nwachukwu (2006) communication breakdown is the single greatest barrier to job performance. He explains that communication breakdown in an organization between persons and their subordinates is symptomatic of a faulty organizational structure and poor interpersonal relations (or human relations). Communication breakdown occurs between managers/supervisors and their subordinates when there is mutual distrust, resentment, and when there is a feeling of incompetence and insecurity by the parties involved (Nwachukwu, 2006 cited in Mojaye & Dedekuma, 2015). According to Robbins and Judge (2008), communication problem is the most likely source of low work commitment and employee job performance. Evidently, the most inhibiting forces to valuable job performance is lack of adequate information delivery to and fro the communication line. This has to do not only with the inability of superiors to express clearly what they expect their subordinate to do and how to do what is expected of them in their job roles, but also with subordinate inability to interpret instructions correctly and unwillingness to disclose relevant information about his work situation to the manager for discussions towards better performance. Often managers are unable to give clear instructions about what they expect their subordinates to do, leaving the subordinates to act in their limited knowledge about the job roles or to the best of their understanding of the instructions. On the other hand, subordinates are often weary to ask for clarification from their superiors about areas of doubt as to what to do, for fear of likely unfriendly reactions from their superiors. Such unfriendly reactions towards unclear instructions/directives and feedback reports that may not be positive, engenders distrust between the superior officer and the subordinates and this results in breakdown in communication between the concerned parties.

2.3. Employee Job Performance

As Hordos (2018) noted, the definition of job performance may seem straightforward at first thought, as simply how well or poorly an employee does his/her job. However, analysis of job performance in the literature revealed that job performance is much more than this simple view and involves various factors. It is a multi-dimensional concept and because of its multi-dimensionality, it is something that is always difficult to measure. The concept is defined by scholars in terms of two basic concerns which are the task and the context of the work, so that we have

task performance and contextual performance as two broad levels of performance.

In general, however, job performance is defined as the total expected value to the organization of the discrete behavioural events that a person carries out over a specified time frame (Motowidlo and Kell, 2012). The definition suggests that performance is an element of behaviour (aggregated discrete behaviours of an individual over time). Furthermore, the element of behaviour to which performance refers is its 'expected value' to the organization. Based on this definition, Motowidlo and Kell (2012) explain that the performance construct is a variable that distinguishes between sets of behaviours carried out by different individuals and between sets of behaviours carried out by the same individual in different times. Thus, "variance in performance is variance in the expected organizational value of behaviour" (ibid).

A number of authors (e.g Motowidlo and Kell, 2012; Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997; Austin & Crespin, 2006; Beal, Weiss, Barros, and MacDermid, 2005) have distinguished between behaviour, performance and results. They explained that behaviour is what people do. Performance is the expected organizational value of what people do, while results are states or conditions of people or things that are changed by what they do in ways that contribute to or detract from organizational effectiveness. In other words, they are the effects on organization of what people do. That is why it is appealing to look at the effect when considering job performance of employees. It is in this context that the proposed structural model links communication in job context with job performance.

The literature distinguishes two dimensions of job performance, i.e. task versus contextual performance. Task performance covers a person's contribution to organizational performance. It refers to actions that are within the formal reward system and are carried out within the requirement specified in an employee's job description. It consists of activities that transform materials into the goods and services produced by the organization or to allow for the efficient functioning of the organization (Motowidlo, et. al, 1997 cited in Sonnentag, Volmer & Spychala, 2008). There are five dimensions of task performance (Campbell, 1990) which includes job-specific task proficiency; and supervision for leadership and administrative position. Task performance also involves activities that service and maintain the technical core by replenishing its supply of raw materials, distributing its finished products, or providing important planning, coordination, supervising, or staff functions that enable it to function effectively and efficiently. This domain of task performance represents behavioural episodes which include task activities that are performed either well and task activities that are performed poorly, with corresponding variability in their expected organizational value. Borman and Brush (1993) explained that each of the sub-dimensions of the task performance is differently important for various jobs.

On the other hand, contextual (context of work) performance constitutes behavior that contributes to organizational effectiveness through its effects on the psychological, social, and organizational context of work. For example, by affecting other individuals in the organization so that they become more likely to carry out organizationally valuable behaviors themselves. For instance, when an individual's actions promote positive affect in others, defuse hostilities and conflict, and encourage interpersonal trust, such actions will have positive expected organizational value because their effects on the social context of work improve interpersonal communication and cooperation and make it easier to coordinate individuals' efforts on interdependent tasks (Borman and Motowidlo,1993). Examples of contextual performance are actions that others can emulate or which inspire others to behave positively towards achieving organizational objectives, such as unusual dedication to task, adherence to organizational policies, actions to preserve organizational tangible resources.

