

Communication Practices in the Management of Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria

Ejeh, Emeka Ifeoma ¹, and Dr Okoro, Pius ²

¹Department of Educational Foundation, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki

²National Examinations Council, Ebonyi State Office-Abakaliki

Abstract: *This study investigates communication practices in the management of Colleges of education in South East Nigeria and the strategies that will help enhance the communication practices. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Population of the study was 26,790 respondents. The sample of the study is 1025 respondents. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 5 colleges of education in South East, Nigeria and 1025 respondents comprising 252 academic and non-academic staff and 773 final year students that constitute the sample for the study. Questionnaire was used for data collection and null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance were used for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions; qualitative analysis was used to present the interview, while t-test statistics was employed to test the hypotheses. The study revealed that modern communication facilities are not available in most of the colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. It was also found out that communication practices could be enhanced by constant face-to-face meetings, active listening and transparency. These strategies are necessary for effective communication in the management of colleges of education. Based on the findings, recommendations, use of concise language, constant face to face meetings and good communication flow among others were made.*

Keywords: *Communication, Management and Colleges of Education*

I. Introduction

Communication system in any organization like school is very vital to the survival and smooth running of the organization. Without communication process, managerial, administrative and academic functions will be difficult to achieve in the school. Communication is crucial to worker involvement in the sense that it will help increase mutual understanding between management and subordinates in order to enhance productivity. Employees need information as well as management need feedback from employees. Through communication, management can establish mutual understanding and exchange of ideas, information, experience and innovation for peaceful co-existence, conflict resolution, cumulative development, progress and well-being of the organizational structure. A good communication network in a school, therefore, helps to orient workers and increase staff involvement and commitment to the main objectives of the system (Sareen and Kumari 2011).

Communication therefore has been defined by Conrad and Poole (2005) defined communication as a process through which people, acting together create, sustain and manage meanings through the use of verbal and non-verbal signs and symbols with a particular context. Wayne, Cecil and Tarter (2013) view communication as a relational process during which sources transmit messages using symbols, signs and contextual cues to express meaning and influence behavior. Again, communication from the view of Nakpodia (2010) is the ingredients, which makes organization; it is the vehicle through which the basic management and administration functions are carried out.

Similarly, Keyton (2011) sees communication as a process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another. Essene (2000) sees communication as the transfer of thought from one person to another by post telephone, tele-printer and messages or by other means. It involves transmission" of memorandum reports; order estimates, quotations drawing and samples. Wherever two or more people work together, there is a need for interpersonal communication, the more effective the communication the higher the probability of effective joint social action. Thus if two individuals clearly invested the roles they are going to undertake and have clear expectations as to what each is to do in a particular situation, the probability is greater that they are going to be able to work together effectively. If there is no such clear understanding of the roles, the probability diminishes. Communication is therefore, central to all human behaviours. According to the researcher, communication is a process that people use to exchange messages and share meanings about their ideas and feeling with one another.

Communication process is the means and stages of communication, (Udeze, 2005). According to Yalokwu (2002), communication process involves four major elements namely: sender, message, channel and receiver. The sender initiates the communication. In a school, the sender is a person who has a need or desire to convey an idea or concept to others. The receiver is the individual to whom the message is sent. 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, non-verbal or written language. The message is sent through a channel which is the carrier of the communication. The medium can be face-to-face conversation, telephone call e-mail or written report. The receiver decodes the received message into meaningful information. Finally, feedback occurs when the receiver responds to the sender's message and returns the message to the sender. Feedback allows the sender to determine whether the message has been received and understood. (Keyton, 2011). The elements in the communication process determine the effectiveness of communication. A problem in any one of these elements can reduce communication effectiveness, (Keyton 2011). For example information must be encoded into a message that can be understood as the sender intended. For written media, the college management may choose from memos, letters, reports, bulletin, handbooks, newsletters and the like, for verbal media, choices include face-to-face conversations telephone, computer, public address systems, closed-circuit, verbal media, television, tape-recorded messages, sound slide shows, expressions, body position and even clothing can transmit message. When feedback does not occur, the communication process is referred to as one-way communication. Two-way communication occurs with feedback and is more desirable. Channel of communication is the means by which messages are transmitted, (Ajileye, 2004). Channel of communication is the recognized and predetermined means through which message can be transmitted in an organization, (Udeze, 2005). This channel can be formal or informal. Formal channels are methods sanctioned by the organization and are related to such organizational goals as regulation and innovation (Wayne, Cecil and Tarter 2013). When individuals communicated through informal channels and networks, they are using grapevines. Grapevine is the spread of communication or information through unofficial sources. It could be gossip or rumours. The direction of informal and formal channels can be vertical, horizontal, downward, upward or diagonal as well as one or two-way communication. Wayne et al (2013) see channels or networks as simply methods, vehicles or forms a message travels in organizations such as schools, they are lines of communication. These channels are discussed below:

Firstly, vertical channel of communication is the flow of communication from downward to upward direction, (Udeze 2005). It is the communication that takes place between people and those above and below them in the organizational hierarchy; it takes place usually along formal reporting lines as between management and their subordinates. Downward communication flow is used for giving out instructions from top level to lower level, (Guo and Sandez 2005). Again, it is a flow of communication from people at higher levels to those at lower levels in the organizational hierarchy, for example from the management through the deans of faculties to head of departments to academic or non academic staff and finally the students.

