



JOURNAL OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

JUNE 2012 VOL. 02 NO. 01

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**COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT IN TASK PERFORMANCE AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN
EDO STATE: TOWARDS NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication is very important for all administrative functions and processes. Hence it is regarded as the key to human relations. Therefore this study was aimed at examining the relationship between communication management and teachers' task performance among secondary school teachers in Edo State. Three (3) research questions and three (3) null hypotheses, which were formulated, guided the investigation. The study employed survey technique based on ex-post-facto design using a population of (5,035) teachers in secondary schools. From each of the three senatorial districts of Edo State, 134 teachers were randomly sampled through the balloting technique yielding a total of 503 teachers representing 10% of the population used for the study. The data collected from the respondents and their cumulative grade point averages were analyzed using Pearson (r) and regression analysis. It was revealed that there was significant relationship between oral, and written communication while symbolic means of communication was regarded as weak; though significant to teachers' task performance in secondary schools. It was therefore, recommended that members of staff should be furnished with adequate information through appropriate means of communication necessary to carry out their task performance.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a phenomenon that tends to be trivialized or taken for granted because everyone communicates in one way or the other all the time, but communication is not just talking or writing or gesticulating, it is much more than that. Interpersonal communication is one of the fundamental underpinnings of the society. Unfortunately, however, just because communication is "easy" to accomplish does not mean that it is done or that the result is an increase in understanding. This paper will therefore shed more light on the concept of communication generally and in administration in particular by examining the central role of communication, the types and strategies for effective communication. It is however, pertinent to have a working definition.

Definition of Communication

It has not been easy to have a universally applicable definition of communication because of the multifaceted nature of the process. Clark (2000), summarized that communication "is the basis of cooperative effort, interpersonal influence, goal determination and the achievement of human and organizational growth". Through communication, behavior is modified, change is affected for production, goals are set, attained, control, modification and feedback ensured and satisfactory outputs achieved. Thus, Ejiogu (1990), asserted that communication is the fundamental process of organizing task performances and leading human resources in a work place. It provides answers to the numerous questions that may be asked to establish policy and to obtain action in an organization.

The Central Role of Communication

The organization of school administration in recent times has been multifaceted functions which include; planning, staffing, organizing, coordinating, controlling, directing, motivation appraising outcomes and making decisions. The person saddled with the actualization of all these functions is called the administrator. The role of effective communication in assisting the administrator to carry out these numerous tasks cannot be over emphasized. These numerous challenges cannot be accomplished without adequate and effective communication system in place since communication permeates every stratum of the organizational structure. Its centrality to the overall job of the administrator is evident when we consider the amount of time spent in communication in organizations.

Task performance is a multi-dimensional construct, which depends on the demand of the job, the goals, the mission of the organization and beliefs in the organization, through this, behaviors are most valued, and judging an employee's overall contributions to the organization better realised. Therefore, decisions about promotions and other rewards may depend on the relative behaviors exhibited by the administrator's (principals) on the subordinates. In other words, the instrument of communication determines and directs the actions of the school authorities. This indicates that all human interactions, mutual understanding and interpersonal relations that exist in any organization do so only through proper communication networks. Task performance is the activity of the worker. It is a human being's act and an essential part of humanity with dynamics and dimensions. Ahuya (1998), asserted that researchers have found out that the great majority of people really want to hear how they are doing on the job. Bion (1990), posited that feedback systems, writing procedures establishing disciplinary routines, specific responsibility developing skills and reward for good attendance will promote effective job performance. Hence, communication is key;

- 1) To foster any attitude which is necessary for motivation, co-operation and job satisfaction.
- 2) To prepare workers for a change in methods or environment by giving them the necessary information in advance.
- 3) To encourage subordinates to supply ideas and suggestions for improving upon the product or work environment and taking these suggestions seriously.
- 4) To encourage social relations among workers by encouraging inter-communication, Chandan (2003).

The channels of communication can be understood simply as the modes or pathways through which two parties might communicate. That is, the network or linkage through which the message travel through from the sender to the receiver. There are numerous channels of communication. The directions of communication include the vertical (downwards and upwards), the lateral or horizontal, the diagonal and the multidirectional and with increased complexity of role or functions of staff, the effectiveness of the communication system in the organization.

Horizontal or Lateral Communication

This refers to flow of information among members at the same hierarchical level in a school e.g. principals of different schools or head of departments. This results in harmonizing all activities on the same level in arriving at an integrated strategic plan of action towards the attainment of set of organizational goals.

Vertical Communication:

- a) **Upward Communication:** This is the flow of information from the subordinates to the supervisor in a school. This helps with feedback, monitor decision-making effectiveness, feel the pulse of organizational climate and necessary for evaluation. Upward communication is difficult to achieve because, it is subject to filtration and distortion by emphasizing positive information and withholding negative data.

