

## INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND DECISION MAKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OYO STATE

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the relationship between information dissemination and decision making in secondary schools. The study examined the predominant mode of information dissemination, level of decision making participation of teachers, the influence of school location and experience of teachers on information dissemination and decision making. The descriptive research design of the survey type was used. The population of the study consisted of all the teachers in all the public secondary schools in Oyo State. The multistage random sampling technique was used to select 300 respondents consisting of teachers from 15 secondary schools in the state. Two research questions and two hypotheses were generated. A self designed questionnaire titled "Information Dissemination and Decision making Questionnaire" (IDDMQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. The data was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test Statistics. The hypotheses was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that the predominant mode of disseminating information is by the school principal and heads of department while the level of decision making participation of teachers is moderately high to certain extents. There was positive relationship between information dissemination and decision making. It was also found that there was difference in the dissemination of information and decision making in schools located in rural and urban areas while there was no difference in the information and decision making of teacher based on their years of experience at work. It was recommended that all bottlenecks hindering information dissemination and decision making in schools should be dealt with. All teachers should be carried along while taking decisions regardless of experience and location of schools. All schools should be supplied with necessary infrastructures by the government that can aid information dissemination no matter the location of the school.

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Information dissemination in organizations had always been of great concern because of its importance. It is believed that organization could not survive unless a network of information flow is developed among the various operation levels. The effective flow of information should lead to effective management in an organization. A good measure of information dissemination effectiveness is for the receiver to understand the exact purpose and meaning intended for a message by the sender. In a situation where irrelevant, unwanted, superfluous and unreliable information are passed, the tendency is for wrong decisions to be taken. Decision making is a key managerial function in an organization. Management of secondary schools take decisions regularly concerning the operations of the school system. The quality of decisions taken also determine whether the school will achieve its objectives or not. This also depends on the successful use of accurate information which all the members of the organisation need to function.

Observations revealed that there are usually the problem of inadequate dissemination of information on the improvement and performance of teachers job. New entrants into the profession are not sometimes adequately informed of what to do on resumption and students are in some instance not adequately informed of what to do and what is expected of them. Besides, it is also noted that not all the staff partake in decision making because they lack adequate information. The school principals at times take decisions on their staff alone, and even effective decision are not usually taken promptly. The views of the junior members of staff are not often given consideration neither are the students allowed to participate in decision making.

In the secondary school setting, the principals, vice principals, heads of departments and class teachers are supposed to be decision makers who perform different tasks to achieve the goals of the school. When the right information are not properly disseminated to the class, teachers, students and others concerned, they become ineffective. For instance decisions made on discipline of teachers and students, academic improvement of students, maintenance culture of school physical plant, co-curriculum activities, school sports and so on are seen not to be well implemented in the schools for lack of proper dissemination of information and lack of involvement of the people concerned in the decisions taken. Since the teachers lack access to useful information, they stand the risk of inefficiency as all decisions are premised on working information.

According to Cole (1993) dissemination of information is a way of broadcasting a message to the public without direct feedback from the audience, The oxford dictionary defined dissemination of information as the act of spreading something especially information widely. Jaszay and Dunk (2006) refer to it as the distribution of information to the general public usually conducted by the government or an agency specifically given authorization to release information for any public sector. He emphasized that the information released is usually a statement of fact so that the groups of people who are being sent this information will not be required to give any feedback. According to Chike-Okoli (2007) decision making is the receiving and analyzing of relevant information about a managerial problem for the purpose of making the most suitable choice among alternative choice of actions. To Amadi (2009) decision making is a process of identifying problems, considering and evaluating alternatives arriving at a decision taking actions and assessing the outcome. Simon (1976) viewed decision making as a major tool in organizational management while Ukeje (1992) stressed that decision making is an administrative function that pervades the entire task of the administrator from his definition of goals through the definition of tasks and activities to the evaluation and control of the performed activities. Peretomade (1991) it is a means to achieving organizational goals and objectives. Considering the various views of authors, one can refer to decision making as holding the key to organization. Olagoke (2009) discovered that decisions taken on time often prevent problems from getting bigger and therefore becoming more difficult to tackle and that good quality information leads to effective decision provided it is properly handled.

