

**Assessment of Administrator's Communication Ability as a Predictor of Effective Supervision and Control of Public Schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study sought to investigate the extent to which the administrators' communication ability predicts effective management of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. An Ex-post-Facto research design was used for this study. The research area was Eket Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State, the population of this study comprised of one thousand one hundred and fifty-two (1152) teachers distributed into 63 public secondary schools in seven local education committees in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. A stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the five hundred and seventy-seven (577) teachers. The main instrument used in this study was questionnaire titled "ADMINISTRATORS' COMMUNICATION ABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE (ACAQ) and SECONDARY SCHOOL EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (SSEMQ)." The instrument passed through face and content validated by the experts in test and measurement. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument, the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.75 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study was appropriate analyzed using Simple Regression Analysis technique. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. The study concluded that administrators' communication ability predicts effective decision making and planning of public schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended amongst others that secondary school administrators should make use of participatory decision making style in the school because it will encourage staff to contribute their ideas for the smooth running of the school.*

**KEY WORDS: Administrator's Communication Ability, Effective Management, Supervision, Control, Public Schools**

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**Introduction**

It is observed that in every school, an administrator who is effective leader and problem solver must apply a range of communication strategies every day. Good communication straightens activities, smoothen the work and makes for organizational goal achievement and employee's satisfaction. It is almost impossible to run any social organization successfully without effective communication ability is a very important and effective tool in the smooth running of

secondary schools since the schools since the school itself is a social agent (Uyanga, 2002). In speech, the speaker needs the feedback to know whether the listener understand the information or not.

Listening ability requires active listening to get “get inside” the speaker’s head in order to understand the communication from the speaker’s point of view (Habaci, 2013). Active listening could be improved through: making eye contact with the speaker, exhibiting affirmative nods and appropriate facial expressions, avoiding distracting actions or gestures, avoiding interrupting the speakers to complete their thoughts before responding, asking in words what speaker had said, avoiding over talking and making smooth transition between the roles of the speaker and the listener (Robbins and Hunsaker 1996, Habaci, 2013). In addition to listening ability, the school administrator is expected to have good writing ability also. Writing is ability the capacity to write simple and concise sentences with readable handwriting. Writing is the most common form of communication used in the school system. In written communication, messages can be edited and revised many times before it is actually sent. A good writing ability is influenced by the sequence of letters or symbols used in forming words. It is influenced by the vocabulary and grammar used, writing style, precision and by the clarity of language used. Also, the environment which one develops can affect ability to learn how to read and write (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Reading ability is also very needful by secondary school administrators. It is ability to recognize and read messages effortlessly. Administrators that read effortless have clear reading goals and can easily identify relevant information while reading. Reading ability can be as a result of a person’s understanding of messages. For the administrators to communicate without hitches, they need to develop good interpersonal ability enables a person to interact positively and work effectively with people. Interpersonal relationship is “ability to get along with people” and “good human relationship”. Hence, it is believed that good interpersonal ability will aid the secondary school administrators in the management of both human and material resources (Peretomode and Peretomode, 2001). It is also observed that the greater the density of relationship within the organization, the greater the efficiency of the organization. Thus, interpersonal ability of administrators enhances the existence and management of good relationship among staff and students (Min and Yong, 2014).

### **Statement of the problem**

Every school administrator is involved in communication of information among staff and students while managing the school. Managers and administrators direct through communication. They primarily plan, make decisions, supervise, control and discipline the organization through communication. In the secondary school, managers are saddled with the task of equipping students to be good citizens and in preparing them for higher education. These tasks have not been an easy one because administrators need to provide favourable environment for teaching and learning by monitoring the activities within the school. This seems very difficult for them because of limited resources and poor funding. The available resources have to be circulated evenly to our various public schools. The schools have to clearly plan on how to utilize the available resources and communicate the decisions made to all concerned. To what extent does administrators’ communication ability predicts effective management of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District? This research seeks to answer the question by studying communication ability

as a predictor of public secondary school management in terms of supervision and control of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate into the extent to which the administrators' communication ability predicts effective supervision and control of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the objective of this study were to:

1. Determine the extent to which the administrators' communication ability predicts effective supervision of public secondary school in Eket Senatorial District.
2. Determine the extent to which the administrators' communication ability predicts effective control of public secondary school in Eket Senatorial District.

