An Assessment of Provosts' Communication Skills in Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State. The study was a descriptive survey study. It was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses. The population of the study comprised the academic staff and NCE students in the three Colleges of Education owned by Kwara State Government. In all, there are 426 academic staff and 7,500 NCE students in the three colleges. The samples consisted of 100 academic staff and 250 NCE students drawn proportionately from the three colleges. An instrument constructed by the researchers, titled: Provosts' Communication Skills for Effective Management Questionnaire (PCSEMQ) was used for data collection. Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test statistics were used to analyse the data collected. The result of data analysis revealed the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills to include the decrease in the standard of Nigeria Certificate in Education; lack of sustainability of College's good track record; lack of adequate control of staff and students; neglect of staff welfare and non-provision of grant for research and publications; poor supervision and monitoring of college's activities; disruption of college environment making it difficult for lecturers to achieve their goals maximally; etc. Based on the findings, some recommendations were made which include the use of clear and concise language by provosts, constant use of face-to-face communication and the provosts being active listeners.

Keywords: communication skills, determinant and effective management

1. Introduction

Education worldwide is seen as an instrument for effecting national development. Nigeria's educational goals have been set out in the National Policy on Education in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individual and the society (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2014). To this end, the National Policy on Education set up certain aims and objectives which are meant to facilitate educational development in the country and the schools' heads have important roles to play. These roles include providing effective leadership for enhancing better job performance among staff. How effective a school head is in performing these roles has been a matter of concern for many educationists. The school head is the engine that gives the institution its power. His communication must be effective to be able to achieve the best results. In the College of Education sector of tertiary institution, the provost is the head who communicates daily with different stakeholders of the college (staff, students, parents, etc.). This task makes him the image of the school and thus, he must possess efficient communication skills which enable him fulfil the goals for which the school was established (Shahrill, 2014). The utmost essential key to great leadership is communication. School head must be an effective and convincing communicator to be efficient and successful (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015).

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Colleges of education are an integral part of the nation's educational system responsible for the production of qualified teachers for primary and junior secondary schools (Otegbulu & Chidobi, 2018). According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), colleges of education are teacher education institutions designed to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for primary and junior secondary levels of Nigerian educational system. Heads are responsible for the success or failure of the academic institutions they lead. Evolving demands from both internal and external forces create a turbulent environment for administrators. Traditionally, leadership in academic programs comes from within faculty ranks (Friesen, 2018; Wilson, 2020; Lee et al., 2020). Academic staff often become administrators simply because they possess requisite qualifications and it is their turn, while others assume leadership status because their superiors and colleagues believe they would be good administrators. Academic staff are trained as scholars and their experience often does not prepare them for leadership. Teaching, research, and community service, the three-legged stool of academia, does not necessarily prepare lecturers for administrative excellence, as research have shown that faculty are often dissatisfied with their administrators' effectiveness (Celdrana, 2020; Young et al., 2021; Moon, Morash & McCluskey, 2021). It is important to identify the skills required for good academic leadership (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Tahsildar, 2021). The ability to effectively communicate is probably the most important skill that a school head needs to develop. It is far more important in the long term than degrees, certifications and other measures of professional and intellectual skills (Jung, Lee & Shin, 2020). No matter how qualified and intelligent an administrator is, the ability to effectively pass information on is the only thing of consequence and value (Brust-Sisti, Sturgill, & Volino, 2019; Ismail, Arnawa & Yerizon, 2020). Effective communication is critical to achieving success in business, educational and scientific world (Kontoangelos, Economou, & Papageorgiou, 2020; Sibiya, 2018). Communication skill is not innate in most human beings, but it can be developed. The three essential elements of effective communication are: listening; speaking and giving and receiving feedback effectively (Grainger, 2019; Ataguba & Ataguba, 2020; Kelly et al., 2021).

The real work of academic chairs demands a diverse set of leadership capabilities: well-honored communication skills (such as listening deeply to colleagues and students with empathy and curiosity), problem-solving skills, conflict-resolution skills, cultural management skills, coaching skills, and transition management skills (Gigliotti, 2021). Based on this submission, academic leaders have the task of making colleagues' strengths efficient and their weaknesses irrelevant (Brinkley-Etzkorn & Lane, 2019). Organizations exist due to communication which serves as blood flow to human body. The survival of any organization is a function of existing communication in it (Solaja, Faremi & Adesina, 2016). Every organization is in dire need of a wise leader who is visionary, flexible and who will be able to adopt changes and communicate effectively. Some leaders lack communication skills which are an important function in leadership. It forms a significant tool in an organization contributing to the formation of a cohesive team (Campo, 2014; Kapur, 2018). Communication skills (of managers and employees) are a decisive factor for an organization's success, because functioning of an organization involves dealing with its human resources and managing them effectively to carry out various tasks associated with customers and clients, which depends on communication at various levels: interpersonal level, group level, mass level (Ansari, 2021).

