# Towards Improving Organizational Communication Protocol of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus: An Assessment

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find out the perception of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University, Buug, and how the present communication protocol of the university affects the job satisfaction and sense of value of the employees. The study was conducted among employees with designated positions such as deans, college secretaries, department coordinators, and heads of offices who were the respondents to the survey questionnaire. An adapted but modified questionnaire was devised to quantify the strengths and weaknesses of the communication activities in school. The data was analyzed using basic statistical tools: frequency counts, percentages, and mean. The study found that the majority of the respondents responded negatively. Most of them are dissatisfied with the organizational communication protocol of Mindanao State University. The variable with the lowest mean (2.71) was effective communication. Employees are not conscious of the communication channeling. Most communications are oral. Written communications are rare, and these communications do not follow protocol. On the effects of communication protocol on the employees' feelings and sense of value, the lowest mean, 2.32, was the way communication is carried out at work. In general, they are not happy. The researcher recommends that all heads of offices develop effective communication strategies to provide frequent pertinent information and create avenues for suggestions, opinions, and feedback from employees. Further, the employees holding top management positions need to understand the significance of proper communication protocol.

**Keywords:** organizational communication protocol, perception, employees, job satisfaction, sense of value

## 1. INTRODUCTION

When staff feel satisfied with communication, they also feel satisfied with their job (Sharma, R. (2015). The study found a strong positive relationship between communication and job satisfaction, with no significant difference found between gender, service years, degree attainment, and job classification. Every organization needs effective communication to grow and solve issues. When there is a proper communication protocol within any organization, all the workers within the organization will be more motivated to do their work. But when there is no proper communication protocol, it will cause the employee to be demotivated and not want to do the work assigned to him. As a result, poor communication can undermine the organization's ability to function. Effective communication will result in better record-keeping, less miscommunication, and, more importantly, achieving goals. Each member of an organization must learn what they need to know and do through the organization's continuous communication methods and processes. Information and instructions must be clear, organized, and easily disseminated to boost employee morale and workplace harmony. This current study examines the organizational communication protocol of the Mindanao State University Buug Campus. Assessing the school's organizational communication protocol will reveal its strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. Additionally, the school's communication protocol assessment will address communication protocol problems encountered by employees. Quantitative data were derived from the questionnaire. An adapted but modified questionnaire was created to quantify the strengths of university communication activities.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In the study of Reynolds (2022), there is a strong positive relation-

ship between communication and job satisfaction, with no significant difference found between gender, service years, degree attainment, and job classification. An organization's regular form of communication between leadership and employees is governed by a communication protocol. It is an approach to problem-solving that promotes motivation, connection, and decision-making. All organizations have their own culture and norms and having unity in terms of decision-making and everyone's participation strengthens motivation and connection. Effective communication protocols make workers feel valued and encourage them to contribute to organizational goals. However, there is a need for improving communication between office leaders and subordinates. Administrators must identify communication barriers, analyze their causes, and take proactive steps to eliminate them. Organizational change is crucial for competitiveness, necessitating a new perspective in change leadership theory, emphasizing the importance of communication in this process (Robertsson, Anton (2019) Changes in leadership style can change the perceptions of followers and the organization. Better employee performance, accuracy, determination, morale, and transparency are just some of the benefits that come with putting an effective communication protocol in place. According to Christine Proctor et al. (2012), the organization has to ensure that employees engage with one another continuously, bridge communication gaps, and foster alignment at all leadership levels. As such, it is the leader's responsibility to establish and maintain the organization's effective communication skills. Organizational communication prioritizes people, goals, and structure. As a result, organization and structure are related and discussing an organization's structure is equivalent to discussing its internal operations. Furthermore, public officials have obligations about communication protocols under Section 3 Rule 6 of Republic Act No. 6713, Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards of Public Officials and Employees. According to this law, employees or government officials must acknowledge acceptance of information requests and handle them properly when they come in regarding matters under the jurisdiction of a specific office. If the message is outside of their jurisdiction, the officer or employee is required to forward the letter or verbal request to the proper agency or department.