Secondly, upward channel: This is information or messages that emanates from subordinates to the superiors until it gets to the top of the hierarchy in any organizational set up, (Udeze 2005), for example is a message from students through academic or non academic staff to the heads of departments to deans of faculties to the management.

Thirdly, horizontal channel: This is the flow of communication across departments or units, usually from employees of the same status or heads of different units, (Ajileye, 2004). It is also a flow of information between peers or colleagues on the same or similar organizational levels such as among staff, heads of departments, deans of faculties or management. The major purposes of horizontal communication are sharing information with colleagues, resolving conflict, coordinating tasks, solving problem and building rapport (Wayne et al 2013).

Fourthly, diagonal channel is the flow of information involving persons from different levels which are not in direct reporting relationship with each other. The informal channel refers to as grapevine, members of the organization by - pass the normal chain of command to relay information that is build around the social relationship of the members of the organization. It is a situation where for instance a clerk passes his supervisor or head, of unit or head of department to report directly to the dean of faculty.

The importance of communication in colleges of education in South East Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. It means that in the management of the colleges of education, and for the colleges to achieve its set goals and objectives effective communication is involved. (Wayne et al 2013) rightly asserts that communication plays such a central role in schools that the key issue is not whether management, staff and students engage in communication but whether they communicate effectively. The college management runs the affairs of the college; they make a lot of decisions, plans, organize people and material resources, co-ordinates the activities of both academic and non academic staff and generally ensure that the educational goals are kept in view. Performing these functions obviously requires communication. They also communicate with academic and non academic staff, students, colleagues, the community members and the governing council, through telephone and discussion. They hold meetings and conferences, browse the internet, hold interviews with members of the public and clients of the college. Since the world is dynamic and there is new developments in communication technologies; computer age and job description flexibility in recent times, it has become necessary for the management of colleges of Education in South East Nigeria to acquire, and constantly update their knowledge on communication practices which will enhance the management of colleges of Education. Communication practices are many different ways to exchange

information or transfer messages, it could be through reading, writing, speaking, listening, visual means, technology, the media and numeric, (Yusuf 2005). Hall (2009) defines communication practices as ways of ensuring that voices are heard by different people in different languages at different levels, in different contexts and at different times. Practice therefore is a way of doing something that is habitual or regular. The management is expected to demonstrate proficiency in listening, oral and written communication practices and at the same time be aware of their non-verbal behaviour and be skilful of "reading" their subordinates. For the purpose of this study, the researcher sees communication practice as different ways of communicating regularly for effective information dissemination and effective college management. The management should also possess a high degree of communication technology, skills so as to help their subordinate increase their abilities in communication.

Modern communication technological advancement provides opinions that speed up and enhance communication in offices and college management. The use of modern electronic mail, voice mail, faxes, cellular phone, laptops, computers, e-mail, handheld pen-based electronic notepads, CD - ROM information storage tele-conferences and video- conferences make it possible for people scattered all over the country and the world to communicate without being in a room, (Kwache, 2005).

Many organizations (schools) can operate from "visual offices" like traditional business but are actually a network of workers connected with the latest technology. This is to tie together all parts of school to allow them to work together, which will enable work groups to share computing software, hardware and transmit pictures, documents and through networking of technology to bring about effective communication in management of colleges of education. This is why Yusuf (2005) describes communication technology as a term used to provide opportunities for students and faculty to communicate with one another through e-mail, mailing lists, chat rooms and others. It also provides quicker and easier access to more extensive and current information, and can be used to carry out complex, mathematical and statistical calculations. This means that communication technology application facilitates efficiency and effectiveness in achieving educational objectives through management. Osuwa (2002) outlined the functions of communication technology with regard to college management. These are; "to enable us to increase the capacity, flexibility and efficiency of channel for collecting information, it enables us to select the actual information we require at anytime from different sources, it enables us to transform, collect and select information, which needs to be rearranged and recorded for presentation in different ways."

Management therefore could be said to be the guidance or direction of people towards organizational goals or objectives (Akinnubi, Gbadayan, Fashiku and Kayode, 2012). Based on the functions above, management is also the co-ordination of the resources in an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling activities in the organization in order to attain organizational goals, Millins, (2005). In the school system, the management and staff perform the same management functions to rational organization and efficient utilization of school resource to maximally achieve school goals at different stages, (Akinnubi et al, 2012). In the management of colleges of education, communication is needed in both lecturing and administration. The effectiveness of the communication will promote the efficiency of the management of colleges of education. For the purpose of this study, management is defined as the act of purposeful action of planning, organizing, directing, communicating and controlling scarce human and material resources to achieve organizational goals. It is the act of getting things done through others. With effective management, colleges of education educational objectives will be achieved.

