

## Ranking Feedback and Disclosure Mechanisms based on Johari Window Model in order to Enhance Organizational Communications

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(Received Jan. 2015 & Published online March. 2015 issue)

### Abstract

The present research, which is conducted in survey framework, aims to rank the priorities of feedback and disclosure mechanisms based on Johari Window Model in order to enhance the organizational communications among female managers (of primary, middle and high schools) in Ilam Education Organization. Data gathered through questionnaire and literature review. Research population included all experts and professors of management in addition to a total number of 1820 female staff who worked in primary, middle and high schools in Ilam, among which 317 applicants were randomly selected through applying Cochran formula. The data were analyzed through parametric and non-parametric tests. One-sample t-test and confirmatory factor analysis were applied to confirm the model and Friedman rank test was employed to rate feedback and disclosure components. Findings showed that positive imagery (15 items), relieving tension (17 items) and building trust (14 items) were classified as the top priorities of disclosure and top priorities of feedback included corrective feedback (17 items), critical feedback (11 items) and destructive feedback (11 items), all of which were ranked through statistical analyses and final priorities were identified as a) acting based on democracy by the leader in organizational decision-making process (positive imagery), b) taking priority over organizational tasks and time management (relieving tensions), c) leader's trustworthiness and honesty in performing tasks (building trust), d) presenting controlling strategies for performing tasks by leader (corrective feedback), e) attaching importance to admiration and criticizing employees (critical feedback), and f) increasing positive encouragement and non-threatening feedback (destructive feedback). Giving feedback, in addition, was given the first priority in enhancing organizational communications.

**Keywords:** Communication, organization, feedback, 360-degree feedback, disclosure, clarification, trustworthiness, staff performance.

### Introduction

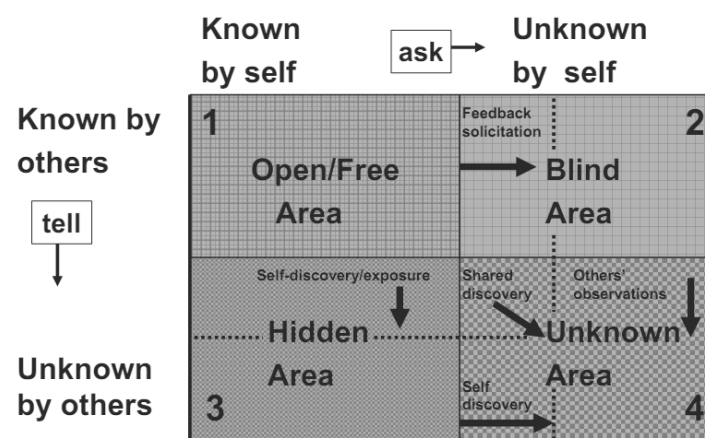
Since communication skills as transmission of message through a channel to a receiver play a crucial role in enhancing interaction and relationships among employees and managers in an organization, many leaders have brought such skills into sharper focus. Also, communication skills pave the way for organizational success by facilitating information exchange, increasing employees' understanding of organization procedures and identifying strengths and weaknesses. Communication skills, in addition, have enormous impact on organizational commitment and trust which are directly related to mutual understanding, motivation and team

work (Bahadori, 2014). Leaders and employees also have a big responsibility to promote the organization performance and achieve the objectives (Dayanandan & Arputharaj, 2012). Team members and leaders should always be striving to increase their knowledge and awareness by which they would be able to reduce the communication gap in organization. There are some models to bridge this gap, one of the most influential of which is known as Johari Window Model (Bahadori, 2014).

Johari Window is a communication tool that is used to improve understanding between individuals. It is widely used to instill a sense of confidence to help team members'

understand the value of self disclosure, to encourage folks to give and accept, in order to yield a constructive feedback. It is, in fact, an interpersonal communications model specially designed to meet the current trend to nurture the present generation with all its essential ingredients like self-awareness, personal development, group development and understanding relationships through behavior, empathy, inter-group development, etc. (Rajeshwari, 2013, p. 1339). Johari window contains four quadrants or regions, namely open

area, open self, free area, free self or the arena (Ingham & Luft, 1997). This tool gives a wide exposure on attitude, adaptability, goal setting, motivation, time management, critical thinking and creativity, problem solving, teamwork, leadership and stress management. The goal of this window is for the learner to better understand himself/herself and to know how others see the particular person.



**Figure 1:** Johari Window (design Alan Chapman, 2001-4, based on Ingham and Luft's Johari Window concept)

The four panes of the window represent the following:

**Open Area:** This phase is basically of our conscious self that include our behavior, attitudes, motivation, values, and ways of life which we are aware of and which is known to others.

