



Assessment of Head-Teachers' Communication Styles on Teachers Job Performance in Public Primary Schools in Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State

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Abstract

The study assessed head-teachers' communication styles on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari local government area of Kaduna State. The study employed the use of descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was made up of 87 head-teachers, 1,850 teachers and 5 education officials in Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State. A sample size of nine (9) head-teacher, one hundred and eighty five (185) teachers and five (5) education officials were sampled from Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State, making the total of one hundred and ninety nine (199) respondents, used in the study. The sample size of head-teachers and teachers represented 10% of the entire population while the entire number of education officials was used the way they are due to the manageable size. The instrument titled "head-teachers' communication styles questionnaire (HCSQ) was used for data collection in the study. The validated instrument was pilot tested, the data collected from the pilot study was analysed using Cronbach Alpha statistics and a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. The data collected in the study was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that head-teachers' aggressive communication style negatively influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Head-teachers' assertive communication style, open communication style, and inclusive communication style all had positive influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Recommendations made include that there should be constant in-service training for head-teachers on positive verbal and non-verbal communication styles. This will equip the head-teachers with the essential skills for guiding teachers with respect to their job performance.

Keywords: Communication Styles, Teachers, Head Teachers, Aggressive communication, Open communication

Introduction

Communication style is very important in managerial work. Communication is a double edged sword. It is the fundamental tool through which information and ideas are transferred to others. In fact, it's the first ancient way of learning people used from the beginning of history even



before reading and writing were discovered. Communication is the process of creating or sharing meaning in informal conversation, group interaction or public speaking (Verderber & Verderber, 2008). In the view of Chandler in Nzekwe (2013), communication is a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed in an attempt to create shared understanding. Within the school, through effective communication, human relations can be improved and the objectives can be achieved because of dialogues, which are aimed at developing responsible and accountable individuals (Arlestig, 2008).

The subjects of this study include teachers, head teachers, and official of local government education authority. A teacher is any person that had acquired Professional knowledge in teaching and can be able to use them during the Teaching-Learning processes. The choices of primary school teachers are usually the ones who work under the supervision of the head teacher and should be able to describe his/her ability or inability to handle communication in school. The Head teacher is the one that is entrusted with the responsibility of managing all the resources (human, financial, materials, and time) in the primary schools to ensure the objectives of the schools are met. The researcher deems it right that main subject of the study be listen to. It is worth noting that the local government education authority is mandated to supervise the activities of the head teachers to ensure their legitimate role do not suffer a setback. The role of supervisors at the local government education authority makes them very vital and indispensable in a study of this magnitude.

Job performance referred to an act of accomplishing or executing a given task (Lindsay in Nwosu, 2017; Griffin, 2012). Teacher job performance defined as duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals (Obilade in Nwosu, 2017). Teachers' job performance could be measured through teacher's job satisfaction and job attitudes such as job commitment, feelings of job challenge, job meaningfulness and job responsibility (Cheng, 2002). Head-teachers' communication styles refers to how head-teacher verbally and nonverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood (Norton in Chory & McCroskey, 1999). In the context of this study, head-teachers' communication styles refers to the various strategies including verbal, nonverbal and caring approach which head-teachers employ to make the teachers understand their instructions effectively. An effective head-teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the administration of schools by adopting the styles of communication that will enhance the clarity of his or her instruction in the school, thus Uchefuna in Nzekwe (2013) noted that head-teachers' communication styles have an influence on school climate which affect teachers job performance.

Teachers' job performance referred to an act of accomplishing or executing a given task (Lindsay; Griffin in Nwosu, 2017). It is defined as duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals (Obilade, in Nwosu, 2017). Teachers' job performance could be measured through teacher's job satisfaction and job attitudes such as job commitment, feelings of job challenge, job meaningfulness and job responsibility (Cheng, 2002). When an individual is satisfied, their job performance might increase and tend to be more committed to their work. Job performance is important to ensure the quality of instruction taking place at school.

An aggressive communication style is one in which individuals express their feelings and opinions and advocate for their needs in a way that violates the rights of others. Thus, aggressive communicators are verbally and/or physically abusive (Adubato, 2014). A primary school head-



teacher who uses aggressive communication style creates a win-lose situation and uses intimidation to get his needs met, often at the expense of others. An aggressive head teacher feels a strong sense of inadequacy, has lack of empathy and believes the only way to get their needs met is through power and control. He is usually close-minded, a poor listener and tends to monopolise discussions. He is a fault finder, tries to dominate others, uses humiliation to control others, criticises, blames or attacks others, has low frustration tolerance, speaks in a loud, demanding and overbearing voice, acts threateningly and rudely.