Colleges of education are teacher education institutions which have as their objective the production of highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for the primary and post primary levels of our educational system, page 197, (Ogbonnanya, 2010). The National Policy on Education, page 39, (2004) enumerates the goals of colleges of education as follows;

"produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for primary and post-primary levels of our educational system, encourage further the spirit of enquiring and creatively in teachers, help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals, provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations and enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession".

These objectives are achieved through teaching, research and development, virile staff development programmes, generation and dissemination of knowledge and inter-institutional co-operation which involves a lot of communication.

When communication is not properly need, in colleges of education in South East Nigeria pose a lot of negative effect in college management, which cause educational goal misplacement and creates impediment in teaching and learning processes. It creates bad relationship between the college management members of staff and students which resulted to conflict in carrying out their primary duties. The poor communication network in the

system created the spirit of distrust and fear. Any college where fear, distrust and threat are rife, communication will be undermined and any message received under such circumstances is viewed with skepticism and people in this case may not be willing to participate in certain communication encounter (Ikwuje 2002).

Therefore, teaching and learning process in colleges of education will be poorly enhanced. The researcher is motivated to study the communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East Nigeria for obvious reasons. In the first place, effective communication flow, immediate feedback, proper dissemination of information among others in colleges of education seems not to be achieved in South East, Nigeria. Studies such as Aluede (2001) and Adeyemi, Ekundayo and Alonge (2010) found that there is wide communication gap between the management and the students of tertiary institutions because the management denies the students the opportunity of being part of policy making decision in related matters of their welfare which results to students crisis and unpeaceful environment. Iwambe (2002) observed that most management of colleges of education are either lukewarm to information meant for members of staff and students or they communicate in a haphazard manner that the intended message never reaches the staff or students in a manner they can properly decode. The consequences of this are budget deficiency, failure of accreditation and delay of degree graduates going for youth service. This in turn mars the communication machinery of the college and the college fails to realize its educational goals. It is in this way that poor communication practice in the college breeds misunderstanding, suspicion, mistrust, rumors, creates conflict between the management and members of staff, and causes students crisis, delay in academic calendar and failure of accreditation of some faculties in the colleges of education. Ikwuje (2002) found that communication between the management and members of staff are filtered through rumours and counter rumours because of the existence of communication gap due to poor communication practices, and this causes misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Secondly, the problem of communication practices highlighted above can result in poor instructional delivery, conflict, and poor management, poor motivation of workers and communication break down in the colleges of education. Hence the need to conduct a research like this that focuses on communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East Nigeria and strategies that could help address the problem.

II. Statement of the Problem

Poor communication in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria has been a great concern to the management, members of staff and students. Effective communication practices are virtually indispensable. Poor communication practices could be as a result of poor communication facilities which may equally lead to delays in college programme, academic calendars, students' welfare and preparation for accreditation. This may equally affect the realization of colleges of education goals or objectives as stipulated in the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) by the Federal Government of Nigeria. This, according to the studies at the background has affected adversely the performance of administrative functions by the college management.

The problem of this study therefore put in question form are: why are communication practices ineffectively used by the college management? What can be done to improve the communication practices in management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria? Hence the need for the study. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out the communication practices in existence in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.
2. Find out the problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.
3. Suggest strategies that could enhance communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following Research Questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the communication practices in existence in the colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?
2. What are the problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?
3. What are the strategies that will enhance communication practices in the colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the staff and students on communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students on the strategies that will help address the problem of poor communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

II. Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. AH (2006) defines descriptive survey design as documenting or description of event in its natural phenomena without any manipulation of what is being observed. The research design was considered appropriate for the study because it will help the researcher collect data or information direct from the respondents in order to investigate improving communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

The study was carried out in South East geo-political zone of Nigeria. South East geo-political zone is made up of five states namely Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. These states of the geo-political zone are Igbo speaking areas. There are established colleges of education in the area of study. There are both federal owned colleges of education and state owned colleges of education in these five states. South East zone in Nigeria was chosen because it is observed by the researcher that this zone is known of its advancement in education. There are 7 federal and state colleges of education in South East Nigeria, three federal colleges of education and four state colleges of education.

The population of the study comprised all the 7 federal and state colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. At present, there are 3,258 of members' of staff and 23,532 students which gave a total number of 26,790 respondents. The colleges of education are: (1). Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. (2). Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, and (3), Federal College of Education (Technical) Umunze. The state Colleges of Education are: (1). Abia State College of Education (Technical), Arochukwu. (2). Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu. (3). Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo. (4). Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe in Anambra State. The respondents of this study consist of all the members of staff in all the departments and all the final year students of all the 7 Federal and-state colleges of education in south east, Nigeria. Source: (Personnel service unit and statistics and records unit of the colleges of education in south east, Nigeria 2014/2015 session).

