

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS
IN GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF
ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of organizational communication taking place between the school principals and the two groups of subordinates - the academic and administrative staff members. The data was collected from 28 principals, 80 administrative staff members, and 310 teachers selected from 12 senior secondary schools of Ethiopia by systematic sampling method. Two schools were picked by lottery (simple random sampling method) from each zone in the country. Two types of questionnaires were employed to collect the necessary data from the principals and their subordinates.

The study revealed that principals do not have a thorough understanding of the general principles of organizational communication and they have not applied them in their schools. Because of this and other reasons, staff members seem to lack the courage and interest to transmit their suggestions, comments, etc. upwards. Although the flow of messages is primarily downward that even does not look to be effective. Generally, it appears that there is no conducive climate for communication and this has made the networks faulty and not able to facilitate school work. It is believed that these problems can be alleviated by organizing workshops and training programs to acquaint principals with the basic principles of communication so that they can improve communication in the schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH

The aim of this chapter is to provide some basic information about the research problem and how the study was conducted.

1.1. Introduction

An organization, including a school, is made up of persons who have to work in harmony. It is a mechanism for transforming human desires into social realities (Greenfield in Bush et al., 1985:166). Since each person has to know what others are doing and what is expected from him, all members of the organization have to be capable of receiving and transmitting messages effectively so that it can be successful in achieving its goals. Communication is the link that harmonizes each group and each person in an organization because it is the life-blood of every organization (Sigband, 1982:4 and Hanson, 1985:263). When the communication through the various channels of the organization is smooth and effective, the organization will be usually in good health. When the channels are faulty and the flow is inadequate or interrupted, the organization suffers in many ways.

According to Knezevich (1969:67), communication is a

means to accomplish the objectives of an organization. It is central in all planning, organizing, decision making, coordinating, leadership, and evaluation. Subordinates have to know the needs and interests of their organization. The leaders also need to know the interests and wishes of their subordinates. This can be done with the help of an efficient communication system. Lack of this system can promote an atmosphere of secrecy and distrust which hinders the smooth functioning of the organization. Since a climate of open communication improves the chances for high productivity and job satisfaction (Weeks and Jameson in Sigband, 1982:589), it is vital that managers; in this case school principals, be aware of the importance of communication and take the necessary measures to keep it smooth and effective.

In Ethiopia, teachers and administrative staff members are usually heard complaining that there are some misunderstandings between the principals and themselves. They don't get all the necessary information needed to accomplish their tasks on time; nor do they have the chance of sending the necessary feedback, comments, and new ideas upwards. Although leadership in educational administration needs to be based on social interaction (Zaudneh, 1987:236), lack of smooth and effective communication network is observed in many of our schools today. Because of this and other problems, the quality of education seems to be deteriorating from time to time. Hence, it is believed that improving the

communication networks of the schools is a step forward towards the improvement of the quality of education in the country.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Because of the key role communication plays in an organization, many theoreticians and practitioners have conducted research in the field. Sullivan (1974; Higham (1967); Weeks and Jameson (1982); Bredeson (1987); Honey (1981); Cusik (1981); Donnellon, Gray, and Bougon (1986); Lysaught (1984); and Morrow (1982) are some of the researchers who, one way or the other, dealt with such studies. However, except the senior essays of Hirpa (1983) and Gizaw (1985) which point to some communication problems in senior secondary schools of Addis Ababa, it seems that no research has been conducted on this topic in the country so far.

Although there is a great variation in magnitude between countries, regions, and organizations there is no any corner where communication problems are totally non-existent. Undoubtedly, these problems are more severe in countries of the third world because of the shortage of properly trained manpower and lack of research oriented management. In Ethiopia, the culture of using research based approaches in management, to put it in concrete terms, is at its infancy for the field itself is a recent development in the country.

There are many communication hindrances in our organizations in general and in the schools in particular. While serving as a school principal in various parts of the country, the student researcher had the chance of observing the nature of organizational communication in the schools; and this condition initiated him to focus on the problem. Therefore, he believes that the problem is widespread and has contributed a lot to the deterioration of the country's educational quality and needs a research based solution.

The research aimed to answer the following basic questions.

1. What are the major channels of communication used by principals and their subordinates ?
2. Do school principals have a good knowledge of the major principles of communication ? How is the implementation of these principles in schools ?
3. What are the major barriers of communication ?
4. Is there a smooth upward flow of messages ?
5. Do administrative staff members and teachers have similar perception towards the communication systems of their schools ?

These were the principal questions which the thesis intended to answer.

1.3. Significance of the Study

As is the case with many of the developing countries in the world, education in Ethiopia is nowadays facing a lot of social, economic, and political problems (MOE, 1985:408-409). Among these, those related to school administration and finance seem to be at the top (Ayalew, 1991:176). And still from those categorized under school administration, the problems associated with communication might have contributed to the poor quality of education in Ethiopia.

