

Communication: A Tool for Effective Secondary Education Management in Nigeria

Anya, Emmanuella-Jacqueline C. (Ph.D)
Department of Educational Management
University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
Corresponding author: jackieanya01@gmail.com

Arthur I. A. Ekezie (Ph.D)
Department of Technical and Science Education,
Rivers State University, Nkpolu, Oroworukwo
Port Harcourt Rivers State, Nigeria.

Abstract

Communication is an essential ingredient in every organisation which facilitates the realization of organisational goals through the application of administrative and management principle; and as part of these principles seem to be of greater importance than all others in the school organisation. This is due to its informative viability and its critical need in harnessing the efforts of the school principal, teachers, students and other school support staff towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the school. The study is a descriptive survey design guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses. The sample of the study which was drawn using the simple random and stratified random sampling techniques was 312 academic staff made up of 104 principals and 208 teachers drawn from a population of 522 public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. This constitutes 20% of the schools in the study area; and for each school principal selected, two (2) teachers were selected from the same school. The data was collected using a 19-item self-designed instrument titled “Communication a Tool for Effective Management Questionnaire” (CTEMQ) which was validated and the reliability established using the Cronbach Alpha method, thus reliability index of 0.82 was ascertained. The modified four-point Likert-type scale was adopted to elicit the responses for data analysis. In answering the research questions, mean and standard deviation were used while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the findings revealed among others that free flow of information enhances effective management; that the grapevine helps in the fast dissemination of information. Also that horizontal communication channel fosters relationships among peers in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. It was concluded that communication, be it formal or informal plays a very crucial role in the effective management of secondary education and that using the appropriate channels sets the school activities in motion and makes both teachers and principals to participate effectively in the management of the school. It was therefore recommended that there should be clarity, reliability and completeness of the messages communicated and that informal communication should be encouraged as it fosters cordial interpersonal relationship between staff, which is an ingredient for effective management and harmonious work performance towards productivity.

Key words: *Formal Communication, Informal Communication, Effective Management, Secondary Education.*

Introduction

Education has contributed immensely to the overall national growth of every nation especially in our country Nigeria and Rivers State in particular. The level of education of a country has a lot to say about its citizenry especially in the development of its human capital resources. The school programmes are drawn in such a way that they actualize the goals of education as stated in the country's policy of education and Nigeria is not an exception. Consequent upon this, school programmes are drawn to meet up with the demands of the ever changing society and in recent years these programmes have undergone series of restructuring to meet the aspirations of the immediate society and the world at large. To be able to achieve these, and for effective coordination and realization of educational goals in the secondary school system, administrative and management principles and practices are propounded by different scholars (Peretomode: 2014, Okorie: 2012, Armstrong: 2012, Hoy and Miskel: 2008) which include: planning, organising, coordinating, decision- making, and evaluation. Each of these principles though they play very important role in the management of education, they are inter-twined. Communication is an essential ingredient in the realization of these administrative and management principles, and it must take place in every organisation where people abound like the secondary school environment. Though looking at it from an angle, communication seems to be of greater importance than most others. This is due to its informative viability and its critical need in harnessing the efforts of the school principal, teachers, students and other school support staff towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the school. A good administrator should spend the greater part of his working time communicating, which can be in different forms and manners. This is because communication plays a prominent role in management and administration of schools.

The concept of communication

Communication, a term derived from the latin word *communicare* which means to share, to impart, to transmit and to make common, has been defined as a process that links the individual, the group and the organization and in fact permeates every aspect of organisational life (Lunenbug & Ornstein in Peretomode: 2014, Hoy & Miskel 2008). Communication is a veritable tool required in an organisation to solve problems and accomplish goals; but it can never take place in isolation, there has to be a sender, a receiver, the message and the medium used to communicate. This agrees with Lewis, Peretomode (2014) who defines communication as the sharing of information, ideas, or attitudes in ways that produce a degree of understanding between two or more people. In addition to this, Abraham (2003) opines that communication is a process by which people disseminates meaning via transmission of symbolic messages; a process of passing information and understanding from one person to another, and an initiated behaviour from the sender which conveys the desired meaning to the receiver and elicits desired response from the receiver. On the other hand, Viris & Clarke-Ellis in Onye (2014) avow that communication entails the successful transfer of information from one entity to another through the exchange of thoughts, messages or information by speech, signals, writing or behaviour as well as the use of verbal or non-verbal strategies effectively to impart information or ideas.