**Hidden Area:** This area is something that is not known to others unless we disclose it.

**Blind Area:** This particular phase deals with things about ourselves which we do not know, but that others can notice with profound clarity.

**Unknown Area:** This phase we observe some ignorance of the prevailing traits that cannot selected by neither subjects nor their peers as they remain in the unknown quadrant (ibid, p. 1341).

As model represent, the size of the open/free area is a developmental outcome of working relationships. The open/free area

is usually expanded by encroaching into the blind and hidden areas. That means that the enlargement of the open/free quadrant comes from telling what is hidden and asking about the blind spots. In other words, the size of the open area can be expanded horizontally into the blind space, by seeking and actively listening to feedback from other group members and by the person's disclosure of information, feelings, etc. about him/herself to the group and group members. Often, this comes through the natural process of developing work experiences, but can also be accelerated by actively engaging in personal feedback processes. Here our potential is unknown to us and to others. In other words, as Rajeshwari (2013) states "Johari region IV consist of information, hidden abilities, feelings, aptitudes, experiences and so on that are not known to the person

himself/herself and unknown to others in the group as well” (p. 1342). Therefore by free and open exchange of information between person’s own-self and others (feedback), particularly personally relevant information is shared (disclosure) it would be possible to increase this arena in size (Luft, 1999).

The main aim in all groups should always be to develop the open area of every person as it produces effectiveness when we work in this area with others. As this arena can be best perceived as the space where good communications and cooperation occur, gradually people learn and work with one another overtime that reveals things about themselves directly or indirectly (Bahadori, 2014). Rajeshwari (2013, p. 1341) believes that “in order to become a part of the team, there is an utter urgency for us to be open and communicate. We need to be open to know how other people view us”. This model can play a crucial role in enhancing the organizations and leaders’ effectiveness.

Studies conducted by some researchers (Mathiew & Zajac, 1990; Koch & Steer, 1978; Porter, 1974; Movday et al., 1982) showed that there was a significant relationship between organizational communications and some behaviors in work place such as absenteeism, turnover and professional effectiveness. Employees with high level of organizational relationships had better effectiveness compared to those with low level of relationships (ibid). The present study, which is conducted based on Johari window model, aims to identify and rate feedback and disclosure mechanisms in order to enhance the organizational communications relationships among female managers in Ilam Education Organization, Iran.

### **Material and Method**

Regarding the process, the present study is a quantitative research and regarding the strategy, it is conducted in survey framework.

### **Data collection**

The questionnaire was developed as following:

Step1. in which subject-related books and articles were reviewed as research literature and key components of feedback and disclosure were extracted. Afterwards, a 10-item questionnaire was developed in order to get information about applicants’ expectancies and important indexes on each item. Then, the data collected were analyzed.

Step2. Having gathered the indexes in questionnaire, mixing them with those extracted from review of literature and omitting repetitive items, seven indexes were finally obtained. Since analyzing too many items for subsuming in questionnaire were difficult, they were categorized in some sets and given to experts. They were asked to take their priority over each item based on their points of view. Getting their opinions, six items remained as the final ones, which represented the most important items for the going-to-be finalized questionnaire.

Step3. The primary 144-item questionnaire was developed using six obtained indexes. Items were reduced to 89 after the questionnaire was distributed among applicants, its reliability and validity were computed and the sample size was determined. It is worthy of notice that the four items were omitted from the questionnaire based on applicants’ prioritization for each item, the time allocated to answer items and Cronbach’s Alpha for each of them. Thus, just 85 items were included in the finalized questionnaire.

### **Population, sample and sampling method**

Research population included all experts and professors in management in addition to a total number of 1820 female staff who worked in primary, middle and high schools in Ilam, Iran, among whom 371 applicants were randomly selected through applying Cochran formula.

### **Validity**

As the research was conducted in a quantitative framework, the face validity, content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity were confirmed through:

- Various sources such as books, articles in English and Persian which discussed the indexes of disclosure and feedback based on

Johari window model. Accordingly, their mechanism aspects were classified into six categories and given to management professors and experts for revision.

- Conceptual model which was revised by professors (i.e., thesis supervisor and reader), and then reviewed by the Management Department in University and finally confirmed from the theory and application perspectives.
- An 85-item questionnaire (on 5-Likert scale) which encompasses all aspects of feedback and disclosure for enhancing organizational communication in Education Organization. In addition, to strengthen the validity of questionnaire some experts were requested to comment on the newly-inserted indexes.