Hence, the researcher believes that identifying these problems and trying to suggest some ways of solving them is a step forward to improve the quality of education in the country. In view of the above fact, the study is intended to bring the following benefits.

1. The researcher hopes that the study will help school principals to have a thorough understanding of the communication patterns in their schools. This understanding is believed to encourage them to create an open system of communication which enhances organizational productivity.
2. This study is believed to initiate the Ministry to plan for seminars and workshops on organizational communication at various levels to increase the

effectiveness of its staff members in general and that of the principals in particular.

3. It might also encourage the Ministry and senior researchers to pay more attention to communication problems existing in schools. Hence, it can act as a springboard for more comprehensive studies.
4. Although a novice researcher, the student hopes that the thesis will enrich the existing literature in the field.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study

The study tried to investigate the communication problems of government senior secondary schools in Ethiopia. The focus was on the formal intrastaff exchange of messages only. The school-community interactions and communications made with the students were not the concern of the research. This delimitation was made because it would be very difficult to manage within the limited span of time if all aspects of school communication were to be included. Therefore, the emphasis was on the exchange of messages between the principals and the subordinates although some aspects of lateral communication were also dealt with.

Limitations of the Study

The following factors had created some inconvenience on the researcher during his conduct of the study,

1. Because of the lack of peace and security in some parts of eastern Ethiopia, the student was not able to collect data from Assebe Teferi and Hirna Senior Secondary Schools and was forced to change his sample areas to Assela and Huruta.
2. The very low per diem (8.00 birr per day) provided by the office of the school of Graduate Studies had also created some impediments on the researcher.

1.6. Research Methodology and Procedures of the Study

The study used a descriptive survey method which is a planned method of data collection that involves entering a subject population and measuring a specific set of responses (Miskel and Sendlin, 1981:2; Sharma, 1986:46; Jakob, 1987:37; Ghosh, 1985:184; Kerlinger, 1977:410; and Babbie, 1973:47). The selection of the sample schools, sources and method of data collection, and the methods of data analysis are described as follows.

1.6.1. Sample Areas

One administrative region was randomly selected (by lottery) from each of the four zones of the country (Northern, Eastern, Western, and Southern) and two administrative regions including Addis Ababa from the Central Zone of Ethiopia. Two senior secondary schools were taken using simple random sampling method (Babbie, 1973:92) from each of the selected administrative region making a total of 12 sample schools from the whole country. The following is a list of the schools involved in the study. It also includes the samples taken from each group of respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of Sample Schools and Respondents

Name of the School	Administrative region	Zone	No. of Respondents		
			Academic Staff	Adm. Staff	Principals
1. Hote Sen. Sec. School	South Wollo	Northern	41	11	2
2. Haik " " "	" "	"	21	5	3
3. Assela Comp. Sec. School	Arsi	Central	38	8	3
4. Huruta Sen. " "	"	"	12	4	2
5. Batu Terrara Comp. Sec. School	Bale	Southern	26	8	3
6. Robe Sen. Sec. School	"	"	19	4	3
7. Gore " " "	Illubabore	Western	15	5	2
8. Bedelle " " "	"	"	16	5	2
9. Nazareth Sen. Sec. School	East Shoa	Central	31	6	3
10. D/zeit Comp. " "	"	"	27	5	2
11. Menelik II Sen. " "	A. Ababa	"	55	18	3
12. Ayer Tena Sen. Sec. School	"	"	31	8	3
Total (distributed)			332	87	31
Total (collected)			310	80	28

Although there are nearly 200 government senior secondary schools in Ethiopia, the selected schools can serve as representatives because they were systematically chosen from different corners and they also receive the same type of policies and regulations from the Ministry. The samples also comprise schools of varying size and facilities if at all such factors can result in communication differences.

1.6.2. Sources of Data and Method of Collection

The major sources of data for this study were the three groups of school employees - the principals (including their assistants), the academic staff, and the administrative staff members of the sample schools. Since they were not many in number, all the principals and assistant principals of the 12 schools were taken as respondents. One third (33%) of the teachers and administrative staff members have been also selected from each sample school using systematic sampling method (Babbie, 1973:92). Every third person was picked from each list to fill in the questionnaire.

Two types of questionnaires were prepared - one for the principals and their assistants and the other for the two groups of subordinates: the academic and the administrative staff. Each questionnaire consisted of three types of questions. Thirty nine items of those prepared for the subordinates and fifty two of those organized for the principals were framed using the Likert's Rating Scale

(Armstrong and Dawson, 1985:70) so that each respondent could indicate his (read also her) particular level of agreement easily. In the second group of questions, two items were included in both types of questionnaires. There, the respondents were provided with choices to show their preferences. The third type of question consisted of 38 items organized in five different lists. The respondent was required to rank each batch of questions according to his choice by writing first, second, third, etc. in front of each item listed.

