

Influence of Principals' Communication Skills on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of principals' communication skills on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the influence of written communication skill, and public speaking skill, on effective administration. Two research questions guided the study, while two corresponding null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 1,776 teachers from 43 public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample of 317 teachers was selected through proportionate stratified and multi-stage sampling techniques. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled "Influence of Principals' Communication Skills on Administration of Secondary Questionnaire" (IPCSASQ). The instrument was validated by experts in Educational Foundations and Measurement and Evaluation, while a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Chi-square statistics were used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that Principals' written communication skills significantly influenced effective administration of public secondary schools and Principals' public speaking skills significantly influenced effective administration of public secondary schools. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that principals' communication skills significantly influence the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. It was therefore, recommended among others that the Taraba State Ministry of Education and the Taraba State Post Primary School Management Board should organize regular seminars, workshops, and in-service training programmes to improve principals' interpersonal communication skills for effective school administration.

Keywords: Communication Skills, Principals' Communication Skills, Effective Administration, and Public Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Effective administration is "the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources and activities within an organization to achieve its goals efficiently and effectively." This definition highlights the importance of coordinated efforts and resource management to ensure organizational objectives are met successfully (Cole 2018). Effective administration of public secondary schools is a multidimensional process that ensures the integration and harmonization of various elements of school management to achieve institutional goals. This encompasses not only the coordination of physical and human resources but also the strategic alignment of policies, practices, and programs to support academic excellence and holistic development. It involves a systematic approach to resource allocation, ensuring that financial, material, and human resources are optimally utilized to address the needs of the school. Additionally, effective administration entails the proper coordination of staff, where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, fostering teamwork and accountability among teachers, non-teaching staff, and administrative personnel.

Systematic planning is another critical component of effective administration. This involves setting clear, measurable objectives and designing actionable strategies to achieve them within specified timelines. Through robust evaluation mechanisms, administrators can monitor progress, identify challenges, and implement corrective actions to enhance the effectiveness of academic and extracurricular programs. Evaluation ensures that the school remains adaptable to changing circumstances while maintaining a commitment to its mission and vision.

The impact of administrative effectiveness is profound, shaping the overall performance of students and staff by creating a nurturing environment conducive to learning and teaching. A well-administered school promotes discipline, improves teacher motivation, and enhances student engagement, thereby leading to better academic outcomes. Yusuf and Dada (2020) highlight that schools with strong administrative practices not only achieve higher student performance but also report improved teacher satisfaction and stronger community involvement. This underscores the interconnected nature of effective administration, where the benefits extend beyond the classroom to foster a thriving educational community. Conversely, the absence of effective administration often results in organizational chaos, with mismanagement of resources, unclear communication, and a lack of focus on educational priorities. Poor administration can lead to decreased staff morale, high teacher turnover, and a lack of student discipline, ultimately diminishing academic achievement and eroding public confidence in the school system. In the context of public secondary schools, particularly in regions like the Jalingo Education Zone, where challenges such as limited funding, overcrowding, and infrastructural deficits are prevalent, effective administration becomes even more critical. It serves as a cornerstone for addressing these challenges, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and fostering a sustainable educational environment that meets the diverse needs of students and stakeholders.

Principals' communication skills are crucial pillars underpinning the overall success and efficiency of school administration. These skills enable principals to clearly and effectively transmit ideas, instructions, and expectations to a diverse range of stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, administrative staff, and community members. The ability to communicate well ensures that principals can convey the school's goals and vision in a manner that is both inspiring and easily understood, thus motivating teachers and staff to work collectively towards common objectives. Effective communication also plays a significant role in building trust and fostering a collaborative school culture, where all stakeholders feel heard and valued. Beyond merely transmitting information, principals' communication skills facilitate the understanding of the concerns, suggestions, and feedback from different groups within the school community. This two-way communication is essential for identifying and addressing challenges promptly, making informed decisions, and adapting school policies to meet evolving needs. According to Okeke et al. (2021), communication is the bedrock of educational leadership and management because it ensures that policies, directives, and feedback loop through the school system accurately, minimizing misunderstandings and promoting smooth operational processes.