### Reliability

The questionnaire reliability was measured through Cronbach's Alpha in SPSS software. Distributing the questionnaires among 317 female staff of Education Organization in Ilam, the alpha coefficient was reported 0.986 for the questionnaire, which is considered acceptable.

### Data analysis

The data were analyzed through parametric and non-parametric tests. To confirm the model, one-sample t-test and confirmatory factor analysis were employed and to classify the indexes of disclosure and feedback, Friedman rank test and coefficient of variation were used.

### Results

#### Descriptive statistics of sample based on gender variable

Table 1 shows the sample distribution based on gender.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics for sample based on gender**

|        |        | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative frequency |
|--------|--------|-----------|---------|----------------------|
| Sample | Male   | 208       | 65.6    | 65.6                 |
|        | Female | 109       | 34.4    | 100.0                |
|        | Total  | 317       | 100     |                      |

As seen, there were 317 applicants, among whom 208 were female and 109 were male.

#### Results of descriptive statistics

In addition to key components, the interview and three steps reported other indexes influential in improving organizational communication. Table 2 represents them in details.

#### Results of inferential statistics

Having developed and revised the questionnaire, the items were analyzed through One-sample t-test, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Friedman Rank Test, the latter of which is employed to rank the components based on the applicants' views and their importance and priority given to them.

#### Results of confirmatory factor analysis

Table 3 shows the results of confirmatory factor analysis.

**Table 2: The priority of indexes of feedback and disclosure mechanisms**

| Indexes              | Top items  |
|----------------------|--|
| Positive imagery     | Acting based on democracy by the leader in organizational decision-making  |
| Trust building       | Trustworthiness and veracity by manager in performing the tasks  |
| Relieving tension    | Taking priority over task using time management (management based on purpose, determining time deadline for special tasks) |
| Destructive feedback | Increasing positive encouragement and non-threatening feedback   |
| Corrective feedback  | Presenting controlling strategies for performing tasks   |
| Critical feedback    | Attaching importance to admiration and criticizing employees   |

**Table 3: Lisrel output for the six components of research**

|                      | X <sup>2</sup> /df<br>Standard<br>value: less<br>than 3 | AGFI<br>Standard value:<br>higher than<br>0.90 | GFI<br>Standard value:<br>higher than<br>.090 | P-value<br>Standard<br>value: less<br>than 0.05 | RMESA<br>Standard<br>value: less<br>than 0.1 |
|----------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Positive imagery     | 4.2 = 2   | 0.90   | 0.97  | 0.000   | 0.001  |
| Relieving tension    | 49.27 = 2   | 0.92   | 0.97  | 0.000   | 0.000  |
| Trust building       | 4.2 = 2   | 0.90   | 0.96  | 0.000   | 0.002  |
| Corrective feedback  | 4.2 = 2   | 0.91   | 0.95  | 0.000   | 0.001  |
| Destructive feedback | 4.2 = 2   | 0.90   | 0.96  | 0.000   | 0.001  |
| Critical feedback    | 152.59= 2   | 0.92   | 0.96  | 0.000   | 0.003  |

As LISREL output shows, the model fits to measure the six components of the research, which is attributed to the fact that the Chi-Square/DF is less than 3, RMESA is less than 0.1 and AGFI and GFI values are higher than 0.90. In addition, all factor loadings are higher than 3; which indicate that six components in research are consequently confirmed.

#### Results of One-sample t-test

Table 4 shows the results of one-sample t-test for research variables.

**Table 4 : The results of one-sample t-test for each of variable**

| Variable             | Test Value: 3 |     |                |                 |                                       |        | Hypothesis   |
|----------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--------|--------------|
|                      | t             | df  | Sig (2-tailed) | Mean difference | 95% Confidence Interval of Difference |        |              |
|                      |               |     |                |                 | Lower                                 | Upper  |              |
| Positive imagery     | 210.422       | 316 | .000           | 3.96614         | 3.9291                                | 4.0032 | H1-Confirmed |
| Relieving tension    | 186.796       | 316 | .000           | 3.77584         | 3.7361                                | 3.8156 | H1-Confirmed |
| Trust building       | 137.974       | 316 | .000           | 3.75101         | 3.6975                                | 3.8045 | H1-Confirmed |
| Corrective feedback  | 170.592       | 316 | .000           | 3.82557         | 3.7814                                | 3.8697 | H1-Confirmed |
| Destructive feedback | 116.389       | 316 | .000           | 3.88299         | 3.8174                                | 3.9486 | H1-Confirmed |
| Critical feedback    | 134.967       | 316 | .000           | 3.85890         | 3.8027                                | 3.9152 | H1-Confirmed |

Results of table show that the t-value for feedback and disclosure are higher than standard t-value (- 1.96), which indicates that the variables fits the population.

