

COMMUNICATION A DETERMINING FACTOR TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

In educational organization good communication is crucial for an active and productive education. Effective communication skills are needed among school managers and teachers. Understanding how to convey and interpret messages is essential for effective communication. Communication therefore becomes a unique instrument that integrates management function in any organization. This explains why communication is inevitable and indispensable in a school system for effective management. Communication is paramount in education whether it is a teacher to student, student to teacher, teacher to administrator and vice versa.. The paper examined how communication aids managers in schools in carrying out their duties effectively. Meaning, importance and communication process as well as communication flow were discussed. Barriers to effective communication were discussed. It was considered that communication is an important ingredient and vital instrument any given organization

Keyword: Information, administrator, encode, decode, message

Effective communication is vital to the survival of any organization through communication. Individuals are able to express and share their individual ideas, opinions, and emotions. Communication touches all aspects of human life. Communication is the vehicle through which people and management are linked together in an organization in order to achieve common aim. Communication is the transmission of

information which involves the interchange of facts, thoughts, values, judgment and options which can take many forms such as face to face conversation, telephone calls, letters or reports. Institution with good human relations succeeds because they have effectively channels of communication that are clearly defined. Thus teaching and learning could be greatly enhanced through good communication channels. According to Lunenburg (2010) communication is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another.

Therefore the bed rock of human activities and existence is communication. Communication keeps people together, ensures that individuals and groups understands one another. Communication is the act of sending a message through different media, it can be verbal or non verbal, formal or informal as long as it transmits a thought provoking ideas, gestures, action etc. Knowledge of communication will always be important to anyone who wishes to function more effectively within the workplace. It is a vital link between people and it makes it possible for organization to function. The common elements in the communication process are the sender and receiver. The sender initiates the communication. The sender is referred to the person, who has a need to convey the desire or idea or concept to other individuals. Whereas, the receiver is the person s to whom the message is sent. The sender encodes the idea by selection of the words, symbols or gestures which are used to compose a message. The message is the outcome of the encoding which takes the form of verbal, non verbal or written language the message is sent through the medium or channel, which is regarding as the carrier of communication. According to Apostol (2017), at the level of any society, important at the level of the educational unit, no activity can be managed outside the communication process This Nakpodia (2010) supported, stating that , the transfer of information from one individual to another is absolutely necessary. It is the means by which behavior is modified. , change is effected, information is made productive and goals are achieved. The communication process follow sa systematic procedure. It is a gives and take method involving the sender and receiver (Nakpodial, 2006) usually the senders must have an idea to put across which make sit a 3 way grid- sender, message and the receiver. For better communication in school, the principal is not working alone. He/she has to share information, transfer idea and feelings through communication to ensure the cooperative operations of others within the school. This is where the patterns of communication come in. The school administrator must not only communicate downwards management thoughts and in decision but also upward reaction and development in the rank. In fact in order to persuade instruct direct request inform stimulate the administrator must engage in upward and downward communication hence the importance of upward flow of communication in an educational organization cannot be under estimated. According to Nakpodia (2010), it helps that administrator to get a feedback from the people that might be affected. These people represent the important an important source of idea for improvement,

Definition of Concept Communication

According to Markovic & Salamzadeh (2018). Lubienberg (2010) stated that communication has its root in latin from the word communis which means “common”. Communication is defined as a management function which involves creating, interpreting, communicating, ideas, facts, opinions and feelings about work performance, organizational effectiveness and efficiency as well as goals attainment in organization Griffin and Pattern (1976) cited in Fatoluke (2018) stated that communication is the process of creating meaning as well as absorbing it. It is the exchange of ideas and interaction among group members. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2004) defines communication as the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information. Keyton (2011) defined communication as a process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another. Furthermore Emogie (2008) stated that communication is universally accepted as a powerful tool for organizational effectiveness. It is also the life wire of an organization.

