

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

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## COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS AS DETERMINANTS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT FOR ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS ACHIEVEMENT IN A TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined communication systems as determinants of effective management for organization goal achievement in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria. The study employed the ex-post-facto research design. In carrying out the research, five hypotheses were generated and tested using an instrument titled "communication system for organizational goals achievement scale" (CSOGAS) which comprised of 25 items. The instrument was administered to a purposely selected population of 100 senior academic and non-academic staff of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used to test hypotheses I-IV while the T-Test was used to test hypothesis V. From the result of the analysis, it was discovered that the university employed the use of all the communication systems tested in this research but with high level of usage of both formal and two-way communication systems. The study recommended that the university should endeavor to invest on modern communication gadgets and programmes such as computers, telephones, internet, e-mail and generally imbibe the ICT culture which will enhance the achievement of organizational goals. Moreover, feedback should be given priority in the communication process to allow for evaluation of the effectiveness of communication system employed.*

### KEYWORDS

Organization, Communication System, Management, Organizations Goals, Effective Management, Effective Communication.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the world, the accomplishment of organizational objectives in an effective and efficient manner has become a point of focus. Therefore, communication occupies a cardinal position in the smooth running of an organization. In actual fact, there will be no organization if there is no communication. The world is fast becoming a global village, through effective means of communication.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cole (1993), while x-raying the importance of communication posits that the issue of communication is a vital one for any organization. It is a process that is essentially a sharing one a mutual interchange between two or more persons. In organizations, communication is generally thought of in terms of:

- (a) the skills of communication, that is, giving instructions, interviewing, chairing meeting etc.
- (b) the media of communication, for example, memos, reports etc.
- (c) the organization of communications which is the chain of command, briefing groups, committees etc.

Akintayo and Alebiosu (2007) described communication as a lifeblood of an organization; the harmonizer of its seemingly disparate components; the lubricant of its intricate machinery; the livewire and the nerve centre of its activities. Be that as it may, the importance of communication in any organization cannot be overemphasized. Lack of information will severely bring chaos and organizational goals will become unattainable. Effective management therefore, is dependent on effective communication systems. It is through communication that productivity which is defined as the measure of how well resources are brought together in organization and utilized to accomplish a set of result can be met.

Goldhaber (1983) defined communication as the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships to cope with environmental uncertainty. In addition, the process involves three parts. Firstly, it occurs within a complex system involving many parts. Secondly, it involves messages and the flow, purpose, direction and media. Thirdly, it involves people and their attitudes, feelings, relationship and skills. Okoro (1993) saw communication as cement which binds a company together, without it, departments and divisions being pulling in different directions. It is then pertinent that communication plays an important role in the functioning of organizations, be it private or public. Ejiogu et al (1995) defined communication as basically sender related factor in determining the success of all forms of interchange of thoughts and ideas or in the assignment of roles. This means that effective communication crystallizes when any form of communication deployed in achieving management objectives has succeeded in meeting the set goals or objectives.

In its broadest sense however, the purpose of communication and the goals of communication in organization are to effect change, that is, to influence action towards the welfare of the organization. Fajana (1995) listed some methods of communication as - briefing groups, downward communication, joint consultation, specialized committees, organizational surveys, house journals, grapevine. Communication barriers are like dangerous worms to effective communication in organization. Adekola and Obasan (1998) listed some of these barriers as - manner of communicating, lack of knowledge or background, bias and prejudices, filtering, talking down, information overload, defective structure, organizational barriers. Researchers have carried out both theoretical and experimental works on the importance of communication system on management function in an organization. Communication is a complex and difficult process. They had varied in intelligence, education, religious beliefs, social background and experience. These differences create different frames of reference with the result that each person looks at the world around him in a particular and unique way. Our physical and mental makeups have a direct effect on our perception and judgment. These often work when interpreting information we see or hear, what we think ought to be there and/or what we want to see or hear, what we think ought to be there and/or what we want to see or hear. All these go to create barriers and difficulties.

Agbato (1990) sees communication as the "nervous system of business" and in many ways sees this as an apt metaphor. Biologically, the nervous system is the pathway along which a vast amount of information constantly travels at lighting speeds up and down linking distant parts of the body with the brain. Functionally, he says communication in organization should operate in much the same manner linking subordinates and superiors. Ubeku (1975) frowned at what operates in Nigeria where courses were just organized for supervisors and managers. He said "organizers of such courses devote a lot of time and energy to such things as physical and semantic barriers to communication". Consequently, in order to improve the ability of the supervisors to communicate they engage in learning better English (in the course that has only three weeks) and in elaborate report writing. But this approach misses completely the whole point of the communication problems in industry. His position was that, the workers do not get suspicious because they misunderstood the language in which the information was passed to them; they get suspicious because they are not told what is happening and therefore pick up information through the grapevine. According to Cole (1993) it would seem that an organization uses "centralized networks" when the problem is simple and it wants to minimize the number of messages and errors.