Jaszay and Dunk (2006) also stress that the ultimate effectiveness of a decision is affected by both the quality of the decision itself and the implementation. Okeke (2009) affirmed that the decision of mankind remains a mere good intention without effective implementation of selected alternative solutions. Implementation of selected options is the final step in the decision making process. He emphasized that the manager in the organization has to possess good communication and human relations skills. Belasco and Alutto (1992) opined that allowing teacher participation in decision making purports to result in more satisfied teacher with greater commitment to organizational goals.

The problem of information dissemination among secondary school teachers seems to be complex that decision making appears to be ineffective. School principals are observed not to disseminate information appropriately. They take decisions without involving other decision

makers or subordinate. Information seems to come to teachers late and even the views of junior teachers are not sometimes put into consideration. As a result of these observations, it is the concern of the researcher to investigate the effect that information dissemination has on the decision making practices of school principals in Oyo State.

### Research Questions:

The following questions were raised for the study:

1. What is the predominant mode of information dissemination in secondary school?
2. What is the level of involvement of teachers in decision making process?

The following research hypotheses were generated for the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between information dissemination and decision making in Oyo State Secondary Schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between information dissemination and decision making in urban and rural schools.
3. There is no significant difference between decision making and information dissemination based on experience of teachers.

### Method:

The study was a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population for the study consisted of all the secondary school teachers in Oyo State. Multistage technique was used to select 5 schools for the study 300 teachers were randomly selected from the 5 schools. A self designed questionnaire tagged "Information dissemination and Decision making questionnaire (IDDMQ)" was used for data collection. The face and content validity of the instrument was ensured. While the re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The result of the reliability revealed 0.85 at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that the instrument was high enough and reliable to be used for the study. The completed questionnaire were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient for Hypotheses 1 & 2 and t-test for hypotheses 3. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Result:**

**Result Question:**

1. What is the predominant mode of dissemination of information in secondary schools in Oyo state, Nigeria

Research question 1 revealed the different modes of dissemination of information in secondary schools.

These include:

- i. By Government (DIG) e.g Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Commission
- ii. Internet (DII) e.g. e-mailing, website etc.
- iii. School principals and heads of departments (DID)
- iv. Mass Media (DIM)
- v. Public announcement (DIP)
- vi. Students to teachers (DIST)
- vii. Staff meetings (DISM)
- viii. Standing meeting (DISM)
- ix. Suggestion box (DISB)
- x. Circular (DIC)
- xi. Mobile phone (DIMB)
- xii. Notice board (DINB)
- xiii. Memo (DIMM)
- xiv. Morning devotion (DIMD)
- xv. Posters (DITP)

The frequency of the use of each mode of dissemination is presented in fig 1.