The Mindanao State University Buug Campus has been in existence for more than a decade and is home to more than 160 employees. Currently, as one of the faculty members, the issue is the communication protocol. Unfortunately, few formal communications are submitted in their respective offices, where most employees are accustomed to using verbal techniques instead of what is expected. Moreover, the sub-units pass through different offices, making specific authorities useless. As a hope for change, the researcher wants to investigate the underlying phenomenon and come up with a structured approach tailored to the real problem. The initiative is not only beneficial to the university but also serves as a scientific guideline for new scholarly debates and a new conceptual framework for replication.

The research gap found in this study that differs from previous studies is that it refers to the perceptions of the current communication protocol and its effects on job satisfaction and the sense of value of employees of Mindanao State University Buug Campus.

## 1.2 Significance of the Study

This study aims to assess the organizational communication protocol of Mindanao State University Buug Campus. Assessing the organizational communication protocol of the school will unveil its strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. Further, assessing the communication protocol of the school will bring to light the problems in communication protocol encountered by the employees. Particularly, this study may be beneficial to the following groups: employees of Mindanao State University for it will guide them to improve and resolve the problems and concerns about the communication protocol of the campus. This study hopes to initiate more strategies to help employees solve problems at the university. Also, students/readers can be fully aware of the existing communication protocol of the campus, and this will give useful ideas to the students. Researchers will also be guided by this study.

## 1.3 Statement of the Problem

1. What is the level of perception of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus?
2. What is the level of effect of the communication protocol to the job satisfaction and sense of value of the employees of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus?

## 1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the perceptual context on communication among the employees holding top management positions of the university. Specifically, it is focused on the Deans, Secretaries, Coordinators, Heads of Offices. These respondents are limited only to these levels.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Respondents

Intentionally, employees with designated positions such as Deans, College Secretaries, Department Coordinators, and Heads of Offices were the respondents to the survey questionnaire. Given the number of employees with designated positions, which was only thirty-one (31), the researcher incorporated everyone to be part of the study. There were four (4) deans, six (6) college secretaries, ten (10) department coordinators, and eleven (11) heads of offices. A total of 31 respondents.

### 2.3 Sampling

Purposive selection of the respondents was used to ensure that the information gathered was substantial and would be adequately presented.

### 2.4 Research Instrument

The first part of the research instrument is adapted but modified from the study of Priti R Sharma. The question was about the perception of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University Buug. Part 2 of the questionnaire also is adapted but modified from the study of Jacqueline Carter Gerard. It answered the questions on the effects of the present communication protocol on the employees of the University. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: demographic profiling, perception of communication protocol, and effects of the communication protocol. There were 10 items each on the perception and effects of communication protocol.

## 2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data, a letter of request to conduct the study was prepared. The researcher prepared an adapted but modified questionnaire checklist, then the questionnaire checklists were distributed. The researcher conducted the research through survey because of the advantages of the survey method. The researcher explains to the respondents the importance of their response to the study. The researcher clarified some terms to the respondents so that the respondents can answer the questionnaire with full knowledge of their responsibility as the subject of the study. The researcher requested the respondents to answer with honesty. The researcher used a purposive sampling. In this study, the researcher's goal was to determine the perceptions of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus and the effect of the communication protocol to the job satisfaction and sense of value of the employees of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus. The researcher believes that this method is the most appropriate in choosing the sample for the research. After the respondents answered the questionnaire, the researcher collected and tallied the data for interpretation. The researcher asked a statistician to help in determining the appropriate statistical tools to be used and in interpreting the data. Based on the data the researcher comes up with conclusion and recommendations for this study