The sample size for this study was 1025 respondents. The sampling size of the members of staff was determined using 10% and the sample size of the students was determined using 5%. The choice of this sample size was based on the premise of Nwana (2006) who stated that if the population is a few hundreds, a 40% or more sample will do; if many hundreds, a 20% sample will do; if a few thousand, a 10% sample will do and several thousand, 5% or less sample will do. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the five (5) colleges of Education out of seven (7) federal and state colleges of education in South East, zone. This is to ensure that all the states are represented simple random sampling technique was also used to select two hundred and fifty two (252) academic and non academic staff from the selected five colleges of education and the same simple random sampling technique was used to select seven hundred and seventy three (773) final year students from the selected colleges of education. Academic and non academic staff and final year students were used for the study because these members of staff are involved in communication practices in these colleges (either being a sender or a receiver) and the students feel the impacts of the communication practices in the colleges. Both groups are therefore in the better position to give reliable information on the availability of communication facilities, communication practices prevalent and what will be done to enhance communication practices in the management of colleges of education in south east, Nigeria.

The instruments for data collection were a researcher developed Questionnaire, titled: Communication Practice Questionnaire (CPQ) and interview schedule. The questionnaire is divided into three clusters: A, B and C. Cluster A requested information on the communication practices prevalent on the management of colleges of education in south east Nigeria, cluster B sought information on the problem associated with communication practices in colleges of education in south east Nigeria. Finally, cluster C required information on the strategies that will enhance communication practices in the colleges of education in south east, Nigeria. A 33-item questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents.

The questions for interview were designed from the research questions. It was used in this study to elicit information for the study. The researcher randomly selected ten (10) management staff (provost, deputy provost, registrar, and bursar and college librarian) two from each college and conducted face-to face interview with them. The interviews were conducted informally to allow the respondents to feel comfortable. All information given by the respondents were noted down as well as recorded.

The researcher presented three copies of the questionnaire to three experts from faculty of Education Ebonyi State University of Nigeria, two from Educational Foundations administration and planning option and one from Science Education (Measurement and evaluation). The experts were also presented with the purposes of the study and research questions as a guide. These experts were requested to thoroughly go through the items and evaluate the items in terms of clarity of language used, relevance of items to the purpose of the study and the suitability of the items to the level of the respondents. These experts made corrections which led to some modifications.

In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, a trial testing was carried out. The instruments were administered to 30 respondents comprising 10 academic and non-academic staff and 20 students of federal college of education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State, outside the study area. The data collected were collated and analyzed using cronbach Alpha method to enquire the internal consistency of the items. This method was considered appropriate because the items in the instrument were not dichotomously scored. The internal consistency reliability estimate yielded for cluster A (0.87); cluster B (0.79); cluster C (0.81); and cluster D (0.82). The grand reliability co-efficient of the instrument yielded (0.82) which indicated that the instrument is highly reliable for the study.

Based on the geographical spread of the population, the researcher employed and trained two research assistants. The assistants were directed on the modality for administering the instrument. The use of these research assistants helped to ensure that the actual respondents for whom the instrument was meant for were indeed those who completed them. It also helped to make clarification on items wherever the need arose. This helped to reduce likely errors that could have arisen in the filling of the responses for the different items. It also ensured that the percentage return of the instrument will be high. The direct technique of administration of the instrument helped the researcher to retrieved 1,010 questionnaires from the respondents. The questionnaire collected were 247 from the members of staff and 763 from the students totaling 1,010 respondents which is 99% return rate. The researcher randomly chose ten (10) out of twenty five (25) management staff from the five (5) selected colleges of education in South East, Nigeria and conducted face-to-face interviews. Each participant was interviewed by the researcher individually for about 30 minutes.

The data collected from the respondents was analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics will involve the use of means and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the inferential statistics will be used to test the hypotheses. In view of the fact that the four points scale is used for the instruments, the decision rule will be based on the mid-point of the scale which is 2.50. Therefore, the criterion mean of 2.50 and above will be accepted, as indicators of Agreement, while mean scores below the criterion mean will be indications of disagreement. Independent test was used to analyze the corresponding null hypotheses formulated for the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data on interview was analyzed using qualitative analysis that is reporting the interview the way respondents have responded to the issue the researcher raised.

III. Results

Research Question One: What are the communication practices in existence in the colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?

The data collected with items 1-12 of the instrument which dwell on communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in south-east Nigeria were used to answer research question 1. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Communication Practices in Existence in Colleges of Education in South-East, Nigeria.