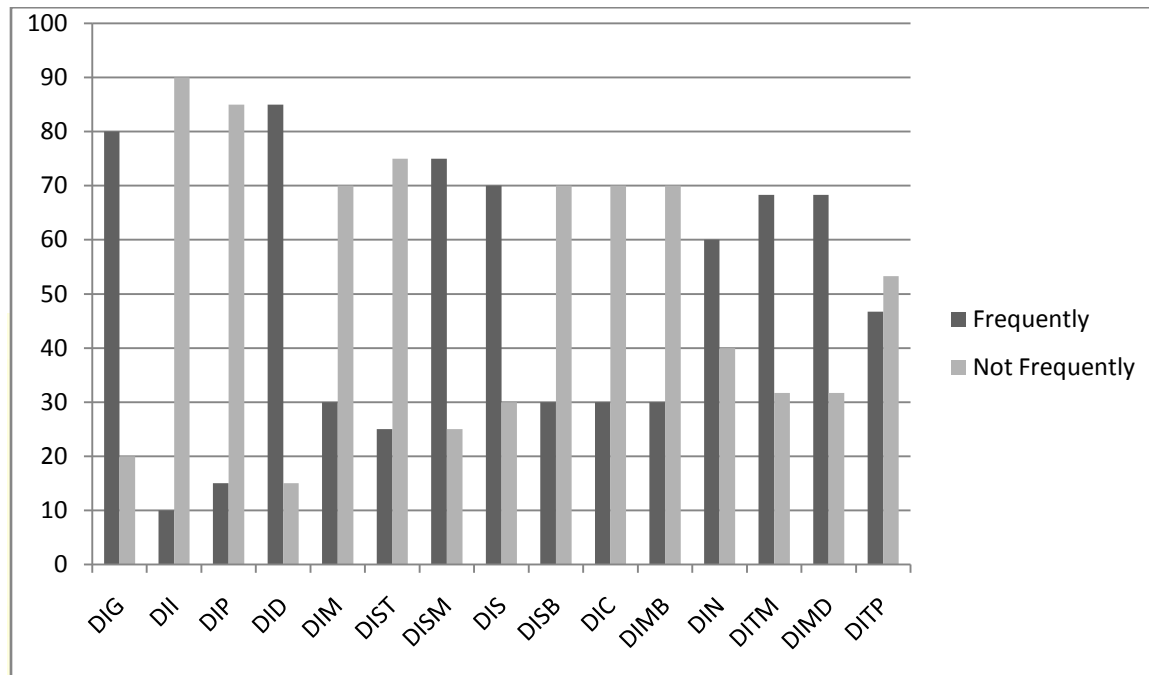


Figure 1: Chart on the mode of information dissemination in Oyo State Secondary School

- DIG: Dissemination of Information by Government
- DII: Dissemination of Information Through Internet
- DIP: Dissemination of Information Through Public Announcement
- DID: Dissemination of Information Through Principal and head of department
- DIM: Dissemination of Information Through Media
- DIST: Dissemination of Information Through Student to Teachers
- DISM: Dissemination of Information Through staff Meeting
- DISM: Dissemination of Information Through Standing meeting
- DISB: Dissemination of Information Through Suggestion Box
- DIC: Dissemination of Information Through Circular
- DIMB: Dissemination of Information Through Mobile Phone
- DIN: Dissemination of Information Through Notice Board
- DITM: Dissemination of Information Through Memo
- DIMD: Dissemination of Information Through Morning Devotion
- DIPT: Dissemination of Information Through Posters

The predominant mode is the dissemination by the school principal and heads of departments with 85% indicating frequently used mode. Next to its is by the government that is the ministry of Education and teaching service commission 80% while the third mode is through the staff

meeting 70%. The mode least used is the internet e.g. e-mailing, website etc with 90% responding not frequently used, next is public announcement 85% and thirdly students to teachers 75%.

2. What is the level of involvement of teachers in the decision making process.

Mean scores was used to categories the subject into 'Low and High' level of involvement in decision making as in table 2

Table 2

| Level of Teachers involvement in decision making | Range of Scores | Frequency | Percentages |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Low  | 20-50           | 148       | 49.3        |
| High   | 51-80           | 152       | 50.7        |
| Total  |                 | 300       | 100.0       |

Minimum score = 20, maximum = 80

The above table shows that 148 teachers representing 49.3% responded to Low involvement in decision making while 152 representing 50.7 responded to high involvement. This result shows that the level of involvement of teachers in the study area is just moderate.

$H_{01}$  There is no significant relationship between information Dissemination and decision making in Secondary School in Oyo State.

Table I. Test of relationship between information dissemination and decision making.

| Item            | N   | r-cal | r-tab |
|-----------------|-----|-------|-------|
| Information     | 300 |       |       |
| Dissemination   |     | 0.20* | 0.19  |
| Decision making | 300 |       |       |

\* $P < 0.05$  (Significant)

Table 1 shows positive relationship between information dissemination and decision making. The result obtained from the analysis, shows that the value of r-calculated (0.20) is greater than r-table (0.19) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not

accepted. This means that there is significant relationship between communication and decision making in Oyo state secondary school.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference between communication and decision making in rural and urban secondary schools.