### **Research Questions**

This study sought to answer the following questions.

1. To what extent does administrators' communication ability predict effective supervision of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State?
2. To what extent does administrators' communication ability predict effective control of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State?

### **Null Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis were formulated to guide the study.

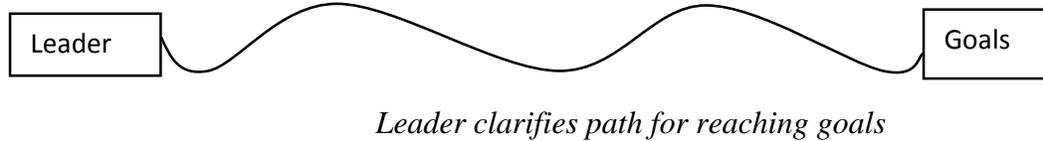
Ho1: Administrators' communication ability does not significantly predict effective supervision of public secondary schools Eket Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State.

Ho2: Administrators' communication ability does not significantly predict effective control of public secondary schools Eket Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Path Goal Theory of Leadership Effectiveness: N. G. Evans (1970).**

Path goal theory was first promulgated by Evans (1970), later refined by House (1974) and further refined and expanded by House and Dessler (1974). The theory draws heavily on the expectancy theory of motivation by Vroom (1964) and Porter and Lawler (1968). The theory proposed that the leader is a key individual in bring about subordinate motivation, satisfaction and performance. It explained that the primary task of the leader is to increase the attractiveness of the reward outcome associated with performance level (task goal) and the reward that they hope to get (personal needs). The theory is designated 'path-goal' because it focuses on how the leader influences and clears the paths that subordinates must take in order to reach those 'goals' as seen in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Leader's Role on Path-Goal Approach.

**Source:** James A. Stoner (1978). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, p. 456.

From Figure1, the leaders' jobs are seen as being one of;

- Clarifying the tasks to be performed by subordinates.
- Clearing away or reducing roadblocks and pitfalls that prevents goal attainment and
- Increasing personal satisfaction (among sub-ordinates).

Thus the followings are the relevance of path-goal theory of this study;

- Directive Leadership: the secondary school administrators should provide guidelines to let the people know what is expected of them, this will encourage free flow of communication within the school.
- Supportive Leadership: the administrators' in secondary school should be friendly and interested in subordinates' well-being, welfare and needs of people. This will motivate staffs to perform better.
- Participative Leadership: the secondary school administrators' behavior should be characterized by consulting with subordinates and using their ideas and suggestions in reaching decisions.

## Conceptual Review

### The Concept of Communication Ability

Habaci (2013) observed that for school success to develop, communication must be seen as a seminal and essential notion. Therefore, communication should be used as an effective tool in school development. Essien (2003) stated that effective communication should provide a clear understanding of the message. Essien (2003) further gave the following as roles of communication, especially in a school system. They are; to inform, persuade or convince, understand through listening to instructions as in giving of orders by superiors to their subordinates and to stimulate actions.

Akinnubi (2010) explained that communication in an organization serves various functions among which are; giving the staff opportunity of expressing their feelings and serves as a medium of resolving conflicts, reducing tension and defining direction for individuals; serves as motivational function of encouraging achievement in subordinates; provides the necessary information for decision making; used to control the activities in an organization; used to create a good public image for the school; helps in fostering school communication relationship; and aids in management control. Also, communication may be intentional or unintentional, conventional or unconventional, it may take linguistic or non-linguistic form and often occurs through spoken or other modes. Communication requires a sender, a message and a recipient, although the receiver may not have to be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time. Thus,

communicating can occur across vast distance in time and space. It requires that the communicating parties share an area of communicative commonality. Therefore, communication process is complete once the receiver understands the senders' message (Akpan, 2006).

