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Communication Styles as Correlate of Administrative Effectiveness in Public Universities in Anambra State

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ABSTRACT
The study examined communication styles as correlates of administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 6,311 administrative staff in two public universities in Anambra State. The sample of 631 administrative staff was selected using simple random sampling technique for the study. Communication Styles Questionnaire (CSQ) and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. The face validation was done using three experts. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool and the average coefficients were established at 0.71 for CSQ and 0.86 for AEQ. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to answer research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness and weak positive and significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. The study concluded that communication styles exhibits a positive and significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that there should be free flow of communication from superiors to subordinate, when staff are constantly told what they are to do, confusion does not set in and therefore they are able to perform optimally for enhancing administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.
Keywords: Communication styles, administrative effectiveness, public universities

INTRODUCTION

In the school system, the process of administration is referred to as educational administration or school administration. Okoroma (2019) defined educational administration as the process of systematic arrangement of human and material resources and programmes that are available for education and the use of them carefully and systematically within defined guidelines or policies to achieve educational goals. Administration in the school involves the mobilization and arrangement of both human and materials resources for the achievement of the university's goals (Adinna & Okaforcha, 2019). University administration is the deployment of the universities' resources to accomplish the universities' programme. The implication of the definitions above is a connotation that administration deals extensively with the utilization of all resources available to the school administrator to ensure that the desire purpose to which the organization (school) is being attained. Ogunode et al (2020) identified the objectives of

administration in the university to include: to implement the programme of the universities as defined; to allocate resources for the implementation of the universities programme; to ensure implementation of teaching programme, to ensure implementation of research programme; to ensure delivery of quality community services programme, to ensure effective staff development, to ensure effective student administration, to ensure smooth implementation of academic calendar and to ensure quality education.

Administrative effectiveness refers to the ability of school leaders to efficiently coordinate and manages all aspects of school operations to achieve desired educational goals. Ezeaku and Joseph (2025) posited that administrative effectiveness involves the strategic allocation and utilization of resources, supervision of teaching and non-teaching staff, maintenance of discipline, fostering of a positive school climate, and the implementation of policies aimed at ensuring optimal performance of the school as an organization. Ikegbusi et al. (2025) explained that administrative effectiveness is the extent to which school administrators succeed in achieving predefined educational goals through systematic planning, organization and leadership. Obiekezie and Obi (2025) defined administrative effectiveness as the ability of administrators to achieve the educational goals of the institution through their administrative prowess. It is indispensable for the actualization of the educational policy objectives. Okoye and Ezeaku (2025) noted that administrative effectiveness strives towards the attainment of goals of school system. In other words, administrative effectiveness is judged by the extent to which administrators accomplish their core tasks which includes the ability to communicate with necessary stakeholders as at when needed.

The effectiveness of school administration is largely influenced by the leadership behaviour adopted by the administrators, as it play a vital role in shaping the daily operations and strategic direction of the school. As reported by Chiekezie et al. (2025) and Obi et al. (2025b), there are existing declining academic performance, inefficient resource management and staff dissatisfaction raised concern about the potential relationship among leadership behaviours, communication styles and school administrative effectiveness among institutions of learning in Anambra State. Mmor and Adinna (2025) noted that, while some institutions appeared to excel in administrative effectiveness under specific leadership approaches and communication patterns, others struggled to achieve similar results declining the desired the academic outcome of university education in Anambra State.

As laudable as the goals of university education are, Chiekezie et al. (2025) noted that very little has been achieved especially in the area of producing high quality graduates and advancement in research and development. The Nigerian public universities in recent times have come under attacks for poor performance. The quality of the public universities in Nigeria is going down due to poor administration (Ezeaku & Obi, 2025). The Nigerian public universities were among the best in the world before but the situation has changed. The performance of Nigerian public universities is not encouraging. Many problems have been identified as responsible. Problems of poor administration of public universities have been identified by different scholars as a problem facing the public universities in Nigeria. This can be attributed to low level of administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities including Anambra State.

