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Institutional Communication and Administrative Effectiveness of Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Institutional Communication, Marketing, Management, Public relations, Administrative effectiveness, universities

ABSTRACT

The need for effective institutional communication in any social systems cannot be over-emphasized. Communication is crucial to the survival and effectiveness of any organization. It is on the basis of this background that this study examined institutional communication and administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study was 409 participants drawn from Principal Officers, Deans, Head of Departments, Directors of Units and Directorate of Information and Communication Units in all the universities. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select 272 participants for this study. Two instruments entitled "Institutional Communication Questionnaire" (ICQ) and "Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire" (AEQ) were developed for data collection from the respondents. Validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured and a co-efficient value of Alpha 0.68 and 0.72 was obtained for ICQ and AEQ respectively. The finding of the study showed

statistically that there was relationship between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness with calculated (r-value 0.647 < p-value 0.000). The study recommends that university administrators should ensure that other institutional communication processes should be adequately and effectively employed to complement marketing communication; university administrators should improve on the use of institutional communication as a tool of sound decision-making and management communication channels should be encouraged and improved in the universities as a means of passing or transferring information.

Introduction

The major objective of organizations is to accomplish its set goals. The attainment of the organizational goals can be made or marred by the institutional communication which the organization's management has established. An important aspect of human existence is communication because its influence is felt on every area of human endeavors. Through effective institutional communication established by an organization, relationships are formed, maintained, sustained and nurtured with the aim of achieving organizational goals and objectives (Durgun, 2006). The place of communication in the realization of organizational effectiveness cannot be over-emphasized. Suffix it to say that effectiveness is dependent on the communication network, pattern and flow put in place by an organization. This is because it serves as a basis for maintaining harmonious relationships among the different levels of the organization. As opined by Omotoye (2007), the growth and development of an organization is contingent on the communication networks or patterns that are put in place. The management of well coordinated systems of communication brings harmonious relationships among the various component of an organization with respect to the realization of organizational goals. Managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing and controlling can only be effective discharged when proper communication is put in place in the organization. Communication helps organizations to develop plans, arrange the flow of human and other resources. No wonder that it is often been regarded as the means by which human elements in an organization are linked together for effective realization of goals. However, to ensure the effective relationship among the human elements and other key stakeholders in the organization, institutional communication is a sine qua non.

Institutional communication involves the processes of facilitating other forms of organizational behaviours. One of the essential attributes of communication is that it unifies and facilitates the accomplishments of

organizational goals. Institutional communication should be knitted with business objectives and strategies. It is the medium by which members of an organization are brought together with a view of achieving the mission and vision set by the organization (Nwachukwu, 2000; Trochim, 2002). It involves all the stages an organization use to communicate all its policy statements, goals, objectives and actions of key stakeholders. The stakeholders in an organization are internal (employees, shareholder, manager and etc.) and external (customers, media, government and the general public). Institutional communication is seen to be a rod that connects and bring members together for realization of organization objectives. Effective institutional communication is closely related to the success of the organization because the survival of the organization depends essentially on it (Paulraj, Lado & Chen, 2008).

University education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (2013) was viewed as a training ground for development of high-level manpower needed in all sectors of a nation. And it is a well known fact that the strategic position occupied by university all over the world in national development is beyond doubt. Universities are therefore expected to be agency saddled with the task of extending the frontier of knowledge for the overall benefit of the society. To be able to accomplish these responsibilities efficiently, it requires that effective institutional communication should be put in place by the universities administrators in passing information across to their staff, students and other stakeholders in such a way that could help in the realization of the mandates of the university.

Administrative effectiveness refers to the extent to which the goals and objectives of universities are realized by administrators (Ajayi, 2005). It connotes the effort put in place by university administrators in areas such as decision-making, discipline, crisis management with the intent of achieving the school goals and objectives. Uche (2002) identified effectiveness as a symbol of good administrative style, teamwork and obedience to established norms. It is positive response about administrative efforts that guarantee the realization of goals.