An open communication style is a style of communication in which the leader consciously creates an atmosphere where all individuals within an organization express their views and opinions on issues affecting the running of the organization (Akinwale, & Okotoni, 2018). In other words, a leader (primary school head-teacher) with an open communication style provides necessary information that will help and allow all workers in the school to perform optimally and maximally. Such leader also creates rooms for effective feedback and constructive criticism when and where necessary in order for the organization to achieve its set goals and objectives. This type of communication style encourages all staff to pour out their minds on school policies and issues affecting their jobs in the school. The style allows head-teachers to see teachers not only as workers but as human beings whose views and opinions must be heard and respected for the progress of the school. The study therefore seeks to assess head-teachers' communication styles on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari local government area of Kaduna State.

Statement of the Problem

The job performance of primary school teachers in recent times have become a thing of worry to parents, stakeholders and the government. This ugly incident of teachers' low job performance is lingering, despite all the efforts of the government in ensuring that qualitative education is provided at the primary school level. However, in recent times, most primary school teachers are having low self-esteem, resulting to low job performance. These teachers lack confidence in their ability to perform well on the job. This seems to be affecting the teaching and learning process as well other instructional activities at school.

In the bid to finding possible solution to this issue of low job performance of teachers in primary schools, school facilities and infrastructure has been improved as well as teachers' welfare and developmental programmes; researchers have also embarked on series of studies. Evidence from some of the literatures suggests that one of the essential determinants of success or failure in education is the style of communication which a head-teacher adopts in school administration. Hence, lack of effective communication between the school leader and teachers, impedes the teachers job performance. According to Patrick and Frankel (2004), communication encompasses more than speaking. It is also written communication as well as communicating with behaviour. The personal communication styles of the head-teacher, including verbal and non-verbal ones, open door policies, and regular meetings can pave the road to effective communication with the teachers. Hence, it is crucial to assess head-teachers' communication styles on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Kaduna State.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:



1. assess head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State;
2. investigate head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State; and

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in the study:

1. What is the influence of head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State?
2. What influence does head-teachers' open communication style have on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated in the study:

- H0₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.
- H0₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

Methodology

The study employed the use of descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was made up of 87 head-teachers, 1,850 teachers and 5 education officials in Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State. A sample size of nine (9) head-teacher, one hundred and eighty five (185) teachers and five (5) education officials were sampled from Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State, making the total of one hundred and ninety nine (199) respondents, used in the study. The sample size of head-teachers and teachers represented 10% of the entire population while the entire number of education officials was used the way they are due to the manageable size. The instrument titled "head-teachers' communication styles questionnaire (HCSQ) was used for data collection in the study. The validated instrument was pilot tested, the data collected from the pilot study was analysed using Cronbach Alpha statistics and a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. The data collected in the study was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Response to Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the influence of head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers' job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State?

Opinions of head-teachers, teachers and MOE were gathered in order to provide answer to this research question. The summary of analysis made in respect to research question one is presented in Table 1.



Table 1: Influence of Head-Teachers’ Aggressive Communication Style on Teachers Job Performance in Primary Schools in Sabon Gari LGA of Kaduna State

SN	Item	Respondents	SA	A	U	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1.	Head-teachers often reject teachers' suggestions	H-Teacher	2	-	3	4	0	1.91	1.10
		Teachers	-	25	8	102	50	2.04	0.92
		MOE	1	2	2	-	-	1.87	0.91
2.	School head use query when teachers make mistakes on the job.	H-Teacher	1	1	4	2	1	2.66	0.63
		Teachers	9	53	16	28	79	2.37	1.40
		MOE	-	2	1	-	2	2.30	0.93
3.	My school head often makes unrealistic claims about his good points.	H-Teacher	-	3	2	3	1	2.41	1.17
		Teachers	3	47	22	72	41	2.45	1.14
		MOE	-	2	3	-	-	2.29	0.86
4.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA makes teachers look or feel stupid, small, or afraid.	H-Teacher	-	3	1	3	2	2.37	0.82
		Teachers	5	109	33	23	15	3.35	1.01
		MOE	1	-	2	2	-	2.79	1.28
5.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA dislike being confronted by teachers in a general meeting.	H-Teacher	-	4	1	2	2	1.44	0.82
		Teachers	6	63	24	12	80	2.47	1.41
		MOE	2	1	1	-	1	2.65	0.55
6.	Head-teacher transfer of aggression when things are not happening as expected.	H-Teacher	1	3	3	2	-	2.37	1.37
		Teachers	3	81	34	38	29	2.95	1.15
		MOE	2	-	2	-	1	2.37	1.17
7.	Teachers in Sabon Gari LGA do not see their school head except in the formal meetings.	H-Teacher	-	3	-	2	4	3.11	1.06
		Teachers	1	45	13	51	75	2.16	1.21
		MOE	1	-	-	2	2	3.42	0.78
8.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA use threats to motivate teachers to work.	H-Teacher	1	4	-	2	2	3.42	0.78
		Teachers	9	65	11	64	36	2.71	1.26
		MOE	1	-	2	1	1	3.40	0.83
9.	School head in Sabon Gari LGA display anger when displeases by teachers’ actions.	H-Teacher	2	2	1	2	2	2.83	1.12
		Teachers	6	44	8	32	95	2.10	1.34
		MOE	-	2	1	-	1	1.75	0.98
10.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA use obscene language when relating with teachers.	H-Teacher	2	1	1	2	3	3.56	0.75
		Teachers	3	53	14	54	61	2.36	1.25
		MOE	1	-	2	-	2	3.32	0.76
Average Mean								2.58	

