

Internal Audit Communication for Non-profit Community Learning Centre

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ABSTRACT

Unequal access to education is a major problem in Indonesia, and even in big cities like Jakarta, many do not possess formal education. Without good education, employment opportunities will be limited and most will end up as blue collar workers. Al Ishlah PKBM is one of the community learning centres in Jakarta. For more than a decade, it has provided educational services for people who want to be more empowered through education. It is an alternative educational centre catering for all ages. The PKBM relies on good communication, both internal and external, and therefore, it needs a communication audit to comprehensively evaluate the quality of its internal communication, namely its ability to send, receive and share information with various audiences within the organisation. The aim of this research is to study how internal communication audit influences an organisation's performance. The results show there is a gap between the vision and mission of organisation. The managers of PKBM Al Ishlah still use the traditional way to manage its internal communication. It was found that the organisation lacks professionalism because it emphasises on the values of empathy. Thus, the centre needs to instil the importance of discipline which needs improvement.

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INTRODUCTION

Unequal access to education is a major problem in Indonesia, and even in big cities like Jakarta, many do not have formal education. There are a few factors at play which make formal education inaccessible to everyone. The main cause is poverty in addition to lack of

interest in education, inadequate facilities (transportation and school building among others), culture (the community's view that understates the importance of education) and disability. Data from DKI Jakarta Provincial Education Office (2015) shows that the number of dropouts has decreased from 2012 to 2014. In 2012, the number of dropouts in Indonesian schools at Elementary level was 281, Junior High School, 804 and Senior High School, 2921. In 2013 the number of dropouts at Elementary level was 221, Junior High School, 552, and Senior High School, 2270. In 2014, the number of dropouts at Elementary level was 197, Junior High School, 431, and Senior High School 1332. The employment rate is higher for people with higher levels of educational attainment and without that, employment opportunities will most likely be limited and, as a result, almost all with low levels of education will end up as blue collar workers. This phenomenon often leads to social problems, crime, especially in big cities like Jakarta. To resolve this issue, the non-profit centres have supported the government to provide informal education to the poor and to the disadvantaged. The non-formal educational sector comes under the portfolio of the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education, Ministry of Education and Culture.

An example of the private, non-formal education is the Community Learning Centre, or PKBM. The PKBM is an established community learning initiative of, by and for the community (Direktorat

Pembinaan Pendidikan Masyarakat, 2012). Its establishment is an initiative by the community. The PKBM was set up and governed by the community to improve people's quality of life through learning. Managing the centre requires passion, self-reliance, and mutual cooperation. The PKBM consists of the following components: (1) the target community, (2) students, (3) tutors, (4) the organiser and manager, and (5) partners. The progress of a PKBM can be measured using the following parameters:

1. Community participation: the higher the number of community members participating in a PKBM, the greater its achievement or success. Public participation is encouraged by providing facilities, funds, personnel, and so on.
2. Benefit or impact on society: This is measured by contributions of PKBM to improving the quality of life of the community. This contribution can be in the form of knowledge, skills, income, changes in behaviour, job creation, and so on.
3. Quality and relevance of the programme: A system that monitors the input, process and output of the programmes in the PKBM.
4. Independence and sustainability: PKBM's ability to implement the entire programme according to the needs of the targeted community. It requires an independent and sustainable funding system.

Communication is the key to efficiency in an organisation, along with motivation and professional competence. Employees spend most of their time communicating in a form or another, no matter where their position is in the hierarchy of the company. Due to the fact that the number of employees in the services sector and offices are bigger than the number of production workers, there is a need to improve communication among them. Additionally, it is necessary to have a stronger collaboration between work colleagues as the company expands. Team work would not be efficient without collaboration among all its members.

There is a need for good internal and external communication in PKBM. Without good communication, it would be impossible for the organisation to grow and thrive. This research was conducted at PKBM Al Islah, Jakarta. The reason of choosing this institution as an object of this study is because PKBM Al Islah represents the characteristics of non-formal educational sector in Indonesia. It is a learning centre, centre for exchange of knowledge, a knowledge and information centre, a meeting place for various levels of society as well as a community research centre. It has existed for more than a decade, but has never subjected itself to a communication audit before. Consequently, many of the communication problems may potentially occur in PKBM.