One of the ways of achieving effective institutional communication in universities is by establishing an efficient public relation. With public relations in an organization, positive interpersonal relationships can be fostered among the various components of the organization (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The public relation is the means through which organizations communicate professionally with the general public. Furthermore, universities are saddled with the responsibility of communicating their activities to the outside world; this in a way is carried out through marketing activities. The need to relate with the outside world necessitated marketing communication which is basically essential for communication with the

external audience of the organization. Again, management communication is an important aspect of institutional communication. This is because there has to be flow of information from the top echelon of the organization hierarchy to the lower echelon of the organization. Management communication follows the organization structure and chart designed by the organization. It is based on this background that this study examined institutional communication and administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, institutional management, marketing, and public relations communication were examined as components of institutional communication in this study.

Statement of the Problem

A major reason why most organizations are failing nowadays is because of ineffective institutional communication networks. Administrative ineffectiveness experienced by most universities in Nigeria can be traced to the improper communication systems among various components and departments. Breakdowns in communication may have negative effect on an organization and ultimately results in poor performance. Poor institutional communication often leads to organizational ineffectiveness such as low commitment, indiscipline, absenteeism and poor job performance (Zhang & Agarwal, 2009).

Researchers such as Nebo, Nwankwo & Okonkwo (2015) carried out a study on of effective communication and organizational performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Bedman, Divine & Kingsley (2015) conducted a study on public relations practices focusing on some selected private universities in Ghana. Emma and Akua (2015) carried out a study on public relations as a management tool in tertiary institutions at Winneba. David and Vladimír (2015) carried out a study on internal marketing communication of public universities in the Czech Republic. A study on Integrated Marketing Communication and its influence customer satisfaction was conducted by Asiamah (2013). Byakutaga, Onen, Oonyu and Kasenene (2016) carried out a study on communication methods and employee performance in Central Uganda. While most of the studies focused on communication and public relation practices in different institutions, they failed to ascertain how such practices had affected the effective functioning of the institutions.

Looking at all the previous studies altogether, none of the previous researchers focused on the combination of the three variables of institutional management, marketing and public relations as they affect the administrative effectiveness of universities. With poor institutional communication, most African and Nigerian universities found it difficult to inform and intimate their stakeholders about their achievements and challenges. Most universities had suffered a disconnect between itself and their immediate

stakeholders due to poor institutional communication; most universities are not always on the same page with their workers, students and immediate community as a result of inadequate communication which results in poor university image and ineffectiveness. Also, another noticeable gap between the present study and the previous ones was that this study focused on universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The degree of the contributions of the sub-variables of the institutional communication to administrative effectiveness was determined in this study.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

In order to conduct this study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the institutional communication processes put in place by universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?
3. Is there any significant relationship between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness in the study area?

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated for this study are:

Main Hypothesis

Ho: Institutional communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Operational Hypotheses

Ho1: Management communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho2: Marketing communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho3: Public relation has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

The study was quantitative in approach and it employed correlational research design.

Participants

There are three public and four private universities in Kwara State totaling seven universities altogether. At first, the universities were stratified based on proprietorship i.e federal, state and private. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select the only federal university which is the University of Ilorin, which is located in Kwara Central senatorial district of the State, the only state university which is the Kwara State University, which is located in Kwara North senatorial district of the State and Landmark University Omu-Aran which is located in Kwara South senatorial district of the State.

This makes the total number of universities used for this study to be three. The target population of the study was 409 participants drawn from Principal Officers, Deans, Head of departments, directors of units and directorate of information and communication unit in all the universities. Thereafter, a total of 272 participants took part in this study. The participants for the study were purposively selected through purposive sampling technique because the researchers were of the view that the participants are the officers that can give information about the activities that goes on their respective universities. Activities that relates to the management, marketing and public relations of the universities to the outside world.