According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993) five types of contextual activities exist: (1) volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally a part of the job (2) persisting with extra enthusiasm or effort when necessary to complete own task activities successfully (3) helping and cooperating with others (4) following organizational rules and procedures even when personally inconvenient (5) and endorsing, supporting, and defending organizational objectives. All of these behavioural patterns would engender positive organizational value. On the other hand, negative contextual behaviour such as ignoring standard procedures when personally inconvenient, rebelling against reasonable organizational rules, consistently questioning supervisors' judgment, or deriding the organization to fellow employees and persons outside the organization would negatively affect organizational effectiveness and

consequently cause negative organizational value.

Coleman and Borman (2000) empirically refined the original five-factor taxonomy of contextual performance, by reviewing the behavioral patterns in organizational behaviour examined in the original taxonomy, and came up with a three factor model/taxonomy. The three dimensions of the model include, interpersonal support, organizational support, and job-task conscientiousness. Borman, Buck, et al. (2001) further refined the three-dimensional model by redefining the three dimensions where they relabeled one of the dimensions to reflect effectively the specific behavioural patterns that consisted each of the dimensions. The revised model specified behavioural dimensions as (i) personal support (ii) organizational support (iii) conscientious initiative. Borman, Buck, et al. (2001) distinguished these three dimensions and explained that:

Personal support includes, "helping others by offering suggestions, teaching them useful knowledge or skills, directly performing some of their tasks, and providing emotional support for their personal problems; cooperating with others by accepting suggestions, informing them of events they should know about, and putting team objectives ahead of personal interests; showing consideration, courtesy, and tact in relations with others as well as motivating and showing confidence in them". On the other hand, organizational support involves "representing the organization favorably by defending and promoting it; expressing satisfaction and showing loyalty by staying with the organization despite temporary hardships; supporting the organization's mission and objectives, complying with organizational rules and procedures, and suggesting improvements." While, conscientious initiative entails "persisting with extra effort despite difficult conditions; taking the initiative to do all that is necessary to accomplish objectives even if not normally parts of own duties and finding additional productive work to perform when own duties are completed; developing own knowledge and skills by taking advantage of opportunities within and outside the organization using own time and resources".

Any of the specified dimensions can engender both effective behaviour and ineffective behaviour such that the level of effectiveness can be measured in terms of "very effective, effective, somewhat ineffective, and very ineffective" (Borman, Buck, et al., 2001). Both task and contextual performance behaviour can cause either/or both positive and negative expected value for an organization depending on the reason behind the performance behaviour. The reason can either be to contribute to organizational goods and services or to contribute to the psychological, social, and organizational context of work or even to both. Behaviour which impacts task performance is that which directly enhances or hinders output delivery, while, behaviour which impacts contextual performance is that which promotes or hinders the social, organizational, or psychological context of work. A particular behaviour can simultaneously impact task performance and contextual performance in organization.

Contextual performance behaviours are usually the kinds of behaviors that would have expected value for maintaining or enhancing the psychological, social, and organizational context of work, but they also sometimes have implications for task performance especially in the conscientious initiative dimension. For example, persisting with extra effort despite difficult conditions and taking the initiative to do all that is necessary to accomplish objectives contribute to an individual's contextual performance partly because when observed by others in the organization, they can be inspired to behave similarly. Such behaviours can also serve to establish and reinforce values and cultures that support and encourage such behaviors. Of course, the same acts can simultaneously enhance the performer's execution of his/her own role and duties towards achieving organizational objectives and goals, thereby contributing to his/her task performance.

In reference to this proposed model, task performance is defined as the total expected value of a worker's behaviours over a standard period of time for the execution of the policies and decisions of the organization with regards to its day to day activities. While contextual performance is defined as the total expected value of a worker's behaviours over a standard period of time for adhering to, maintaining and enhancing the organization's culture, core values and ethical conduct between its members and in representing the organization in the external environmental context of work. In defining the broad dimensions of employee performance in an organization. In this way, it is acknowledge that some behaviours of the staff might have consequences both for execution of tasks and productive actions, and for maintaining and enhancing the psychological, social, and organizational context of

work of the organization.