Table 1 shows that head-teachers’ aggressive communication style had negative influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The table showed that the average response mean of 2.58 is less than the rating mean of 3.0. The implication of this result is that, head-teachers often reject teachers' suggestions and communicate back to them using aggressive communication style. The items on the table in order of ranking showed that item number 1 recorded the lowest response mean of 1.912 by the head-teachers, 2.043 for the teachers and 1.873 for MOE. Detail shows that a total of 2 head-teachers strongly agreed with item number 1, while 3 stayed undecided against 4 head-teachers that disagreed with item number 1 on the table. Also, a total of 25 teachers agreed, against 8 that stayed



undecided while 102 teachers disagreed and 50 teachers that strongly disagreed. In like manner, 1 MOE strongly agreed with item number 1 and 2 that agreed, against 2 that stayed undecided.

Research Question 2: What influence does head-teachers' open communication style have on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State?

Opinions of head-teachers, teachers and MOE were gathered in order to provide answer to this research question. The summary of analysis made in respect to research question three is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Influence of Head-Teachers' Open Communication Style on Teachers Job Performance in Primary Schools in Sabon Gari LGA of Kaduna State

SN	Item	Respondents	SA	A	U	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1.	Direct face to face communication with my head-teacher is a common practice in my school.	H-Teacher	3	2	2	1	1	3.20	1.64
		Teachers	3	94	42	39	7	2.45	0.93
		MOE	1	1	1	2	-	3.10	1.30
2.	My school head encourage teachers to give feedback on policies and programs of school.	H-Teacher	4	2	2	-	1	4.00	1.00
		Teachers	109	3	15	48	10	3.25	1.03
		MOE	1	1	2	1	-	3.41	1.14
3.	Teachers are allowed to freely express themselves in meetings.	H-Teacher	3	4	1	1	-	4.20	0.82
		Teachers	8	105	23	31	18	3.29	1.10
		MOE	-	3	-	-	2	2.80	1.64
4.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA encourage teachers even when students are not performing as expected.	H-Teacher	4	2	3	-	-	4.23	0.80
		Teachers	100	3	20	45	17	3.14	1.09
		MOE	1	3	1	-	-	4.02	0.70
5.	School head in Sabon Gari LGA show concern to teachers' challenges in a professional way.	H-Teacher	2	4	-	2	1	3.70	0.00
		Teachers	3	94	25	35	28	3.04	1.17
		MOE	1	3	-	1	-	3.80	1.09
6.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA discusses school issues with teachers regularly.	H-Teacher	3	5	-	1	-	4.60	0.54
		Teachers	3	72	9	57	44	2.63	1.26
		MOE	1	1	-	-	3	2.40	1.94
7.	Teachers feel free to discuss challenges facing them with head-teacher.	H-Teacher	4	3	-	2	-	5.10	0.89
		Teachers	3	51	25	55	51	3.25	1.20
		MOE	1	2	-	1	1	3.80	1.64
8.	Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA often show a lot of understanding for other people's problems.	H-Teacher	3	3	2	1	-	4.00	1.22
		Teachers	3	78	26	40	38	2.82	1.22
		MOE	-	2	2	1	-	3.20	0.83
9.	School head usually asks for teacher's opinion before taking any decision in the school.	H-Teacher	2	5	1	1	-	3.80	1.09
		Teachers	6	91	32	46	10	3.20	1.02
		MOE	1	3	1	-	-	4.00	0.70
10.		H-Teacher	3	4	2	-	-	3.68	0.83
		Teachers	3	71	22	75	14	2.85	1.06