To achieve sustainability, a PKBM should be able to regulate the flow of communication within the institute and to be aware of the alignment between

the vision and mission and operations of the institution. Thus, the focus of this research is to understand how internal communication audit influences organisational performance. The research question is whether the evaluation results of internal communications at PKBM Al Islah in line with its vision and mission. The aim is to analyse the results of the evaluation of internal communication through communication audits on PKBM Al Islah.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Earlier studies have analysed the importance of internal communications audit to improve the internal market orientations (IMO) of a company (see for example, Joao Carvalho, 2013). Carvalho's research was a case study using a mixed method approach to examine private higher educational institutions. The results indicated managers, teachers, non-academic staff, and students agree on the importance of formal rules and procedures to regulate the flow of communication. The study also pointed to existence of a direct link between internal communications and the internal market orientations.

The study Vaananen, Harkonen, and Mottonen in 2012 entitled *Improving High-Tech Product Development through Communication Audits* looked at the suitable process for assessing the effectiveness of communication in high-tech product development. Based on the literature review, a communication audit process is constructed and tested

in five product development projects of different information and communication technology (ICT) companies. Based on test case experiences and analysis, this study proposed a streamlined communication process audit. An outcome of this paper is a streamlined communication audit process that provides benefits for companies, but does not burden the organisation unnecessarily (Vaananen, et al., 2012). Managers of high-tech companies can utilise the development process for enhancing communication during product development.

Henderson in 2005 conducted a communication audit of Family Health Care Center in Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota. Data were collected through interviews, surveys, and media monitoring. Findings indicated that Family Health Care Center employees wanted more information from their superiors as well as a reliable source of information and a recognition of their success. The communications audit also found a gap between the requested information and the final information received by employees from the management (Henderson, 2005).

Quinn and Hargie in 2004 published their work titled *Internal Communication Audits: A Case Study of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC)*. Not unlike many police organisations in the United Kingdom, the RUC recognised the need to address the issue of internal communications, but the employees had not been involved in any in-depth assessment of its internal

communications, nor did it have a written internal communications strategy. By applying a validated audit methodology, the study examined internal communications strategy within the. Using a triangulation approach, the research consisted of structured interviews, the international communication audit questionnaire, and a critical incident approach. The results showed a general dissatisfaction in the area of specific communication and dissatisfaction in relation to particular areas of the organisation (Quinn & Hergie, 2004).

Situational Theory of Communication

This theory was developed by Grunig who assumes that the relation between knowledge or cognition (awareness), attitudes and behaviour (attitudes and behaviour) depends on a number of situational factors (Macnamara, 2011). Grunig and his students developed the situational theory of communication behaviours, communication effects, and publics. Three independent variables: (1) problem recognition, (2) level of involvement, and (3) constraint recognition, were separated into two dimensions: internal and external. All these concepts were integrated into a causal model (causes and effects) of communication behaviours. Situational theory is used in any public identification by communicating actively, passively, or do not communicate at all about an organisational decision. Grunig describes four situational factors in question, namely (Macnamara, 2011):

1. The level of recognition, the publics who recognised the problem is the aware publics.
2. The level of understanding of the individuals if the problem is within the scope of their powers. Publics do something to overcome the problem of so-called active publics.
3. The existence of a reference such as previous experience or knowledge.
4. The level of involvement, namely how big is the individual's involvement. Results of communication can be a level of cognition or make people think about something, the attitude / attitude (opinion-forming), or conduct or behaviour.

Grunig's Situational Theory asserts that publics can be identified and classified according to the extent to which they are aware of the problem and to the extent to which they do something about the problem. Specifically, the theory examines how publics are formed and how this can help an organisation segment the publics accordingly in order to communicate with them. Grunig also identified four categories of publics (Macnamara, 2011):

1. Non-public: no problem is recognised or exists
2. Latent public: problem is there, but public does not recognise it
3. Aware public: the group recognises that a problem exists
4. Active public: the group is aware of the problem and organises to respond it.

The type of publics determines how the organisation communicates to it. Situational Theory points out that an organisation should communicate with its latent and aware publics to solve any problems or issues before the situation escalates and the publics decide to take action.