Today, the public schools are in crisis with various sectors of society questioning their performance and ability to provide the quality of education needed to enlist the nation in the comity of developed countries in all ramifications. Communication in an organization and with people outside the organization leads to better understanding among people. Thus, organization communication is the communication that is done between the stakeholders for business purposes; to give appropriate information to people within and outside the organization to ensure effective and efficient product and service delivery towards achieving satisfaction by all (Dupe, 2015).

Education is an instrument for national development and its success or failure is dependent upon the communication skills used by its manager. However, effective communication skills are virtually indispensable in the management of Colleges of Education, since no rational educational objectives can be achieved without an effective flow of communication among stakeholders within the system. Poor usage of communication skills in Colleges of Education in Kwara State has been a great concern to the College management and members of staff. It seems the problem has brought about a decline in standard of education and poor quality of Nigerian Certificate in Education graduates from Nigerian Colleges of Education, especially in Kwara State. The more a provost refuses to have listening ears to the members of staff and also not skillful in using clear, brief and straightforward language while giving out information, the more the tendencies of bringing confusion, tension and conflicts in the College. It was observed from the above statement that in most Colleges of Education, communication skills are not properly used while performing management functions. This has resulted to inefficiencies in management.

2. Literature Review

From conceptual perspective, communication is the totality of all the activities that a school head does to make transformation in the minds of his workforce and other stakeholders. Communication is a veritable tool required in an organisation to solve problems and accomplish goals (Anya & Ekezie, 2019; Ballaro, Mazzi & Holland, 2020). Communication can never take place in isolation, there has to be a sender, a receiver, the message and the medium used to communicate. Effective communication is a process where the two or more people involved in information sharing interact successfully (Arop, Owan & Ekpang, 2018; Momeny & Gourgues, 2019). Communication in an institution of learning is also the exchange and flow of information and ideas from one person to another. It involves a sender transmitting an idea, information, or feeling to a receiver. Effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit. Communication is a way of conveying messages to various people using a common system of symbols, signs or behaviour. Language is used to transmit verbal messages; from single-letter words to complex discussions, in order to produce the anticipated effect. We start our first communication soon after birth when we cry to convey the message of discomfort or hunger, i.e. basic messages pertaining to our needs. Later in life, more complex messages need to be communicated. Non-verbal communication is a way of communicating without words. It includes behaviour such as facial expressions, eye movement, touching and tone of voice, as well as less obvious messages, such as dress, posture and the spatial distance between two or more people (Rajhans, 2018).

From empirical perspective, studies have been conducted on the importance of communication in organization. For instance, Solaja, et al. (2015) investigated the relationship between leadership communication style and organizational productivity. The result of the study revealed, amongst others, that there is a relationship between leadership communication style and organizational productivity. Specifically, precise, friendly, open and attentive communication styles have been found to have a positive relationship with organisational productivity and job performance. In essence, leaders who are open and friendly in communication will understand their co-workers better and this helps to reduce work place stress and improves employees' satisfaction and cooperation, which ultimately leads to attainment of organizational goals. Effective leadership communication styles were recommended for school heads when disseminating information, in order to increase the job commitment of workers, knowledge creation, job satisfaction, acceptance of work responsibility and positive subordinate behaviour which leads to goal attainment.

Akinwale and Okotoni (2018) studied the communication skills of principals and its impact on the administration of secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey was employed using 756 respondents comprising principals and teachers randomly selected. Two instruments: Principal Communication Skill Questionnaire for Principal (PCSQP) and Principal

Communication Skills Questionnaire for Teachers (PCSQT) were used to elicit information from the sample. One research question was raised and answered using frequency counts and percentages to analyse the data collected. The findings revealed that inclusive communication skill is the most commonly used by principals in secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria. However, other styles employed are open and assertive.