2.4. Communication and Employee Job Performance

According to Anderson and Martin (1995) and Harkins (1996) cited in Asamu (2014) communication plays an important role in fostering job commitment by employees. Nwachukwu (2006) explains that the effect of communication in an organization can be measured in terms of attitude and morale of the employees, and their attitude towards both their duties and the organizational leadership and consequently performance as it affects the organizational productivity. Essentially, employee's job performance requires the transfer of skills and knowledge to the employee through effective direction, control, organizing and motivation. All of these are expressed through effective communication. A number of studies (e.g. Onasanya,1999; Goris, et.al, 2000;   Brunetto and Farr-Whartons, 2004; Ooi, et.al, 2006; and Asamu, 2014) suggest that manager-employee communication has strong positive association/relationship with job satisfaction and affective job commitment and consequently job performance

In specific terms, effective manager-employee communication serves three major roles with regards to performance within work context: Control, motivation, and information (Scott and Mitchell, 1976).

i.   It is used to control employee behaviour towards optimal job performance. This could be formal or informal communication.

ii.   It fosters motivation by clarifying to employees what is to be done, how well they are doing, and what can be done to improve performance. Essentially, a reinforcement of desired behaviour acts as a motivator to an employee.

iii.   It facilitates decision making by providing the information that managers/management needs to make decisions by transmitting the data to identify and evaluate alternative choices. Effective and fast decision making by management/managers helps to ease the work of role players who may rely on directives from their supervisors for actions. All of the functions are equally important and critical for optimal employee job performance. (Robbins and Judge, 2008).

The goal of this paper is to develop a model that address the interpersonal communication encounter between a manager and a subordinate, and to fill the gap in existing models in this regard, there is therefore the need for a review of the existing communication models relevant to the objective of the paper. But first we would try to explain what a model is generally. A model is a simplified representation of reality or anticipated reality. It seeks to show the main elements of any structure or process and the relationships between those elements (McQuial, et.al, 1981). A model is a theory of some sort since it serves the same purpose of explanation of a phenomenon that a theory serves. It is the stepping stone to the development of a theory. A model is extremely useful in the construction and understanding reality because it helps us to organize information, to illustrate relationships between arts, and to create new ideas and predict new observations (Akingbade, 1988). Models of communication helps us to understand communication and how it works particularly in workplace.They help us to think about our communication situations more deliberately; better prepare for future situations; and learn from our previous experiences.

In this paper we present a communication model as a theoretical/explanatory representation of the structure of a communication encounter between two parties at different levels in work situation. There are a number of existing models on communication but most of these are concerned with mass communication, i.e. where the audience is large and furthermore, the context is outside work and the objective is not about job performance. In work situation, communication models are more individualistic and address communication between managers and subordinates; and the relationship between communication and job performance. The few work related communication models that exist in the literature address either of two concerns alone: the elements/activities involved in communication process; or the flow of communication between the manager and the subordinate. They exclude the complex behaviour exhibited by the parties, and the cause and effect relationship between communication and job

performance. However, a major weakness among these models is that they tend to present the communication flow as a one-way information traffic from manager to subordinate. In this paper we present some of the models and their major features to lay the background for the need for our proposed model. The more visible models which have been used to provide an understanding about communication include that by Aristotle; Lasswell; Shannon and Weaver; Berlo; Barnlund; Osgood and Schramm. The essential features of these models are presented as follow:

2.4.1. Aristotle's Model

Aristotle specifies communication to consist of ethos and pathos. Ethos defines the credibility of the party to the communication encounter and this derives from authority and power of expertise in the subject matter. Pathos refer to the different emotions(anger, sadness, happiness, etc.) through which the parties connect with each other. A major drawback of this model is that it considers communication encounter as linear without a feedback component in the process by making the receiver passive.

2.4.2. Laswell's Model

The Laswell's model is a linear model like the Aristotle's and suffers the same pitfall, but it emphasizes the need for the message to have effect on the receiver. The effect is the measurable and obvious change in the receiver of the message, that is caused by the elements of communication. In other words, effect is the ability to yield the intended purpose in terms of making the receiver to do what is expected. A number of factors may cause the message not to have the intended effect, ranging from problems associated with the sender to those associated with the receiver, and the environment of communication.