On the school administrator rests the mantle of leadership of the school and in the course of carrying out his duty, he applies leadership skills among which communication is a major skill. Okorie (2012)

affirms that leadership is non-existent without communication but that there can be communication without leadership, therefore it can be considered as the essence of organization (Peretomode: 2014), an essential tool in management. Communication therefore, entails the transfer of information, feelings, instructions or messages from a source otherwise known as the sender to a receiver through a medium.

Importance of communication

The essence of communication in schools can never be over emphasised because through communication, all the participants in the school are abreast of what goes on in the school: instruction is passed, teaching is achieved as well as direction communicated. Through communication, the task and the resources needed to carry out assignments, the roles and duties and the expected results are made known to the subordinates. All of these contribute towards making work easier for better performance, effectiveness and greater productivity. In the secondary school organisation, Armstrong (2012) affirms that communication is a medium employed in the changing of management programmes, for instance to communicate proposed terms and conditions of employment, sharing of duties, delegation, passing of information from the administrator to the teachers, to the students and to the school support staff, it also improves interpersonal relationships among staff and students. It is the vehicle for instruction in the classrooms. Through communication, basic management functions are carried out – directing, coordinating, planning, controlling, staffing and budgeting. In carrying out these duties, the school administrator employs the use of adequate and effective communication which therefore indicates that every school administrator must have a clear understanding of the process of communication. Though time consuming due to the fact that it encompasses all other activities but, the existence of any school organisation depends on it because it is the link between every aspect. Myers and Myers (Hoy and Miskel, 2004) summarize its importance thus: production and regulation of the school's activities in the innovation processes as well as socialization and maintenance. While production and regulation refers to teaching and learning activities, setting goals and objectives, transmission of information, decision making, and so on, the innovation process is about passing own information about new ideas, and socialization and maintenance refers to the maintenance of interpersonal relationships which fosters good working climate, motivates teachers as well as students towards putting in their best towards high achievement

The process of communication

The process of communication involves the transmission of information from one person (sender) to another person or groups of persons (receiver). Communication is regarded effective if the message conveyed is clear and free from ambiguity thereby communicating what it is supposed to communicate as well as gets the required feedback. Anyamele and Uduma (2015) and Wofford and Cummins in Peretomode (2014) affirm it to be the step through which an idea otherwise called purpose of communicating goes from its sender to the time the receiver gets it and sends feedback (reply). In communication, be it in management process or in instructional process, the sender sends the message through a medium to get to the receiver, who decodes and reacts by way of feedback. With this, the communication process is complete, but there are times when the message can be distorted by way of noise, then the intention of the sender is not carried out.