Arop et al. (2018) in their study focused on the nexus between effective communication and performance of tertiary Institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. Their study involved 119 participants comprising 53 academic and 66 non-academic staff. A researcher-designed instrument titled Effective Communication Management and Performance of Tertiary Institutions Questionnaire (ECMAPOTIQ) was used. Three null hypotheses formulated were tested using the chi-square statistics at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Rejecting the null hypotheses, the researchers concluded that human relationship, employee work performance, and school goals attainment in tertiary institutions significantly depend on effective communication management. Provision of effective communication guidelines, proper channels of communication, development of interpersonal communication skills, proper management of communication and use of effective communication management were recommended by the researchers to encourage the workforce towards organizational goals attainment.

Ansari (2021) established that for effectiveness in communication, the leader needs certain requirements, which include "verbal skills, nonverbal skills, empathy, positive attitude, problem-solving, decision-making skills, active listening, assertiveness, resilience, negotiation skills, team player attitude, and patience" (p. 917). Managers with good interpersonal communication skills keep the work environment better, more positive and productive, which helps build trust with their employees, thus retaining them. Managers with good interpersonal communication skills can maintain the work environment positive and productive and help build trust with their employees, thus retaining them. Pearse (2005) (as cited by Ansari, 2021) recognized three principal co-words as bases to business success: consideration, cooperation, and communication.

Fowler and Lucero (2021) studied the influence of manager communication on job engagement and job satisfaction of care providers. The study sought to find out if an evidence exists that nurse managers with communication competence have better patient/staff outcomes than those with lower competencies. Common health database was used to obtain data through an evidence review on day-to-day influence of nurse manager communication. Dimensions such as patient safety and quality; job satisfaction, leadership styles, innovative practice and general management skills were identified. Results revealed that positive patient and staff outcomes correlated with a leader who exhibits communication competencies. Also manager communication is a crucial determinant of nurses' job engagement and job satisfaction. It was recommended from the study that assessment of current competence levels of communication in nurse managers and education for improving communication skills are needed.

Theoretically, this study is anchored on Berlo's SMCR (Source, Message, Channel, and Receiver) communication model (Najafi et al., 2018). The model focuses on the individual characteristics of communication and stresses the role of the relationship between the source and the receiver as an important variable in the communication process. The more highly developed the communication skills of the source (the provost) and the receiver (lecturer and students), the more effectively the message will be encoded and decoded. This implies that if the provost is skillful in his communication, managing the college becomes effective (Muyanga & Phiri, 2020; Najafi et al., 2018). Berlo's model represents a communication process that occurs as the source (the provost) drafts a message based on his communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, and social and cultural system. The message is transmitted along channels, which can include sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. A receiver (lecturer or student) interprets the messages based on the individual's communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, and social and cultural system. Thus, the goal of the institution is passed from the provost in form of tasks to be performed by the lecturers and the students (de Almeida, 2022; Lee, Kim & Phaal, 2012).

In validating the above theory, Destiny (2016) assessed the communication skills as a training need for senior administrators in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria and found that senior administrators in tertiary institutions adequately acquired communication skills mostly in creating a good image and speech delivery in public. No significant difference was found between male and female administrators from their communication skills viewpoint.

Somawardana, Wijedasa and Gunaweera (2019) examined the impact of interpersonal communication skills on job satisfaction of front line managers. Specifically, their study attempted to identify the determinants and the current interpersonal communication skills level of the front line managers, and also determine the methods to enhance the front line managers' interpersonal communication skills. The study revealed that non-verbal communication, to be effective, represents 55 per cent of the message which must be communicated accurately. The study by Adekunle (2017) established that the ability of the head of an institution to work with and through people as well as effectively communicating with them positively contributed to employees' job engagement. McKenzie (2012) concluded that leadership communication is positively correlated with an improved job satisfaction among teachers leading to improved effectiveness.

2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

2. What are the communication skills needed by the provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

2.2 Research Hypotheses

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

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed the descriptive survey design. Ali (2006) defines descriptive survey design as documenting or description of events in its natural phenomena without any manipulation of what is being observed. The design allows a researcher to systematically seek for respondents' opinions on current issues about the problem under study (Mustapha, 2020). This was considered appropriate for the current study, because it involved collecting data directly from the respondents on the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara state.

3.2 Sampling Techniques

The total population of the study consists of 420 academic staff and 2,185 NCE students in the three state-owned Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria, while the sample consisted of 100 academic staff and 250 NCE students who were

proportionately and randomly selected from the three public Colleges of Education in Kwara State, making a total of 350 respondents.