Research into communication networks suggest that relatively simple problems are most speedily and accurately dealt with by means of centralized networks, but complex problems are best solved in de-centralized networks. Centralized network are leader-dominated, but de-centralized networks encourages shared leadership and contribution. Peretomode (1991) confirmed that there are four most common networks (all-channel, circle, Y, and wheel). Out of these, the all-

channel and circle networks are more highly decentralized, whereas the Y and wheel networks are highly centralized. The wheel or star is the most centralized network because all communications flow from and to any one individual, while the all-channel network is the least centralized, that is, most decentralized. Moreover, according to Peretomode (1991) the research findings of a number of researchers (Greebaum, 1974; Shaw, 1964; Leavitt, 1978, 1951) have revealed that networks effectiveness depends on situational factors. For example, the wheel and the Y networks are more effective in accomplishing simple tasks while the circle and all-channel are more effective on complex tasks. Effective communication is also very vital in enhancing the behaviour of members of the organization for the achievement of its cherished goals. The review also shows that when communication system in an organization is defective, usually, other problems are triggered and the result is crises. But when communication is effective and sound, it promotes positive change in the knowledge, attitude and behaviour of people within the organization.

Koontz, et al (1983) submitted that feedback is highly essential in order to check the effectiveness of communication. The only sure way to determine whether communication has really taken place is through feedback. That is why feedback must be given an important place in the process of communication. Adedoyin (1991) stressed the importance of language and communication skills in the process of disseminating information across to concerned people. The inability of the communicator to effectively communicate due to language deficiency will surely hamper the effectiveness of communication in an institution.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Inadequate or lack of good communication system may mar or make the development of any organization vis-a-vis the attainment of goals of the organization. Attempts to put in place an effective communication system in organizational set up, becomes a serious matter to managers, it is against this backdrop that a lot of researches have been carried out to find an antidote to this seemingly unavoidable organizational problem.

However, the available researches in this area only focus on business organizations. Studies in communication system as an effective management tool in tertiary institutions has not been given much attention based on limited literature.

A multi-campus university is a formal organization with complex tasks and certain goals orientation. As an institution, it operates a definite structure and has specialized, delimited objectives often emanating from outside the structure. Also, the degree of effectiveness with which its tasks are carried out and its goals are achieved is dependent upon quality communication systems adopted by the managers.

It is in realization of this gulf that this study focuses on communication system as a determinant of effective management for organization goals achievement in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study has the following as its objectives:

1. To describe the characteristics of the Senior/Management staff involved in the use of the various communication system in Olabisi Onabanjo University.
2. To identify the various types of communication system in use in the University and their level of usage.
3. To determine the level of effectiveness of communication systems adopted in the University.
4. To identify factors that influence the level of effectiveness of the communication systems adopted.
5. To examine the likely implication of the observed level of usage and effectiveness of communication system adopted in the University in the achievement of its organization goals.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study;

1. there is no significant relationship between the employment of formal communication system and one - way communication system for the achievement of organizational goals in Olabisi Onabanjo University;
2. there is no significant relationship between the employment of informal communication system and two - way communication system for the achievement of organizational goals in Olabisi Onabanjo University;
3. there is no significant relationship between the employment of one - way communication system and two way communication system for the achievement of organizational goals in Olabisi Onabanjo University;
4. there is no significant relationship between the employment of formal communication system and informal communication system for the achievement of organizational goals in Olabisi Onabanjo University;
5. there is no significant difference in the perception of academic and non-academic Staff about the effectiveness of communication systems in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

## METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

This particular study employed the ex-post-facto research design. The population for this study comprised all members of staff (junior, non-teaching and academic) of Olabisi Onabanjo University. A sample of 100 members of staff senior non-teaching staff comprising officers on Administrative Officer cadre from the rank of Assistant Registrar and Officers on Executive Officer cadre from the rank of Principal Executive Officer, Academic Staff saddled with some administrative responsibilities such as Heads of departments, Sub-Deans, Directors, Deans and Provosts as well as those who had held such position in the past were purposely selected. The instrument used was mainly the questionnaire which contained 25 items based on the research hypotheses and was structured on a four points Likert scale. The Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient was used to test hypotheses (a)-(d) while the t-test was used to test hypothesis (e).

## RESULTS

The analysis of the data obtained from this study was done within the framework of five hypotheses earlier formulated. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. In all, five hypotheses were put forward in this research. Each of the data was related to the hypotheses with a view of rejecting or failing to reject the hypotheses.

### LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN OLABISI ONABANJO UNIVERSITY

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the level of employment of the various communication system by Senior members of staff of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

TABLE 1: LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Communication System	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	% Score
Formal Communication	11.00	19.00	15.05	1.72	75.25
Informal Communication	8.00	16.00	11.47	1.72	57.35
One-way Communication	9.00	18.00	13.67	2.07	68.35
Two-way Communication	9.00	20.00	14.14	2.39	70.70
Effective Communication	6.00	18.00	12.70	2.39	63.50

It shows that on the average, the Senior members of staff in the University considered the use of formal communication in 75.25% of the cases, informal in 57.35% of the cases, One-way communication in 68.35% of the cases and Two-way communication in 70.70%. Overall, the communication system adopted by the senior members of staff of the Olabisi Onabanjo University is said to be about 63.50% effective. The results suggest a high incidence of one-way communication (68.35% of the cases).



**CORRELATION BETWEEN VARIOUS COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS ADOPTED**

The results using Pearson Product Moment Correlation are summarized on Table 2.

**TABLE 2: CORRELATION MATRIX SHOWING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIOUS COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

Communication System	Formal	Informal	One-Way	Two-Way
Formal Communication	1.000	-0.215*	0.051	-0.082
Informal Communication	-0.215*	1.000	0.002	0.149
One-Way Communication	0.051	0.002	1.000	0.268*
Two-Way Communication	-0.082	0.149	0.268*	1.000

Note:\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**HYPOTHESIS 1**

Table 2 reveals that there is a low positive correlation between formal communication system and one-way communication system. The effect of this is that the increase use of formal communication system enhances the use of one-way communication system. For example  $r = 0.51$  for formal and one-way communication is not significant using 0.05 level of significance.

**HYPOTHESIS 2**

Table 2 also indicated that there is a low positive correlation between the employment of informal communication system and two-way communication system. The increase use of informal communication enhances the use of two-way communication system. The relationship of 0.149 for informal and two-way communication system is not significant at 0.05 level of significance.

**HYPOTHESIS 3**

The table shows that there is a positive correlation between the employment of one-way communication system and two-way communication system. This is to say that the employment of both one-way communication system increases with the employment of two-way communication system in the University. The relationship of 0.268 for one-way communication system and two-way communication system is significant using 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis which states that "there is no significant relationship between the employment of one-way communication system" is hereby rejected.

**HYPOTHESIS 4**

From Table 2, it is clear that there is a negative correlation between the employment of formal communication system and informal communication system. The implication of this is that increase in the use of formal communication resulted in decrease in the use of informal communication system. Meanwhile the relationship of 0.215 is significant using 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis which states that "there is no significant relationship between the employment of formal communication system and informal communication system" is hereby rejected.

**HYPOTHESIS 5**

The results using t-test are depicted on Table 3:

**TABLE 3: THE AVERAGE SCORE OF THE TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF ON THEIR PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

Groups	N	X	SD	t cal	t tab	Remarks
Teaching Staff	66	12.4032	2.3641	1.71	1.96	Not Rejected
Non-Teaching Staff	34	13.2903	2.3692			

Table 3 revealed that the 't' calculated ratio of 1.71 is less than the 't' tabulated ratio of 1.96. The hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference in the perception of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff about the effectiveness of communication system in Olabisi Onabanjo University" is hereby not rejected.

**DISCUSSIONS**

The achievement of organizational goals may suffer a setback in the University considering the high incidence of one-way communication. One-Way Communication does not allow feedback which is an essential aspect of effective communication. It is however regretted that most of the communication that takes place in the world today is one-way. It only travels from sender to the receiver.

The experiment conducted by Leavitt and Mueller in 1951 on the suitability of one-way communication system and two-way communication system indicated that two-way communication is more accurate in terms of developing understanding than one-way communication in spite of the fact that two-way communication consumes more time than one-way communication. The effect of this is that two-way communication is result oriented.

In addition, the relatively low incidence of informal communication in the university might be connected with the desire of the University Management to achieve organizational goals within shortest possible time. This is in agreement with the belief that an organization that is highly bureaucratic in nature such as the University will normally tend towards the adoption of formal communication where emphasis is on documentation. The fact however, is that both formal and informal communication can be married successfully for the achievement of organizational goals. Informal communication once effected can be backed up by formal communication. The advantage of this method is that the feedback which is highly important might have been generated instantly or within shortest possible time to really assist the organization in the achievement of its goals.

Therefore, the hypothesis that "there is no significant relationship between formal communication system and one-way communication system" is hereby not rejected.

