

**Influence of Principals' Communication Strategies on Teachers
Productivity in Asa Local Government Area
Secondary Schools, Kwara State**

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Abstract

The study was conducted to find out the influence of principals' communication strategies on teachers' productivity in selected secondary schools in Asa Local Government Area of Kwara State. Two instruments were designed for this study both for principals and students i.e. two hundred (200) randomly selected students and ten (10) principals as sample. Two (2) hypotheses were formulated while a self-designed questionnaire was administered to the stakeholders. The statistical methods used for data analysis and testing were frequency counts, percentage and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. From the hypotheses testing, it was found out that communication strategies of school principals significantly influence teachers' productivity. It was thus recommended, among others, that principals should make information available in the school at all times.

Keywords: *Principal, teachers, productivity, secondary schools, communication, strategies, language.*

Introduction

Communication touches every sphere of human activity. It involves all man's actions because it is occasioned by his need to interact with fellow-man. Animals and trees also communicate, but it is man's ability to create symbols, ascribe meaning and interpret messages that elevates him above the status of the lower animals and gives form and character to his existence. Communication is not restricted to human beings alone, insects, as well, do interact with one another, but do not have any planned or structured language. Non-living things do communicate through echoing, while plants communicate merely by responding to stimuli. The only distinct parameter from which human beings are seen differently from other communicative things is by the use of language. Therefore, all human institutions can hardly survive without interaction among the basic elements which are both human and material resources. As resources paramount to human existence are not evenly distributed, institutions have to depend on one another. This makes communication both within and outside the organization imperative.

Communication may be seen in different perspectives; but central to its definition is that it involves the process of transmitting ideas, thoughts, values, instructions, etc. for the purpose of creating mutual understanding and expected behaviour between the sender and the receiver. Communication is an indispensable management tool. Any means that an individual uses to transfer meaning, idea, feeling, emotion or attitude to others is communication. There are speechless messages that are transported by facial expressions, by the use of the eye, body movement, gesticulation of the hands, shaking the head in approval or disapproval, smiling or frowning. These are sometimes accurate ways of expressing oneself than the conventional oral or written manner. Since people make up an organization, communication then becomes a vehicle that creates mutual understanding cohesion that keeps the organization going.

Generally, it is in the view of the foregoing that Ayinde (2000) defines communication as: "the transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by both receiver and sender." Also, communication is not just the given of information, it is

the giving of understandable information and receiving and understanding the message. Umaru (2005) views communication as the transferring of a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon.

Communication has been described as one of the most vital aspects of management. Lawal (2010) describes communication as a “central element in all aspects of humans living. Through the use of communication, institutions and people of all races, religious beliefs and geographical locations have been able to build up social groupings and different types of organizations. It is man’s ability to communicate that has actually made it possible for him to transmit cultures, cultural values, standards and beliefs from one generation to the other. By so doing, man has been able to establish viable patterns of survival and pleasant living conditions. Communication thus occupies a very special position, this position is further enhanced in the school system - the central place where the body of knowledge about cultures and cross-cultural values are being transmitted and perpetuated.

Communication is used in the school system as the means for the dissemination of orders, ideas, instructions, directions, etc. It is also the process through which ideas can be received for valuable decisions, special reports are made, questions are asked and responses are given. Communication enables school principals to mobilize the teaching personnel towards the achievement of the laid-down institutional objectives. Aliyu (2009) also states that the influence of an executive in an organization is partly as a matter of his position in the hierarchy and partly as result of a complete and sensitized communications system. Therefore, effective communication has contributed tremendously to creating and sustenance of organizations and other social groups.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine principals’ language of communication and teachers’ productivity in Asa Local Government Secondary Schools in Kwara State.
- ii. To find out the mode of principals communication and teachers productivity in Asa Local Government Secondary Schools in Kwara State.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' language of communication and teachers' productivity.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' modes of communication and teachers' productivity.