3.3 Instrumentation

An instrument titled "Provosts' Communication Skills for Effective Management Questionnaire (PCSEMQ) was adapted from the work of Akinwale and Okotoni (2018). The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section A inquired information on personal data of the respondents. Section B involved two clusters, I and II, each containing items structured to address the research questions of the study. The response option of the items was a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points; Agree (A) =3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. Three experts validated the instrument. One from Educational Management and Counselling Department of Al-Hikmah University, Nigeria and two experts from Social Sciences Education Department (Measurement and Evaluation Experts) from University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final instrument. The instrument was trial tested involving 20 academic staff and 50 regular diploma students from the Kwara State College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies, Ilorin, because the institution is owned by the same proprietor with the three Colleges of Education and operates under the same conditions of service. This yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86 and 0.81 for communication skills and effective management respectively.

3.4 Procedure for Data Collection

Three hundred and seventy-five copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researchers. However, 340 copies were retrieved giving a percentage return rate of 97.1%.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected from the respondents, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Both descriptive and inferential analysis were performed. Specifically, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to analyze the two hypotheses at *0.05* level of significance. Criterion mean of *2.50* and above was accepted as indicator of 'agree', while mean scores below the criterion mean was an indicator of 'disagree'.

4. Results and Analysis

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the data collected based on the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The table below shows the profile of the respondents of both lecturers and students.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents (Lecturers)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	64	64%
Female	36	36%
Total	**100**	**100**
Length of Service		

1- 10 years	14	14%
11 - 20 years	36	36%
21 years and above	50	50%
Total	**100**	**100**
Rank		
Assistant Lecturer	05	5%
Lecturer III	06	6%
Lecturer II	21	21%
Lecturer I	26	26%
Senior Lecturer	22	22%
Principal Lecturer	13	13%
Chief Lecturer	07	7%
Total	**100**	**100**
Highest Qualification(HQ)		
B.A./B.Sc./B.Ed.	05	5%
M.A./M.Sc./M.Ed.	62	62%
Ph.D.	33	33%
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 1 above indicates that 64 lecturers representing 64% were male while 36 were females. Fourteen (14%) have served between one and ten years; thirty-six (36%) have spent between 11 and 20 years in service, while 50 lecturers (50%) have spent between 21 years and above in the services of the three state-owned colleges of education. Only five lecturers (5%) were in the cadre of Assistant Lecturer; six (6%) are Lecturer III; twenty-one representing 21% are Lecturer II; twenty-six (26%) are Lecturer I; twenty-two (22%) are Senior Lecturer; thirteen (13%) are Principal Lecturer, while only seven representing 7% are Chief Lecturer. Five of the lecturers representing 5% hold Bachelors' Degrees; sixty-two (62%) hold Masters' Degree, while thirty-three (33%) are Doctorate Degree holders.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents (Students)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	182	75.8%
Female	58	24.2%
Total	**240**	**100**
Level		
NCE I	54	22.5%
NCE II	86	35.8%
NCE III	100	41.7%
Total	**240**	**100**
School		
Arts Education	50	20.8%
Science Education	48	20%
Social Science Education	48	20%
Technical Education	46	19.2%
Business Education	48	20%
Total	**240**	**100**

Table 2 above indicates that 182 NCE students representing 75.8% are male while 58 (24.2%) are female. Fifty-four of the student respondents representing 22.5% are in NCE 1; 86 representing 35.8% are in NCE II, while 41.7% totaling one hundred students are in NCE III. Similarly, 50 students (20.8%) are in Arts Education; 48 (20%) in Science Education; 48 (20%) are in Social Science Education; 46 students or 19.2% are in Technical Education, while 48 (20%) students were sampled from Business Education.

Research Question One: What are the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

Table 3. Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State

Items	Problems caused by poor usage of Communication Skills	Academic Staff (100)			NCE students (240)		
		X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC
1.	Causes falling in the standard of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) graduates	2.82	0.75	A	2.55	0.88	A
2.	Brings about lack of sustainability of College's good track record	2.72	0.85	A	2.88	0.68	A
3.	Causes inadequate control of staff and students	2.62	0.65	A	2.77	0.75	A
4.	Breeds neglect of staff welfare and non-provision of grant for research and publications	2.66	0.82	A	2.55	0.72	A
5.	Encourages disruption of college environment making it difficult for lecturers to achieve their goals maximally	2.34	0.68	D	2.45	0.69	D
	Grand Mean	2.63	0.75	A	2.64	0.74	A