Research Instruments

The researchers designed two questionnaires as instruments for the collection of data from the respondents. The first questionnaire was tagged 'Institutional Communication Questionnaire' (ICQ) which was based on the three sub variables of institutional communication. The key constructs of the questionnaire are the objects i.e. communication media in the universities which focused on management, marketing and public relations. The questionnaire also focused on the people that responded to the items in the questionnaire such as the Deans, Head of Departments, and Directors. The questionnaire was structured along the four point likert scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed.

The second instrument was tagged 'Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire' (AEQ) and the key construct was to measure the effectiveness of the universities administrators using objects such as conflict management, discipline and decision making. The people that responded to the items in the questionnaire are the Deans, Head of Departments, and Directors. The questionnaire was structured along the four point Likert scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed.

Validity of the Instruments

For the validity of the instruments, drafts of the instruments, ICQ and AEQ were given to three experts at the University of Ilorin for both face

and content validity. The experts were lecturers one from Test and Evaluation department of the university, the other from Educational Management department who is an expert in administrative effectiveness and lastly Corporate Communication unit of the university. The experts were involved in the validation of the instruments. The suggestions and opinions of the experts were incorporated into the final instrument that was used to collect data from the respondents.

Reliability of the Instruments

To determine the reliability of the instruments used for this study, the test re-test reliability method was adopted. The reason why test re-test reliability was suitable for the study was because variables in the study especially institutional communication tend to be stable over time. Test re-test reliability method was adopted and Pearson product-moment correlation statistic was used to correlate the two sets of scores which yielded 0.68 and 0.72 for ICQ and AEQ respectively.

Data Analysis and Results

Specifically, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions raised while Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test all the hypotheses generated for this study at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: What are the institutional communication processes put in place in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria*?*

Table 1

Institutional Communication Processes Used by Universities in Kwara State.

S/N	Institutional Communication Process	N	X	SD
1	Management Communication	250	3.10	.49
2	Marketing Communication	250	3.26	.45
3	Public Relations Communication	250	3.25	.50

Table 1 revealed the institutional communication processes of the universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The table revealed that marketing communication has the highest mean score of 3.26. This implies that marketing communication is the most institutional communication processes and it was followed by institutional public relations communication with a mean score of 3.25. Management communication has the mean score of 3.10. It means that management communication is the least institutional communication processes put in place by universities in Kwara State.

Research Question 2: What is the level of administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?

Table 2
Administrative Effectiveness of Universities in Kwara State.

S/N	Administrative Effectiveness	N	X	SD	Decision
1	Crisis Management	250	2.86	.63	High
2	Discipline	250	2.82	.54	High
3	Decision Making	250	3.08	.38	High

Source: Fieldwork, 2017
Key: X: Low 1.00 -1.59, Average 1.60 -2.59, High 2.60 - 5.00

Table 2 showed effectiveness of Universities in Kwara State with Each of the administrative effectiveness variables showing mean scores above 2.60.

Main Hypothesis

Ho: Institutional communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria**.**

Table 3
Relationship Between Institutional Communication and Administrative Effectiveness in Kwara State.

Variable	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	r-cal value	p-value	Decision
Institutional Communication	250	3.20	.34				
				248	.647	.000	H_o Rejected
Administrative Effectiveness	250	2.92	.44				

*Significant P< .05

Table 3 shows that the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 248 degrees of freedom. On the basis of the information contained in the table, the hypothesis was rejected. It means that significant relationship exists between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness.

Operational Hypotheses

Ho_1*:* Management communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 4
Relationship Between Management Communication and Administrative Effectiveness in Kwara State.

Variable	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	r-cal value	p-value
Management Communication	250	3.10	.49			
				248	.542	.000
Administrative Effectiveness	250	2.92	.44			

*Significant P< .05

The information contained on Table 4 revealed that p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 248 degrees of freedom. On the basis of this, the hypothesis was rejected showing that a significant relationship exists between management communication and administrative effectiveness.

Ho_2: Marketing communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 5

Relationship between Marketing Communication and Administrative Effectiveness in Kwara State.

