Principals' Communication Strategies and Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

Ikeme, Juliet Onyekachi

and

Asouzu, Blessing Gilbert

Abstract

This study investigated principals' communication strategies and administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted correlational design. The population of the study was 6,452 teachers in 289 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Sample of 400 teachers were determined using simple random sampling technique. Principals' Communication Strategies Questionnaire and Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire were used for data collection. The internal consistency of the instrument was established through Cronbach method. The reliability coefficients showed a scale of 0.79 for Principals' Communication Strategies. Out of 400 copies of instrument administered, 365 were retrieved representing 91.4% success rate. The research questions were answered using simple regression analysis while hypotheses were tested using the t – test associated with simple regression at 0.05 alpha level. The findings among others revealed that principals' use of telex predicted administration by 12.4% while hypothesis showed that principals' use of telex significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It was concluded that principals' communication strategies such as use of telex, e-mail, and electro-conferencing have a low prediction on administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that School management should encourage the use of telex to ensure effective administration in schools.

Keywords: Communication, administration, electro-conferencing.

Introduction

Teachers believed that instructional communication not only occur, but also argue that effective communication is critical to successful teaching and learning in all contexts. Teachers assert that many communication initiatives, interventions, and campaigns are destined to fail when the messages do not instruct receivers about how and why to act on the information. Agi (2019) believed that communication in education was originally conceived as a means to distinguish it from general communication, which was broadly defined as instructional communication (how to teach interpersonal communication, group communication, public communication and knowledge instruction). Instructional communication, on the other hand, referred to the role of communication in instruction. Richmond and Frymier, (2015) believed that conceptualizing instructional communication in this broader context would encourage wealth of instructional research occurring in a variety of communication contexts (education, interpersonal, family, organizational, political) and administration of secondary schools.

Boran and Ziarat (2021) defined administration of public secondary schools as all planned and systematic' actions deemed as necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will fulfil specified requirements for quality. Communication is all encompassing or systematic in that it is a system that covers the two major areas of school activities which are administration and academic issues. In other words, communication is a necessary action to secure confidence that both the administrative and academic related services in our secondary schools will fulfil specified requirements for administration of public secondary schools as a set of activities whose purpose is to demonstrate that all meet the quality requirements (Ololube, 2017). Secondary schools are academic entities where all quality requirements are expected to be met. Adebanjo (2016) added that administration of public secondary schools can be achieved through standard act of processes such as communication strategies.

Principal communication strategies are variety of behaviours, processes and Technologies adopted by which school information is transmitted or derived to the recipients (Teachers, Students and school community). The team "Principal communication strategies" are used to describe diverse ways and activities which principals could use to pass information in the school system. Communication is at the core of our humanness. How principals communicate with teachers shapes lives, educational institutions and our world. School principals rely on their communicative skills as they confront events that challenge their flexibility, integrity, expressiveness, and critical thinking skills. Communication involves different forms which includes the intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, public, mass communication and so on, all these are different ways/means through which principals interact, associate, communicate, relate, share ideas, views, opinion, information, norms and values in the process of administration of secondary schools. Communication is regarded as the life blood of educational existence which rapidly enhances unity that leads to educational goals attainment and the development of our society at large.

Principals' communication strategies both modern and traditional means have promoted peaceful co-existence, understanding and self-awareness among members of school community. Both modern and traditional means of communication have certain common elements that together help define the communication process. In educational communication, there must be individuals who are involved in the dissemination of the message and at the same time receiving the message in order to make it lively and effective. In educational communication, things are done simultaneously (sending and receiving) if teachers were just receivers, they would be no more than receptacles for signals from others, never having an opportunity to let anyone know how they are affected, if principals were just senders, they would simply emit signals without ever stopping to consider whom, if anyone is being affected. But, if principals are able to achieve the goals of secondary education, it simply signifies that there is an effective communication between the sender and the receiver, which means both parties, understood the message (Bayo, 2017).