### **The Concept of Effective Secondary School Management**

Akinnubi and Gbadeyan (2015), opined that secondary schools' administrators should bear in mind that the success of the school is determined by their effective management of the school. Therefore, communication serves multi-purpose and multi-dimensional roles of improving and achieving the goals of an organization. Also Sisman (2012) observed that it is responsibility of school administrators to participate in communication, motivate people, discourage gossip, respect varied views and make use of different communication tools for achievement of goals and objectives. Therefore, for achievement of goals and services in the schools, managers are saddled with the following task; providing a favourable environment for teaching and learning; adequate caring for school facilities; providing sufficient manpower; defining clearly responsibilities and communicating same to all concerned.

Communication is therefore an essential tool in proper management of secondary school. Armstrong (2009), opined that communication is a very vital part of any change in management programme. He explained that if any change is to occur in the school, the staff needs to know what is proposed and how it will affect them. Thus, if they do not know, due to lack of efficient communication network in this aspect, it may lead to resistance to whatever change. This will in turn tell on the organizational expectations and workers performance. Also, Habaci (2013) opined that robust and effective communication depends on managers exercising their responsibilities properly and employees having knowledge of these responsibilities.

### **Administrators' Communication Ability and Effective Supervision of Secondary Schools**

An effective administrator should supervise the activities of all school functionaries, device ways to aid the teaching and learning activities of the school and also promote the growth of the school. Wikipedia (2015) defines supervision as the act or function of overseeing something or somebody. Jackson (2001) explained that supervision contains elements of providing knowledge, helping in organizing tasks, enhancing motivation and monitoring activities and results. From the above definition, one can simply deduce that supervision in the secondary schools is a process that an administrator or routine supervisor does with teachers, learners and learning facilities to maintain or change the school operation in the teaching and learning process in the school so as to maintain the stated standard. Therefore, for effective supervision of instructions, the instructions should be a good communicator.

No effective supervision can be done without communication between the teachers and the supervisor. Therefore, in the school, supervision is seen as the process of bringing about improvement in instruction by working with people who are working with pupils. School principal as supervisors should have technical competence in observing, planning and assessing instructional development. This they can do by expressing their thoughts and ideas clearly and intelligently to staff and students. Jackson (2001) also observed that supervision and evaluation

role of the administrators or principals is the key element in improving the human assets of the system. Thus, supervision provides information about the activities of teachers and students, and how these activities can be improved for the achievement of educational goals. Also, Mbipom (2000) observed that some principals neglect the great task of supervision of curriculum and instructions and hide behind other managerial roles. This can have negative effect on the school activities. An effective administrator should carry out routine supervision. This can be done by studying and interpreting the syllabus into needed skills, competences, activities, books and other instructional materials. Administrators should also help to improve the quality of instructions in schools through observation, evaluation and discussions. They should also work closely with teachers and exhibit in their work so as to gain respect and love from them.

A study conducted by Obot (2006) on ‘principals’ supervisory role and secondary school teachers’ effectiveness in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State’. A researcher made instrument “principals” Supervisory Role and Secondary Teachers’ Effectiveness Questionnaire (PSRSTEQ)” was developed and used for data collection. The null hypotheses were rejected as their correlation coefficient of 0.961, 0.764, 0.676, and 0.929 were greater than the critical  $r$  value of 0.195. The study recommended that principals should look at teacher’s lesson notes. Again in the secondary schools, for effective supervisory role to be played by the secondary schools’ administrators’ there is need to develop interpersonal ability. Interpersonal ability will help school administrators to communicate positively within the organization. Interpersonal ability will help school administrators to communicate positively within the organization. Interpersonal ability here is concerned about the way members of an organization relate and interact with each other on daily basis. It is person to person positive interactions that will enable individual to get along easily and as such help them to solve personal and organizational problems.

Nya (2009) conducted a study to determine the relationship between Principals’ levels of instructional supervision teachers’ effectiveness in secondary schools in Calabar, Cross River State. In the study, 400 teachers were drawn from ten (10) secondary schools in Calabar. Five secondary schools from Calabar Municipality and five from Calabar south Local Government for the study. Data was collected using Principals’ Motivational Technique Questionnaire (PMTQ). Pearson’s product moment correlation was used analysed the data collected. The calculated  $r$  (0.66) was greater than the critical  $r$  value of 0.196 at .05 level of significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the principals’ level of instrumental supervision and teachers’ effectiveness was rejected.