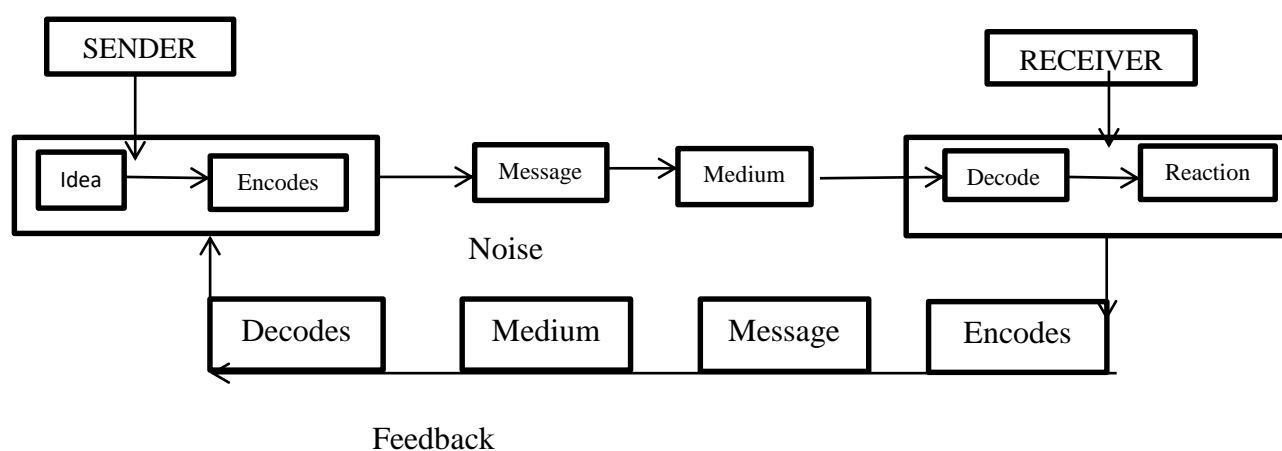


Figure 1. Critical elements in the communication process
Adapted from (Peretomode, 2014 p.559).

Methods of communication in secondary schools

In a secondary school organisation, the following methods of communication are considered: verbal, written, non-verbal and combined method.

Verbal communication – this method of communication involves the use of spoken words which can be through telephone calls, face to face discussion, and mass media like televisions, radio, phone chats and video conferencing. This method of communication is direct and provides on the spot feedback unlike the other methods. It is used during staff meetings, school assemblies, for instruction and learning, group discussions, extracurricular activities, grapevine communication, and so on.

Written communication – this involves all forms of communication put down on any form of paper either hand written or printed. Examples include newsletters, memos, bulletin boards, letters, newspapers, websites, blogs, charts, and any other form of hand written information.

Non-verbal communication – this method of communication does not require words in any form whether written or spoken. It involves the use of body language and gestures which includes facial expressions, arm and hand movements, artefacts with symbolic value and touch (patting on the shoulder or butt), dressing and so on.

Combined method: It uses verbal, written as well as non-verbal methods all at the same time.

Channels of communication flow

Secondary school environment consists of human beings working towards achieving set organisational goals; therefore as an organisation, communication is a veritable tool which when used goes through formal and informal channels.

Formal channel of communication: Official messages can be transmitted through the following established formal channels of communication: vertical flow, downward communication, upward, horizontal communication and vertical.

- a. Vertical flow: this is the upward and downward flow of communication through the hierarchy. It can flow from the superiors to the subordinates or vice versa. Every staff involved is actively involved in this channel irrespective of status or level.
- b. Downward communication: this is a one way direction of communication from the higher levels in an organisation to the subordinates. This channel of communication serves to direct, instruct and command, providing specific job instructions and performance feedback for subordinates.
- c. Upward communication: this method flows from subordinates to superiors. The importance of upward communication is to provide routine operational messages, reports on problems or problems, suggestions on improvements, and information on how subordinates feel about each other and the job.
- d. Horizontal communication: this type of direction flows across organisational members between employees of the same level, among peers of the same work group or between groups of the same status. A typical example is among teachers, among principals, among administrative staff, among school support staff, among academic staff and so on. This type of direction is effective in conflict resolution, sharing information with colleagues, coordinating tasks, and promoting strong friendly relationships.
- e. Diagonal communication: in this direction of communication, the interaction flows freely between line and staff thereby cutting across the organisation's chain of command. Through this channel, members of staff who failed to communicate through other channels can succeed.