In complex environments such as public secondary schools in the Jalingo Education Zone, where principals regularly engage with teachers, students, parents, education authorities, and local communities, the importance of strong communication skills cannot be overstated. These schools often face multifaceted challenges that require principals to negotiate, mediate conflicts, and foster cooperation among diverse groups. The effectiveness with which principals communicate can significantly influence the resolution of conflicts, enhance staff morale, and improve the level of stakeholder satisfaction. Ultimately, principals' communication competence serves as a critical determinant of administrative efficiency and the overall quality of education delivered within these schools. In this study, principals' written communication skill, and principals' public speaking skill are considered as sub-independent variables of the study.

Written communication encompasses all written forms of conveying information, including official memos, reports, correspondence, and policy documents. Principals' ability to write clearly and concisely is essential for maintaining transparency, ensuring accountability, and facilitating effective record-keeping. Written communication serves as a formal means of documenting decisions, disseminating information, and establishing guidelines for school operations (Ahmed & James, 2019). In public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, where schools often rely heavily on written documents for communication with education boards and other stakeholders, the ability to write effectively can prevent misunderstandings, streamline processes, and enhance administrative efficiency.

Public speaking is the art and practice of effectively addressing and engaging large audiences, encompassing a variety of formal and informal settings such as staff meetings, parent-teacher forums, community gatherings, and educational conferences. For school principals, public speaking serves as a vital communication tool to articulate the institution's vision, outline goals, share updates on academic progress, and inspire collective action among stakeholders. It requires a combination of clarity, confidence, emotional intelligence, and the ability to tailor messages to the needs and expectations of diverse audiences. Effective public speaking not only ensures that key messages are communicated but also fosters trust and credibility in the speaker's leadership.

According to Igwe and Chika (2022), principals with strong public speaking skills are better positioned to inspire and persuade their audiences, creating a sense of shared purpose and encouraging active participation from staff, parents, and community members. This skill is particularly critical for promoting a positive school image, building partnerships, and advocating for resources or policy support. In regions like Jalingo Education Zone, where principals often navigate interactions with government officials, local community leaders, and parents, public speaking becomes a core leadership competency. Principals are frequently required to deliver speeches during school events such as graduation ceremonies, PTA meetings, or community outreach programs. These opportunities to address a public audience are critical for building community trust, garnering support for school initiatives, and showcasing the institution's achievements. Principals who master the art of public speaking can effectively advocate for their schools, secure resources, and enhance the school's reputation, contributing to a thriving educational environment.

The Jalingo Education Zone continues to face several challenges in the administration of public secondary schools, as evidenced by delays in the dissemination of school information, poor coordination of academic and administrative activities, ineffective communication between principals and teachers, and limited involvement of parents and other stakeholders in school affairs. In many schools, principals often experience difficulties in clearly communicating school policies, assigning responsibilities, and providing timely feedback to staff, which sometimes results in misunderstanding, role conflict, and low staff commitment. Observation also suggests that weak communication between school administrators and teachers has contributed to poor staff morale, ineffective conflict resolution, and challenges in maintaining discipline among students.

Principals' communication skills and the effective administration of public secondary schools is fundamental to achieving educational goals. Each sub-variable: interpersonal communication, active listening skills, written communication, public speaking, and digital communication plays a distinct role in enhancing administrative practices. Addressing the gaps in these communication skills among principals in Jalingo Education Zone can lead to improved resource management, better stakeholder relationships, and enhanced student outcomes.

Observation suggests that public secondary schools in this zone continue to experience inefficiencies such as poor resource management, lack of staff accountability, and weak stakeholder collaboration. These challenges have led to declining teacher motivation, increased student indiscipline, and unsatisfactory academic outcomes, reflecting a gap in the administrative effectiveness required to meet institutional goals. For instance, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) reports indicate that despite interventions such as the training of school administrators and the provision of grants for infrastructure, many schools in the region still struggle with overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and ineffective leadership.