***A** = Agree; **D** = Disagree; **DEC**= Decision

Table 3 above shows the data analyzed regarding the responses of the respondents in the three Colleges of Education owned by the State Government on problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the Colleges. The data revealed that all the academic staff agreed on items *1, 2, 3* and *4* (with their means ranging from 2.66 to 2.82), but disagreed on item *5* with its mean 2.34. The NCE students agreed on items *1, 2, 3* and *4* (with their means ranging from 2.55 to 2.88), but disagreed on item *5* with its mean *2.45*. The cluster means are *2.63* and *2.64* for the academic staff and NCE students respectively. Mostly, the respondents agreed that four of the listed items are the identified problems caused by poor usage of communication skills. However, respondents did not believe that Provosts' poor usage of communication skills encourages disruption of the college environment needless to talk of making it difficult for lecturers to achieve their goals maximally.

Research Question Two: What are the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

Table 4. Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation scores on the communication skills needed by provosts for the effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State

s	Item	Communication Skills needed by the Provosts	Academic Staff (100)			NCE students (240)		
			X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC
	1.	Adequate use of interpersonal communication such as eye contact and face-to-face communication	2.62	0.65	A	2.52	0.68	A
	2.	Adequate use of verbal communication such as sound, language, tone of voice	2.66	0.75	A	2.68	0.64	A
	3.	Active listening and hearing skill to reduce misunderstanding	2.64	0.64	A	2.75	0.55	A
	4.	Using open-ended questions to get more information	2.76	0.72	A	2.51	0.82	A
	5.	Constantly using non-verbal communication skill clearly	2.84	0.60	A	2.65	0.64	A
		Grand Mean	2.70	0.67	A	2.62	0.67	A

Table 4 above shows the data analyzed regarding the responses of the academic staff and NCE students in the three Colleges of Education owned by the State Government on the communication skills needed by the provosts in the Colleges. The data revealed that all the items under the two categories of respondents are above the criterion mean of *2.50* ranging from *2.51* to *2.85* with standard deviations of *0.67* and *0.62* respectively. This shows that respondents agreed unanimously on the stated items as the communication skills needed by the provosts in the three Colleges of Education.

Hypotheses Testing

H0$_1$: There is no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

Table 5: T-test analysis of academic staff and NCE students on the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills by provosts in the management of Colleges of Education

Source of Variation	N	X	SD	Df	Prob-Level	t- Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Academic Staff	100	2.63	0.75					
NCE Students	240	2.64	0.74	338	0.05	1.24	1.96	H$_{o1}$ Accepted

Table 5 above shows the calculated t-value of *1.24* at *0.05*level of significance and *338* degree of freedom with the critical t-value of *1.96*. The calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value, thus, the null hypothesis is, therefore, not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of academic staff and NCE students on the problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in the government-owned Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

Table 6: T-test analysis of academic staff and NCE students on the communication skills needed by provosts in the management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State

Source of Variation	N	X	SD	Df	Prob-Level	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
Academic Staff	100	2.70	0.67					
NCE Students	240	2.62	0.67	338	0.05	1.04	1.96	H$_{o2}$ Accepted

The result of data analysis in table 6 reveals that calculated t-value of *1.04* at *0.05* level of significance and *338* degree of freedom is less than the critical t-value of *1.96*. Thus, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of academic staff and NCE students' opinions on the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

5. Discussion

The result of the study in table 1 revealed that there are problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in Colleges of Education in Kwara State, which include falling in the standard of Nigeria Certificate in Education graduates, lack of sustainability of College's good track record, lack of adequate control of staff and students, neglect of staff welfare and non-provision of grant for research and publications, poor supervision and monitoring of college's activities. Appointment of weak administrators has been identified as one of the problems facing public schools including tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Such weakness covered both administration and management and are always manifested in poor usage of communication skills amongst others as some heads of institutions do not possess requisite qualifications, experiences and knowledge and skills for successful leadership (Ogunode, Ahmed, Deborah & Abubakar, 2020). This phenomenon of insufficient level of provosts' communicative skills and its negative impacts is a nation-wide problem, as virtually all the colleges of education in Nigeria are faced with one problem or the other resulting from administrators' lack of effective use of communication skills (Kadir, Tijani & Sofoluwe, 2020; Birabil et al., 2020; Ezinine, & Ughamadu, 2021). This is also in line with the opinions of Ogunode, Wama and Dilmund (2020) and Beard (2018) who stated that inability to use communication skills effectively by school administrators causes problems such as poor quality of education, neglect of staff welfare, poor supervision and monitoring, low productivity of workers and lack of sustainability of good track record of performance. They maintained that this causes disruption in college environment making it difficult for the lecturers to achieve their full potentialities.