2.4.3. Berlo's Model

For Berlo, all forms of communication are attempts to influence the behavior of the receiver. Communication is successful if the reaction of the receiver matches the purpose of the source. Berlo identifies four features for communication success -communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, and social-cultural system. Communication skills are primarily the ability of the source to encode messages and the ability of the receiver to decode them. The attitude is the positive or negative stance that source and receiver have toward themselves, Knowledge stands for the understanding of the subject. However, it is often criticized based on its simplicity because it does not discuss feedback loops.

2.4.4. Osgood-Schramm Model

In attempt to remedy the deficiency in linear models, Osgood and Schramm argued for a circular model in which messages go in two directions. The model stresses that communication process is circular with an endless current of information between the parties, and participants alternate between them the position of a sender and a receiver. It is argued that communication is equal and reciprocal, i.e. both parties are equally engaged as sender and receiver, such that there is no distinct characteristic of a sender and a receiver.

Osgood and Schramm posit that the essence of communication is to realize an intended effect, and specifies four requirements to achieve this: the sender must ensure that he gets the receiver's attention; the message must be understandable; the sender's wording of the message must be within the receiver's understanding; and the receiver must be able and motivated to react to the message in the intended way. This model is useful for describing interpersonal, synchronous communication, such as in superior-subordinate relationship.

2.4.5. Barnlund's Transactional Model

Barnlund's Transactional Model is similar to the Osgood and Schramm model. As in Osgood and Schramm's there is no clear division between sender and receiver. The sender and the receiver change their places and are equally important. It explores interpersonal, immediate-feedback communication, and is a multi-layered feedback system. Feedback for the sender is the reply from the receiver, and both communicators provide feedback, and are

simultaneously responsible for the communication's effect and effectiveness. According to Barnlund, any activity/action that creates meaning is a form of communication. Thus, communication can be verbal or non-verbal such as signs, gestures, rewards, queries, facial expression, etc. Each party's reaction is a function of his background, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs.

2.4.6. Shannon-Weaver Model

Shannon-Weaver model incorporates feedback mechanism in the communication process to provide a more truthful representation of human interaction. The distinguishing feature of the Shannon-Weaver model is the introduction of the element of noise in the communication process. Noise is "anything that is added to the signal between its transmission and reception that is not intended by the source."(Fiske,1982). Noise appears in the form of mishearing the message, inappropriate/incorrect wording, or interjection/interruption by another party. Shannon and Weaver argued that understanding the message is critical to effective communication and in this regard the receiver and the source should possess similar elements in terms of communication skills, attitudes, and knowledge, and be familiar with the social system and culture which surround their communication.

The difference between the models is based majorly on the extent of interaction captured as the nature of communication flow between the parties in the communication encounter that is represented by each model. In this regard, there are different forms that communication models have been designated but in specific reference to manager-subordinate interpersonal communication relationship, we have categorized models as either linear model (one-way flow) or circular (two-way flow) model. A circular model is also referred to as interactive model.

2.4.7. The Linear (One-way flow) Model

The linear or transmission models of communication describe communication as a linear, one-way process in which a sender intentionally transmits a message to a receiver (Ellis & McClintock, 1990). These models focus on the sender and message within a communication encounter. Although the receiver is included in the models, this role is viewed as more of a target or end point rather than part of an ongoing process. It can therefore only be presumed that the receiver either successfully receives and understands the message or does not.

The linear models as one-way information traffic models do not include the reaction of the receiver subordinate to the message from the sender manager, consequently the manager is apparently unable to evaluate the effectiveness of the message or the instruction on the job performance domain. Essentially, the linear approach was based on participation and empowerment theories, and assumes that the manager in the context of work supervision has all the power to enforce compliance on the subordinate without negotiation/dialogue or engagement. The models do not allow the manager to understand the subordinate's frame of reference in order to anticipate how to attune the message to him (Lan, Chuang, Li, Tu, and Huang, 2020). They subjectively assume that the subordinate would always carry out the instructions of the manager without resistance or objection and to precision. The models fail to explain why receivers may ignore or refuse to accept the meanings conveyed in the message (Leeuwis, 2004), and the consequent actions.