Informal channel of communication: This is also known as grapevine. This is not an established channel within the organisation, but it exists among employees. It is governed by social and personal relationships rather than officially recognized rules and formalities. In this type of channel, information is transmitted verbally like gossip but it goes round faster than information transmitted through the formal channel. It communicates opinions, suspicions, and rumours that generally do not move through formal channels. Through the grapevine, information flows in different directions linking almost everyone in the organization. Though the informal channel of communication has negative features, yet no formal organisation exists without this channel but for efficiency in the school's management, it should be integrated into the formal organisation. (Asodike & Adieme: 2015.) Therefore, it is found in all organizations. It does not follow any prescribed or predetermined rule and spreads any information quickly. Unlike the formal communication, it does not follow any set pattern, it effectively operates horizontally, vertically and even diagonally.

Communication for Effective Management in Secondary Schools

For communication to effective management in the secondary school system, the school administrators must function effectively in sending and receiving messages. As sender, the administrator must possess the skill of sending and receiving message to people both inside and outside the school environment. He must at all times, apply the use of combined method of communication as situation demands and in a way that his audience will understand him and properly interpret the messages received. Jones and George (2009), and Peretomode (2004) outline the steps school administrators must take to ensure that communication is effective as follows:

- a. Clarity of message: Send clear and complete messages not missing anything in order that the receiver understands and interprets it as it is. The messages must be in clear language and contain all the information that the receiver needs in order that misunderstanding and confusion be eliminated.

- b. Consistency of message: Avoid ambiguity in choice of words and symbols, using familiar symbols and codes that mean the same thing for both sender and receiver. Avoid the use of ambiguous language, codes or languages that the receiver is not conversant with and therefore cannot easily decode.
- c. Length of message should be considered: The method of communication and content of the message determine the length of the message for instance, face to face, written letters, memos, newsletters and telephone conversations can be long but nonverbal, bulletin boards, and WhatsApp need not be too long.
- d. Medium: Transmit the message through an appropriate medium by selecting from the available media like letters, memos, newsletters, phone conversation, and electronic media. As a matter of fact, the nature of the message determines the medium to be used.
- e. Avoid filtering and distortion of information.
- g. A feedback mechanism should be included in messages by either requesting for feedback or mapping out ways for a follow up on the message as this ensures that the message is received and understood.
- h. Timing of message: avoid giving sensitive messages when the receiver is tired or has emotional and psychological problems.

The administrators are also receivers of message therefore they should always pay attention to the received messages, possess good listening skills, minimize distractions and ask questions in times of ambiguity and confusion for clarity purposes.

Barriers to effective communication

Without effective communication in an organisation, nothing can be achieved. Communication helps the administrator to carry everybody along. Without effective communication, the teachers will not be able to deliver their instructions for learning, which is the primary aim of the schools. Some of the barriers identified in the government senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria are: feeling of superiority, overloading, timing, distortion of message and lack of clarity of words and message.

Feeling of superiority: An autocratic administrator who builds a wall of superiority around himself and is too officious even in his dealings with his subordinates creates a barrier to effective communication. The teachers will always be afraid of him thereby will never express their minds on issues of the school nor suggest ways for solving problems in the school. The communication will always be downward with a monosyllabic response of 'YES' and 'NO'.

Overloading: In communication, messages should be brief and straight to the point. Repetition and redundancy should be avoided to avoid making the message sound or look clumsy and to avoid boring the receiver as well as for clarity purposes.

Timing: The psychology of the receiver should be considered during communication because the mood of the receiver most times determines how he interprets the message.

Lack of clarity of words: Avoid the use of jargons, symbols, codes, personal abbreviations and abridged words as they can be interpreted differently by the receiver thereby changing the meaning of the message sent.

Technological barrier: Technology has made communication much easier and effective and at the same time it has also posed a barrier to its effectiveness. When there is information overload, management becomes a problem and the administrator screens out most of the messages or does not respond. There is also the problem of incompetence in the operation of the technological devices, network failure when there is urgent need to use these devices, system failure, and unavailability of required transmitters or receivers.