Electronic device like Smartphone is used to send instant messaging to school community members for the purpose of goal achievement. It also stores messages online. On most communication websites or applications, chatting records can only be stored for several months, even the longest one lasts no more than two years. Just as the conventional telephone carries voice, a fax or facsimile machine carries printed messages (words and pictures in photocopy form) from the sender instrument to the

receiver instrument. The sender of a fax message prepares the copy on a sheet (generally no larger than A4 size) which can be fed into the fax machine. Internet is an international computer network that links computers from sectors such as government agencies, business houses, educational institutions and individuals. It receives information, stores it and allows it to be read on satisfying certain conditions. Electro conferencing involves the use of teleconferencing, computer conferencing and video conferencing in passing information to members of the school community.

Statement of the Problem

Some principals communicate with their teachers as if they are slaves and not colleagues. Some order teachers about, shout at them, criticize them before the students. During supervision, many principals criticize and condemn teachers even before students. Most times, the students don't even know the school rules and regulations and most times fall into disciplinary problems. It has been observed that some principals hoard vital educational information from teachers and use unclear statements in delegating duties. Consequently, some teachers speak ill of their principals, some prefer gathering what some writers call "painted information" from typists and messengers. It is not rare to see teachers using rude words in response to principals' directives. These problems have a negative impact on school administration. Poor communication processes have been linked to poor administrative processes in terms of accomplishing school goals and objectives. Therefore, this study investigated the extent principals' communication strategies predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study investigated principals' communication strategies and administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives sought to:
1. examine the extent principals' use of telex predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. investigate the extent principals' use of e-mail predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. examine the extent principals' use of electro-conferencing predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:
1. To what extent does principals' use of telex predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does principals' use of e-mail predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does principals' use of electro-conferencing predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study:

1. Principals' use of telex does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Principals' use of e-mail does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Principals' use of electro-conferencing does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Concept of Communication

Communication is an essential part of the education process and is very vital in the classroom management. It can be defined as the process of transmitting knowledge, ideas, information and beliefs from one person to another. It refers to the transfer of information from one person to another or amongst people. No society or even the smallest unit being the family can exist without communication. Communication is the key that drives the wheel of school activities all over the world. In every school, communicating to people (teachers and students) about a particular idea or good is very vital because without information, no administrator can succeed and make progress without communication. Communication is virtually cut across every sphere of life, people pass information and communicate. Communication is important because it helps strengthen relationships and bond customers.

Kochkin (2015) noted untreated hearing loss has been correlated with irritability, negativism, anger, fatigue, tension, stress and depression, avoidance or withdrawal from social situations, social rejection and loneliness, reduced alertness and increased risk to personal safety, impaired memory and impaired ability to learn new tasks, reduced job performance and earning power, and diminished psychological and overall health. Although the communication system is negatively impacted through hearing loss, it may well be the loss of connectivity that is the root cause of these emotional issues. Additionally, it can be argued the reason we communicate is essentially to connect with other people. As such, when connectivity is absent or diminished, the emotional essence of relationships suffers. Traditional connectivity might be thought of as the personal manifestation of communication. As such, communication and connectivity problems usually occur within the same person because communication problems often cause connectivity problems.

Administration of Public Secondary Schools

Information, transformation, excellence, efficiency, effectiveness and increased productivity are all essential and indispensable elements of administration of public secondary schools. Basically, humans as rational beings have strong penchant for quality things. That is why, as a matter of rational action, quality-oriented mechanism have been extended to education system in Nigeria. What then is administration of public secondary schools? Hornby (2015) defined administration of public secondary schools as the practice of managing the way goods are produced or services are provided to make sure they are kept at a high standard. Bringing this definition within the context of this study, administration of public secondary schools is a driven practice geared towards handling