2.4.8. The Circular (Interactive) Model

The interactive or interaction models of communication provide for a two-way communication with feedback. The models describe communication as a process in which participants alternate positions as sender and receiver and generate meaning by sending messages and receiving feedback within physical and psychological contexts (Schramm,1997). Rather than illustrate communication as a linear, one-way process, the interactive model incorporates feedback, which makes communication a more interactive, two-way process in which messages are exchanged back and forth. They evisage a continous feedback process between parties in communication encounter, which is described as a circular flow. The models capture the role of the communicators' field of experience in the message construction and its acceptance. Each party goes with a unique field of experience into communication situations. The field of experience is explained as a person's culture, past experiences, and personal relationship with the other party. All of these factors influence how a sender constructs a message, as well

as how the receiver takes it. The circular models are apparently more realistic in communication in human interaction and speaks more pertinently to superior-subordinate relationship in work situation.

Both model categories have their roots in the behaviour change paradigm and seek to transmit information to control behaviour/actions of persons. Scholars have suggested that work supervision related communication models do not seek empowerment for persons and therefore, do not attempt to explore views to facilitate social bonds or raise consciousness (Leeuwis, 2004). But in our composite model we propose that communication functions both to control behaviour and actions, and to empower persons and raise consciousness through instructions and feedback process, even in work situations. Empowerment is achieved through the transfer of knowledge that is embedded in superior-subordinate communication at supervision and the mentorship embedded in the relationship.

## 2.4.9. Model Presentation and Analysis

The model is a composite interactive (circular) model of communication. It consists of different elements in communication between the manager and subordinate in work situation. The model is not about the process of communication, i.e. the process of originating, transmitting and interpreting messages, per se, but the relationship between the manger and subordinate in the communication process; and the relationship between their encounter and employee (subordinate) job performance. Motivation is used as an intermediate variable between manager-subordinate/employee communication and job performance. Employee motivation is a function of his job satisfaction which in turn is determined by the extent of his satisfaction with the communication encounter or communication style of the manager. Employee job performance is a function of the level of motivation. Motivation can affect employee performance both directly and through change of attitude and behaviour towards work. Such change may be positive or negative depending on the direction and the level of motivation- whether high job satisfaction or low job satisfaction.

The response by a subordinate to the directives from a manager is determined largely by the communication style of the manager. The response could be acceptance of the directives or rejection of the directives in some quiet manner or out right revolt against the manager. On the other hand, the style of communication of a manager is a function of a number of factors which include his socio-cultural background, past experience, impression about the subordinate and attitude towards him, his personal relationship with the subordinate, his beliefs and his communication skill. Similarly, the response of a subordinate is a function of a number of factors which include, the subordinates emotions (pathos), his impression about the credibility of the manager (ethos), his personal relationship with the manager, attitude towards the manager, his beliefs, his socio-cultural background, and his communication skills. Poor communication style of the manager will put force behind these factors to manifest their negative influence.

The model consists of three types of paths: the instruction path from the manager to the subordinate, the feedback path and the influence path leading from the subordinate's response to the subordinate's motivation and to job performance. There are two types of feedback from the subordinate: Response feedback on the manger's directives; and job performance feedback (report).

Aside from the instructions on the job from the manager, there is also feedback from the manager to the subordinate, represented with a broken path. Such feedback comes either in form of approval, and commendation to reinforce positive job performance; or in form of disapproval, queries, reprimand and sanctions to check subordinate's negative work behaviour/attitude and negative job performance.