SN	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD	Remark	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Managements listens to workers plight	3.51	0.50	A	3.36	0.77	A
2.	Advising staff to read notices on the board by the management	2.62	0.82	A	2.81	0.97	A
3.	Encouraging staff and students journals on college management	3.55	0.49	A	3.48	0.67	A
4.	Use of dialogue with staff and students without assumed answers	2.31	0.50	D	1.34	0.71	D
5.	Act of being transparent in disseminating information by management	2.76	0.84	A	2.81	0.94	A
6.	Management aligning their actions with their words	2.69	0.77	A	2.70	0.95	A
7.	Making use of all methods of communication to disseminate information by management	2.73	0.91	A	2.95	0.96	A
8.	Offering feedback as opinion not fact to the staff and students	2.32	0.50	D	2.46	0.68	D
9.	Encouraging questions from staff and students to get information on certain issues.	2.61	0.59	A	2.88	1.09	A
10.	Management gives meaningful and immediate feedback to the staff	2.72	0.83	A	3.14	1.01	A
11.	Being concise and straightforward in writing memos and letters	2.66	0.81	A	3.07	0.96	A
12.	Considers the channels of communication in disseminating information by management	2.59	0.88	A	2.79	0.99	A
	Cluster mean	2.76	0.22	A	2.82	0.49	A

Table 1 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education from 2.31 for item 4 to 3.55 for item 3 and for students, the mean

responses ranged from 1.34 for item 4 to 3.36 for item 1. Most of the items had mean values greater than 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The over all mean value on the communication practices prevalent was 2.76 and 2.82 for staff and students respectively.

Based on the fact that the over all mean were within the range of 2.50 – 3.49, it implies that the respondents agree that items in Table 1 are the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

The views of the management staff of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria were sought through interview on the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education. The respondents are of the opinion that the following are the communication practices prevalent in Colleges of Education in South East, Nigeria: Use of written communication (e-mail, circular, memo as text messages for important messages/information). Use of multi-dimensional practice, that is using many methods of instruction for particular information. Use of open communication practice (everything the management does is described openly).

Research Question 2: What are the problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?

The data collected with items 13-19 of the instrument on problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in south-east Nigeria were used to answer research question 2. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as present in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Problems Associated with Communication Practices in the Management of Colleges of Education in South-East, Nigeria.

13.	Poor listening skill by the management	3.23	0.85	A	2.58	0.97	A
14.	Presenting the college vision inappropriately	3.08	0.91	A	2.82	0.99	A
15.	Inability to write memos clearly and concisely	2.65	1.14	A	2.21	0.96	D
16.	Not using questions appropriately after interaction	2.97	1.02	A	2.62	0.96	D
17.	Management using ambiguous words during staff congress	3.08	1.00	A	2.67	0.95	A
18.	Lack of fund to buy modern communication technology	2.98	0.99	A	2.76	0.97	A
19.	Poor usage of media like journals by the staff	3.29	0.80	A	2.16	0.97	D
	Cluster Mean	3.04	0.52	A	2.55	0.56	A

Table 2 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the problems associated with the communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The table shows that the mean responses for staff ranged from 2.56 for item 3 to 3.29 for item 2. Most of the items had mean values greater than 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The overall mean value on the problems associated with communication practices was 3.04 and 2.55 for staff and students respectively.

Based on the fact that the overall mean were above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that the listed questionnaire items 13 – 19 are the problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. The problems associated with communication practices identified by management staff during interview include the following: Misinterpretation of circulars due to lack of staff and students capacity to read and understand the language, economic factor – low salary or delay in payment of salary can make staff not to attend meetings called by the management, lack of fund to maintain or buy new information and communication equipments affects communication negatively, Aggressiveness from students, that is the students are always ready to react negatively to any matter believing that they are being cheated, Harsh weather that is (being in a room without fan or air condition) affects the state of sender and the receiver by making either to lose concentration and approach in rendering the information by the sender causes communication problem.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies that will enhance communication practices in the colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?

The data collected with items 20-33 of the instrument which dwell on the strategies that will enhance communication practices in colleges of education in south-east Nigeria were used to answer research question 3. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Strategies that will Enhance Communication Practices in Colleges of Education in South-East, Nigeria.

SN	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD	Remark	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
20.	Constant face-to-face meetings will help reduce communication barrier	3.26	0.89	A	2.69	0.98	A
21.	Active listening communication practice should be used by college	3.29	0.82	A	2.85	0.98	A

22.	management to reduce communication barrier Effective use of communication audit will help reduce communication barrier in colleges of education	3.03	0.95	A	2.19	0.94	D
23.	Organizing seminars on interpersonal communication for all categories of staff	3.19	1.00	A	2.63	0.95	A
24.	College management should be transparent in communicating with the workers	3.57	0.72	A	2.91	1.00	A
25.	Management should encourage staff to read journals and college magazines	3.28	0.81	A	2.22	0.98	D
26.	Avoidance of connotations and ambiguity will help reduce communication barrier in these colleges	3.22	0.84	A	2.21	0.96	D
27.	Information should be planned and organized by the management before disseminating it.	2.69	1.11	A	2.68	1.01	A
28.	Management should always engage staff in dialogue without assumed answers	3.13	0.99	A	2.80	0.98	A
29.	Management should use all the methods of communication to disseminate information as the need arises	3.40	0.77	A	2.90	0.95	A
30.	Improvement on standard and maintenance of information and communication technology facilities is another strategy for improving effective communication	3.33	0.74	A	2.79	0.98	A
31.	Constant use of questions during interaction by the management will help to reduce communication barrier	3.30	0.82	A	2.82	0.96	A
32.	Provision of fund for communication facilities will also help reduce communication barrier	3.11	0.84	A	2.79	0.98	A
33.	Management should consider the channel of communication in disseminating information	3.23	0.85	A	2.21	0.98	D
	Cluster mean	2.76	0.22	A	2.82	0.49	A

Table 3 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in the colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The table shows that the mean responses for staff ranged from 2.69 for items 27 to 3.57 for item 24 and for students the mean responses ranged from 2.19 for item 22 to 2.91 for item 24. Majority of the items had mean values greater than 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The over all mean value on the strategies that will help enhance common practices was 3.22 and 2.62 for staff and students respectively.