The persistence of ineffective administration raises concerns about the administrative capacity of school principals, particularly their communication skills, which are critical for engaging stakeholders, resolving conflicts, and ensuring the smooth implementation of school policies. It is on this background, that the researcher intends to carry out the study on influence of principals' communication skills on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Empirical studies revealed that Principals' written communication Skill influenced Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools Adigun (2017) found that principals' written communication significantly enhanced administrative efficiency, especially in documentation and policy implementation in public

secondary schools in Lagos State. Similarly, Okeke (2018) reported that principals' written communication had a significant positive relationship with teacher satisfaction and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. Additionally, Olatunji (2019) established that principals' written communication significantly influenced effective decision-making through proper record-keeping and staff coordination in public secondary schools in Oyo State. Likewise, Adebayo (2020) found a significant positive relationship between principals' written communication and conflict resolution effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. Also, Kassim (2021) reported that principals' written communication positively influenced staff discipline and school administration in Kaduna State public secondary schools. Nwankwo and Eze (2022) revealed that principals' written communication significantly improved teacher productivity and policy implementation in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Empirical studies revealed that Principals' Public Speaking Skill influenced Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools: Abubakar (2017) found that principals' public speaking skills significantly improved staff motivation and created a positive school climate in public secondary schools in Katsina State. Likewise, Okoro (2018) established that principals with effective public speaking skills significantly enhanced decision-making processes and communication efficiency, thereby improving administrative outcomes in public secondary schools in Delta State. Similarly, Ibrahim (2019) revealed that principals possessing strong public speaking abilities achieved higher stakeholder engagement, resulting in improved school administration and teacher performance in Kano State. Similarly, Eze (2020) reported that principals' public speaking skills significantly enhanced conflict resolution and contributed to effective school management in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Additionally, Adebayo (2021) found that principals with strong public speaking skills promoted team building and staff collaboration, thereby enhancing administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State public secondary schools. Rahman and Bello (2022) also reported a strong positive relationship between principals' public speaking skills, teacher productivity, and effective dissemination of school policies in public secondary schools in Bauchi State.

Statement of the Problem

Effective administration of public secondary schools is essential for achieving educational goals and creating an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning. School administration involves planning, coordinating human and material resources, implementing policies, maintaining discipline, and fostering collaboration among teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. Principals, as the chief administrative officers of schools, play a crucial role in ensuring that these responsibilities are effectively carried out. Among the competencies required for effective school administration, communication skills remain fundamental, as they facilitate information sharing, decision-making, conflict resolution, staff motivation, and stakeholder engagement.

Observation suggests that many public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, continue to experience administrative challenges such as poor coordination of school activities, weak teacher-principal relationships, delayed dissemination of important information, ineffective feedback mechanisms, and limited collaboration between school management and stakeholders. These challenges have contributed to declining teacher morale, increased student indiscipline, poor conflict management, and unsatisfactory academic performance among students. Reports from the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) indicate that despite interventions such as training programmes for school administrators, infrastructural support, and policy reforms aimed at strengthening school management, many public secondary schools still face persistent difficulties in achieving effective administration.

The persistence of these challenges raises concerns about the communication competence of school principals, particularly their ability to communicate clearly, listen actively, provide timely feedback, and maintain productive interpersonal relationships within the school system. Ineffective communication among principals may result in misunderstandings, poor staff coordination, unresolved conflicts, weak implementation of school policies, and reduced stakeholder trust in school leadership. Although government and educational authorities have made efforts to improve school administration through capacity-building workshops and supervisory support, the problem of ineffective administration continues to be evident in many public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone. It is against this background, that the researcher intends to carry out the study on

influence of principals' communication skills on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria with a view to determining how communication competencies of principals can enhance administrative effectiveness in schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' communication skills on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of:

- Principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.
- Principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is the influence of principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria?
- What is the influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 1,776 teachers from 43 public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample of 317 teachers was selected through proportionate stratified and multi-stage sampling techniques. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Influence of Principals' Communication Skills on Administration of Secondary Questionnaire" (IPCSASQ). The instrument was validated by experts in Educational Foundations and Measurement and Evaluation, while a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Chi-square statistics were used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Responses on the Influence of Principals' Written Communication Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	The principal's written memos and notices are clear and easy to understand.	317	3.61	0.54	Agreed