2.4.10. The Structural Model
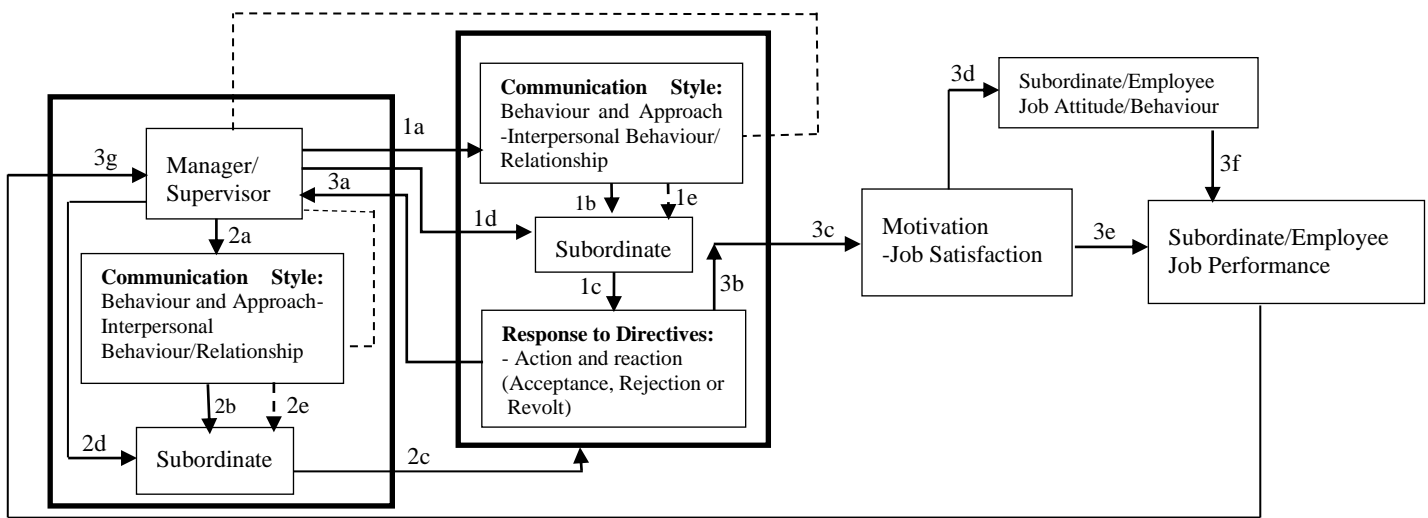
Source: Author

Path 1a & 2a = Delegation of duty (Directives/task instructions) i.e. work information to subordinate from Manager/Supervisor

Path 1b & 2b = The communication style by which the manager passes instruction to the subordinate

Path 1c & 2c = Assessment of the information and the communication style of the manager by the subordinate in accordance with what he is comfortable with in terms of his values, expectations and capabilities. The subordinate processes the effect of the information and communication style on his personality and dignity.

Path 3a &3b = Response to directives in terms of actions and reactions by the subordinate, based on the outcome of the assessment of the information and communication style of the manager, to determine acceptance, rejection or revolt. This is the initial feedback from subordinate to manager/supervisor which concerns the communication style and the information.Track 3a indicates rejection, resistance as well as search for clarity/clarification, while 3b indicates acceptance to carry out directives/assigned task.

Path 1d &2d = Feedback response from manager/supervisor to subordinate on subordinate's initial feedback response in 3a. Such response may either be an explanation, dialogue, query or withdrawal of benefits, depending on the communication style of the manager and his/her interpersonal behaviour/relations.

Path 3c = Influence of the communication atmosphere on the subordinate willingness to carry out the orders of the manager. The extent of commitment of the subordinate to the manager's directives or the assigned task. This is a function of how much he is satisfied with the communication atmosphere which includes the manager's communication style. This affects his/her job satisfaction considerably and determines his/her motivation at work or to carry out assigned task optimally. It indicates that the subordinate's assessment of the manager's communication style and his view of the

communication atmosphere will determine his response and motivation to carry out assignments. Path 3c thus, indicates the link between communication atmosphere and workers motivation.

Path 3d = Link between worker's (subordinate) motivation and his/her work/job attitude/behaviour. It indicates that there is a relationship between a worker's motivation and his/her attitude towards his/her work. It suggests that a dissatisfied worker/subordinate is not likely to carry out instructions of his boss willingly or dedicatedly. The converse of this is also implied. The model, thus, suggests that motivation affects work attitude and behaviour.

Path 3e &3f = Actual work activity and behaviour or performance. Here, it is suggested that motivation and work attitude affect performance outcome/output whether in quality or quantity. In other words, motivation has implications for performance output directly or indirectly through the effect of work attitude/behaviour on actual performance activity or action.

Path 3g = Job performance feedback from the subordinate to the manager in terms of both achievement level and challenges.

Path 1e & 2e = Manager's feedback in response to subordinate feedback on performance achievement and challenges during task performance. This may come as expressed dissatisfaction, disapproval, query, sanctions, or commendations, provision of reward, assistance and mentorship towards better performance. Whatever response approach is used for giving feedback to the subordinate would depend on the communication style of the manager/supervisor. It can either be friendly and motivational feedback method or querulous feedback method.

Essentially, the model indicates that the communication style of the manager is a determinant of the subordinate's behaviour towards the manager's orders to him. The model presents three scenarios:

Scenario one represented by label 1 with the manager in a vertical relationship with the subordinate. The manager is shown to occupy a commanding height with a behaviour that expressly indicates that he is the boss.