Research Method

The method of research adopted in this study is purely descriptive survey. According to Olokoba (2014) a descriptive survey method is one of the frequently used designs within the empirical research methodology model.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were designed for the study. "Teachers Productivity Description Questionnaire (TPDQ) was meant for students' responses while the second instrument tagged "Communication Strategy Description Questionnaire (CSDQ) was constructed using likert's rating scale for the teachers to elicit relevant information.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The content validity was established by experts in the field by obtaining experts agreement on the fact of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was also established in order to obtain the correct relationship between the variable.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The principals of the sampled schools were contacted for permission to distribute CSDQ to teachers. The researchers randomly selected respondents for the TPDQ in the same selected schools. The data were collated, tabulated and analysis based on frequency, percentage and Pearson, Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Results and Discussion

This section focuses attention on the detailed analysis of the results collected in the survey in respect of principals' communication strategies and teachers' productivity in Asa Local Government Secondary Schools of Kwara State.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' language of communication and teachers' productivity in Asa Local Government Secondary Schools of Kwara State.

Table I: Analysis of Relationship between Principals' Language of Communication and Teachers' Productivity

Variables	No. Cases	Mean ÷	Sd	DF	Calculated t-value	Critical value
Communication Strategy	200	118.9000	2.8373	198	0.955	.195
Teachers Productivity	200	116.5600	8.3736			
P<0.05 level						

From the above, the calculated table value is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance 0.955 and .195 respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows there is significant relationship between principal's language of communication and teachers' productivity. This finding corresponds with an observation made by Umoru (2005) that the quality of output is determined by the ability of communicate effectively. The role of communication is in the process of making concrete ideas that was hitherto very clear. One very important ingredient for good communication is the use of language. Principals should always strive to communicate with their teachers and non-teaching personnel, in a very clear language; they should avoid the use of threats all the times.

Similarly Abubakar (2007), quoting Isa (2000), asserts that one of the techniques of overcoming communication barriers and ensuring effective communication is through the use of direct and simple language. The teachers' responses indicated effectiveness in the language used by their principal's for communicating ideas.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' modes of communication and teachers' productivity in Asa Local Government Secondary Schools of Kwara State.

Table 2: Analysis of Relationship between Principals' Modes of Communication and Teachers' Productivity

Variables	No. Cases	Mean ÷	Sd	DF	Calculated t-value	Critical value
Communication Strategy	200	17.3900	2.2322	198	0.976	.195
Teachers Productivity	200	116.560	8.3736			
P<0.05 level						

From the above results, the calculated t-value is greater than the critical value 0.976 and .195 respectively, at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses is rejected which means there is significant relationship between the principal's mode of communication and teachers productivity.

The result of the finding corresponds with an observation made by Idiagbon (2011) that principals should use the forum of full staff meetings to formalize programmes and procedures when important messages have to be sent. The principal has to use legal media such as written memoranda which should be circulated or placed on notice boards where everybody can see them and be informed. The mode of communication is very crucial to the productivity or otherwise of the whole system. The appropriate mode has to be utilized. The result of the finding indicated both channels (verbal and non-verbal) were used by school administrators in communicating ideas to their staff. Also, both the formal and informal patterns of transmitting idea were employed. Therefore, both channels have significant roles to play in communication effectiveness. From the above, it is clear that principals should use any of the modes of transmission when the need arises; in the same vein, the principal should be flexible in the use of communication strategies. Similarly, Okon (2012), quoting Barnard (1984), is of the opinion that team briefing should be encouraged rather than having person-to-person

communication as this would limit the knowledge of the principals concerning other people's view. Therefore, it is very necessary to consider the appropriateness of the mode employed – oral communication may be proper to use in some situations but they could result in crisis if other channels are not employed as supplements and complements.

Conclusion

In conclusion from the above study, it is pertinent to say from the findings that the communication strategies of principals have a direct link with the productivity of the teachers. This is a known fact considering the fact that members of the school community have a link with one another to attain the stipulated goals and objectives of teaching and learning process.

Hence, a successful principal should make sure that the members of staff, students and non-teaching staff should be well informed about the policies, plans, programmes and problems of their schools; and the latter in response are free to make suggestions for possible solutions. The principals must be able to get information to all members of staff, students and non-teaching staff in ways that such can be well received and understood. They must sure that the language, direction, mode, time and feedback on communication are taken into consideration in order to achieve productivity of the adopted communication strategy.

Recommendations

Consequent upon the investigation and the results of the research findings above, the researchers hereby make the following recommendations:

- i. School principals should always strive to communicate with their teachers, students and non-teaching personnel, in clear, simple and understandable language or mode.
- ii. The principals should give room for adequate consultations in order to achieve cordial relationships among their workers.
- iii. They should also close the wide gap between them and their teachers in decision making.

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