- b) Downward communication: This is the flow of information from people at higher levels to those at lower levels in the school hierarchy; in the form of directives for handling tasks, procedure and enterprise practice, feedback about the performance of subordinates, information and relationship of their roles to the general tasks. This direction of communication is usually found in organizations with an authoritarian or dictator atmosphere.
- c) Diagonal communication: This is the flow of information among persons at different levels without direct reporting relationship e.g. different departments. That is, inter-departmental communication between a superior and a subordinate; this will minimize the time lag in securing needed information and action, provided it does not erode the authority of anyone.

Multi-directional Communication Flow

This is a very complex system of information dissemination in an organization as it encompasses the vertical, horizontal and diagonal system. This does not rigidly follow the organizational structure but cuts across the chain of command.

Types of communication: Oral communication takes place in face-to-face conversation; such as speech conferences and seminars, group discussion, telephone calls, lectures and substantial parts of teaching. Oral communication is the speedy interchange with immediate feedback. This is because during oral communication questions can be asked and points can be noted. It also tends to promote mutual understanding between the superior and their subordinates if properly used under democratic atmosphere. Oral communication is sometimes expensive, especially when it involves people traveling from far distant places to attend meetings, Odor (1999). The major drawbacks include inaccuracies that may come up with its use and the fact that it leaves no permanent record. Noise may disrupt the process and wrong words may be chosen and details may be left out. Written communication consists of reports, notices, house journals, bulletins, policies and procedure manuals, condition of services, organizational structure, agenda, handbooks charts, letters, minutes, memoranda, statistical data and suggestion schemes. Written communication tends to be more accurate and provides records of communication. However, this model of communication inhibits feedback and inter-change. (Blair 2003), believes that communication seems to be more difficult and time consuming while attempting to ensure accuracy of words and contents. It must be noted that the situation determines the kind of communication to choose, for instance, oral communication is seen to be better when it involves a message that is personal, brief and non-routine but when the message is impersonal, more routine and long, the written kind of communication should be adopted.

Non-Verbal Communication: This is a kind of exchange which does not involve the use of words or that uses words that carry more meaning than the real or exact definition of the words themselves. It often relies on facial expression, body movements, physical contact, gestures, inflection and tone. Although this is little understood and not frequently used in organizations; Hoy & Miskel (1991), believe that it is a powerful form of communication.

To this end, it is critical to examine teachers' task performances in secondary schools in Edo State in relation to communication management by eliminating general dissatisfaction amongst workers (teachers) such as untimely information display, inadequacies of information, and blockades in the flow of communication resulting in delayed actions. This paper therefore, seeks to address the following variables which include:

Principals' oral and written communication management and communication by symbols.

Research Question

1. Will principals' oral communication management have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State secondary schools?

2. Will principals' written communication management have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State secondary schools?
3. Will principals' communication management by symbols have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State secondary schools?

Hypotheses

- 1) Principals' oral communication management will not have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State secondary schools.
- 2) Principals' written communication management will not have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State secondary schools.
- 3) Principal's communication management by symbols will not have significant influence on teachers' task performances in Edo State Secondary Schools.

METHODS

Research Design

The descriptive survey design, which involved questionnaire was used in the study. This design was chosen because it provides appropriate methodology for perception and opinion.

Population

The population consists of the (5,035) principals in Edo State secondary schools

Sampling and Sampling Technique

The public secondary schools in Edo State were clustered and stratified into three senatorial districts-Edo south, Edo central and Edo north. In each senatorial district, twenty (20%) percent of the public schools was randomly drawn; while ten (10%) of the teachers in each sampled school was randomly selected to serve as the teacher sample. This method was used because it gives an equal chance to every member of the population to be selected for the study.

Instrumentation

A twelve-item questionnaire titled "Communication Management and Teachers' Task Performances (CMTTP) Questionnaire was used to measure teachers' task performances in relation to principals' effective communication. The instrument went through all the pre-test required and was found to have reasonable face and content validity. Reliability co-efficient was computed to be 0.78 using the split-half statistics. The index of 0.78 was arrived at, after it was correlated by the use of Spearman Brown Prophecency Formula.