One would have expected that the adoption of formal communication system would have seriously discouraged the employment of one-way communication system taking into consideration the nature of the university environment where the level of literacy is expected to be high. However, the finding on this hypothesis only confirmed that the university management uses formal communication without having much regard for the role of feedback. This will be in disagreement with the goals of communication as put forward by Oyedijo (1995) that "through communication, superiors receive feedback about the performance of the workforce thus enabling them to make immediate corrections when necessary". In other words, decision making will be impaired. Therefore the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the employment of informal communication system and two-way communication system is hereby not rejected.

Informal communication is prone to filtering which is a barrier to effective communication. Most often, messages change along the line while moving through the process of communication especially through oral line which is a type of informal communication in organizations by means of filtering. (Adekola and Obasan, 1999). The University management ought not to have given much emphasis to informal communication to the detriment of formal communication.

Meanwhile, if informal communication is properly managed it can actually enhance the achievement of organizational goals. Adekola and Obasan (1999) confirmed that informal communication such as the grapevine which is often referred to as popular rumour, if authentic and reliable could be very helpful as some, very often may be factual and sincere and as such may worth investigating.

Moreover, the result as depicted Table 2 also indicated a high incidence of one-way communication system (68.35% of the cases) and also a high incidence of two-way communication system (70.70% of the cases). The much attention given to the use of one-way communication system in the University need to be addressed so that the University can reap the fruits of two-way communication system, Leavitt and Mueller (1951) conducted experiments involving communication from person A to B both with and without any flow of messages back from B to A.

In effect, they measured the value of feedback in human communication system which is guaranteed by the use of two-way communication system. As a result of the experiments, it was established that feedback is essential and that two-way communication system is more accurate in terms of developing understanding than one way communication in spite of the fact that two-way communication consumes more time than one-way communication.

Koontz et. al. (1983) also submitted that "to check the effectiveness of communication, feedback is essential". One cannot be too sure whether or not a message has been effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded and understood unless it is confirmed by feedback.

In all previous works, two-way communication is always ranked superior to one-way communication for the achievement of organizational goals.

The statistical results shown on Table 2 indicated that there is a negative correlation between the employment of formal communication system and informal communication system. The implication of this correlation is that increase in the level of use of formal communication lead to decrease in the level of use of informal communication system.

Moreover, the relationship of 0.215 between the adoption of formal communication system and informal communication system is significant using 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the above hypothesis is rejected and the implication of this is that there exist a significant relationship between the employment of formal communication and informal communication system.

Results on Table 2 also indicated that the University uses formal communication more often than informal communication system as the use of formal communication syndicated 75.25% of the cases while informal communication takes 57.35% of all the cases.

The high incidence of the level of use of formal communication can be understood considering the nature of the University environment and system of administration. Emphasis is placed highly on documentation.

The results on Table 3 also indicated those communication systems which are generally regarded as superior to others such as formal communication and two-way communication had the highest level of employment in the University. Therefore, the effectiveness of the communication systems as perceived by staff could be hinged on this fact.

This result also buttressed the assertion of Peretomode (1991) who submitted that message properly transferred and received with adequate feedback have the capacity to ensure the achievement of organizational goals.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present investigation was conceived against the background of identifying various types of communication system employed in Olabisi Onabanjo University as well as determining the perceived effectiveness of the various systems being adopted by the management of the University for the achievement of organizational goals.

From the findings of this study it is obvious that the Olabisi Onabanjo University still uses one-way communication and informal communication systems to a certain degree. Employment of these two systems of communication may not positively enhance the achievements of organizational goals. If the University wishes to move faster towards the achievement of its organizational goals, more emphasis must be placed on formal communication and two-way communication goals.

Moreover, there is need for the University to invest on certain information gadgets such as internet service, intercom, telephone, computer networks that will enhance the effectiveness of workers' productivity which on the long run will surely aid the achievement of organizational goals in the University.

The essence of feedback is very important in information dissemination and as such effort should be made by the University to encourage two-way communication system and all gadgets and processes that encourage the employment of two-way communication system and at the same time discourage the adoption of one-way communication system. Notwithstanding the result of findings of hypothesis five which dealt with the perception of both teaching staff and academic staff on the effectiveness of the communication system, efforts should still be geared toward jettisoning that defective communication system such as one-way communication systems.

Moreover, communication courses/training should be made available to University Administrators and staff so that they will be able to acquire extensive and intensive knowledge in the art of communication.

Finally, all involved in the realization of organizational goals achievement should put it at the back of their minds that feedback and continuous appraisal of communication flow is needed for the achievement of organizational goals. The feedback is for evaluation and the evaluation shows the strengths and weaknesses of any communication system put in use.

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