Contextually, the researchers defined administrative effectiveness as the ability of the school principal to achieve the goals and objectives of the school. It is also the degree to which administrative functions, processes and activities contribute to the school's ability to achieve its goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. In essence, it is about how well administration supports the overall mission and purpose of the organization. Effective administration is the hub behind the success and development of every institution of learning. This is because the quality of any school is dependent on quality school administration hence; university education cannot be effective without good communication styles.

Communication is exchange of ideas, feelings knowledge, information, experiences and emotion within or between people or a group of people. Arguing in the same line, Ezeaku and Ezeiru (2025) defined communication as a coerced effort on the part of the individuals involved in the school system to share their personal feelings, purpose and knowledge and to appreciate the feelings, purposes and knowledge of others. Communication helps in coordinating the efforts of staff in school (Manafa & Adinna, 2023). A problem or misunderstanding may arise if there is breakdown in communication or administrators fail to provide timely information to members of staff. Okaforcha and Okonkwo (2025) asserted that

administrators who are involved in communication process need to possess both basic skills and abilities; otherwise the information could be misunderstood. In essence, sharing ideas, receiving messages and achieving mutual understanding requires using different styles of communication.

Communication styles of administrators in schools plays important role in its administration. Onyekwelu (2024) asserted that communication styles otherwise known as communication patterns can be seen as the way an administrator expresses their thought when transmitting information and ideas to members of staff. Onyekwelu listed communication styles as assertive, open, aggressive, passive and manipulative. In the words of Obi et al. (2025a), communication style is a distinguishing way an administrator transmits verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal indicators in social interactions to present the identity he or she has or wants to (or appear to) have, the way he or she relates with members of staff and the way his or her message should be understood. Obi et al. added that communication styles can be open, passive, assertive, manipulative and aggressive. Ohamobi and Ukeh (2025) defined communication style as a method by which administrator negotiates situations with other members of staff.

Communication styles encompass the methods used to share information, articulate ideas and receive feedback. Manafa et al. (2021) credited that communication styles integrate verbal and written strategies for effectively exchanging information. Manafa et al. added that communication styles include open, passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, manipulative and assertive. Ughamadu et al. (2025a) noted that communication style is about how administrators or superiors use various communication skills when conveying their thoughts and ideas among members of staff in their various institutions. Chiekezie et al. (2025) argued that administrators communicate in different situations or with different people (students and other members of staff) in school, the styles can be combined, and they use styles different than their default one, based on who they are communicating with. Obikeze and Ezeanowai (2025) defined communication styles as distinct methods of transmitting and receiving information in organisational settings. Similarly, these styles involve various patterns and strategies administrators use to issue instructions or guidance to employees. Ughamadu et al. (2025a) and Chiekezie et al. (2025); also categorized communication styles into open, inclusive, passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, submissive, manipulative and assertive styles.

Contextually, the researchers defined communication styles as the verbal and non-verbal approaches through which information is shared within the school. It is also the various ways school administrators express information and feelings when interacting with staff and students, encompassing verbal and nonverbal cues like body language and tone of voice. This study was delimited to passive and aggressive communication style.

The passive communication style involves not defending one's own rights, not being able to express feelings, thoughts and opinions, and showing conformity to everything. This type of communication is also known as the submissive communication style. Another way of describing it is the "people-pleaser" type. This type of communication is self-effacing, conflict-avoidant, and easy-going (Obi et al., 2025a). That is not to say that a passive communicator is always happy, in fact, this style of communication can lead to resentment building up over time because the persons are unable to clearly communicate their opinions, needs and wants. Ezeaku and Joseph (2025) noted that passive communicators prioritize others' needs, have difficulty saying "no," apologize excessively and may use non-verbal cues like avoiding eye contact or speaking softly. While it can temporarily create harmony, this style can damage self-worth and relationships by fostering misunderstandings and internalizing negative feelings. Eziuzo (2025) argued that passive communication is typically associated with individuals who agree to whatever the others in the group want). Their individual opinion is kept to themselves, even when they tend not to agree, which causes passive-aggressive communication to take place. When passive communicators fail to stand up for themselves time and time again, it can lead to frustration, resentment and aggression.