Effective Management in Education

Management refers to a process concerned with the formulation of strategies, plans, policies and programmes with a view of achieving set organizational goals. It requires planning, organising, coordinating, commanding and controlling. Management in a school setting is about leading people in activities involving planning, formulating policies or programmes, organising, directing and controlling so that they can function as a team in order to achieve educational goals. To achieve all of these in educational institutions there must be effective management which requires skills as well as capabilities. An effective management must possess certain skills which will enable everybody to be carried along and at the same time achieve the organisational goals. Some of these skills include:

Clear Communication: Decisions, tasks, and messages must be clearly communicated in order to elicit clear understanding. This is because it is an impossible task to read the human mind. The principal must ensure that the medium and lines of communication are created and open too. With this, tasks, personal well-being and career goals are freely communicated. It also allows staff to thrive individually and boost their contributions towards the achievement of the schools' goals. The principal should realise that communication is a two-way street, that when you communicate clearly with your team and show them that you value their input, they'll do the same with you who is their team leader.

Time Management: Every member of staff should be an expert in time management. This has to do with allocation of appropriate time to activities and ensuring that tasks are accomplished at expected time. People manage time, time does not manage people.

Teamwork and Collaboration: Every hand should be on deck irrespective of expertise and experience. The principal ensures that members of staff get involved by bringing everyone to be part of decision making and all other management activities.

Build trust: The principal should create a relationship where your staff will trust and always rely on and confide in him. He should be tactful in his transparency not withholding important information from his staff because transparency is the key to earning trust but being tactfully transparent will help you build a foundation of trust so that your team knows and understands there may be times you can't bring all the details to the table.

Delegation of duties to promote development: Delegation is about assigning responsibilities which offers the principal the opportunity to continually help the staff members learn, develop, and grow, but the principal stands to supervise all tasks. To achieve the objectives, the strengths and weaknesses

of the staff must be identified. By understanding their abilities and considering their professional development goals, tasks can be delegated and team projects structured in a way that contributes to each employee's evolution. It's all about making the most of their individual skills, while also providing the opportunities to continue building on them.

Statement of the problem

For there to be an effective management, especially in secondary school system, there has to be an effective communication among the administrator, the teachers, the school support staff and the students. With the researchers' experiences as teachers in Rivers State, Nigeria, principals usually shut their teachers out in decision making concerning them, the students as well as the school support staff, even in the event of curriculum implementation. The teachers are usually instructed if not ordered to perform certain duties without any prior discussion; the principals build walls around themselves thereby making secondary school management their personal affair which does not lead to effectiveness. Consequent upon this, each person works in different directions resulting in lack of unity, selfishness, lousiness, truancy, conflicts of ideas, chaos, resentment, un-cooperative attitude and the rest of them which therefore do not enhance effectiveness and productivity in a secondary school. This situation makes it imminent to find out how communication enhances effective management, the ways formal and informal communication as channels of communication enhance secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and objectives of the study

The study investigated the role of communication in effective management of government secondary schools in Nigeria.

The study will in specific terms:

- i. ascertain the extent to which communication enhances management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- ii. identify the ways in which formal communication channel enhances effective secondary education management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- iii. find out the ways informal communication channel enhances communication towards effective management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are posed for the study:

- i. To what extent does communication enhance effective management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- ii. In what ways does formal communication channel enhance effective secondary education management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- iii. What are the ways in which informal communication channel enhances communication towards effective management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and the mean scores of teachers on the extent to which communication enhances management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between the mean scores of principals and the mean scores of teachers on how formal communication channel enhances effective management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Ho₃ There is no significant relationship between the mean scores of principals and the mean scores of teachers on the ways in which informal communication channel enhances effective management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population consists of all 522 public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The sample determined by simple random sampling consists of 312 academic staff comprising of 104 principals and 208 teachers, the make-up of which is 20% of the schools in the study area; and for each school principal randomly selected, two (2) teachers were selected in the same school. The data was collected using a 19-item self-designed instrument titled “Communication a Tool for Effective Management Questionnaire” (CTEMQ). The instrument was validated and the reliability established using the Cronbach Alpha method, thus reliability index of 0.82 was ascertained. A total of 312 copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents and equally retrieved. In answering to the research questions, mean and standard deviation were used while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A mean average of 2.50 served as the criterion mean for accepting.