2	The principal's written communication is concise and straight to the point.	317	3.55	0.56	Agreed
3	The principal uses correct grammar, spelling and punctuation in official communications.	317	3.66	0.50	Agreed
4	The principal's written messages reflect a professional tone.	317	3.59	0.53	Agreed
5	The principal delivers written communications such as circulars and directives on time.	317	3.48	0.61	Agreed
6	The principal ensures that written communication is relevant to school operations.	317	3.52	0.58	Agreed
7	The principal makes written communication accessible to all staff.	317	3.44	0.63	Agreed
8	The principal follows up written communication with verbal clarification when necessary.	317	3.39	0.67	Agreed
9	The principal's written communication reduces misunderstanding among staff.	317	3.63	0.52	Agreed
10	The principal uses written communication as a reliable record for administrative decision-making.	317	3.57	0.55	Agreed
Cluster Mean			3.54	0.57	Agreed

Source: Field work (2026). Criterion Mean: Mean $\geq$ 2.50 = Agreed; Mean $<$ 2.50 = Disagreed.

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of teachers' responses on the influence of principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The mean ratings ranged from 3.39 to 3.66, indicating that all the items were above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest-rated item was "The principal uses correct grammar, spelling and punctuation in official communications" (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.50), indicating that respondents viewed accuracy and professionalism in written communication as essential for effective administration.

The least-rated item was "The principal follows up written communication with verbal clarification when necessary" (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.67), although respondents still agreed with the statement. The cluster mean of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 0.57 indicates that respondents generally agreed that principals' written communication skill contributes positively to the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Research Question Four

What is the influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Responses on the Influence of Principals' Public Speaking Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
11	The principal uses public speaking to clearly communicate the school's goals and vision.	317	3.64	0.52	Agreed

12	The principal's public speeches motivate both staff and students towards better performance.	317	3.58	0.55	Agreed
13	The principal demonstrates clarity during staff meetings through effective public speaking.	317	3.55	0.56	Agreed
14	The principal effectively uses public speaking during assemblies to instill discipline.	317	3.48	0.61	Agreed
15	The principal's tone during public speaking helps to build trust.	317	3.61	0.54	Agreed
16	The principal uses storytelling and real-life examples to improve staff engagement.	317	3.39	0.68	Agreed
17	The principal's public speeches are well-organized to influence effective decision-making.	317	3.52	0.58	Agreed
18	The principal's ability to speak publicly enhances communication during PTA meetings.	317	3.57	0.57	Agreed
19	The principal uses public speaking to acknowledge and celebrate staff achievements.	317	3.45	0.63	Agreed
20	The principal's public speaking fosters unity and cooperation among staff and students.	317	3.60	0.53	Agreed
Cluster Mean			3.54	0.58	Agreed

Source: Field work (2026). Criterion Mean: Mean $\geq$ 2.50 = Agreed; Mean $<$ 2.50 = Disagreed.

Table 2 presents the mean and standard deviation of teachers' responses on the influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The mean ratings ranged from 3.39 to 3.64, indicating that all the items exceeded the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest-rated item was "The principal uses public speaking to clearly communicate the school's goals and vision" (Mean = 3.64, SD = 0.52), indicating that respondents considered clear communication of school goals an important element of effective administration.

The least-rated item was "The principal uses storytelling and real-life examples to improve staff engagement" (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.68), although respondents still agreed with the statement. The cluster mean of 3.54 with a standard deviation of 0.58 indicates that respondents generally agreed that principals' public speaking skill positively influences the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Null Hypothesis Three (H₀₃)

H₀₃: There is no significant influence of principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Chi-square Analysis of the Influence of Principals' Written Communication Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

Items	SD	D	A	SA	Total	chi-square	Df	Sig. Dec
Item 1	2	5	116	194	317	151.227	27	0.000

Item 2	2	7	127	181	317			
Item 3	1	4	102	210	317			
Item 4	2	6	120	189	317			
Item 5	4	10	149	154	317			
Item 6	3	8	138	168	317			
Item 7	5	12	156	144	317			
Item 8	7	15	161	134	317			
Item 9	2	5	113	197	317			
Item 10	2	6	131	178	317			
Total	30	78	1313	1749	3170			