Administration of the Instrument

The administration of the instrument was made possible by the help of research assistants.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using both the multiple simple and linear regression analysis to predict and account for contribution of the variations in teachers' task performance (dependent variable) by the independent variables of oral, written and communication by symbols. The three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

CORRELATION MATRIX

Inter Correlation Matrixes of Communication Management and Teachers' Task Performance in Secondary Schools

Independent variable	Oral	Written	Horizontal	Vertical	Diagonal	Symbolic	Electronic	Task Performance
Oral Com	1	-.079 ^{**}	.281 ^{**}	.068 ^{**}	.071 ^{**}	.251 ^{**}	-.090 ^{**}	-.070
Written		1	.281 ^{**}	.144 ^{**}	-.097 ^{**}	-.005	.96 ^{**}	-.93 ^{**}
Symbolic						1	.103 ^{**}	-.023
Teachers task performance								1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 levels (2. tailed)

Table 1.0 shows the correlation matrix of all the independent, moderator and dependent variables in the study. As shown in table 1.0, there is significant positive relationship between communication management and teachers' task performance in secondary schools oral ($r=.281$, $p<0.5$). There is also a positive correlation between written communication management and teachers' performance ($r=.144$, $p<.05$). Furthermore, there is a significant correlation between principals' communication management by symbols and teachers task performance. ($r =.222$, $p<.05$).

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between principals' oral communication management and task performance in secondary schools. In testing hypothesis 1 the multiple correlation and regression analysis was computed using, oral, and written communication by means of symbols. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 1.1

Table 1.1
Relation between Communication Management and Task Performance

Model	R	R ²	R ^{2adj}	Std error of the estimate	
1	.176g	.031	.023	.92141	
ANOVA^B					
Model	Ss	Df	Ms	F	Sig
Regression	23.336	7	3.334	3.927	.013g
Residual	728.483	858	849		P<.0.5
Total	751.774	865			

- Predictors (communication management) oral, written, symbols.
- Dependent variable: Teachers task performance * Significant $p<.05$.

The analysis in table 1.1 showed that $f(3.927) = 0.13p<0.5$. This indicated that there was a significant relationship among (oral, written communication, communication by symbols and teachers' task performance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis was upheld.

The adjusted R² value of .031 showed that 3.1% of the variance in task performance of teachers' accounted for the collective compact of all the variables of oral, written and communication by means of symbols. Furthermore, in other to determine the variables in the equation, the null hypothesis, that the regression coefficient B=0 was tested using the small t-test. As shown in table 4.2, the (b-regression

coefficient) of oral was found to be significant, $B=109$, $t=2.165$, $p<.05$). The second variable had a significant contribution. In principals' written communication (regression coefficient) $B=6.637$, $t=1.963$, $P<.05$.

Apparently, oral communication contributed more to the variance. This was followed by the written communication in secondary schools. However, in order to accept the accuracy of the relative contribution of each of the variables in the equation, the issue of multicollinearity was examined. The test was performed using the SPSS version 12 collinearity diagnosis. The outcome is presented in table 1.2.

Table 1.2

Model	Correlation coefficient			Colinearity Statistics	
	Zero order	Partial	Partial	Tolerance	Significance
Comm.. management					
Oral com..	-.070	-.73	-.073	.863	1.199
Written	.093	.066	.066	.937	1.067
Symbols	-.23	-.044	-.43	.858	1.166

In table 1.2 the, zero order coefficient indicated the bivariate correlation of oral, and written communication by means of symbols with task performance. Also the column showing the part of correlation coefficient indicated the strength of the relationship between task performance (dependent variable) and each of the independent variables when the impact of other independent variables were controlled for or removed from the regression model. The tolerance co-efficients are very high ranging from .863, .937, .871. Since these values are not close to zero that is they are below, it means that there is no multi-collinearity problem among the independent variables. This also has co-efficients that are in the cutoff threshold of .10 (America Education Research Association 2004). The conclusion can be drawn that since all the independent variables passed the multi-collinearity diagnostic test, the beta values can be accepted as constituting the unique contributions of each variable to the dependent variable of task performance.

Hypothesis 2

This states that there is no significant relationship between principals' written communication management and teacher's task performance in secondary schools. In order to test hypothesis 2, the data gathered were used to compute the multiple correlation regression analysis using written communication and communication by means of symbols. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 2.0.

Table 2.0

Relation Between Communication Management and Task Performance

Model	R	R ²	R ^{2adj}	Std error of the estimate	
1	.155f	.024	.017	.9247	
ANOVA^B					
Model	Ss	Df	Ms	F	Sig.
Regression	18.116	6	3.019	3.535	.002 ^f
Residual	733.657	859	.854		P<.0.5
Total	751.774	865			Accept

Variable in the equation					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Significance
	B	SEB	BETA		
Comm. Man	2.575	-.261		9.867	.000
Written	-.121	.050	-.087	-2.408	.016
Horizontal	7.461	.034	.077	2.210	.027

a. Predicators (Communication management) Oral, written and Symbols.
 Dependent variable: Teachers task performance significant $p < .05$

Table 2.1

Dependent variable: Task Performance

The analysis presented in table 2.1 asserts there was a significant relationship between principals' written communication management and teachers' task performance. The null hypothesis was then rejected and the alternative hypothesis was upheld. However, it was observed that the R^2 adjusted value moved from 3.1% to 1.7% amount of variable in the task performance. Dependent variable accounted for the collective impact of all other independent variable. It means that principals' written communication management alone accounted for 1.4% amount of variance in task performance of secondary school teachers.