Table 2 t-test summary of difference in information dissemination and decision making in rural and urban secondary schools.

| Items         | N   | X    | SD   | Df  | t-cal | t-tab |
|---------------|-----|------|------|-----|-------|-------|
| Rural schools | 112 | 4.00 | 2.13 | 298 | 6.10  | 1.65  |
| Urban schools | 188 | 8.27 | 7.23 |     |       |       |

P<0.05

The result revealed the value of t-calculated as 6.10 at df= 298, t-value was found to be 1.65. it implies that t-calculated is greater than the corresponding t-value at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant difference in information dissemination and decision making in rural and urban secondary schools in Oyo state.

**Hypotheses 3**

There is no significant difference between the decision making and information dissemination based on the experience of teachers.

The number of years spent in service was used to measure the experience of teachers. Any teacher with a length of service between 0-10 years is regarded as less experienced while a length of service of 11 years and above is regarded as experienced.

Table 3.t-test summary of difference in decision making and information dissemination based on experience.

| Items            | N   | X    | SD    | Df  | t-cal | t-tab |
|------------------|-----|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|
| Experienced      | 186 | 7.16 | 19.54 | 298 | 1.178 | 1.645 |
| Less experienced | 114 | 5.00 | 1.00  |     |       |       |

\*P>0.05



The result revealed that the value of t-calculated is 1.178 at  $df = 298$ , t value was 1.645. This shows that t-calculated is greater than the corresponding t-value at 0.05 level of significance meaning that there is no difference in decision making and information dissemination based on experience of teachers in secondary schools.

## Discussion

The result revealed that the predominant mode of information dissemination in secondary schools in the study is through the school principals and heads of departments. The information from the principal usually flows through the heads of departments to other members of the department. This result is supported by the study of Adegun (2002) who discovered that all transmissions of information that flow laterally within an organization took place between the employee at the same level, between or among peers within the same work group or between groups of equivalent status across departmental boundaries.

The level of involvement of teachers in decision making process in the study area was found to be just moderately high. This implies that the teachers are not adequately participating in decision making as it should be. This might one way or the other affect teachers' performances. Taylor and Tashakkori (1997) found that the best discriminator between high participation and low participation groups was principal leadership followed by job satisfaction. Allowing teacher participation in decision-making purports to result in more satisfied teachers with greater commitment to organizational goals and could be a challenge for making vital contributions in the education sector.

The result of the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between dissemination of information and decision making in secondary schools. This suggests that dissemination of information is a key to decision making. Information is needed by decision makers to solve any educational problems and issues. Quality and properly disseminated information allows decision makers to justify the basis of the decision of others. The finding is in support of Olagoke (2009), and Ajayi and Ayodele (2001) who discovered that in decision making, the decision makers are mostly content with the amount of information they are able to analyse effectively.

It was also found that there was a significant difference in information dissemination and decision making in rural and urban secondary schools. The result might be due to the fact that

information get to teachers and students more frequently and quickly in schools located in urban centres than those in the rural areas. It could also be because of the availability of some facilities other facilities through which information can be passed across which are not easily available in rural areas. This might affect taking certain decisions on time. Furthermore, the study discovered that there is no difference in decision making and information dissemination by experienced and less experienced teachers. It means that both subordinates and superiors are to participate in decision making at the secondary school when information is disseminated appropriately and frequently. This finding however contradicts the study of Thomas (2004) that emphasised that incompetent decision can be avoided largely through good personnel management whereby only those which appropriate qualifications and experience are made to occupy decision making position in organization.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

It can be concluded from the study that the predominant mode of information dissemination is through the school principal and heads of departments while teachers involvement in decision making high. Information dissemination is related to decision making. There is difference in information dissemination and decision making between teachers working in urban and rural areas of the study area but there is no difference in information dissemination and decision making among teachers in terms of their years of experience at work. It is thereby recommended that all bottlenecks hindering effective dissemination of information in schools should be dealt with. All teachers and students should be carried along while taking decisions regardless of experience or location of school. Schools outside the urban centres should be properly catered for by providing them with all amenities that will make them to receive information at the right time. Equal treatment and supply of infrastructures should be given by the government to all schools no matter the location.

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