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered were tallied in a tabular form and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools: frequency counts, percentages, and mean. The analysis and interpretation of data is carried out in two parts. The first part is the analysis on the perception of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University Buug. The second part is the analysis on the effects of the present communication protocol on the employees of the University. Thirty-one (31) completed questionnaires were the bases for computing the results. Frequency counts were applied to the information obtained from the survey. The sum of the respondents' answers to each question was used to determine the highest frequency of occurrence, or how frequently a specific reaction happens. These quantifiable answers to the questions were then presented in percentage forms.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PART ONE:  COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL IN THE CAMPUS AS PERCEIVED BY THE EMPLOYEES

1.  What is the level of perceptions of the respondents on the communication protocol of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus?

| CATEGORY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | MEAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Extent to which the people in my organization communicate effectively. | 0 | 17 | 13 | 1 | 2.71 |
| | 0% | 55% | 42% | 3% | |
| 2. Extent to which my organization's communication makes me identify with it or feel a vital part of it. | 0 | 17 | 12 | 2 | 2.97 |
| | 0% | 55% | 39% | 6% | |
| 3. Extent to which I receive the information needed to do my job in a timely manner. | 0 | 13 | 16 | 2 | 2.97 |
| | 0% | 42% | 52% | 6% | |
| 4. Extent to which conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels. | 5 | 11 | 11 | 4 | 2.87 |
| | 16% | 35% | 35% | 14% | |
| 5. Extent to which communication through informal and unofficial line occurs in my organization. | 2 | 13 | 12 | 4 | 2.97 |
| | 6% | 42% | 39% | 13% | |
| 6. Extent to which horizontal communication with other organizational members is accurate and free flowing. | 0 | 16 | 13 | 2 | 2.74 |
| | 0% | 49% | 39% | 12% | |
| 7. Extent to which the communication channels used in my organization are appropriate. | 0 | 12 | 19 | 0 | 2.87 |
| | 0% | 58% | 36% | 0% | |
| 8. Extent to which the amount of face-to face communication that occurs in my workplace is appropriate. | 0 | 12 | 19 | 0 | 2.87 |
| | 0% | 58% | 36% | 0% | |
| 9. Extent to which our meetings are well organized. | 1 | 14 | 13 | 3 | 2.90 |
| | 3% | 45% | 42% | 10% | |
| 10. Extent to which the amount of supervision given to me is about right | 0 | 10 | 18 | 3 | 3.19 |
| | 0% | 32% | 58% | 10% | |

| 1 | NOT AT ALL | 1.00-1.49 |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | SMALL EXTENT | 1.50-2.49 |
| 3 | MODERATE EXTENT | 2.50-3.49 |
| 4 | LARGE EXTENT | 3.50-4.00 |

**LIKERT SCALE MATRIX CODING**

*Table 1: Communication Protocol in the Campus as Perceived by the Employees*

Table 1 presents the data on the responses of the participants regarding their perceptions on the communication protocol of MSU Buug Campus. This table shows that in item 1, conspicuously, there is a split in population between perceptions; however, at the level of 2.71, the average of the respondents believes that to a moderate extent within their organization, they communicate effectively. In the following item, based on the mean score of 2.97, It can be said that despite respondents' different views on organizational communication and being part of it, on average, to a moderate extent, they feel that in the execution of organizational communication, they feel that they are vital part of it, whereby ownership or identity is developed. Next, with a mean score of 2.97, respondents perceived that, to some extent or moderately, because of the existing organizational communication practiced, information necessary to their job or certain responsibilities is received promptly. In terms of conflict management, albeit a remarkable splitting of perceptions, at the average level of 2.87, it can be said that most of the respondents believed that, to a moderate extent, the proper channeling of communication as practiced in the organization helped them to settle and handle conflicts appropriately. Averagely, at the level of 2.97, to a moderate extent, the respondent believes that informal and unofficial lines of communication are occurring in the organization. Despite the practices of proper channeling of communication, grapevine or unstructured communication still exists. Also, as reflected in item 6, at a 2.74 mean score, a large sample moderately believes that the extent of horizontal communication is accurate and freely flowing among employees at MSU-Buug. The chain of command from top management down, or vice versa, is smoothly existing within the organization. At 2.87, the average of the sample group perceived that, to a moderate extent, communication channels used in the university are somehow appropriate. At a similar level to the previous item, a mean score of 2.87 reflects that, largely to the respondents' moderate extent, the practice of face-to-face communication occurring in the institution is justly appropriate. Even though there is a clear division among responses, the average of the respondents thinks that because of the type of organizational communication used in the MSU, Buug is extensively moderate (2.90), resulting in well-organized meetings. Lastly, at 3.19, respondents averagely believed that, to a moderate extent, employees were able to perceive that because organization communication existed, the amount of supervision they were receiving was just about right.