### Results of Friedman Rank Test

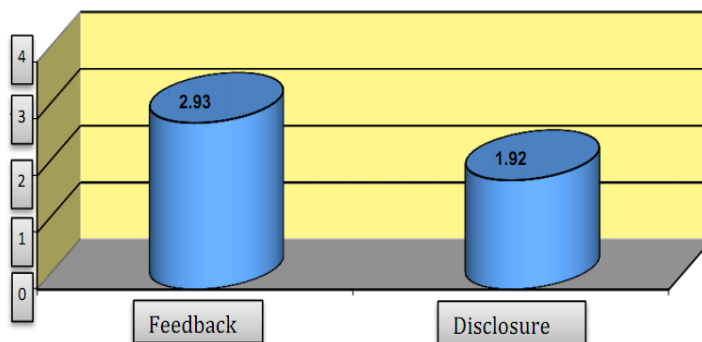
To rate the six components of the research, Friedman rank test was run, the results of which are shown in table 5.

**Table 5: Ranking of six components in research**

| Rank | Index                | Mean rank |
|------|----------------------|-----------|
| 1    | Positive imagery     | 4.16      |
| 2    | Destructive feedback | 3.64      |
| 3    | Critical feedback    | 3.58      |
| 4    | Corrective feedback  | 3.41      |
| 5    | Relieving tension    | 3.25      |
| 6    | Trust building       | 96.2      |

**Table 6 : Rank-ordering of the main components of organizational communications**

| Rank | Index      | Mean rank |
|------|------------|-----------|
| 1    | Feedback   | 1.64      |
| 2    | Disclosure | 36.1      |



**Diagram 1: Rating of the key elements of organizational communications**

### Discussion

Analyzing the positive imagery rank, it was revealed that top priorities included: 1) acting based on democracy by the leader in organizational decision-making, 2) helping staff to fulfil more of their potential, 3) attending the organization regularly, 4) taking responsibility for the sources, and 5) apologizing for the faults and problems occurred in organization. In addition, the present research findings showed that acting based on democracy and helping staff to fulfil more of their potential would considerably influence on creating positive imagery in staff, which is in line with the studies conducted by Robbins et al. (2004).

In addition, considering the priorities of corrective feedback, it was revealed that factors

like controlling strategies and staff encouragement towards self-assessment would have crucial impacts on managers' perceptual self-image among employees. Top priorities included 1) presenting controlling strategies at work place, 2) encouraging staff for self-assessment, 3) acting impartially, 4) paying close attention to staff's mistakes in a profound manner, and 5) using a supervisory group in organization. This finding is consistent with that of studies conducted by Wickenberg & Kylen (2004) and Dubrin (2003) who found that aforementioned factors could significantly enhance organizational communications.

Furthermore, taking into account the priorities of critical feedback, it was understood that if managers consider criticism and

encouragement in organization and give feedback fairly, their management perceptual image would be enhanced among employees. Relevant top priorities consisted of 1) paying attention to employees' opinions (critics and admiration) and their affairs, 2) giving fair and impartial feedback, 3) responding to feedback without biased and partiality, and 4) soliciting information without regarding personal interests. This finding is also in line with the findings of researches of Jackson (2007) and Thomaset al. (2007).

Also, examining the priorities of destructive feedback, it was revealed that positive encouragement and using feedback as a guide, not as a negative assessment, could create a good imagery of management for the leader. Top priorities included 1) increasing positive encouragement and non-threatening feedback, 2) employing feedback as a guide, not as a negative assessment, 3) mentioning uncontrollable professional defects, 4) taking notes of the problems to be used in the next opportunities, and 5) focusing on enhancing feedback. This finding is also in line with those of Simmons (2010).

Finally, the examination of priorities of trust building showed that leader's trustworthiness and honesty in performing tasks, his/her understanding organizational affairs and making benefit of opportunities would dramatically improve his/ her management imagery among staff. Top priorities, here, included 1) leader's trustworthiness and honesty in performing tasks, 2) understanding organizational affairs and making benefit of opportunities, 3) taking into account the staff's well-being, 4) encouraging employees to participate in reaching organizational objectives, and 5) meeting employees' emotional and individual needs.

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