Communication Audit

According to Hardjana (2000), communication audit is a thorough research on the implementation of the communication system of the organisation with the aim to improve the performance and effectiveness of the organisation. The scope of the communication audit can be tailored to the needs of the organisation, because through the audit, the management can test the communication through the media, reveal a misunderstanding and even discover new opportunities. Communication audit is expected to ensure cost-effectiveness, evaluate on-going programmes, clarify issues and change the perception among the staff. Just as a financial audit serves to establish the economic portrait of an organisation, a communication audit forms a portrait of communication issues within the organisation (Henderson, 2005). Some problems that can be identified through the audit of internal communication, according to Hardjana (2000) are: information deficit, the power of rumours, poor upward communication, poor communication channels, and unproductive meetings.

Three characteristics common to all audits are (Hargie & Tourish, 2000):

1. The accumulation of information. This is the diagnostic phase of the audit. In communication terms, managers need information about the quality and quantity of communication between different sectors of the organisation.
2. The creation of management systems. This is the prescriptive phase of auditing. Once information has been gathered, systems must then be put in place to further develop best practices, and to remediate identified deficits.
3. Accountability. This is the functional aspect of the audit process. Specific individuals should be made accountable for different aspects of internal communication so that when problems are highlighted someone is specifically tasked with ensuring these are swiftly dealt with. If a problem is everyone's responsibility, it is usually no-one's responsibility.

It is true that organisations seeking a competitive advantage must design their systems to at least match, and then exceed, world best practices. Organisational communication is no different. It has been suggested by Clampitt and Berk that a world-class communication system has five key attributes (Clampitt & Berk, 2000):

1. The leadership team has a strategic commitment to effective communication.

2. Employees at all levels have appropriate communication skills.
3. There is a proper infrastructure of channels to meet organisational objectives.
4. There are proper communication policies and procedures to meet organisational objectives.
5. Information is managed in a way to meet organisational objectives.

Few organisations have systems in place that are consistent with these attributes. Often, the sad reality is that communication is (Hargie & Tourish, 2003):

- a. Widely touted as a panacea for organisational ills, but allocated minimal fiscal or functional resources.
- b. All pervasive, but often unplanned, it is often the case that communication is what happens to companies when they are busy doing other things.
- c. Hailed as being of central importance in terms of what managers actually do, but rarely investigated with the same rigour as is reserved for such other functions as finance.
- d. Still regarded as something that managers do to their subordinates, they drop information like depth charges on to those employees submerged in the organisational ocean, but make it very clear that they do not expect to receive any feedback in return.

The aims of a communication audit are (Hardjana, 2000):

1. To determine the location where there is information overload or information underload,
2. To assess the quality of information communicated by the resources within the organisation,
3. To measure the quality of the relationships of communication,
4. To identify informal networks (grapevine) and formal networks,
5. To identify the source of congestion of information and the filter of information by comparing the role of communication in practice,
6. To identify the categories and examples of communication experiences that are categorised as positive or negative,
7. To describe the pattern of communication that occurs at a personal level, groups, and organisations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used descriptive qualitative method according to internal audit communication processes. Data was collected in two stages:

1. The first stage: preliminary interviews were conducted at the secretariat of PKBM Al Ishlah. This stage was crucial as any audit requires a preliminary assessment of internal communication strategies. This interview was aimed to elicit the managers' opinions and to find

out communication problems which have occurred within the institution. These interviews were a kind of a forensic communication to identify aspects that will be explored further in the next stage of data collection.

2. The second stage: focus group discussion involving the managers of PKBM Al Ishlah. The aim was to find out the level of understanding of the vision and mission of the institution. Interviews involved alumni of PKBM Al Ishlah to get a thorough understanding of the institution's internal communications activities. Data analysis and interpretation followed the end of the interview phase. It was useful to see if the results from focus groups matched those from interviews or if there were differences.

PKBM Al Ishlah Profile

PKBM Al Ishlah was established in 2004 to serve the educational needs of the community which are not covered by the formal education services. In 2015, the PKBM Al Ishlah had 75 RT (Rukun Tetangga, a kind of neighbourhood watch) where PKBM Al Ishlah was located. The RT (Rukun Tetangga) is a community organisation that is recognized and fostered by the government to maintain and preserve the values of Indonesian society. The values are based on mutual cooperation and kinship as well as to help improve the task of governance, development, rural and urban community. Each RT

consists of 30 families in a village and 50 family villages were established under Regulation No.7 /1983. Al Ishlah PKBM educational services are expected to be an alternative for people who want to be more empowered through education efforts irrespective of age. The students of PKBM Al Ishlah range between 10 and 60 years of age. The PKBM Al Ishlah programme services include:

1. Package A, elementary school equivalent.
2. Package B, junior high equivalent.
3. Package C, high school equivalent.

In addition to academic services, PKBM Al Ishlah also provides vocational or job-related educational programme. The vision of PKBM Al Ishlah is

“Becoming a leading educational institution that provides educational programs and professional equality useful for students who are not served in formal education”.