PART TWO: EFFECTS OF THE COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL TO THE EMPLOYEES

2. What is the level of the effect of the communication protocol to the job satisfaction and sense of value of the employees of Mindanao State University- Buug Campus?

| CATEGORY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | MEAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Communicating without restraint at work maintains sense of happiness. | 4 / 13% | 13 / 42% | 11 / 35% | 3 / 10% | 2.42 |
| 2. The suggestions, opinions, or thoughts are listened to and acted on. | 1 / 3% | 21 / 68% | 6 / 19% | 3 / 10% | 2.35 |
| 3. The concerns that are listened to and acted upon give a feel of being valued at work. | 1 / 3% | 18 / 58% | 5 / 16% | 7 / 23% | 2.58 |
| 4. Communicating at work creates feeling that you contribute to the overall benefit of the organization. | 1 / 3% | 18 / 58% | 5 / 16% | 7 / 23% | 2.58 |
| 5. Involvement in communication activities for organizational decision-making such as brainstorming and the like establishes a feeling of control over work environment. | 1 / 4% | 15 / 48% | 0 / 0% | 15 / 48% | 2.64 |
| 6. The way we communicate at work feels that co-workers are happy. | 3 / 10% | 19 / 61% | 5 / 16% | 4 / 13% | 2.32 |
| 7. With the way we communicate at work, I feel that it is management's responsibility to create a positive work environment. | 1 / 3% | 13 / 42% | 13 / 42% | 4 / 13% | 2.65 |
| 8. Communication protocol can affect employee productivity. | 2 / 7% | 15 / 48% | 9 / 29% | 5 / 16% | 2.55 |
| 9. Adequate communication within an organization has a positive impact on organizational efficiency and effectiveness. | 1 / 3% | 16 / 52% | 11 / 35% | 3 / 10% | 2.32 |
| 10. Communication effectiveness within an organization depends on the quantity and quality of the information given to employees during the working process | 1 / 3% | 22 / 71% | 5 / 16% | 3 / 10% | 2.52 |

| 1 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | 1.00-1.49 |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | DISAGREE | 1.50-2.49 |
| 3 | AGREE | 2.50-3.49 |
| 4 | STRONGLY AGREE | 3.50-4.00 |