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. This type of people can focus on winning, even if it is on the other person's expense. They behave as if their needs are more important, have more to contribute, and have more rights than other people. This is not a healthy style of

communication because the content of the message can be lost because people become too busy reacting to the way it is delivered. Thus, aggressive communicators are verbally and/or physically abusive (Onyekwelu, 2024). A school administrator who uses aggressive communication style creates a win-lose situation and uses intimidation to get his needs met, often at the expense of others. Aggressive administrators feel a strong sense of inadequacy, has lack of empathy and believes the only way to get their needs met is through power and control (Ezeaku et al., 2025). He is usually close-minded, a poor listener and tends to monopolize discussions. Okaforcha and Okonkwo (2025) opined that aggressive administrator is a fault finder, tries to dominate others, uses humiliation to control others, criticizes, blames or attacks others, has low frustration tolerance, speaks in a loud, demanding and overbearing voice, acts threateningly and rudely. In the words of Okechukwu and Oputa (2022 p.203) noted that aggressive administrators can be abusive and manipulative.

The responsibility of maintaining administrative effectiveness is the core task of school administrators (Adinna & Okafor, 2023). However, the attainment of administrative effectiveness in public universities depends on administrators' capability, knowledge and skills to discharge specific responsibilities toward achieving the goals of institutions. The researcher observed that there are several abnormalities associated with administrative effectiveness among some administrators in public universities in Anambra State in the areas of poor decision-making, a tendency to blame, lack of empathy and inappropriate application of mix communication styles. It is worrisome that members of the public sometimes accuse some administrators of public universities in Anambra State of improper application of communication styles. These issues are pointers to administrative ineffectiveness among administrators of public universities in Anambra State. Considering these scenarios, the researcher's interest was aroused to examine communication styles as correlate of administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine communication styles as correlate of administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent of relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.
2. find out the extent of relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the extent of relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State?
2. What is the extent of relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

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

1. There is no significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study was carried out in public universities in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consist 6,311 administrative staff in two public universities in Anambra State. The sample of 631 administrative staff was selected using simple random sampling technique for the study. Communication Styles Questionnaire (CSQ) and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (AEQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face and construct validation. Face validation was done by three experts, two in Educational Management and one in

Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, while construct validation was carried out with Principal Component Analysis approach using SSPS vol.26 and the results showed that the construct validity was met. The reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool and the average coefficients were established at 0.71 for CSQ and 0.86 for AEQ. Direct method of data administration was utilized by the researcher together with five research assistants. Out of 631 copies of the instrument administered, 628 copies representing 99% of the instrument were correctly completed and returned. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to answer research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question One: *What is the extent of relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State?*

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	Remark
Passive communication style	628			
		0.684	0.552	Moderately Positive
Administrative effectiveness	628			

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis in Table 1 showed that passive communication style has a high positive relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This revealed a high positive correlation coefficient valued at 0.684 which indicated that there is a high positive relationship existing between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This implies that a unit increase in the application of passive communication style leads to 0.684(68%) increases in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and vice versa. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value of 0.552 showed that the explanatory power of the variable was positively moderate. This implies that 55% of the variations in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State were moderately accounted for by the variations in the application of passive communication style.