school administration and academic oriented services to ensure that such services are of high standard. Adebanjo (2016) defined administration of public secondary schools as a way of measuring, improving and maintaining the quality of human activity that has value, the activity as Adebanjo suggested that it may be academic, administrative, business, evaluative, decision making in nature. Agunbiade, (2016) viewed administration of public secondary schools as means of ensuring that the best practices are encouraged in a social system. Secondary schools are the integral part of the social system for meeting educational needs of our society with a view of providing manpower resources with best practice to guarantee effective administration. Communication is administrative centered mechanism that will enable the people in the school community to operate in a qualitative efficient manner and render services as well as producing high standard products capable of ensuring that required continuous positive change and innovation of our society. Fasasi, (2016) generally perceived administration of public secondary schools as the consistent provision and utilization of good and high standard resources to foster effective teaching and learning, administration, researches and training in secondary educational setting. Ajayi and Adeghesan, (2017) argued that administration is related to accountability of which is concerned with maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency if educational system and services in relation to their context, their missions and their stated objectives. What Ajayi and Adegbesan seem to be suggesting is that, administration of public secondary schools is associated with accountability. This is because secondary educational system can only be viewed by the people in society as being accountable where it promotes the effectiveness and efficiency of its products (graduates) and services that at large form its main focus, missions and objectives. Communication accounts for accuracy, flexibility resource waste reduction, speed, time and energy saving and so on (Wysocki & Young, 2015) and all the attributes of the system accountability (Joseph, 2021).

Telex Communication
Smartphone
According to Ekhagure (2016) said that electronic device like Smartphone is used to send instant messaging to school community members for the purpose of goal achievement. It also stores messages online. This means, two years later, no one would be able to find the records, while paper-based records can exist for how long you want. So, when it comes to some important communication, it would be better to use traditional channels, so that the record can be preserved for a longer time. Another reason is that hard copy documents are easy to access and to handle, which means it 'can help businesses maximize their communication effectiveness (Levitin & Brain, 2018). You can spread all the files in use on the desk to refer to at the same time, but it cannot be done on any electronic device.

The technological advances of the past few decades have made it possible to transmit printed messages, pictures and even live performances to all comers of the world with speed. With a single touch, you can send communications to a number of destinations. Not only large business houses but even medium and small ones use them in their day-to-day working. Among such means are fax, internet/email and videoconferencing (Chory & Horan, 2018).

Fax

A fax or facsimile machine carries printed messages (words and pictures in photocopy form) from the sender instrument to the receiver instrument. One dials the destination number, gets the fax tone and feeds the message into the machine. The printed message is converted into electronic signals as the paper rolls through the fax machine. This message is received in the same form at the other end on the paper roll that is attached to the machine.

E-mail

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) allow one to create the email identification (ID) free, hoping to recover the cost through the advertisement to which the user is exposed during the use of email. A typical email address reads abcdef@xyz.com. Some other ISPs are yahoo, hotmail, and Gmail (Lamote, 2016). Every time the user wants to send messages or check the incoming mail, he can reach his ID by typing a password which makes the mail account private. However, once you have submitted to the mechanism of email you do not know who might read this "private" information far away. As such email does not guarantee 100% secrecy.

Electro-conferencing

In the view of Lindley (2016), electro-conferencing are teleconferencing, computer teleconferencing and Videoconferencing. This mode of communication begins in teleconferencing. A number of telephones are simultaneously connected to one another. Teleconferencing is a facility enabling people in different parts of the world to have an audio meeting (as opposed to dialogue), saving on transit time and hotel stay. It helps in thrashing out a variety of opinions on a subject to reach a faster conclusion. A further advance in this technology is computer teleconferencing. The participants can react to the messages and inputs for the others' knowledge. They may not even be present simultaneously for the computer teleconference but add their contribution at their convenience (Lamote, 2016).