The Concept School Management

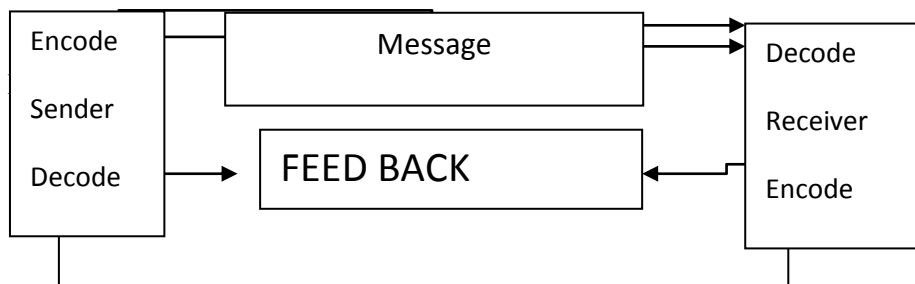
According to Akinnubi (2010) Management is defined as getting things done through others. Supported by Akunnibi, Gbadeyan, Fashiku and Kayode (2012) defining management as the coordination a of all there sources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain organizational objective (2010). Management is the guidance or direction of people towards organizational goals or objectives. It can also be seen as supervising, controlling and coordinating school activities to attain optimum results with organizational resources.

Process of Communication

The communication process refers to a series of actions or steps taken in order to successfully communicate. It involves several components such as the sender of communication, the actual message being sent, the encoding of the message, the receiver and the decoding of the message. Communication process involves the sender, transmission of message through a channel, receiver and the feedback. The elements in the communication process determine the quality of communication. A problem in anyone of these elements can reduce communication effectiveness (Keyton, 2011). According to Cheney (2011) identifies the important elements of the communication process. The common elements in any communication exchange are the sender and the receiver. . The sender initiates the communication. The sender uses words and symbols to put forth information a message for the receiver, the individual receiving the message. In the workplace, the sender is a person who has a need or desire to convey at idea or concept to others, the sender is a person, department or unit of an organization or system who originates the message. The sender encodes the idea by selecting words, symbols or gestures with which to compose a message. The message is the outcome of the encoding

which takes the form of verbal, nonverbal or written language. The receiver is the individual to whom the message by the receiver is critical to effective communication. Different perception of the message, language barriers, interruptions, emotions and attitudes are examples of noise. Finally feedback occurs when the receiver responds to the senders to determine whether the message has been received and understood.

Figure I, Explain the specific steps in communication process as described below:
Medium



The sender of the message: communication begins with the sender, who has a thought or idea which is then encoded in a way that can be understood by both the sender and the receiver.

Channel for transmission of message: the information is transmitted over a channel that links the sender with the receiver. The message may be oral or written and it may be transmitted through a memorandum. A computer, the telephone, the telegram or television. At all times two or more channels are used.

The receiver of the message: the receiver of the message is one who decodes the message. The receiver converts the message to into thoughts. Communication can only occur when the receiver and the sender attach the same or at least similar meanings to the symbols that compose the message. Thus, it is obvious that a message encoded into Yoruba requires a receiver who understands Yoruba.

Feedback: to ensure that feedback has reached the intended receiver correctly, the communication has to get feedback from the receiver correctly, the communication has to get feedback from the receiver s about the message, and feedback ensures that the process of communication has indeed taken place. In an educational environment, feedback is essential as it helps the employees to know where they stand vis a vis the organizational expectation so as to adjust their behaviors.

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Noise in communication: unfortunately noise is affected by communication. Communication suffers from distortion as it seldom reaches the receiver in the form it originated.

According to Fatinaym (2018) cited in Awoniyi (1982) he affirms that without communication there would be chaos. He added that human existence and civilization as we know today would disappear without communication. He further claimed that there are at least five important elements of the communication process. This is shown in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Element of communication

Sender (Encoder)	Message	Medium of transmission	Medium of receipt	Receiver (Decoder)
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Furthermore, Daniel (2016) elaborated how these elements of communication elements interact to make communication happen. He stated that the process requires the sender to encode message through a medium of transmission which the receiver receives and decodes through the medium of receipt. In essence the sender must encode the message (i.e. the information being conveyed) into a form that is appropriate to the communication channel and the receiver decodes the message in order to understand the meaning content of the message. He further stressed that the common elements in the communication process are the sender and receiver. The sender initiates the communication; the goal of communication is for the receiver to understand the message sent.