While the missions of PKBM Al Ishlah are as follows:

1. Conducting Package, A, Package B and Package C and functional literacy-based professional entrepreneurship.
2. Organising equal education programmes and integrated functional literacy with life skills education in order to train the skills of students.
3. Provide facilities and create a fun learning environment for students.

Cooperation with various parties to improve the quality of human resources and quality of services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Communication audit characteristics used in this paper are adopted from Hargie and Tourish, which are (1) the accumulation of information, (2) the creation of management systems, and (3) accountability (Hargie & Tourish, 2000). Information was collected from various resources, including in-depth interview with the managers of PKBM Al Ishlah, alumnus, staffs, and from observation of secondary data. This diagnostic phase took place at PKBM Al Ishlah, Jakarta. The prescriptive phase followed the diagnostic phase, which include giving recommendations about management structure, changes in the organisation's vision and mission, and internal communication systems. The third phase, accountability, was not tackled. The third phase of the communication audit was still in progress when this paper was written.

In 2015, PKBM Al Ishlah revised its vision and mission. According to its managers, efforts were made to boost reputability of the organisation as well teaching more beneficial skills to its students and to be more competitive in the workplace and society. In addition, it has focused its efforts to become the leading professional institution by advocating modern, cooperative, and transparent management.

The first problem revealed by the audit communication of PKBM Al Ishlah is that the new vision have not been shared with the teachers and students. The second problem is the undefined mission to achieve the vision of enhancing the teachers' professionalism. The mission currently focused only on the quality of learners. Mission statements are supposed to capture the overriding purpose of an organisation in line with the values and expectations of its stakeholders (Johnson et al., 2008). According to Bartkus, Glassman and McAfee (2004) the primary role of a mission statement is to communicate the strategic direction of the organisation to stakeholders in order to guide strategic planning. According to the Indonesian Government (Direktorat Pembinaan Pendidikan Masyarakat, 2012) quality, impact and relevance of the programme have successfully portrayed by Al Ishlah PKBM in its mission. But the two components, namely community participation and sustainability, are not captured in the mission of this institution.

In PKBM Al Ishlah, the students are mostly adults who already have self-concept. It becomes a challenge for the teachers, because the delivery of study materials is often met with students' resistance, if they are not conveyed in a manner aligned with students' self-concept. In other words, learning cannot only focus on theory, but must be combined with other activities that attract students. The PKBM Al Ishlah also provides vocational skills such as sewing, screen printing,

hairdressing, which are expected to directly improve students' livelihood once they graduated.

The values endorsed by PKBM Al Ishlah are familiarity, empathy, and teamwork. In daily operations, these values are not well communicated and well-perceived by members of the institution. The absence of induction for new teachers is also a weakness in the cultivation of the values of the institution. One of the problems expressed by the manager is the value of empathy that is sometimes too strong. They often gave offers to too many prospective students and pursued all means to get them enrolled. For example, they set up a hairdressing business to be managed by students and plans to open a sewing workshop for students in the future, which are not the core of their activities. They should instead focus on teaching and providing the best education and vocational skills to the students. The launching of new businesses are not stated in the vision and mission. This causes problems as there are no tutor and teacher assigned for this programme. In the end, these enterprises, opened only for about 8 months, were forced to shut down.

In terms of the quality of its programme, PKBM Al Ishlah is bounded by the standard of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture in 2007, with a corresponding adjustment in the context and the needs of the institution. Through this regulation, teachers are required to compose a syllabus in accordance with the material being taught. However, in PKBM Al Ishlah,

this has not been fully implemented because many teachers do not comply with the regulation by not using a syllabus. This is not because the teachers are not aware of their obligations, but rather because of the absence of a strong control of the managers.