Results:

Having collected and collated the responses, the data are presented thus according to the research questions.

Research Question 1: *To what extent does communication enhance effective management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

Table 1.

S/No	The extent to which communication enhances effective management include:	Principals		Teachers		XX	Remarks
		X	SD	X	SD		
1	Good communication improves interpersonal relationships among staff.	2.96	1.21	2.99	1.22	2.68	High extent
2	Clear communication helps to achieve organizational goals	2.70	1.15	3.03	1.22	2.86	High extent
3	Reliability of the channels of communication brings adequate feedback for effective management.	2.87	1.20	2.67	1.15	2.77	High extent

4	Through communication, basic management functions are carried out.	3.09	1.26	2.69	1.13	2.89	High extent
5	Effective use of communication methods is an essential ingredient in the realization of management principles.	2.38	1.12	2.60	1.12	2.49	Low extent
6	Clarity of message brings about good feedback.	2.52	1.11	2.68	1.13	2.60	High extent
7	Free flow of information enhances effective management	3.13	1.28	2.69	1.13	2.91	High extent
Aggregate		2.81	1.19	2.76	1.16	2.78	

Principals = 104; Teachers = 208

From the results in Table 1, showed the mean scores on the extent to which communication enhances effective management of secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria. For both the principals and teachers, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 have their mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 showing that they agreed that communication enhances effective management to a high extent, while item 5 with mean scores below the criterion mean means that they do not agree that effective use of communication methods is an essential ingredient in the realization of management principles for effective management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The aggregate mean of 2.78 which is a summation of the mean sets of both principals and teachers showed that the extent to which communication enhances effective management of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria is to a high extent, which is a clear indication that communication enhances effective management of government senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: In what ways do formal communication channel enhance effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2.

S/No	The ways in which formal communication channel enhance effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria include:	Principals		Teachers		XX	Remarks
		X	SD	X	SD		
8	Downward communication channel which results in performance feedback to subordinates.	3.21	1.32	2.99	1.12	2.90	Agree
9	Two-way communication channel which allows freedom of expression.	3.19	1.32	2.87	1.19	3.03	Agree
10	Upward communication channel which provides information to superiors.	3.06	1.25	2.59	1.12	2.83	Agree
11	Horizontal communication channel which fosters relationships among peers.	3.05	1.25	2.90	1.19	2.98	Agree

12	Diagonal communication channel which serves to aid staff communication when all channels fail.	2.90	1.59	2.85	1.57	2.86	Agree
13	Downward communication channel which is used to provide task directives.	2.88	1.42	3.05	1.44	3.01	Agree
Aggregate		3.05	1.36	2.88	1.27	2.94	

Principals = 104; Teachers = 208

The data in Table 2 showed that items 8-13 with an aggregate mean of 2.94 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50 are ways in which formal communication channel enhance effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria. This indicates that both principals and teachers agreed to these items as ways in which formal communication channel enhance effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question Three: *What are the ways in which informal communication channel enhance communication towards effective management in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

Table 3:

S/No	The ways in which informal communication channel enhances communication towards effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria include:	Principals		Teachers		XX	Remarks
		X	SD	X	SD		
14	The grapevine giving staff freedom of interaction irrespective of position.	3.13	1.29	2.85	1.18	2.99	Agree
15	Fast dissemination of information.	3.40	1.44	3.10	1.27	3.35	Agree
16	Promotion of interpersonal relationship among staff.	3.05	1.25	2.77	1.15	2.91	Agree
17	Distortion of information from the grapevine.	2.28	1.10	2.60	1.12	2.44	Disagree
18	Encouraging freedom of expression.	3.23	1.34	2.90	1.19	3.07	Agree
19	Helping staff to satisfy their social needs.	3.18	1.31	2.95	1.21	3.07	Agree
Aggregate		3.05	1.25	2.86	1.19	2.97	Agree