Scenario two represented by label 2 with the manager in a relationship that is almost horizontal with the subordinate. The manager is made to be slightly above the subordinate to represent the conscious and deliberate attempt by the manager to create equality between him and his subordinate as partners in progress and cooperators to allow the subordinate relate with him as equals, even as both of them recognize their relative official position in the hierarchy. The official superior position of the manager is accommodated by locating his box slightly above that of his subordinate.

Scenario three represents a combination of the above two scenarios, with the manager having two subordinates under him where he has a horizontal relationship with one and a vertical relationship with the other, and the responses of the subordinates to directives from the manager and his/her job performance is affected and vary with the kind of relationship that exists between them.

CONCLUSIONS

The model is unique in many respects. Essentially, it presents directives and feedback information from the manager to the subordinate; and subordinate's response feedback to manager as well as communication effect and job performance feedback. Nevertheless, it implicitly reflects many prescriptions contained in the existing models that are relevant to communication in work situation. The elements of ethos and pathos expressed in Aristotle's model are considered relevant in communication and job performance relationship model. The acceptance of

instructions of the superior by the subordinate would depend on how credible the subordinate view the superior to give him instructions on the job, i.e. the authority of the superior to direct or supervise him. For example, where the subordinate feels he is more knowledgeable and possess more expertise on what to do, he may be unwilling to subject himself to the directives and instructions of the superior. Furthermore, superiors and subordinates display/exhibit different emotions in their communication with each other about job situations which may be due to the style of the superior in the construction and delivery of the message; or the subordinate treatment of the message and the effect on job performance. These emotions can show as anger,sadness or happiness.

The emphasis of the Laswell's model on the need for the message to have effect on the receiver is also considered positively in our model. In this regard, we considered that the message must be capable of providing the subordinate with the understanding about what is to be done, how to carry it out or do it to meet requirement. It must change the orientation of the subordinate about the job situation. The effect of the directives or instructions on the subordinate is revealed in the level of job performance achieved either in quantitative or qualitative terms. We, therefore, argue that job performance as the measure of the effect of communication, consequently, a relationship exist between communication and job performance.

The characteristics of Berlo's model also implied in our model. We argue that since the superior and the subordinate interchange roles as sender and receiver they should possess similar characteristics- Communication skills, positive attitude towards the other party, must be conversant with the nature of work to be done and be familiar with the social and cultural characteristics of the other party. Often, it is the lack of these elements in either or both parties that cause communication gap that affects employee job performance negatively.

The argument of Osgood and Schramm in their model that communication is successful if it realizes the intended effect is germane to our model on communication and employee job performance. The requirement for communication success as specified by Osgood and Schramm are also relevant in our model. Communication between superior and subordinate about work is transactional as Barnlund suggested in his explanation of his model. It involves the exchange of information and views, which may be conflicting, between the sender and the receiver, and the discussion of any conflicting views to achieve a common ground in consonance with improved job performance by the subordinate. Both the superior and the subordinate must be guided by the background, and attitude of the party to develop the appropriate approach for communicating instructions and feedback to elicit positive reaction towards his message.

The most unique element introduced into communication encounter in the model by Shannon and Weaver is the issue of noise, i.e. anything that enters into the message between the sender and receiver that is not intended to be part of the message (any inclusion in the communication external to the core message) which can derail the interpretation or meaning of the message from what is intended. Our model accommodates the possible incidence of noise it is in this regard that we advocate for the attention of the receiver as prescribed by Osgood and Schramm. The possible effect of noise can be overcome by the receiver through close attention to the message, so that he is able to filter the message to remove noise.

In our composite model, we stress the role of feedback in communication relationship between the manager or supervisor and the subordinate. Feedback is the transfer of the receiver's reaction back to the sender. Feedback is critical to the success of communication in work situation because it allows the manager or supervisor to restructure the directives and modify his performance to the response of the subordinate. The most important function of feedback is that it allows the subordinate to be involved in the communication process, and therefore, makes him to believe that he is part of the work decision process. This makes the subordinate more receptive to the directives/instructions as he feels his opinion is being taken into account. Every communication encounter is a chance for both parties to learn how to communicate more effectively in the future, and feedback helps not only in improving performance in the task domain but also to achieve more effective communication. Feedback in communication is, therefore, considered in this model as a critical tool for control in organization.

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