Based on the fact that the over all means were above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agree with the items are the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The findings from the interview schedule with regards to the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria include: Provision of fund: This will help the management to maintain or buy new computer equipments to enhance communication practices, use of mobile mega phone when there is an emergency. Provision of advanced technology system in terms of telephones, radio, ipad, and computer system, use of carrot and stick method by the management on staff and students. Carrot is the juicy aspect of administration, that is starting in time to give out goodies (pay salaries to staff in time, pay staff claims, workshops), then the management can now give out the information, example, keeping the rules and regulation of the college. After giving carrot and management notices that some staff or students are not responding positively, they now use stick which might be in form of query or suspension, Management being friendly with the staff and students, Building trust with staff and students, Looking for feedback from staff and students by asking them questions, giving out academic regulation pamphlets to every student at the beginning of every semester. This will help the students to know the programme of the college for the semester and Calling for students' congress.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the staff and students on communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean ratings of the staff and students on communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

subjects	N	SD	df	t-value	sig	decision
staff	247	2.76	0.22			
students	763	2.82	0.49	1008	-0.34	0.22
						not sig.

Sig. = significant

The result presented in Table 4 shows the overall mean response on the communication practices prevalent in federal and state colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. The overall mean response on the communication practices prevalent for staff was 2.76 with a standard deviation of 0.22 and 2.82 with a standard deviation of 0.49 for students. The difference between the overall mean response of staff and students of colleges of education in South East Nigeria was 0.06.

Table 4 also revealed that a t-test value of -0.35 was obtained with associated probability value of 0.22. Since the associated probability (0.22) was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of the staff and students on communication practices prevalent in federal and state colleges of education in South East Nigeria was not rejected. Thus, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students with regards to the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students on the strategies that will help address the problem of poor communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

Table 5: t-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean ratings of the staff and students on the strategies that will help address the problem of poor communication practices in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria.

subjects	N	SD	df	t-value	sig	decision
staff	247	3.22	0.39	1008	19.48	0.00
students	763	2.62	0.49			

Sig. = significant

The result presented in Table 5 shows the overall mean response on the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in Federal and state colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The overall mean response for staff was 3.22 with a standard deviation of 0.39 and 2.62 with a standard deviation of 0.49 for students. The difference between the mean response of staff and students of federal and state colleges of education in South East, Nigeria was 0.60.

Table 5 also revealed that a t-test of 19.48 was obtained with associated probability value of 0.00. Since the associated probability was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students with regards to the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in federal and state colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

IV. Discussion

Communication Practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

In answering the above research question, it was revealed that staff and students agreed that management listens to workers plight, encourages staff to read journals on college management, advises staff to read notices on the board, management is transparent in disseminating information, aligning their actions with words, and uses all methods of communication to disseminate information. Management also encourages questions from staff to get information on certain issues, giving meaningful and immediate feedback to the staff, being concise in given information and considering the channels of communication in disseminating information as the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

This finding agrees with the submission of Davis (2003) who pointed that effective communication is intended for conveying information, instruction, advice, feelings, opinions and facts correctly and accurately from one person to another irrespective of status and personality characteristics. This is in line with opinion of Obi (2004) that if the college management effects communication practices they will be able to build the mission, vision, values and goals of the college.

The result of the test in table two (2) revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students with regard to the communication practices prevalent in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. The overview given by the respondents to research question 2 in the items in table 2 are communication practices prevalent in college of education in South East, Nigeria. In testing the null hypotheses, the null hypothesis was not rejected since the probability value of 0.22 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This means that the views of the staff and students of college of education therefore corresponded. In the interview schedule, respondents also acknowledged the items in table 2 as communication practices prevalent in college of education in South East, Nigeria.

The problems associated with communication practices in-the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

With reference to the problems associated with communication practices in the management of colleges of education in South East, Nigeria, the research findings showed that staff agreed that poor listening skill by the

management, not presenting the college vision appropriately by the management, not writing memos clearly and concisely, not using questions appropriately after interaction, the management using ambiguous words during staff congress, lack of fund to buy modern communication technology and poor usage of media journal by the staff are problems associated with communication practices. While students agreed on poor listening skill by the management, not presenting the college vision appropriately by the management, not using questions appropriately after interaction, the management using ambiguous words during staff congress, lack of fund to buy modern communication technology as problems associated with communication practices in college of education. They disagreed on not writing memos clearly and concisely and poor usage of media journals by the staff as the problems associated with communication practices in college of education. This is an indication that the listed items were generally accepted by the respondents as problems associated with communication practices in the management of college of education.