Videoconferencing, however, is the closest it gets to seeing and hearing one another without being present together. The technologies used in a videoconference are: monitor screen, camera, microphone, codec (compressor-decompress or), equipment control pad at each location, and internet connectivity. With the passage of time, this is becoming more popular and easier to use. You often see it in TV interviews. You often see it in TV interviews. For a videoconference, the participants get into a special room at their respective locations, equipped with the gadgetry. They can see, hear, speak to others and show exhibits without physical presence together.

The entire proceedings can be recorded on video tapes. As someone has jocularly put it, except for the snacks and coffee, everything else is transmissible in a videoconference. At present, the privilege of the richer business houses, videoconferences are set to gain wider popularity (Multon, 2018). Video classrooms are another possibility in this field, where an expert faculty member may teach a number of classes in a number of towns simultaneously and answer the participants' queries.

Methodology

The design of the study was a correlational design. The population of the study was 6,452 teachers in 289 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Sample of 400 teachers were determined through simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection were questionnaire

titled; Principals' Communication Strategies Questionnaire (PCSQ) and Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (ASSQ). The instrument adopted a four point Likert Scale of Very High Extent (VHE) =4points, High Extent (HE) =3points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE).= 1 point respectively. The internal consistency of the instrument was established through Cronbach method. The reliability coefficients showed a scale of 0.79 for Principals' Communication Strategies and 0.80 for Administration of Secondary Schools. The sub scales are Principals' use of telex is 0.74, Principals' use of e-mail is 0.83, Principals' use of electro-conferencing is 0.81 respectively. In all, 400 copies of instrument were administered while 365 were retrieved representing 91.4% success rate. The research questions were answered using simple regression analysis while hypotheses were tested using the t – test associated with simple regression at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does principals' use of telex predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Simple regression on the extent principals' use of telex predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.352[a]	.124	.051

Table 1 revealed that the regression and regression square coefficients are .352 and .124. The extent of prediction is obtained from coefficient of determinism. The coefficient of determinism is 12.4% (.124×100). This showed that principals' use of telex predicted administration by 12.4% in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State while 87.6% was accounted by other variable.

Research Question 2: To what extent does principals' use of e-mail predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Simple regression on the extent principals' use of e-mail predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.411[a]	.168	.040

Table 2 revealed that the regression and regression square coefficients are .411 and .168. The extent of prediction is obtained from coefficient of determinism. The coefficient of determinism is 16.8% (.168×100). This showed that principals' use of e-mail predicted administration by 16.8% in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State while 83.2% was accounted by other variable.

Research Question 3: To what extent does principals' use of electro-conferencing predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 3: Simple regression on the extent principals' use of electro-conferencing predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.222[a]	.049	.271

Table 3 revealed that the regression and regression square coefficients are .222 and .049. The extent of prediction is obtained from coefficient of determinism. The coefficient of determinism is 4.9% (.049×100). This showed that principals' use of electro-conferencing predicted administration by 4.9% in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State while 95.1% was accounted by other variable.

Hypothesis 1: Principals' use of telex does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-test associated with Simple regression on the extent principals' use of telex predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value	Decision
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	28.520	2.080		13.709	.000	Hypothesis rejected
	Principals' use of telex	.227	.056	.352	4.055	.000	

Table 4 showed that principals' use of telex has t-test value of 4.055 with probability value (p-value) of 0.00. The result revealed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. By implication, principals' use of telex significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: Principals' use of e-mail does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-test associated with Simple regression on the extent principals' use of e-mail predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value	Decision
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	42.450	1.529		27.756	.000	Hypothesis rejected
	Principals' use of e-mail	.151	.042	.411	3.603	.000	

Table 5 showed that principals' use of telex has t-test value of 3.603 with probability value (p-value) of 0.00. The result revealed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. By implication, principals' use of e-mail significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: Principals' use of electro-conferencing does not significantly predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: t-test associated with Simple regression on the extent principals' use of electro-conferencing predict administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	P-value.	Decision
1	(Constant)	17.583	1.859		9.458	.000	Hypothesis rejected
	principals' use of electro-conferencing	.524	.050	.222	10.426	.000	