Head-teachers in Sabon Gari LGA talk freely with all the teachers.	MOE	-	2	1	2	-	3.00	1.00
Average Mean							3.47	

Table 2 shows that head-teachers’ open communication style had positive influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The table showed that the average response mean of 3.47 is higher than the rating mean of 3.0. The implication of this result is that, teachers feel free to discuss challenges facing them with head-teacher. The items on the table in order of ranking showed that item number 7 recorded the highest response mean of 5.10 by the head-teachers, 4.10 for the teachers and 3.80 for MOE. Detail shows that a total of 4 head-teachers strongly agreed with item number 7, while 3 agreed against 2 that disagreed. Also, a total of 3 teachers strongly agreed, 51 teachers agreed, against 25 that stayed undecided while 55 teachers disagreed and 51 strongly disagreed. In like manner, 1 MOE strongly agreed and 2 that agreed, against 1 that disagreed and 1 MOE that strongly disagreed with item number 7 on the table.

Null Hypotheses Testing

This section tested the four null hypotheses formulated in this study using analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers’ aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The opinions of head-teachers, teachers and MOE on the influence of head-teachers’ aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The summary of the hypothesis tested is presented in table 3:

Table 3:Summary of ANOVA statistics on the influence of head-teachers’ aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State

Status	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-ratio	F-critical	Prob.
Between Groups	28.891	2	28.891	1.127	2.61	.291
Within Groups	2973.423	197	25.633			
Total	3002.314	199				

Table 3 showed the f-ratio value of (1.127) at 197 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. The critical value (2.61) is higher than f-ratio value (1.127), the probability level of significance P(.291) is higher than 0.05. This implied that head-teachers’ aggressive communication style negatively influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that



there is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State was retained.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The opinions of head-teachers, teachers and MOE on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State are analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The summary of the hypothesis tested is presented in table 4:

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA statistics on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State

Status	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-ratio	F-critical	Prob.
Between Groups	.347	2	.347	3.140	2.61	.002
Within Groups	271.713	197	1.105			
Total	272.060	199				

Table 4 showed the f-ratio value of (3.140) at 197 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. The critical value (2.61) is less than f-ratio value (3.140), the probability level of significance P(.002) is less than 0.05. This implied that head-teachers' open communication style had positive influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State was rejected.

Summary of Major Findings

In view of the hypotheses tested in the study, the following findings were established:

1. Head-teachers' aggressive communication style negatively influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.
2. Head-teachers' open communication style had positive influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on research question one revealed that head-teachers' aggressive communication style had negative influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Therefore, hypothesis one which stated that there is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' aggressive communication style on teachers job performance in



primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State was retained. This finding is in line with the finding of Akinwale and Okotoni (2018) which showed that only a few secondary school principals adopted aggressive communication style in their various schools because the style was confirmed to depressingly impact on staff performance. In view of this, the finding showed that the common communication styles adopted by secondary school principals in Osun State were inclusive, open and assertive communication styles in that order.

Findings on research question two revealed that head-teachers' open communication style had positive influence on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Therefore, hypothesis three which stated that there is no significant difference in the opinions of head-teachers, teachers and education officials on the influence of head-teachers' open communication style on teachers job performance in primary schools in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State was rejected. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Shu and Jiaying (2012) which found that the degree of openness in communication was higher among school head. The finding also correlate the finding of Akinwale and Okotoni (2018) that the common communication styles adopted by secondary school principals include open communication style and that principals' use of open communication styles play important roles in the smooth running of schools as well as enhancing school effectiveness.

Conclusion

It is important for any school head to set clear goals and draw a road map based on effective communication and productive relationships with students, teachers, and parents. Successful school head spend most of their time listening and speaking to others. Such interaction enables the leader to create a harmonious environment conducive to a successful educational institution. In light of the findings from this study, it was concluded that head-teachers often reject teachers' suggestions and communicate back to them using aggressive communication style. Some school head practiced assertive communication style as they give concise and unambiguous messages to teachers. Teachers also feel free to discuss challenges facing them with head-teacher. In addition, as both open and inclusive communication styles were practiced, school head allowed teachers to participate in the planning of school work/policy.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

1. There should be constant in-service training for head-teachers on positive verbal and non-verbal communication styles. This will equip the head-teachers with the essential skills for guiding teachers with respect to their job performance.
2. There should be free flow of communication from head-teachers to teachers when teachers are constantly told what they are to do, confusion does not set in and therefore they are able to perform optimally.

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