The questions were drafted on the basis of the review of the related literature. Comments by experienced authorities in the field had been sought before the questionnaires were pre-tested in some schools in Addis Ababa. Lastly, the questions were reviewed and distributed to the sample schools. In these schools, 31 questionnaires were distributed to the principals; 87 to the administrative staff, and 332 to the teachers. Finally, 28 (90.3%) questionnaires from the principals, 80 (80.8%) from the administrative, and 310 (81.3%) from the academic staff members completed and usable questionnaires were collected.

1.6.3. Method of Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The responses were scored in such a way that the attitude most favouring communication would be given the highest score. Responses to favourable items were given a scale value

ranging from five, indicating "strong agreement" to one, indicating "strong disagreement". The direction of item scores was reversed for unfavourable items so that a response of "Strongly agree" would be given a value of one; "agree", a value of two and so on.

Scores were tabulated by counting the frequency of each item. The attitude score was computed as a sum of the item scores. Mean rating of above 3.5 was taken as favourable attitude to enhance communication. Grand mean of items in the table indicated their aggregate effect and were taken as the basis for the decision whether or not there is an open upward communication system, whether principals have a good understanding of the basic principles of communication or not, etc. Standard deviations were used to indicate how each mean rating deviated from the general mean i.e., they indicated how dispersed the responses were.

Regarding the questions listed for ranking, items with higher mean ranks (lower number in the table) were taken as preferred to those items with lower ranks. The degree of agreement between the academic and the administrative staff members in perceiving the communication systems of their schools was decided based on the coefficient of correlation and rank order coefficient results. Coefficients above 0.75 were taken as indicating the existence of a strong positive agreement.

1.7. Definition of Terms Used

The following definitions of concepts are used in the context of the study.

Communication is the flow of thoughts, information, facts, ideas, opinions or emotions between two or more persons with the objective of bringing about mutual understanding, confidence or good human relations (Prasad and Banerjee, 1985:72).

Communication Overload is a condition created in which employees receive more communication inputs than they can process or than they need (Davis and Newstrom, 1984:453).

Decoding is an aspect of the communication in which the receiver attaches meaning to a message (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll; 1986:682).

Encoding is an aspect of the communication process which occurs when the sender translates the ideas to be transmitted into words, phrases, or other stimuli which are to be received by another (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll; 1986:682).

Grapevines are secret or informal channels of communication resulting from casual contacts in various organizational units (Rue and Byars, 1986:482).

Suggestion System is a formal, written method of receiving and processing employee suggestions for job-related improvements and cost savings. It may deal with improved methods of production, safety improvements, and how to handle employee problems (Dubrin, Ireland, and Williams; 1989:394).

System is a set of components interacting for a purpose within a boundary that filters inputs and outputs (Silver, 1983:54).

Academic Staff Members are members of a school system who are directly involved in classroom instruction. Department heads, unit leaders, etc. are also included here. This is synonymous with teachers.

Administrative Staff Members are employees in a school system who are not directly involved in classroom instruction. Typists, store keepers, guards, etc. are some of the members of this group.

Principals are top school officials who are responsible for the planning, coordinating, leading, and evaluating the school work. Both school directors and their assistants are included in this category. Since one of the purposes of this study is to analyse the exchange of messages between the principals and the subordinates,

principals and their assistants have not been included in the academic or administrative staff members category, although these groups do both academic and administrative work.

The Ministry refers to the Ministry of Education and this is sometimes conveniently abbreviated MOE.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The thesis is organized in four chapters. Chapter one gives a brief explanation of the research problem and how the study was conducted. It also deals with such topics like delimitation of the study, its expected contributions, and the method employed to analyse the data. Chapter two is the review of the related literature. It consists of the basic concepts and explanations of organizational communication as viewed by various authors and authorities. In chapter three, the effort made is to integrate and interpret the data collected from the field with the theories and concepts of the reviewed literature. Chapter four provides the gist of the study and concludes itself by citing some suggestions that can help to improve the communication systems of schools. Finally, a list of reading materials used in the paper has been attached before the appendices which include the sample questionnaires and some tables that indicate how the respondents rated and ranked the question items.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The concern of this chapter is to discuss the various concepts of organizational communication as viewed by different authorities. This is the conceptual framework on which the whole research work is based.

2.1. Importance of Organizational Communication in Schools

In order to function well and smoothly, organizations like schools need to have effective communication system in all aspects of their activities because it is not possible to have a smooth functioning of any sort of organization without it. Various authors have characterized its importance as "the life blood of the organization", "the glue that binds the organization", "the force that pervades the organization", and "the binding agent that cements all relationships" (Bredewon, 1987:55).