Table 3 indicates that the Pearson Chi-square value obtained was 151.227 with 27 degrees of freedom and a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Since the calculated p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that principals' written communication skill has a statistically significant influence on the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Null Hypothesis Four

H₀₄: There is no significant influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-square Analysis of the Influence of Principals' Public Speaking Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

Items	SD	D	A	SA	Total	chi-square	Df	Sig.	Dec
It11	2	5	120	190	317	138.462 ^a	27	.000	
It12	3	8	132	174	317				
It13	2	7	141	167	317				
It14	4	11	155	147	317				
It15	2	6	118	191	317				
It16	5	12	167	133	317				
It17	3	8	146	160	317				

It18	2	6	130	179	317			
It19	4	9	149	155	317			
It10	2	7	123	185	317			
Total	29	79	1381	1681	3170			

Table 4 presents the Chi-square analysis based on teachers' responses on the influence of principals' public speaking skill on effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The Pearson Chi-square value obtained was 138.462 with 27 degrees of freedom and an associated p-value of .000. Since the probability value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result indicates that there is a statistically significant influence of principals' public speaking skill on the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of this study are summarized as follows:

- Teachers agreed that principals' written communication skill influences the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The influence was statistically significant.
- Teachers agreed that principals' public speaking skill influences the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The influence was statistically significant.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are discussed through the following sub-headings:

Influence of Principals' Written Communication Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools

The finding of the study revealed that principals' written communication skill had a positive influence on the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The respondents agreed that principals who communicate through clear, concise, timely, and well-organized written messages promote effective administration by improving the dissemination of information, reducing misunderstanding among staff, strengthening documentation, and ensuring smooth implementation of school policies. The hypothesis tested further indicated that there was a statistically significant influence of principals' written communication skill on effective administration of public secondary schools. This implies that effective written communication remains an essential administrative tool that facilitates coordination of school activities, accountability, and organizational efficiency.

The finding of this study is in agreement with the study of Adigun (2017) who found that principals' written communication significantly enhanced administrative efficiency, especially in documentation and policy implementation in public secondary schools in Lagos State. Similarly, the finding supports Okeke (2018) who reported that principals' written communication had a significant positive relationship with teacher satisfaction and administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools in Imo State. The agreement between the present study and these earlier findings suggests that written communication enables school administrators to communicate official information accurately and consistently, thereby promoting administrative effectiveness. The finding also corroborates that of Olatunji (2019) whose study established that principals'

written communication significantly influenced effective decision-making through proper record-keeping and staff coordination in public secondary schools in Oyo State. Likewise, the finding agrees with Adebayo (2020) who found a significant positive relationship between principals' written communication and conflict resolution effectiveness in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. These similarities indicate that written communication serves as an important mechanism for clarifying responsibilities, minimizing conflict, and ensuring uniform understanding of school policies among staff members.

Furthermore, the present finding is consistent with the findings of Kassim (2021) who reported that principals' written communication positively influenced staff discipline and school administration in Kaduna State public secondary schools. The finding equally agrees with Nwankwo and Eze (2022) who revealed that principals' written communication significantly improved teacher productivity and policy implementation in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The consistency of these findings with the present study demonstrates that effective written communication contributes significantly to improving administrative procedures, enhancing teachers' commitment, and facilitating the achievement of school goals. Therefore, principals should continue to improve their written communication skills through timely issuance of circulars, accurate documentation, and clear administrative directives to strengthen effective administration of public secondary schools.

Influence of Principals' Public Speaking Skill on Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools

The finding of the study revealed that principals' public speaking skill had a positive influence on the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. The respondents agreed that principals who communicate confidently during meetings, assemblies, staff briefings, and public functions enhance teachers' understanding of school goals, motivate staff, strengthen collaboration, improve conflict management, and promote effective school administration. The hypothesis tested also established that principals' public speaking skill had a statistically significant influence on effective administration of public secondary schools. This implies that the ability of principals to communicate effectively before groups contributes substantially to successful school leadership and administration.