Research Question Two: *What is the extent of relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State?*

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	Remark
Aggressive communication style	628			
		0.271	0.135	Weak Positive
Administrative effectiveness	628			

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient on Table 2 showed that aggressive communication style has a weak positive relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This revealed a weak positive correlation coefficient valued at 0.271 which indicated that there is a weak positive relationship existing between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This implies that a unit rise in the practices of aggressive communication style leads to 0.271(27%) rises in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and vice versa. The coefficient of determination (r^2) value of 0.135 showed that the explanatory power of the variable was positively weak. This implies that 14% of the variations in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State were weakly accounted for by the variations in the practices of aggressive communication style.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	p-value	Remark
Passive communication style	628				
		0.684	0.552	0.000	Significant
Administrative effectiveness	628				

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Table 3 showed the significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State with p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the study rejected the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that there is significant relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State

Variables	N	r	r^2	p-value	Remark
Aggressive communication style	628				
		0.684	0.552	0.000	Significant
Administrative effectiveness	628				

***Significant at p < 0.05*

The summary result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Table 4 showed the significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State with p-value = 0.000. Since p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the study rejected the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and accepted the alternative hypothesis that there is significant relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings on the relationship between passive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State indicated that passive communication style has a moderate positive relationship valued at 0.684 with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This means that increase in the practical application of passive communication style will bring about 68% increases in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and vice versa. The study also showed that passive communication style has a significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. In line with the findings of the study, Manafa et al. (2021) revealed that speaking with simple English, writing memo with concise English, use of body language are some of the communication techniques that influence principals' administration of secondary schools in Anambra State. Ezeaku and Ezeiru (2025) showed that school administrators' style of communication entails easily giving away what staff want and often apologizing for having opinions that is different from teachers. Obi et al. (2025d) revealed that the significant relationship existing

between administrators' communication style and their academic effectiveness is based on consistently prioritizing others' needs over their own, and avoiding conflict and confrontation. Similarly, Ohamobi and Ukeh (2025) findings revealed that the activities of the school administrators in their communication pattern using hesitant verbal and non-verbal cues like soft speaking and avoiding eye contact moderately influence their administrative effectiveness in schools. The similarities in the findings could be as a result of unique benefits of a passive communication style including the temporary de-escalation of conflict, the maintenance of short-term harmony, and fostering empathy by valuing others' perspectives.

Findings on the relationship between aggressive communication style and administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State indicated that aggressive communication style has a weak positive relationship valued at 0.271 with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. This means that increase in the practical application of aggressive communication style will bring about 27% increases in administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State and vice versa. The study also showed that aggressive communication style has a significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State. The finding of the study is in agreement with the findings of Yakubu and Afolabi (2020) that administrators' aggressive communication style lowly influence on staff job performance as a result of rejecting staff suggestions during meetings and making their opinions not to count. Ezeaku et al. (2025) findings indicated that some school administrators transfer aggression to staff when things are not happening as expected. In the findings of Eziuzo (2025); Okaforcha and Okonkwo (2025), aggressive communication style weakens the morale of staff which are caused by administrators' use obscene language when relating with staff. In the findings of Ughamadu et al. (2025b), aggressive communication behaviour kills the zeal of staff to perform their duties which affect the school administration. Some aggressive communicators use query when staff make mistakes on the job. The similarities in the findings of these studies could be attributed to its ability to achieve immediate, decisive action in high-stakes or emergency situations due to its direct and unambiguous nature, allowing a communicator to assert dominance and quickly accomplish goals without concern for others' feelings. This can establish control, provide a sense of power, and release tension, though it often comes at the cost of damaging relationships and creating conflict.

CONCLUSION

It is important for any administrator to set clear goals and draw a road map based on effective communication and productive relationships with students and members of staff. Successful school administrators 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 communication styles exhibits a positive and significant relationship with administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations ware made:

1. There should be free flow of communication from superiors to subordinate, when staffs are constantly told what they are to do, confusion does not set in and therefore they are able to perform optimally for enhancing administrative effectiveness in public universities in Anambra State.
2. School administrators should endeavour to keep a high level of professional spirit and good moral standard of the schools. They should learn how to adapt their communication style to situations prevalent in the school to sustain good working environment for staffs and students in order to achieve the school objectives.

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