Davis and Newstrom (1985:425) indicated the importance of communication by stating that:

Organizations can not exist without communication. If there is no communication, employees can not know what their co-workers are doing, management can not receive information inputs, and supervisors can not give instructions. Coordination of work is impossible, and the organization will collapse for lack of it.

Like any organization, schools can smoothly function only if they have effective communication systems. Without such systems, principals can not give instructions and get feedback as needed; teachers will not understand their duties well nor can they accomplish them effectively. There can not be good relationship between the academic and the administrative staff members if the communication system is crippled.

According to Barnard (in Redfield, 1963:3) "The first executive function is to develop and maintain a system of communication". It is because of the very important role it plays that many people who are at work spend fifty to eighty per cent of their time communicating (Fisher, 1981:4; Atchison and Hill, 1978:401; and Griffith, 1979:292). It acts as a lubricant in facilitating work in all organizations in general and in schools in particular for schools are our major areas of attention here.

Many researchers have discovered that as a manager implements effective communication a positive climate begins to develop which inturn makes it easier to communicate the next time due to the supportive trust and openness that have began to develop (Smeltzer and Waltman, 1984:52). This is a cycle which indicates that success breeds success.

The importance of communication can also be understood

from the following statements of Morgan who likens it with thread in our cloth.

Communication is like the thread in your suit. It is not like the mere button on your sleeve. Thread determines the shape, texture, and quality of your suit. Communication determines the shape, texture, and quality of your performance (Morgan, 1964:6).

Organizational communication can be equated with the circulatory system in the human body (Fisher, 1981:4). The human body can not be alive without the proper functioning of the circulatory system nor a school can be functional without communication. When the communication system stops functioning the school ceases to exist as a school. Hence the existence of effective communication system in schools is decisive for their survival.

Since communication can improve performance in the work place it is the central ingredient in the motivational process. For example, the principal can make his teachers feel good about themselves by praising when they perform their duties well, thereby satisfying their egotistical needs. He can also involve the new teachers in group project so that their affiliation needs can be fulfilled. He can give individual recognition by simply asking teachers for their ideas and listening to them. This makes the teachers feel worthwhile and important to the school. No doubt, such teachers will perform their duties better because all conditions being

equal, satisfied employees are more productive than otherwise.

As the statements of Alexander, Helms, and Wilkins (1989:419) indicate, many researchers have found that a high level of satisfaction tends to be positively associated with relevant organizational performance outcomes. These studies also have revealed that the openness of communication channels between superiors and subordinates is positively related to a high level of subordinate performance and satisfaction.

2.2. Types of Communication

Whatever the direction may be, communication can be regarded as of two types. While one group can be transmitted using words verbally face-to-face or in written form, the other group is expressed in different manners of body movements, gestures and the like. These two major groups are named as verbal and non-verbal communication.

2.2.1. Verbal Communication

In verbal communication words and letters are used to represent ideas, emotions, and objects. These words and letters are used as representatives by convention either locally or at a higher level. In most cases language difference comes because of attaching different types of symbols to the same object or idea. The verbal way of communication has two major divisions - the oral type and

the written, the common element in both of them being the use of articulated words.

Oral Communication

This is the type of communication where the message is transmitted in face-to-face conversation or through the use of some technological media like the telephone, radio, etc. i.e., without the use of any writing. Face-to-face conversation is the most important way of communication not only because it provides multiple channels including body language but also gives an opportunity for immediate feedback (Davis and Newstrom, 1985:435). More meaning can be transmitted orally than in writing because when the person speaks, he can stress some words and the voice itself can have various meanings. Campbell, Corbally, and Nystrand (1983:147) have articulated the advantage of oral communication by stating that:

The use of the spoken word in a face-to-face setting is perhaps the most effective communication process available. It permits the exchange to take place rapidly; it allows the use of body language and expressions whereby the receiver can gauge meanings from nonverbal cues.

The efficiency of the spoken word is increased greatly by the accompanying gestures, facial expressions, tones, and other nonverbal communication acts. The recipient of an oral order is able to check if the meaning is not clear.

He can state his case so long as the elements of give and take are preserved if an order does not apply or can not work out satisfactorily. The order giver has also the opportunity for immediate feedback and may change his mind immediately if his orders are not applicable within the given situation.

Oral communication, however, is a very inefficient way of transmitting message to a large number of people and is also time consuming. It is not also appropriate to communicate large quantities of technical data that need memory retention (Armstrong and Dawson, 1985:87). Oral communication like that of the telephone, though has the advantage of speed and quick feedback, is not proper for confidential messages because it can be crossed by a wrong dial or can be taped or recorded by a third party. Absence of record that can serve as a document is also among the disadvantages of oral communication.