Table 6 showed that principals' use of telex has t-test value of 10.426 with probability value (p-value) of 0.00. The result revealed that the p-value of 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. By implication, principals' use of electro-conferencing significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study are summarized as shown below:

1. Principals' use of telex predicted administration by 12.4% while hypothesis showed that principals' use of telex significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State
2. Principals' use of e-mail predicted administration by 16.8% while hypothesis showed that principals' use of e-mail significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State
3. Principals' use of electro-conferencing predicted administration by 4.9% while hypothesis showed that principals' use of electro-conferencing significantly predicted administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Conclusion

Based on the research finding, it was concluded that principals' communication strategies such as principals' use of telex, principals' use of e-mail, and principals' use of electro-conferencing have a prediction on administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. School management should encourage the use of telex to ensure effective administration in schools.
3. Principals should use e-mail to send messages to all newly employed teachers to prepare them for digital world.
4. Principals' should desire to use electro-conferencing to enhance administration of secondary schools.

References

Adebanjo, E. L. (2016). *Quality assurance and the implication for management of University in Nigeria.* A paper presented at the national Workshop organized by the Committee of University Librarians of Nigerian held at the, NUC

Agi, U. K. (2019). Teacher education and its relevance to 21ˢᵗ century secondary school education in Nigeria: The perspective of an educational Administrator. *European Scientific Journal ESJ, 15(1),242-260.*

Agunbiade, S. (2016). *Public sector economics*. Lasmer Press.

Ajayi, B. & Adeghesan, N. (2017). *Bridging the gap between planning and implementation. Turning transformative visions into strategic projects.* Taylor & Francis Press.

Bayo, O. (2017). ICT in schools effect of government initiatives. *www.dera.coe.ac.uk/10148.*

Boran, T. & Ziarat, E. (2021). Challenges of information and communication technology (ICT) education in Nigerian public secondary schools. *Education Research Journal,* 2(12),388-391.

Chory, R. M., & Horan, S. M. (2018). Negotiating power and influence in the classroom. In M. L. Houser & A. M. Hosek (Eds.), *Handbook of instructional communication: Rhetorical and relational perspectives* (pp. 112–125). Routledge press.

Ekhaguere, G. O. S. (2016). *Strengthening the internal quality assurance mechanisms in Nigeria Universities*: A paper presented at the Workshop of Capacity Building for knowledge-down Growth for Nigerian Universities, held at OOU, Ago-Iwoye.

Fasasi, K. (2016). *Modern office technologies in private sector*. *www.academic journals.org*

Hornby, A. S. (2015). *Oxford advanced learners dictionary of current English.* Oxford University Press.

Joseph, R. (2021). Services delivery through information systems in Salaam and Mwanza. *Journal of Information System, 1, 89-114.*

Kochkin, S. (2015). Hearing loss introduction. *www.betterhearing.org/hearing_loss*

Lamorte, S. (2016). *Writing with word processor*. Harper and Row publishers.

Levitin, D. & Brain, C. (2018). *New York times sunday book review.* www.nytimes.com

Lindley, G. (2017). Accessing the far world: a new age of connectivity. *www.oticonusa.com*

Multon, N. (2018). *Architecture terminology.*www. Infoeducation.org.

Ololube, N. P. (2017). The role of students, teachers and parents in students' business studies performance: In N. P. Ololube & O. N. Nte (Eds), *Managing and planning school safety and security*. Third world Press.

Richmond, V.P., & Frymier, A. B. (2015). Communication education and instructional development. In J. W. Chesebro (Ed.), *A century of transformation: Studies in honor of the 100th anniversary of the eastern communication association* (pp. 310–328). Oxford press

Wysocki, R. & Young, J. (2015). *Information systems: Management principles in action*. Wiley Books.