The result of the test of the first hypothesis on the responses of academic staff and NCE students on problems caused by poor usage of communication skills in Colleges of Education shows that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups of respondents. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The findings from the analysis of research question two as shown in Table 2 revealed the communication skills that are needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education. The findings showed that constant use of eye contact and face-to face communication, adequate use of verbal communication, making use of active listening and hearing always, regular use of open-ended question and constant use of non-verbal and writing are the communication skills needed for effective management of Colleges of Education. Supporting these findings, Miller (2006) opined that communication skills like face-to-face meetings, planning of information, dialogue, use of questions during discussion should be further developed among members of the school system. This finding is also in line with Hoy, Miskel, and Tarter (2013) who stated that school administrators give suggestions, ask questions and stimulate participation, encourage alternative suggestions and demonstrate a desire for a group to reach its own conclusion. Similarly, Solaja, Faremi, and Adesina (2015) upheld that precise, friendly, open and attentive communication styles have been found to have a positive relationship with organization productivity and job performance. In essence, leaders who are open and friendly in communication will understand their co-workers better and this helps them to reduce work place stress and improves employees' satisfaction and cooperation, which ultimately leads to attainment of organizational goals. Positive patient and staff outcomes in their study correlated with a leader who exhibits communication competencies. The finding also agrees with the outcome of Fowler and Lucero's (2021) work, which maintained that manager communication is a crucial determinant of nurses' job engagement and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 showed that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of academic staff and NCE students on the communication skills needed by provosts for effective management of Colleges of Education in Kwara State. This finding corroborated Ansari's (2021) study who found that for effectiveness in communication, the leader needs to satisfy certain requirements which include verbal skills, nonverbal skills, empathy, positive attitude, problem-solving, decision-making skills, active listening, assertiveness, resilience, negotiation skills, team player attitude, and patience. Also, the findings buttressed the outcome of Arop and his colleagues' (2018) work, which suggested that provision of good communication guidelines, proper channels of communication, development of effective interpersonal communication skills, proper management of communication and the use of effective communication management are needed by heads of institutions to encourage the workforce towards organizational goals attainment. In addition, their findings support the view expressed by Solaja et al. (2016) that the survival of any organization is a function of existing communication in it stressing further that every organization is in dire need of a wise leader who is visionary, flexible, dynamic and who will be able to adopt changes and communicate effectively. This finding is also congruent with the Berlo's communication model, which focuses on the individual characteristics or features of communication and stresses the role of the relationship between the source and the receiver as an important variable in the communication process (Muyanga & Phiri, 2020).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Answering the research question one, generally, the respondents agreed that all five listed items are the identified problems caused by poor usage of communication skills. The majority of the respondents (academic staff and NCE students) agreed on the items which stated that poor usage of communication skills causes falling in the standard of education, brings about lack of sustainability of good track records, causes inadequate staff and students' control, breeds neglect of staff and students' welfare, and encourages disruption of college environment. Similarly, responding to the research question two, the respondents agreed on the need for the provosts to acquire and develop such skills as adequate use of eye contact and face-to-

face communication; verbal communication; active listening and hearing skills; using open-ended questions; and constant use of non-verbal communication skills. Usage of effective communication skill is the means by which organized activity is unified in the school. It also enhances the morale of staff and makes them more productive and relevant in the pursuant of school objectives. Therefore, these communication skills are needed by the provosts for effective management of the Colleges of Education in Kwara State and other educational institution that have communication problems between managers and the staff. In view of the forgoing, the researchers recommend the following for effective management of Colleges of Education:

1. Use of clear and concise language in disseminating information by the provosts. This will help reduce misunderstanding and role conflict in the Colleges.
2. Constant use of face-to-face communication like meetings by the provosts. This will help create a conducive learning environment for effective management of the Colleges.
3. The provosts should try as much as possible to be active listeners and learn when and how to use questions effectively in order to encourage staff participation in the college management.
4. The provosts should identify a communication method that is inclusive and accessible to all members of the college community to enhance efficiency.
5. The provosts should strive to eliminate those conditions that reduce effective communication among the college staff.

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