This findings confirm the observation of Ramona (2012) that poor listening skills in an organization has been identified as a cause or barrier to effective organizational communication. Poor listening skill can cause misinterpretation, misunderstanding and rumours in an -organization. Poor listening skill can also aggravate students' crises in colleges of education/It is therefore very reasonable for management to learn communication practice of having a listening ear in order to maintain good relationship with the other stakeholders; this is to elicit feedback from management who develop an atmosphere of trust and confidence.

This finding is also in line with the assertion of Ojo (2004) that communication barriers could arise as a result of management using ambiguous words to the receiver and sometimes arises when the source or sender lacks credibility with respect to the issue at hand. Barriers may also arise as a result of management not writing memos clearly and-concisely and not using questions appropriately. Neeta (2010) in reflection to the study on table (4) result, attributed the following as challenges of effective communication in organization, thus, poor listening, lack of feedback, distrust, group size, information overload, language, use of ambiguous words and not being concise and clear can distort a free flow of communication. Moreover, lack of planning, unqualified assumptions, lack of coherence, poor organization, awkward sentence structure, jargons and failure to clarify implications of information sent are some of the barriers according to Ojo (2004) that could hinder effective communication and productivity. The interview schedule respondents were also in support of the above findings as the problems associated with communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

The strategies that will help enhance communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria.

With regard to the fifth research question, members of staff were of the opinion that the following items are the strategies that enhance communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. The items are: constant face-to-face meetings, active listening, effective use of communication audit, organizing seminars on interpersonal communication for all categories of staff, college management should be transparent in communicating with workers, management should encourage staff to read journals and college magazines, avoidance of connotation and ambiguity, planning and organizing information by management before disseminating, should always engage staff in dialogue without assumed answers, should use all the methods of communication in disseminating information, improvement on standard and maintenance of information and communication technology facilities, constant use of questions during interaction by the management, provision of fund for communication facilities and management should consider the channels of communication in disseminating information. Students agreed on all the items, except, effective use of communication audit, encouragement of staff to "read journals and college magazines, avoidance of connotations and ambiguity and considering channels of communication in disseminating information.

Supporting the above finding, Miller (2006) opined that communication practices like face-to-face meetings, planning of information, dialogue, use of questions during discussion be further developed among the members of the school system. Effective communication in colleges will create a conducive learning environment in the college for effective administration. The finding is also in line with the work of Little John and Foss (2005) which opined that basic communicative skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening should be developed among the members of the college system. Other study related to the finding, Wayne (2013) shows that school administrators give suggestions, ask questions and stimulate participation, encourage alternative suggestions and demonstrate a desire for a group to reach its own conclusion. Erven (2013) with agreement to the finding of Wayne showed that for an organization to maintain sound communication without barriers, the management must excel in giving suggestions, engaging in information exchange and avoiding information over load. Training is also necessary in other to ensure effective communication in the organization, since training itself is a motivational tool, because when giving the opportunity to participate in training, workers feel accepted, recognized and learn the ability to deal with communication barriers. The interview schedule respondents also buttressed the finding from survey study concerning the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in college of education in South East, Nigeria.

The data in table five (5) revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students with regard to the strategies for enhancing communication practices in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria. In testing the null hypotheses, the null hypothesis was rejected since the probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. These show that staff and students of colleges of education South East Nigeria. differ in their opinion on the strategies that will help enhance communication practices in these colleges of education.

V. Conclusion

Communication plays a vital role in the success of any organization. Communication plays a central role in schools but can be affected by some communication problems leading to poor communication practices. Highly effective communication is a powerful factor in determining the management's career success. Therefore, the importance of effective communication cannot be over emphasized in our daily activity as human beings. Poor communication generates poor organization, rebuilt and creates a "negative impression among communicators towards achieving organizational goals. From the result obtained from the hypothesis and analysis of the table, the researcher concludes that newspapers, pamphlets, teleconferencing, radio broadcast, electronic bulletin boards, fax and video recording are communication facilities not available in college of education. However, it was discovered that most of the communication facilities used are print and non print facilities, modern communication facilities are not available. The communication practices prevalent in college of education in south east, Nigeria include: Management listens to workers plight, encourages staff to read notices on the board, being transparent in dissenting information, encourages staff to read journals, aligns their actions with their words, uses all methods of communication to disseminate information, encourages questions from staff, given meaningful and immediate feedback to staff, being concise in giving information and considering the channels of communication in disseminating information.