Purpose of Communication in School Environment

It is essential that organizations arrange how information gets to individual or groups who needs it because the key function of any organization s planning, organizing, directing and controlling and all depends solely on effective communication. Afolabi, Ikenga & Oru (2008) asserted that organizational communication has four primary functions

- **Information:** communication provides information that individuals and groups need to make decision through communication vital information required for measuring and correcting performance activities of organization members are conveyed to reach the appropriate person who is capable of taking appropriate action in order that the progress towards the desired objectives can be made and evaluated.
- **Control:** communication provides a vehicle through which one implements a plan of action. It controls member's behavior in different ways. For example following the formal hierarchies and formal guidelines of the organization by workers, job training, delegation of authorities and directing the personnel and materials towards achieving organizational goals cannot be affected without communication between the responsible managers and the human and physical resources within the organization.
- **Emotional expression:** For many employees their work group is a primary source for social interaction, the discussion that takes place within the group is a

fundamental mechanism by which members show their frustration and feelings of satisfaction. Communication therefore provides a release for emotional expression of feelings for fulfillment of social needs. The social contacts and interaction provided by communication are necessary because they contribute indirectly to organizational goals and directly to the satisfaction of individual needs that are compatible with organizational goals

- **Motivation:** communication fosters motivation of employee by clarifying ambiguous issues that can lead to conflicts i.e. it stimulates the essential element of leadership. Without communication there can be no leadership. morale producing and motivate forces are stimulated through communication

Pattern of Communication/ Communication Flow

Patterns of communication are called flows and they are commonly classified accordingly to the direction of interaction. Communication pattern is classified as downward, upward and horizontal communication. Ikpe(1990) and Shola (1998) as cited in Akanta, Ekanem & Ukpe (2017) classified communication flow pattern into formal and informal flow pattern.

A. Formal communication flow: Formal communication flow is further subdivided into (i.) downward, (ii.) upward and (iii) Horizontal communication. Formal communication flow radiates from the top most part of the organizational hierarchy to the next vertically. It can be oral, written and mediated mode of message.

(i.) **Downward communication:** Downward communication is the flow of messages from the superior. It can be in form of conversation through notice boards, tellers, telephones, e mails, videos conference etc. Downward communication takes place to subordinate mainly to make them more effective in their jobs and to provide update on organization policies and strategies. All downward communication is commands and pre arranged signals. Duccan (1974) as cited in Afolabi, Ikenga & Oru (2018) advised that “talking to” no matter how good the articulation will not succeed unless their superior knows enough about the performance, desires, values and aspirations of the workers to know what to say to them.

(ii.) **Upward communication:** Upward communication is actually the key problem area which hinders or tends to promote institutional disharmony. Upward communication refers to messages which flow from subordinates to superiors. Usually for the purpose of asking questions, providing feedback and making suggestions. Upward communication serves as feedback to management, giving clues to the relative success of giving message.

(iii.) **Horizontal communication:** Horizontal communication is a literal exchange of messages among people in the same organizational environment. Horizontal communication takes place between departments and individuals at the same level in an organization. The major purpose of horizontal communication is to coordinate educational activities at the same level.

A. INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

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Informal communication is a casual and unofficial form of communication. It is communication between co workers in the work place, According to Nwinyokpugi (2018), informal communication always occur in every human organization : people chat in the in tea room, along office corridors . Informal communication flows through informal channels and may or may not be work related. Informal communication takes place synchronously in a face to face settings information is exchanged spontaneously between two or more persons without confronting the stipulated official rules, processes, systems, formalities and chain of command. Furthermore, Fay (2011) defined informal communication as “a voluntary talk that does not have to be solely work or task focused or the social glue of the work place. Informal communication he further stressed is often unplanned, conversing off the record and acting beyond role expectation. According Adu-oppoong & Agyin-Birikorang (2014) to importance of communication in a workplace includes:

- **Create job satisfaction:** Organizations which encourage an open and easy correspondence between senior and subordinates face lesser employee turnover. If the work environment is friendly whether the subordinates are encouraged to communication their ideas to their administrators regarding work related issues and makes them feel valued in the organization. Thus, effective communication in the workplace helps in building loyalty and trust which eventually attributes to greater job satisfaction
- **Lesser conflict:** Open communication in the workplace on help prevent and resolve many conflicts, workplace conflicts are easily resolved through open and clear communication and mutual discussion , this can lead to personal and professional growth.
- **Increase productivity:** Effective communication at work is the most important issue for the success and failure of an organization. Every organization has a set of clearly defined goals, objectives and vision. If an administrator is clear in his/her communication, the subordinates will know exactly what the organization. Wants and thus, will be able to deliver the same to the best of their abilities. Thus, the importance of communication skills can be judged from the facts that it leads to better deliverance of work. Increased work place productivity,
- **Formation of relationship:** Open communication whether between the employee and administrators or between the management and employee leads to the formation of better personal and professional relationship. This makes the employee feel genuinely cared and valued for. And they are more likely to remain loyal to the organization. This creates a friendly environment and promotes a better working relationship which is conducive to be work.
- **Proper utilization of resources:** if an organization faces problems, crisis and conflicts due to miscommunication between the staff member, it causes unnecessary delays work. This leads to wastage of resources and lowers the overall work productivity so an environment of good communication is a must for any organization to better utilizes its resource and increase productivity.

Barriers to Effective Communication in School Environment

Communication is a very common concept in everyday life or takes place in every settings, organizational area or place. No work, function or operation is carried out without effective means of communication within the process of communication it is apparent that barriers and obstacles do occur. Zaineb (2010) stated the different kinds of barriers to effective communication within an organization they are :

- **Perceptual barriers:** Perceptual barriers arise due to different opinion between the people; differences in their view points do prove to be a major barrier.
- **Emotional barriers:** Emotional barriers at times happens when people do not develop interest in communication with their fellow employee due to the feelings of fear, mistrust, anger, or annoyance that may arise within their minds and these are stated to be emotional barriers.
- **Language barriers:** Meaning is in the minds of the individuals. Language can pose as a barrier if its use obscures meaning and distortion intent. When two persons or group of people are involved in communication with each other and if a common language is used that is understandable to all individual their objectives will be fulfilled and the process of fulfilled and the process of communication will be made effective.
- **Cultural barrier:** within an organization, individuals belonging to different nationalities, regions, culture, religions and different status , groups are employed together, these people at times do familiarized themselves with other peoples cultures and backgrounds , where as other times they are even unaware . a cultural barrier occurs when people of different culture are unable to communicate with each other efficiently and this inability may be due to diverse factors such as different background, customs , view points, ideas , notion and so forth
- **Physical barriers:** within an organizational structure. It is vital to have team spirit and individual should work in coordination with each other and be cooperative towards each other.

Ways of improving Communication Barriers to Effective Communication in an Organizational Environment

Knoontz and O' Donnell (1972) as cited Afolabi, Ikenga & Oru (2008) in argued that there is no such thing as perfect communication. According to Afolabi, Ikenga & Oru (2008) ways to facilitate effective communication includes:

- **Determine the objectives:** Determine the objectives before placing the information into the communication flow (e.g exchanging information, stimulating increased effects) sharpening the ideas and its focus will yield better.
- **Identify the audience:** Before sending out a communication be careful to minimize the possibility of receiver distortion. Therefore different encoding processes, channels and media must be considered for the intended group.

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- **Determine the media and the transmitting channels:** The message can be sent through different verbal media or printed in a memo, letter or newspaper. In addition it can be sent through formal or informal channel.
- **Establishing mutual interest:** For communication to be effective the message should be relevant to the needs of the receiver.
- **Clarity:** Communication possesses clarity when it is expressed in a language and transmitted in such a way that it will be comprehended, adherence to the will overcome some barriers to effective communication.
- **Reduce ambiguity:** Misunderstanding arises when the message that is being communicated is vague. It is essential to use direct simple language and administrative jargon.
- **Use face to face whenever possible:** the effectiveness of face to face , oral communication most often rates higher than written communication because people enjoy face to face conversation more, it enhances the impact of praise, criticism and promotes people opportunity for immediate feedback from their listener

Conclusion

The channel of communication needs to be effective if organization such as the school is to maintain close ties with the teachers and encourage maximum performance if the communication in the school ios open, an atmosphere of trust , reciprocity, intimacy and growth is built thus, giving room to effective teaching and learning.

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