Written Communication

Letters, reports, bulletins, financial and other documents, printed or hand written, are some of the items categorized in written communication. Here, the sender's language ability i.e., the selection of proper words, phrases, punctuation, etc. will have a good place in minimizing the ambiguity of the message because the receiver does not have the chance of asking what is not clear (Davis, 1981:411). Above all,

it has to be written in simple language and should not open a room for misinterpretation. Sometimes even spelling mistakes can create much confusion on the part of the receiver besides its form and content.

Written communications will have better application in the following situations:

- a) When the action must be done in a precise and uniform way.
- b) If the message has to serve a long period of time
- c) If delegation of authority is needed
- d) If the message deals with procedural changes and job specific directions.

In schools, written communication is used when principals design and give job descriptions to department heads, teachers, classroom monitors, and to other workers; when they send reports to district and regional offices and they receive feedbacks to their reports and directives; and when they issue daily bulletins to the school community members (Anderson and Van Dyke, 1963:534).

One of the main advantages of written communication is that the receiver can absorb the message at his own rate. Although it is advantageous and widely used, it has also some defects — lack of immediate feedback and lack of flexibility being the major ones.

2.2.2. Non-verbal Communication

This is a kind of communication where messages are transmitted without the use of words.

By definition, non-verbal communication is wordless. Most often it is perceived visually and transmitted by appearances, timings and distances, postures, movements, gestures, and facial expressions (Wolf, Keyser, and Aurner, 1979:141).

Certo and Appelbaum (1986:313) have also stated that non-verbal communication is encoding without words and may influence the impact of a message more than the verbal one. Here, especially the face and the hands are major sources of body language of which eye contact, eye movement, touching, and smiles are good examples.

Like, dislike, domination, and responsiveness, which are manifested by gestures, facial expressions, and body movements transmit silent messages. Other phenomena like time, space, color, or even dress are also said to be non-verbal symbolic languages depending on the type of culture the society has. This is because the style of dressing, location of buildings or offices, the lateness or early coming of a person to an appointment place etc. are given various meanings by different societies.

School administrators usually spend much of their time

communicating with their employees; and during such times, they need to use non-verbal ways together with the verbal systems. This will help them to transmit their messages easily. "Actions speak louder than words" (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll; 1986:400 and Preston, 1972:2) and using non-verbal communication makes the transmission more effective. Teachers and administrative staff members also need to use this type of communication if they want to minimize or avoid misunderstandings.

2.2.3. Combination Process

Before transmitting any message communicators must determine the type of audience they want to reach and how to reach it effectively. They must be sure of the facts they know about the audience's abilities and reactions. So, the first question is how to transmit the message. No doubt the transmission will be more effective if more than one way is applied (Redfield, 1963:78).

Much communication is characterized by the use of several media. It is a common practice to supplement written instructions with illustrations like charts.

Regarding the application of the combination process in schools Campbell, Corbally, and Nystand (1983:147) give the following explanation.

Obviously, administrators communicate through processes that involve several techniques simultaneously presentations to a board or a committee often involve the recorded spoken work, visual techniques ranging from slide projections to videotapes, charts and graphs displayed on essels, and perhaps even a musical background to stir the emotions.

School principals give written directives to teachers and administrative staff and at the same time give oral explanations as to how to implement the directives. Teachers also may send written reports to the department heads which are aided by oral descriptions and charts.

2.3. Models of the Communication Process

Models are abstractions that depict theoretical processes in graphic form providing the basis for amplification by means of key concepts (Bormann, 1980:33). Scholars develop models as a way to provide a scientific explanation of phenomena in a clear descriptive language or in graphic form. Like any other field in the social or natural sciences, there are also important models of communication that put the process systematically. The following are models which were proposed by scholars to depict the communication process.

2.3.1. The S.M.C.R. Model of Berlo

This is the short form of the source, message, channel, and receiver model, indicating Berlo's ingredients of the

communication process (Figure 1). To these ingredients are added the encoder and the decoder; because encoder is the source and the decoder is the receiver (Berlo, 1960:41). Following is a brief discussion of each ingredient.