Communication practices in Colleges of education is faced with problems like lack of fund, poor usage of medium journals, misinterpretation, aggressiveness by students, out dated equipment, use of ambiguous words by management, staff not attending seminars, poor listening skill by the management and lack of feedback. However, the management should use clear and concise words, constant face-to-face meetings, and active listening skill; improve on standard and maintenance of information and communication technology facilities, effective use of communication' audit and organizing interpersonal communication seminar for all categories of staff as ways that could help improve communication practice for enhancing college of education management. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of staff and students with regard to the communication practices prevalent in federal and state colleges of education.

References

- [1]. Ajileye, G. (2004). *Humanities and the Human Society*, Owerri Taurus Publications.
- [2]. Akinnubi, O. P., Gbadeyan, C. I., Fashiku, C. O, and Kayode, D. J. (2012). Effective communication. A tool for improvement of secondary school management. *International Journal of Education and practice*. 3 (7) 105-110.
- [3]. AH, M. J. (2013). Improving communication techniques for enhancing secondary school administration in Kogi-East Education Zone of Kogi State. *Unpublished M.Ed Thesis Faculty of Education*. University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- [4]. Aluede, O. O. (2001). Factors influencing students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Edo State of Nigeria. *Education Research-Quarterly*, 24 (3). 10-26.
- [5]. Conrad, C. & Poole, M. S. (2005). *Strategic organization communication" in a global economy*. Belmont, C. A.: Thouson Wadsworth Publication.
- [6]. Davis, K. (2003). *Communication within management*. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.
- [7]. Essene, R. A. (2000). *Business and office management*, An Introductory Text. Ibadan, Nigeria: End-Time Publishing House Ltd.
- [8]. Erven, B. L. (2013). *Overcoming barriers to communication*. North Carolina. PML Publishing Division.
- [9]. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *The National Policy on Education*. Abuja: FGN. Page 39.
- [10]. Guo, K. L. & Sandeze, Y. (2005). *International Journal on Workplace Communication*. Health.adim.jgpub.com/borkowshi/
- [11]. Hall, R. H. (2002). *Organizations: structures, processes and outcomes*. (8th ed.) Upper Saddle River, N. J. Prentice Hall.
- [12]. Ikwuje, M. O. (2002). Strategies for improving communication in secondary schools in Olamaboro Local Government Area of Kogi State. *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis*, University of Port Harcourt.
- [13]. Iwambe, A. T. (2002). Communication as installment for enhancing workers' performance in a school organization. *Knowledge review* 5(6). 77-84/
- [14]. John, S. & Foss (2005). *Effective management skills! Managing people*, Britain: Sphere Books Limited.
- [15]. Keyton, J. (2011). *Communication and organizational culture: A key to understanding work experience*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [16]. Kwache P. (2005). *A Scenerio, workshop and recommendation for implementation of a course management system (CMC) in a university-FUTY, Nigeria*. Retired January 2015 from: <http://essay.utwente.nl/56193/1/scriptie-kwache.PDF>.
- [17]. Miller, S. (2006). *Conversation: A history of a declining art*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- [18]. Millins, L. J. (2005). *Management and organizational behaviour* (7th ed). New Delhi, Prentice Hall.
- [19]. Nakpodia, E. D. (2010). The influence of communication on administration of secondary schools in Delta State. *The Nigeria International Ngo Journal* 5(8).
- [20]. Nwanna, (2006). An appraisal of the major features and problems encountered by the faculty of education, university of Nigeria Nsukka for the period of 1975 – 1980. A report presented at education week of the faculty of education university of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- [21]. National Communication for College of Education (2005), statistical Digest on Colleges of Education in Nigeia 2001/2002 and 2002/2003. Abuja. Nigeria.

- [22]. Neeta, S. (2010). Communication at Work Place. *International journal of education research and technology* 1 (2). 5-8.
- [23]. Obi, E. (2004). *Issues in Educational Administration*, Enugu. Empathy International.
- [24]. Ogbonnaya, N.O. (2010). Principles and Application of Educational Policies in Nigeria. Nsukka: University Trust Publisher.
- [25]. Ojo, G. O. (2004). *Communication is a tool of management control* in J. B. Babalola and S. O. Adedeji (eds). *Contemporary Issues in Educational Management: A book of honour* Ibadan: Awemark Printers.
- [26]. Osuwa, A. A. (2002). Information Technology and its Application in accounting education. *Business Education Journal* 3(5): 37-46.
- [27]. Ramona, L. G. (2012). Organizational Communication, Bridging the Gap between managers and the employees. *Unpublished Ph.D thesis presented to the faculty in communication and leadership studies*. Gonzaga University.
- [28]. Sareem, S. & Kumari, S. (2011). Role conflict in Resolution to emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers. *International Referred Research Journal*. 3 (27) 66-67.
- [29]. Wayne, K., Cecil, G. M. and Tarter, C. J.-(2013). *Educational Administration Theory, Research and Practice*. (9th ed). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill 388-425.
- [30]. Yalokwu, P. O. (2002). *Fundamentals of Management*. Bariga. Lagos: Peak publishers.
- [31]. Yusuf, M. (2005). Information and communication Technology and Education. Analyzing the Nigeria national policy for information technology. *International Education Journal* 6(3), 316-321