Effiong (2011) conducted a study on “School supervision and work behavior of secondary school teachers in Uyo Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State”. A sample size of 450 teachers was selected through the use of stratified random sampling technique. Nine hypotheses were formulated. Pearson product moment correlation was used in analyzing the data that was collected. The result showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between the level of school supervision and work behavior (school discipline, acceptance of instructional responsibility by

teachers, teacher's punctuality and regularity, teachers' turn over and attrition, teacher-student relationship, organizational culture and behavior). This study showed that communication plays an important role while supervising. Therefore, when supervisors communicate, they should write their reports clearly and make it known to all concerned. The school administrators' can accomplish this by using their speaking, listening, reading, writing and interpersonal abilities while communicating within the school.

### **Administrators' Communication Ability and Effective Control of Secondary School**

Control is the ability to direct, influence or limit something. It is a standard for checking the results in any organization like the school (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). Control sees that everything done in the school is in accordance with established rules and regulations. At the Federal level, policies are made based on the national philosophy and objectives. The objectives here affect the aims and objectives of education in the country. It binds the state government in their overall, implementation and general endeavours in education. Control is concerned with seeing that the operating results conform as much as possible to pre-determined goals and objectives of the establishment, setting up of standard and undertaking the necessary corrective measures where performance deviates from the plans the expected results (Igwe, 1985).

Fayol (1949) recognized the importance of organizations being controlled through rules and regulations laid-down by different bodies. Fayol used controlling to mean the appraisal and examination results. Control seen as the process where weaknesses and errors are discovered and various measures are taken to prevent their re-occurrence. These weaknesses and errors are results of evaluation. Management experts and authorities use oral and written communication while evaluating staff and students. On a daily basis there should be an open channel of communication so that teachers and students can air their opinions. This will certainly bring about control of both staff and students. Also, Dixon, Nanni and Vollman (1990) observed that as an organization identifies objectives, it also may realize a need for new performance measures that encourage and monitor new action. They encouraged organizations to optimally use a diverse set of performance measures to reflect the diversity of management decisions and efforts. Thus, control in organization should use various sets of performance to measure achievement.

In order to be able to measure achievement, the interpersonal ability of administrator is highly needed. In the organization, interpersonal relationship existing between the super-ordinate and subordinate bears considerable influence on the performance of the subordinate. Thus, if the administrator establishes a cordial relationship with staff and students, there is bound to be proper control within the school. If the administrator maintains a cheerful outlook, wanting staff and students to succeed, treating them with respect and friendliness, staff and students are bound to be controlled positively.

A study conducted by Akpanudo (2007) on "principals' communicative behaviour and its impact on management of secondary schools in Etim Ekpo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

A population size of 300 teachers was selected. A researcher made instrument “principals’ communicative behaviour and management of schools questionnaire (PCBMSQ)” was used for data collection. Analysis was carried out using Pearson’s product moment correlation. Results showed that there is relationship between principal’s communication behaviour and impact on management (school personnel management, managing school finance, school communication relations, managing student personnel and managing school plant). The study recommended that principals should develop effective communication behaviour by attending seminars, workshops and taking educational courses. These will help administrators to identify new performance measures and in monitoring actions within the school.

Therefore, when administrators effectively communicate and interact with staff, they tend to perform better. Again, when the administrator develops their interpersonal ability, they can act as a counselor in addition to their regular teaching and coaching duties (Akinnubi and Gbadeyan 2015). Thus, a good interpersonal ability will help school administrators’ while directing and evaluating both staff and students, resulting in a positive influence. For administrators to develop their interpersonal ability they should: smile and be appreciative to others within and outside the school, listen actively and pay attention to others, resolve conflicts favourably, communicate clearly using humour and understand other people without complaining.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

An Expost-Facto research design was used for this study. In this type of design, the researcher cannot manipulate the effect on the dependent variable but just obtain the effect already existing in the natural course of events.

### **Area of the Study**

The research area for this study was Eket Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study comprised of one thousand one hundred and fifty-two (1152) teachers distributed into 63 public secondary schools in seven local education committees in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

A stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the five hundred and seventy-seven (577) teachers derived from 7 Local Education Committees (L. E. Cs) in Eket Senatorial District.