However, in order to determine the relative importance of each of the independent variable in the equation, the null hypothesis showed that the regression coefficient $B=0$ was tested using t -test. As shown in the data analyzed in hypothesis 2, the regression coefficient of written means of communication was found to be important $=3.836$, $t=-.996$, $p < .05$. Therefore, the standardized coefficient, beta of $-.036$ in table 2.1 showed that the influence of principals' written communication stood out in the model, the beta value for the influence was enhanced when other variables were held constant.

Hypothesis 3

The hypothesis states that, there is no relationship between principals' communication management by means of symbols and teachers' task performance in secondary schools. In testing hypothesis 3, the multiple correlation and regression analysis was computed using symbolic means of communication variable from the regression model. The results of the data analysis are presented in table 3.0.

Model	R	R^2	R^{2adj}	Std error of the estimate
1	.112b	.013	.010	.92745

Model	Correlation coefficient			Colinearity Statistics	
	Zero order	Partial	Partial	Tolerance	Significance
Comm. management					
Written	.070	.082	.081	.871	1.148
Symbols	.038	.044	.043	.925	1.081

ANOVA ^B					
Model	Ss	Df	Ms	F	Sig.
Regression	9.452	2	4.726	5.494	.0046.05
Residual	742.322	863	.860		$P < .0.5$
Total	751.774	865			

Variable in the Equation					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Significance
	B	SEB	BETA		
Comm. Man	3.416	.175		9.827	.000
Symbols	-8.869	.047	-.064	-1873	.061

a. Predictors (Communication management) oral, written, Symbols.
 Dependent variable: Teachers task performance significant $p < .05$

Table 3.1
 Dependent variable: Task performance

Model	Correlation coefficient			Colinearity Statistics	
	Zero order	Partial	Partial	Tolerance	Significance
Comm.. management					
Symbols	-.070	-.064	-.063	.994	1.006

The multiple correlation in table 3.1 showed that $112r^2$ is 0.13, which was found to have significant relationship between principals' communication management by symbols and teachers' task performance. The R^2 adjusted value of .010. was obtained. After the elimination some communication variables indicated 1.7% amount of variance in task performance. In determining the relative importance of each of the independent variable in the equation, the null hypothesis that the regression co-efficient $B=0$ was tested with t-test.

In this study, $B = .8526$, $t = 2579$, $p < .05$. The standard co-efficient, beta value of .074 in table 3.1. indicated the significant influences of horizontal communication; when all other variables were held constant in the regression model.

FINDINGS

- i) There was a positive relationship between principals' oral and written communication management and teachers' task performance.
 - ii) There was a positive significant but weak relationship between principals' communication by means of symbols and task performance.
1. Most Administrators recognize the usefulness of the different flows of communication and know the best to commonly use. Therefore, the overall communication needs to be improved upon through the formal channels in the secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

From the findings, it was revealed that communication management in the form of oral, written and communication by means of symbols is significantly related to teachers' task performances in terms of administrative communication to their subordinates for effective task performance. This ranks in the following order of superiority (oral) communication, regarded as best, followed by written and communication by means of symbols. Therefore, it is clear that communication is that which unifies all

activities aimed at attaining set goals. The results of the study confirm what Ejiogu (1990) said, that communication is the fundamental process of organizing task performances and leading human resource in a work place; and Chandan's (2003) contention that the problems encountered by most principals emanate from improper communication or lack of communication, which sometimes degenerate into staff attrition, general laxity, lack of co-operation among staff and even indiscipline in the school system. Therefore, the present study is seen to be justified by the submission of Clark (2000), that communication is the basis of co-operative effort, interpersonal influence, goal determination, and the achievement of human and organizational growth.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study revealed that the hypothesis relating to oral, written and communication by symbols were statistically significant, depicting the influence of these three variables. It is therefore concluded that as much as communication is regarded as important in the administrator's articulation of goals and objectives, as well as its effective realization, there is need to minimize some of the barriers to effective communication. Based on this, some recommendations were made:

- i) Principals should endeavor to adopt more than the predominant styles (such as electronic means of communication) or communication revealed by the study with a view to increasing their level of efficiency and effectiveness..
- ii) Principals should ensure that the right information needed at the right time and in the right form, that would be useful to the users is adequately communicated.

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