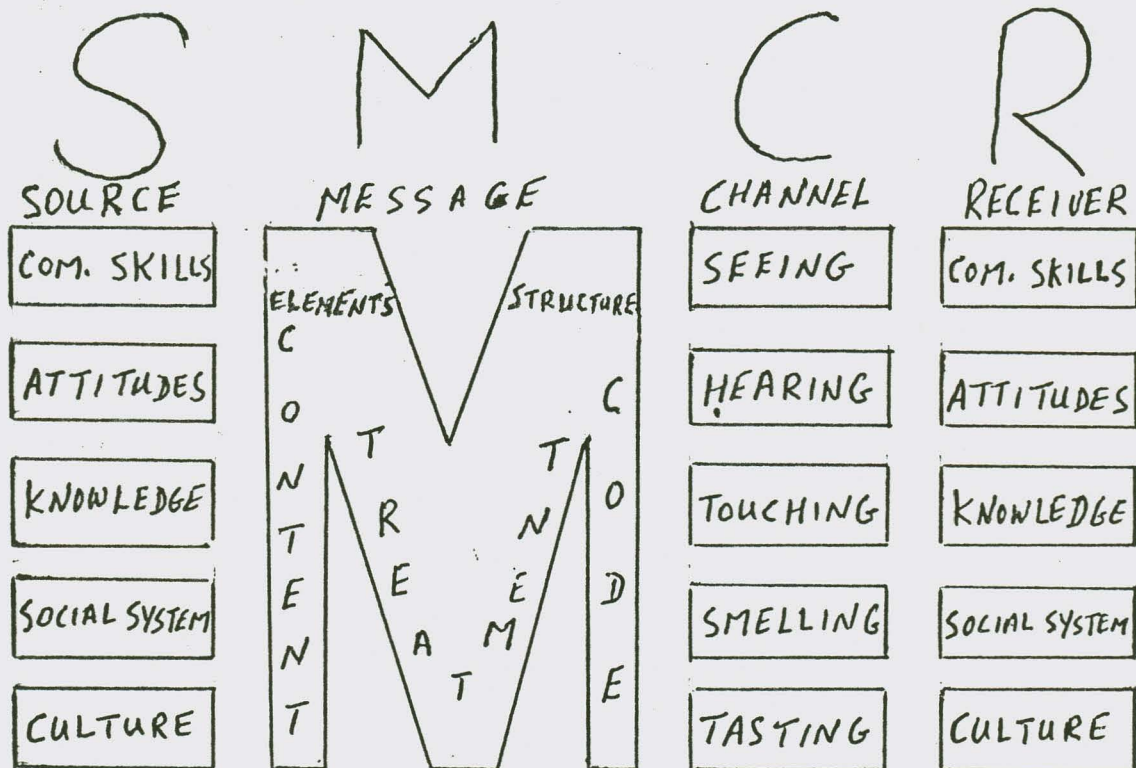


Figure 1. The S.M.C.R. Model of Berlo
(Berlo, 1966:72; Bermann, 1980:31)

2.3.1.1. The Source

The source is the one who sends or transmits the message. He is also called the communicator. After determining the way in which he wants to affect his receiver, the source encodes a message to get response from the receiver.

Berlo lists four factors within the source which can affect accuracy of communication. These are communication skills, attitudes, knowledge level, and position within a social-cultural system.

He further explains the communication skills as having five divisions. Two of them are encoding skills: writing and speaking. The other two are decoding skills: reading and listening; and the fifth one belongs to both and is thought or reasoning. Painting, gesturing, etc. can also be communication skills.

2.3.1.2. The Message

As stated by Berlo, message is the actual physical product of the source encoder which is affected by three factors: the message code, its content, and treatment. A code is any group of symbols that can be structured in a way that is meaningful to a person. Languages are codes. The language must be used in such a way that the receiver can easily get the main idea.

Message treatment refers to the decisions the source makes as to how he should transmit his message - the choices he should make with respect to the method of delivery code and content (Berlo, 1960:60-61). In schools directives, reports or job descriptions can be some of the examples of message.

2.3.1.3. The Channel

For Berlo (1960:67) communication channel refers to the senses through which a decoder-receiver can perceive a message which has been encoded and transmitted by a source-encoder. It is a vehicle or a medium that carries the message.

Before sending the message, the source has to decide which channel to use. Does he want it to be heard, seen, or touched by the receiver? The selection of the channel mainly depends on the nature of the message and the communication skills of both parties.

2.3.1.4. The Receiver

The other very important ingredient in Berlo's model is the decoder or receiver. The receiver is the destination of the communication but it does not mean that a receiver is always a receiver. After receiving the message, if he gives feedback, the direction will be reversed and the receiver becomes the source. It means "he who is a source at one moment has been a receiver" (Berlo, 1960:51).

To have an effective communication the source has to know the receiver well-his ability to listen, to think, and to read, his attitudes toward himself, toward the source, and toward the message because without the due regard of receiver's situation effective communication is unthinkable.

Lastly, it is also worth mentioning that the four ingredients discussed above can not stand in isolation. One cannot work without the other. The process becomes complete with the interaction of all.

2.3.2. The Two Models of Schramm

Schramm also developed models to indicate how the communication process functions. According to his model, Figure 2, for two people to communicate, there must be some sort of commonness in between. It is this commonness that is indicated in the model. It can be seen that the source and the destination have something in common, and an area where the fields of experiences of both parties intersect. This is to indicate that both of them can share ideas in one way or the other. It is this common field of experience that enables the two understand each other. If both of them do not have any common field of experience, if they have nothing to share, or if there is no commonness between the two, there can not be any sort of communication between them. For two parties to communicate "the receiver and the sender must be in tune" (Schramm in Devito, 1981:5). A person encodes or decodes based on his experience so if they both have the same field of experience, they can have better communication between them.