### **Instrumentation**

The main instrument used in this study was questionnaire titled “ADMINISTRATORS’ COMMUNICATION ABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE (ACAQ) and SECONDARY SCHOOL EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (SSEM).”

## Validation of the Instrument

The instrument passed through face and content validated by the experts in test and measurement.

### Reliability of the Instrument:

Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. In the trial test, a total of 30 respondents (teachers) who did not form part of the main study were randomly selected from one of the local educational committees in Eket Senatorial District and the instrument administered on them. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.75 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument.

### Procedure for Collecting Data

A letter of introduction was written by the researcher. This letter was to introduce the researcher to the principals for permission, understanding and assistance to use their teachers as respondents. The questionnaire was issued and retrieved latter from each respondent. The exercise took about six weeks.

### Method of Data Analysis

The researcher subjected the data generated for this study was appropriate analyzed using Simple Regression Analysis technique. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

## Results and Discussions

### Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between the Administrators' communication ability predicting effective supervision of public secondary school in Eket Senatorial District. In order to test the hypothesis, Simple Linear Regression Analysis was performed on the data, (see table 1).

**Table 1: Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the prediction of communication ability and effective supervision in public secondary schools**

Communication Ability	sum of square	df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit
Regression	1036.28	1	1036.28	568.27	3.84
Residual	1002.96	550	1.82		
Total	2039.24	551			

**\*Significant at 0.05 level; df =550; F-crit = 3.84.**

Entries in table1 reveal that the calculated F-value of 568.27 is greater than the critical f-value of 3.84 at .05 level with 1 and 550 degree of freedom. This result shows that communication ability significantly predicts effective supervision of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District.

### Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between the Administrators' communication ability predicting effective control of public secondary school in Eket Senatorial District. In order to test the hypothesis, Simple Linear Regression Analysis was performed on the data, (see table 2)

**Table 2: Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the prediction of communication ability and effective control in public secondary schools**

Communication Ability	sum of square	df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit
Regression	1248.63	1	1248.63	559.71	3.84
Residual	1226.96	550	2.28		
Total	2475.59	551			

**\*Significant at 0.05 level; df =550; F-crit = 3.84.**

Entries in table 2 reveals that the calculated F-value of 559.71 is greater than the critical f-value of 3.84 at .05 level with 1 and 550 degree of freedom. This result shows that communication ability significantly predicts effective control of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District.

### **Discussion of findings**

The findings of this study are discussed under the following sub-headings: Administrator's communication ability and effective supervision of public secondary schools, Administrators' communication ability and effective control of public secondary schools.

#### **Administrator's Communication Ability and Effective Supervision of Public Secondary Schools**

The result of testing hypothesis 1 revealed that the calculated f-value of 568.27 was greater than the f-critical of 3.84. Thus, the testing showed that the null hypothesis is rejected. This result showed that communication ability significantly predicts effective supervision of public secondary schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. The reason for this result could be that when secondary school administrators' carry out routine supervision, the teachers will work effectively and this will yield positive results. This result agrees with the view of Obot (2006) that principals' supervisory role significantly predicts effectiveness. Thus, it is believed that when school administrators play their supervisory roles, teaching and learning will be at its peak.

#### **Administrators' Communication Ability and Effective Control of Public Secondary Schools**

The result of testing hypothesis two revealed that the calculated f-value of 559.71 was greater than the f-critical of 3.84. Thus, the testing showed that the null hypothesis is rejected. This result showed that communication ability significantly predicts effective control of public secondary schools. This may be so because control sees that everything done in the school should conform to standard. Again, control helps the school administrators in identifying new performance measures and monitoring actions within the school.

## **Conclusion**

In the light of the finding of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: Administrators' communication ability predicts effective supervision of public schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. Administrators' communication ability predicts effective control public schools in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

## **Recommendation**

The following recommendations are made based on the findings and conclusion of this study:

1. Secondary schools administrators should attend leadership trainings and workshop on effective supervision and control order to become better school managers.
2. Administrators' should carryout routine supervision within the school. This will encourage positive performance among staff.
3. Administrators should also ensure that control measures are put in place, to check behaviors and avoid unseriousness.

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