Principals = 104; Teachers = 208

The data in Table 3 showed that items 14-19 with an aggregate mean of 2.97 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50 are ways in which informal communication channel enhances effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria. Both the principals and the teachers agreed to items 14,15,16,18, and 19 as ways in which informal communication channel enhances effective

secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria, but disagreed in item 17, distortion of information from the grapevine with a mean score of 2.44.

Ho₁: *There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.*

Table 4: Test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Variables	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Principals	104	2.81	1.19	2			
				310	0.41	1.96	Ho ₁ was accepted
Teachers	208	2.76	1.16				
Total				312			

The results in table 4 show that the z-calculated value of 0.41 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 310 degrees of freedom, thus the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: *There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which formal communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.*

Table 5: Test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which formal communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Variables	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Principals	104	3.05	1.36	2			
				310	1.20	1.96	Ho ₂ was accepted
Teachers	208	2.88	1.27				
Total				312			

The results in table 5 show that the z-calculated value of 1.20 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 310 degrees of freedom, thus the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which formal communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho₃: *There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which informal communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.*

Table 6: Test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which informal communication enhances effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Variables	n	\bar{x}	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remarks
Principals	104	3.05	1.25	2			
				310	1.47	1.96	Ho ₃ was accepted
Teachers	208	2.86	1.19				
Total				312			

The results in table 6 show that the z-calculated value of 1.47 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 310 degrees of freedom, thus the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways in which informal communication enhances effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

From the results of the findings it is obvious that communication affects effective management of secondary education in Rivers State, Nigeria because for there to be effective secondary school management, information, ideas and messages must flow freely in all directions utilising the different types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written as well as combined forms of communication) in the school system. This is because each direction of communication plays a useful role in school management. Peretomode (2014) affirms that horizontal direction facilitates organisational coordination and problem solving, downward communication is used to direct, command and instruct, while upward communication is necessary to provide feedback on downward communication. The message must be clear and pass through reliable channels which however promotes a cross fertilization of ideas, enlightenment, creation of awareness and eventual resolution of conflicts if any. As opined by Akinwale and Okotoni (2018) that, for an organisation to succeed there must be free flow of ideas and effective monitoring of what individuals in the various departments are doing. Also, good and clear communication improves interpersonal relationships among staff which facilitates the achievement of organisational goals. This agrees with the findings of Nwangwu (2012) that effective communication clarifies teachers about task to be done, enhances productivity and makes teachers to be focused. The findings also show that communication leads to effective management when principals are receptive to criticism, appreciate teachers' point of view and run open administration. This corroborates with the findings of Asamu (2014) that a relationship exists between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity and commitment, and that effective communication creates mutual understanding between management and workers which helps in

building genuine relationship among both parties in the organizations. In the same vein, Mutuku, and Mathooko (2014) in their study support with their findings that information sharing through communication had the greatest effect on the employee motivation as they are given the opportunity of being part of the running of the business through decision making. Also, that proper communication leads to shared vision, goals; openness and trust within individuals, teams and an organization, and employees tend to have higher morale and are more motivated in the workplace if all the channels of communication are open.

The findings in research question 2 revealed that formal communication channel enhances effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria. This is and corroboration with the findings of Yawe and Bua (2016) that formal and Informal communication significantly affect staff performance in secondary schools in Benue state; and that formal communication is fundamental to any successful school management, therefore, appropriate channels of communication should be established to educate and guide employees on their proper use in the formal communication process.