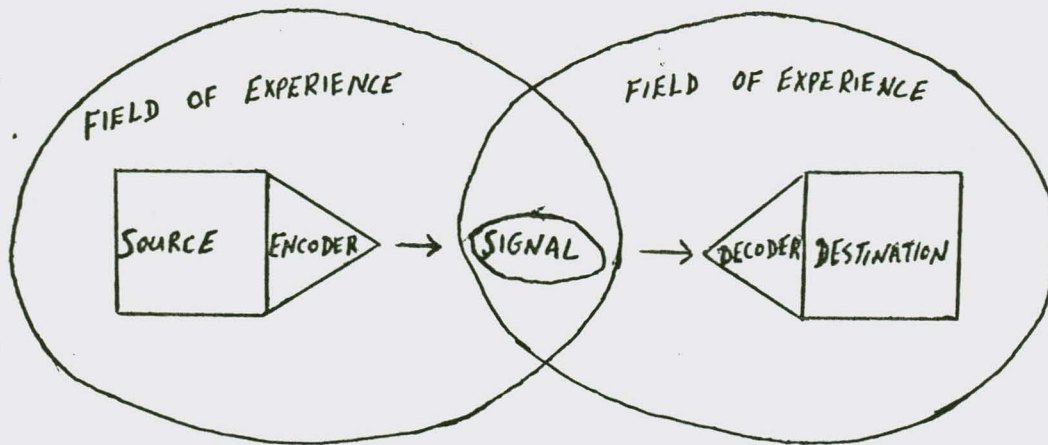


Figure 2. Schramm's Model 1
(Bormann, 1980:31)

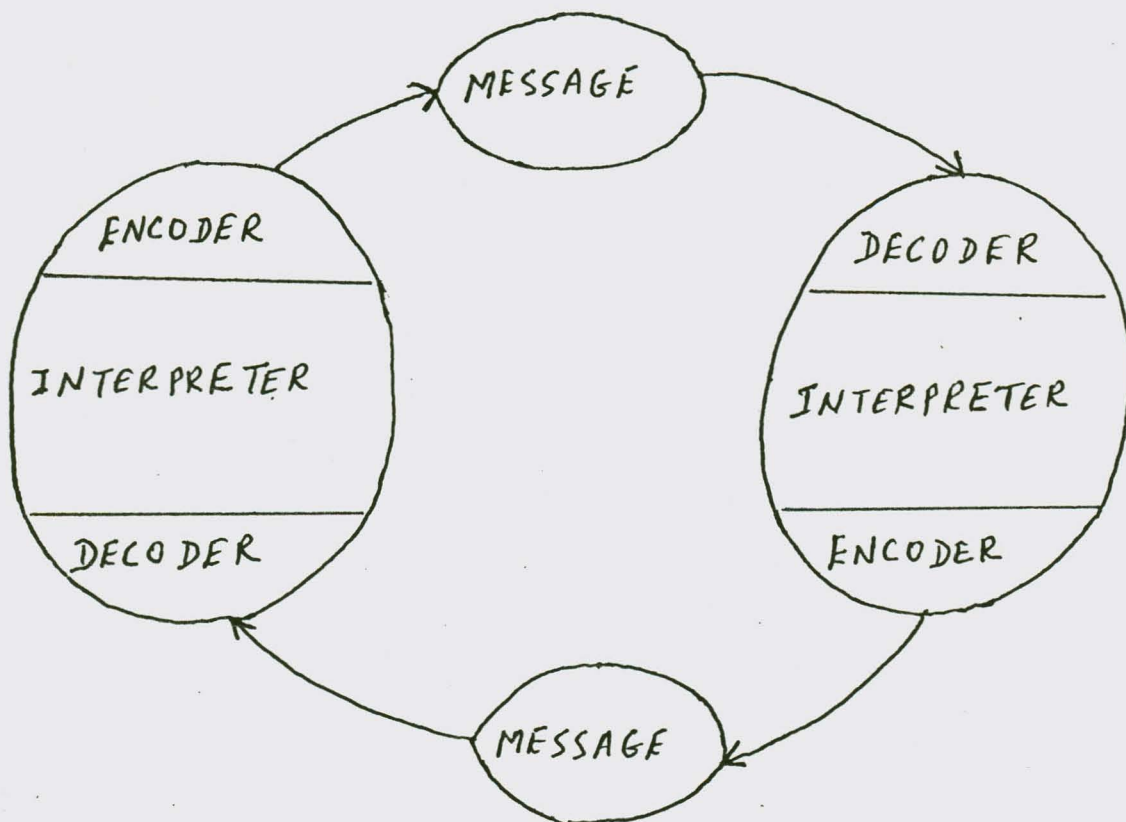


Figure 3. Schramm's Model 2
(Bormann, 1980:31)