The mode of communication between the manager and teachers are: (1) face to face, (2) WhatsApp, (3) SMS, (4) Telephone, and (5) Email. There has been no significant communication barrier between managers and teachers. There are also biweekly meetings for the purposes of coordination of work programmes. The PKBM Al Ishlah Constitution has been amended but its contents are still not well organised. The contents are broad and tend to be immeasurable. Another problem is the lack of socialisation to instil discipline among teachers and students as it is conducted using oral communication only.

The PKBM Al Ishlah, like many other non-profit institutions, has funding problems related to its sustainability. It currently relies on tuition fees, donations from foundations, the government, private companies, and individuals. The public relations officer carries out fund raising activities by establishing cooperation with the government. But the fund raising efforts are not focused because the job description of the public relations officer is not confined to fund raising alone. The officer's job includes establishing relations with government officials, verify student's diploma, coordinate with targeted communities, and manage funds allocation. It is important to note that one

of the short term goals of PKBM Al Ishlah is to become a financially independent non-profit organisation.

Internal conflicts are common. Conflict-related tasks are normally settled amicably between the managers. The school principal makes the final decision based on the input of the managers and teachers.

There is a lack of clarity in terms of short-term and long-term goals between the principals and the managers. If left unchecked or unaddressed, will affect the organisational performance of PKBM Al Ishlah. Problems identified in PKBM Al Ishlah, as a result of the audit of communication, are:

1. Information deficit: without clear job descriptions, PKBM Al Ishlah suffers from unbalanced information flow, with information deficit in one area and information overload in another.
2. The power of rumours: Rumours are common in PKBM Al Ishlah and but they have a devastating impact on the management.
3. Poor upward communication: a poor sense of belonging among teachers, make upward communication difficult. Internal publics of PKBM Al Ishlah tended to be immersed in their own problems, disregarding the organisation. One of the reasons for this problem is lack of control and monitoring by the managers.
4. Poor communication channels: there appeared to no significant barriers between managers and teachers

when they use informal mode of communication, such as face to face interaction or instant messaging. But problems arose whenever formal media was used, such as formal regulation or contracts between the organisation and its members. These problems were due lack of control and it became a habit to ignore formal communication channels.

5. Unproductive meetings: biweekly meetings were usually conducted without clear goals or even meeting the set goals; the contents were too broad and not specific enough without timeline and clear action plans.

The results of the communication audit in Al Ishlah is in line with Grunig's situational theory of communication (Macnamara, 2011). The PKBM is different from a formal educational institute requiring it to adopt certain government standards. From Al Islam's internal communications, it is clear that only the principal and the secretariat are aware of its problem. The teachers are not aware of the situation and not fully involved in the day to day running of the organisation.. The teachers need direction and firm leadership particularly in problem solving.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The result of the internal communication audit of PKBM Al Ishlah shows there's a gap between its vision and mission. The management of PKBM Al Ishlah

still resorts to the traditional way to manage the organisation. There's a lack of professionalism in managing the organisation as it relies too much on the value of empathy. The vertical and horizontal methods of communication include: (1) face to face (2) Online Messenger application, (3) SMS, (4) Telephone, and (5) Email (6) Facebook. The inculcation of values related discipline still needs improvement. Future research should study other PKBMs in Jakarta. A longitudinal research is recommended for PKBM Al Ishlah to check on their internal and communications.

The following recommendations were made to PKBM Al Ishlah based on its communication audit findings:

- A) Improving its vision and mission, as well as its goals and objectives. The mission statement should describe not only the quality of its students, but also the quality of its tutors and managers as well as applying the theory of four parameters of success discussed above. If PKBM Al Ishlah wants to establish a business unit (SMEs) to elevate the living standards of their students, it should be incorporated in the mission statement. In addition, all PKBM Al Ishlah members must share the organisation's vision, mission, goals and objectives.
- B) Improving the rules and determine the appropriate mode of communication to disseminate these new operating

procedures. Rules can also be a tool which guarantee quality control and quality of programmes taught.

- C) An introduction programme for new tutors will enable them to understand the values of PKBM Al Ishlah and its expectations of them.
- D) Branding campaigns and the use of online media for fund raising purposes. It is hoped that through this branding campaign the corporate sector will allocate a portion of their CSR funds for Al Ishlah in order for it to achieve financial independence.

It is understood PKBM Al Ishlah has undergone a change in management in addition to implementing some of the recommendations outlined above. It had also come up with a new and revised vision- mission statement A new internal communication audit is in order to find out the impact of those new measures.

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