From the findings in Research question 3, it was revealed that informal communication channel enhances effective secondary education management in Rivers State, Nigeria. This agrees with the findings of Alparslan and Kılınç. (2015) which revealed that informal communication increases energy at work, which has a considerably positive effect on extra role behaviour. As inferred from these findings, the increase of informal communication will enable lecturers to be more energetic, and hence, such energy will motivate lecturers into putting in extra efforts for their organizations. The findings also revealed that informal communication (grapevine) can distort information sent out thereby resulting in destructive communication.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that communication, be it formal or informal plays a very crucial role in the effective management of secondary education; that using the appropriate channels sets the school activities in motion and makes both teachers and principals to participate effectively in the management of the school. This can only be achieved if the channels of communication are reliable, communication methods effectively chosen, and the message is clear.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that there should be clarity, reliability and completeness of the messages communicated. Informal communication should be encouraged as it fosters cordial interpersonal relationship between staff, which is an ingredient for effective management and harmonious work performance towards productivity.

References

- Abraham, N. M. (2003). *Educational administration in Nigeria*. Port Harcourt; Pam Unique.
- Akinwale, A. S, and Okotoni, C. A (2018) Assesment of Principal Communication Styles and Administrative Impact on Secondary Schools in Osun State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Research and Publications*. 2 (1), 99-112.
- Alparslan, A. M. & Kılınç, U. K. (2015). The power of informal communication and perceived organizational support on energy at work and extra-role behavior: a survey on teachers. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 12(2), 113-138.
- Anyamele, S. C. & Uduma, F. O. (2015). Improving leadership effectiveness through

- communication. . In Obasi, F. N., Oluwuo, S. O. Asodike, J. D., Anyamele, S. C. (2015) *Leadership in schools for productivity: emerging perspectives*. Port Harcourt: Pearl Digital Press.
- Armstrong, M. (2012). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (12th ed.). London: Kogan Page.
- Asamu, F, F, (2014). The impact of communication on workers' performance in selected organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR- JHSS)*. 19 (8), II, 75-82.
- Asodike, J. D. & Adieme, F. G. (2015). Leadership and communication in school organisations. In Obasi, F. N., Oluwuo, S. O. Asodike, J. D., Anyamele, S. C. (2015) *Leadership in schools for productivity: emerging perspectives*. Port Harcourt: Pearl Digital Press.
- Hoy, W. K. & Miskel, C. G. (2008). *Educational administration: theory, research and practice*. (8th ed). New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Jones, G. R. & George, J. M. (2009). *Contemporary management* (6th Ed.) New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Lunenburg, F. C. & Orneinstein, A.C. (2008). *Educational administration: concepts and practices*. California: Wadsworth.
- Mutuku, C. K. & Mathooko, P. (2014). Effects of organizational communication on employee motivation: A case study of Nokia Siemens Networks Kenya. *International academic journal of information sciences and project management*, 1(3), 28-62.
- Nnabuo, P. O. M., Okorie, N.C., Nwideduh, S.B., & Uche, C.M. (2006). *Leadership & supervision in educational*. Owerri: Totan Publishers.
- Nwangwu, I. G. O. (2012). Impact of effective communication in secondary school administration in Enugu State. *Journal of Technology and Education in Nigeria*, 17 (1).
- Nwaogu, U. J. (1986), *Educational Administration and Supervision*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.
- Okorie, N.C. (2012). *Organizational setting of leadership: theoretical perspectives*. (3rd ed.). Nigeria: International Universities Press.
- Onye, O. C. (2014). Communication and decision making in schools. In N. C. Okorie, L.E.B. Igwe, J.D. Asodike, V. C. Onyeike, & R. O. Anyaogo (Eds.). *Teachers, schools and society*. Port Harcourt: Pearl.
- Peretomode, V. F. (2012). *Theories of management: implications for educational administration*. Abraka, Nigeria: University Printing Press
- Yawe, A. A & Bua, F.T. (2016). Communication and Staff Performance in Secondary Schools in Benue State, Nigeria. In *International Journal of Innovative, Social and Science Education Research (AJASEI)*. 4(2) 7-15