LIKERT SCALE MATRIX CODING

*Table 2: Effects of the Communication Protocol to the Employees*

This table shows the data on the effects of the communication protocol on the employees. When respondents were asked about their perception of whether communicating without restraint at work maintains a sense of happiness, 42%, or 13 of them, disagreed. With a mean score of 2.42, the average of the sample cohort disagreed that unstructured communication would satisfy them or make them happy at work. The majority of the population (68%, or 21%) disagree that their suggestions, opinions, or thoughts are listened to by the top management. The mean score of 2.35 showed that the average of the respondents disagreed with this notion. Perhaps they strongly believed that their higher hierarchy was not actively listening to and interested in their voices. With item 3, around 58% of the respondents disagree that their concerns at work are valued within the organization. Ironically, the mean score of 2.58 reflected that the average of the population chose to agree on this notion. The ambivalent results may be since, in some cases, organizational communication has different effects per person, relevant to one's culture and personal philosophy. About 58% of the samples disagreed that communicating at work creates feelings that they have contributed to the overall benefit of the organization. Maybe this is because they felt that it would be useless to verbalize something since the top management does not value their opinions or concerns, as perceived in prior items. However, eyeing the mean score, the result was the opposite. At the level of 2.58, the average of them agreed on this notion. Communicating may be useless for some significant numbers, while for others, this can be crucial. The existing organization's communication with this institution has different effects on the employees. In this item, it is worth noting that responses are equally divided between disagree (48%) and strongly agree (48%). However, when the mean score was focused, it was found that the average of the respondents agreed that involving themselves in communication activities like brainstorming helps them feel control over their work environment. Sixty-one percent of the respondents disagreed that the way they talk to their co-workers is satisfactory/happy. The result is also supported by the mean score of 2.32, which denotes that the average of the samples disagreed with the notion presented. Noticeably, item 7 interestingly shows equal-split results, reflecting that at least 42% of respondents either agreed or disagreed. Using the mean score for interpretation, it is pointed out that the average of these respondents agreed that communication protocol is a responsibility of the top management. Such a result can be simply explained by the principle called "Captain of the Ship.". At a 2.55 mean score, it can be reflected that participants believed that communication protocol has a direct effect on employees' productivity at work. However, when individually focused according to percentile, it can be deduced that respondents' responses are more skewed toward disagreeing. Perhaps because of the perennial problem, some respondents have not seen the importance of the organization's communication to their work improvement and development. In terms of efficiency and effectiveness as by-products of communication, 52% of the respondents disagreed that it has a positive impact on their work. Also, based on the mean score of 2.32, it can be reflected the real average among them disagreed on these cues. This can be explained by the fact that, aside from communication issues, respondents have other motivational factors that can drive them to work efficiently and effectively on their assigned tasks. Finally, when asked if communication effectiveness within an organization depends on the quantity and quality of the information given to employees during the working process, 71% of the respondents replied that they disagree with this. Based on the mean score, at the level of 2.52, the average disagreed with the presented notion. To explain, quality organizational communication is not given much emphasis in this institution, and employees are blinded to its impact on their work. The prevalent circumstances have traditionally existed, yet they were not corrected since they were given priority by the top management and the university.

**4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study's findings will be useful in determining the administration's shortcomings about the organization's communication protocol. The study revealed that the result is negative because most of the respondents are dissatisfied with such practices. This implies that the respondents are unhappy with the communication protocol, including the flow of communication. There was a lack of communication protocol in their office; their input and suggestions were not solicited or listened to when offered. This study will help to consider this problem. Lastly, results led to the conclusion that communication protocol affects the employees' feelings and outlook towards work, thus affecting their job satisfaction and sense of value.

**5. Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions derived from this study, the lowest mean as perceived by the employees is on the effective communication protocol at MSU Buug Campus. This result showed that respondents are not happy with the communication of the university. The researcher recommended that all heads of offices should develop effective

communication strategies to provide frequent pertinent information and create avenues for suggestions, opinions, and feedback from employees because employees often have expertise that should be utilized. Further, employees holding top management positions need to understand the significance of proper communication protocols. They should not bypass offices which are part of the communication channels to prevent conflicts and develop a smooth flow of information from one office to another. Information is vital; thus, it must be a collaborative effort to inform concerned individuals because this may affect employee productivity. This could be done through proper formal and informal orientation for the newly appointed. This orientation will be done by the immediate supervisor. When respondents were asked about their perception of whether communicating without restraint at work maintains a sense of happiness, it was shown that the average of the sample disagreed that unstructured communication would satisfy them or make them happy at work. Furthermore, it is recommended that the administration be made aware of the results of this study so that they may formulate the proper course of action to address the issue at hand. It is a fact that good communication is a necessity in an organization, hence, this should not be overlooked to prevent problems that may be encountered later. There must be a regular assessment on the communication protocol practiced in the school since work performance is affected by the communication protocol. Also, the citizen charter should be enhanced and strictly implemented. Another study may be conducted to support the results of the present study.

## Acknowledgement

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