Variable	N	$\overline{x}$	SD	df	r-cal value	p-value
Marketing Communication	250	3.26	.45			
				248	.526	.000
Administrative Effectiveness	250	2.92	.44			

*Significant P< .05

As reflected on Table 5, the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 248 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis on marketing communication and administrative effectiveness was rejected. It means a significant relationship exists between marketing communication and administrative effectiveness.

Ho_3: Public relations communication has no significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 6

Relationship between Public Relations and Administrative Effectiveness in Kwara State.

Variable	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	r-cal value	p-value
Public Relations Communication	250	3.25	.50			
				248	.652	.000
Administrative Effectiveness	250	2.92	.44			

*Significant P< .05

Table 6 shows that the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 248 degrees of freedom. It was based on this premise that the hypothesis was rejected. It means a significant relationship exists between public relations communication and administrative effectiveness in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Discussion

This section gives a detailed discussion of the findings from the research questions and the hypotheses tested. It was shown in table 1 that marketing communication has the highest mean score of 3.26. The implication of the finding on table 1 is that all the universities in Kwara State are interested in selling their programmes to the public with the intention of generating and boosting enrolment. It could also be inferred from the findings that the institutions are concerned with maintaining good image among stakeholders which is important for their existence and attainment of their objectives. The finding is in line with the view of Dolphin (2005) who opined institutional communication assist in fostering workers relations, harmony and spirit of togetherness.

It was clearly revealed on table 2 that the level of administrative effectiveness showed a high level of effectiveness. By implication, through institutional communication, the universities were effective in handling crisis arising in the daily operation of the system. They have been 63% effective in managing crisis through the use of institutional communication and very well above average in using institutional communication to effect discipline among staff and students of the universities. A lesser amount of decisions taken by the university authorities can be traced to the use of institutional communication.

A significant relationship exists between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria as found out in table 3. The finding of the study is compatible with Nebo, Nwankwo & Okonkwo (2015) whose study revealed significant relationships between effective communication and employee performance. This finding implies that the effectiveness of the universities in Kwara State is dependent on the institutional communication that is put in place.

As evident shown in table 4, a significant relationship exists between management communication and administrative effectiveness. The finding was in consonance with Bell and Martin (2008) whose work revealed that management communication as a fundamental aspect of the organization's success.

The information contained in table 5 revealed a statistical positive relationship between institutional marketing communication and administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Institutional Marketing Communication contributes to the effectiveness of administrators. The finding, however, disagrees with that of Asiamah (2013) who found that communication between management and students and the general public was not adequate; mostly which was carried out through public relation and press release.

Table 6 clearly showed that institutional public relations relates positively with administrative effectiveness of universities in Kwara State,

Nigeria. The finding in table 6 disagrees with that of Bedman, Divine & Kingsley (2015) who found that public relations perform their roles poorly because they lack qualified staff.

Conclusion

Based on the findings which stemmed from the data collected and analyzed with the results obtained, it can be concluded that: Marketing communication is the most widely used form of institutional communication by universities in Kwara State. Institutional communication was effective in managing crisis and instilling discipline in the universities covered by the study. There is a statistically significant relationship between institutional communication and administrative effectiveness in the universities. There is a statistically significant relationship between management communication and administrative effectiveness in the universities. Marketing communication has a statistically significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in the universities. Public relations have a statistically significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in the universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study following recommendations are made:

1. University administrators are to ensure that other institutional communication processes should be adequately and effectively employed to complement marketing communication.
2. University administrators should improve on the use of information communication as a tool of for sound decision-making by constantly informing stakeholders about their programmes and policies for administrative effectiveness to be assured.
3. Management communication channels should be encouraged and improved in the universities as a means of passing or transferring information.
4. Marketing communication should be further strengthened by university administrators so as to brand its product from competitors with a view to attracting more patronage.
5. University administrators should ensure that they sustain the public relations unit by giving them information about the policies, programmes and activities so as to help promote the image of the universities to members of the public.

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