The finding of this study agrees with Abubakar (2017) who found that principals' public speaking skills significantly improved staff motivation and created a positive school climate in public secondary schools in Katsina State. Likewise, the finding is consistent with Okoro (2018) who established that principals with effective public speaking skills significantly enhanced decision-making processes and communication efficiency, thereby improving administrative outcomes in public secondary schools in Delta State. The agreement between these studies and the present finding suggests that effective public speaking enables principals to communicate school objectives clearly, inspire teachers, and improve institutional performance. The present finding also corroborates the study of Ibrahim (2019) which revealed that principals possessing strong public speaking abilities achieved higher stakeholder engagement, resulting in improved school administration and teacher performance in Kano State. Similarly, the finding agrees with Eze (2020) who reported that principals' public speaking skills significantly enhanced conflict resolution and contributed to effective school management in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. These consistent findings indicate that public speaking strengthens interpersonal relationships, facilitates effective conflict management, and improves communication among school stakeholders.

Furthermore, the finding is in line with Adebayo (2021) who found that principals with strong public speaking skills promoted team building and staff collaboration, thereby enhancing administrative effectiveness in Ekiti State public secondary schools. The finding also supports Rahman and Bello (2022) who reported a strong positive relationship between principals' public speaking skills, teacher productivity, and effective dissemination of school policies in public secondary schools in Bauchi State. The consistency of these findings with the present study confirms that effective public speaking enables principals to motivate staff, communicate school policies effectively, strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, and improve overall administrative effectiveness. Consequently, principals should continually develop their public speaking competencies through leadership training and professional development programmes to enhance effective administration in public secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that principals' communication skills significantly influence the effective administration of public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Principals should ensure that official written communications such as circulars, notices, reports, and memoranda are clear, timely, accurate, and easily accessible to members of staff.
- Educational authorities should organize leadership development programmes aimed at strengthening principals' public speaking skills to enhance communication during meetings, assemblies, conferences, and stakeholder engagements.

Strengths

The study addresses a critical issue in educational leadership by examining how principals' communication skills; specifically written communication and public speaking affect effective administration in public secondary schools. The research design is robust, employing a descriptive survey with a large sample size (317 teachers) drawn from a population of 1,776, ensuring representativeness. The instrument was carefully validated, with a strong reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha = 0.86), which enhances confidence in the findings. The analysis is systematic, using both descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Chi-square) to answer research questions and test hypotheses.

The results are clearly presented in tables, showing consistent agreement among respondents that principals' communication skills positively influence administration. The study's recommendations such as organizing seminars, workshops, and in-service training are practical and policy-relevant, offering actionable insights for improving school leadership in Taraba State.

Weaknesses

While methodologically sound, the study is somewhat narrow in scope, focusing only on written communication and public speaking, while neglecting other vital communication competencies such as interpersonal dialogue, active listening, and digital communication. The reliance on self-reported data from teachers may introduce response bias, as perceptions may not fully capture actual administrative practices. The use of Chi-square is appropriate but could be complemented with more advanced statistical techniques (e.g., regression analysis) to better quantify the strength of relationships. The literature review, though informative, leans heavily on Nigerian studies and could benefit from broader international perspectives. Additionally, the discussion section does not critically engage with possible limitations of communication skills in resource-constrained environments, nor does it explore how contextual challenges (e.g., overcrowding, infrastructural deficits) might moderate the impact of communication skills. Finally, the study's conclusions, while valid, are somewhat repetitive and could be synthesized more concisely.

Suggestions

Future research should broaden the scope to include other dimensions of communication skills such as interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, listening, and digital literacy, which are increasingly important in modern school administration. Employing mixed-methods designs (combining surveys with interviews or observations) could provide richer insights and reduce reliance on self-reported data. Advanced statistical analyses (e.g., regression, structural equation modeling) would allow for more precise measurement of the influence of communication skills on administrative effectiveness. The literature review could be expanded to incorporate comparative international studies, offering a wider theoretical grounding. Policy recommendations should also consider contextual constraints in Taraba State, such as limited funding and

infrastructural challenges, and propose tailored interventions (e.g., low-cost communication training modules, peer mentoring). Finally, longitudinal studies could assess whether improvements in principals' communication skills lead to sustained gains in school administration and student outcomes over time.

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