Schramm's second model is designed to show the role of feedback; where, a person is both encoder and decoder because he receives and transmits (Figure 3). The sender first develops an idea and the idea is encoded (changed into words, charts or symbols) so that it will be transmitted. When this transmitted message is received by the communicatee, it is decoded and used. The communicatee, after receiving the message, may leave it, perform the task assigned, store the information provided, or do something else. In organizations of which schools are one, the sender normally expects feedback which has its own process. The receiver receives, understands, accepts, uses the message and finally sends feedback to the sender. If this condition is fulfilled, we say that the communication is effective (Davis and Newstrom, 1985:428). However, the effectiveness can be reduced by many instances which are generally called noise. This is any interference in the communication process including typographical and spelling errors.

2.4. General Principles of Organizational Communication

According to Redfield (1963:29), the list of these principles includes clarity, consistency, adequacy, timing and timeliness, distribution, adaptability, and acceptance. The following is a discussion on the general principles that serve as guides for effective communication.

Clarity refers to the understandability of the message.

For the message to be understood the most important thing is the language. Short sentences and well selected words have to be used. School principals need to know their receivers well-their language command and their ability to understand things. Their subordinates also need to know the background of their communicatees and arrange their messages in such a way that they can be easily understood.

Messages or orders transmitted must be consistent with one another. Messages can not be easily understood if they contradict with the commonly known and practised organizational norms. Therefore, they need to have consistency with the objectives of the organization and also with the commonly known practices. If there are exceptions they should be given special attention and they have to be put in clear terms.

In organizational communication, schools included, the main goal is to insure an optimum flow of messages - neither too little nor too much. Principals should not use more words than needed to convey their ideas. It should not be also less than what is needed to express the message. Redfield (1963:37) states that, in many cases, superiors use fewer words in talking or writing to subordinates than subordinates use in writing or talking to superiors.

In communication, timing of messages is very essential. Convenient time has to be selected so that it will be

effective. Denyer (1976:159) firmly states that messages need to be sent to reach their destinations before they are out-of-date. Therefore senders must always think for the optimum time and method by which their messages can reach their destinations. No doubt, the method of the transmission will depend on the nature and background of the destination.

Messages can be transmitted most quickly and safely if they move directly from the issuing source to the receivers. They are delayed and get distorted as they cross various organizational hierarchies. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the sender to check whether or not the message has reached its destination without distortion and on time.

Getting positive response is the ultimate goal of any communication. Some responses occur immediately and others are delayed. As stated by Redfield (1963:45), no matter how remote or how minute, the ultimate response of any message is a function of the receiver's interest in and acceptance of the message. Especially in upward communication interest and acceptance play a decisive role since messages that are interesting to the superior can be accepted and be practical quite sooner than those which are less interesting to him.

Besides the above mentioned factors, a feeling of mutual trust and respect is also crucial to have effective

organizational communication. The two parties need to understand each other and share a common concern for the success of their joint endeavors. It means that there should be trust and agreement between the sender and the receiver to meet their objectives (Atchison and Hill, 1978:413).

As indicated by White (1975:51), major communications include report and letter writing, putting a case, talking to groups of people, conducting a meeting, and interviewing. Therefore, school principals need to have a thorough understanding of the basic principles of communication and have to try their best to implement them in their schools; otherwise, one can not expect effective communication systems to prevail in these schools.

2.5. Hierarchical Settings

Organizational communication usually has an upward, a downward, and a horizontal direction. Although there is variation in the degree of emphasis, three of these directions may be observed in all sorts of organizations. Some of them give emphasis only to the downward, others may be concerned with the horizontal, and still others can put emphasis on the upward movement of messages. Broadly, the movement of messages can be of two types - vertical and horizontal.

2.5.1. Vertical Movement of Messages

Vertical communication comprises messages that pass between the functional sections and top management. In schools this movement takes place between the principals and the staff members. Two opposite directions are included in vertical communication—downward and upward communication.

2.5.1.1. Downward Communication

Rue and Byars (1986:478) define downward communication as transmitting information from higher to lower levels of the organization through the chain of command. Prasad and Bannerjee (1985:75) also state that it is the job of the head of the organization to ensure that the right messages reach the right person at the right time and this is usually done through downward communication. Managers have to give orders to their subordinates, subordinates should also get all the necessary explanations and details of the job instructions. Feedbacks to subordinates' performances need to come from superiors so that the employees can accomplish their tasks more effectively.

In many organizations downward communication consists of items like bulletins, organizational magazine, directives, job descriptions, policy manuals, and feedbacks to subordinates' performances (Dailey, 1988:312). Dennison and Shenton (1987:149) have also identified five basic types of downward communication which can be recognized in the school situation.

1. Specific task directives such as job instructions, duty lists, standards expected, syllabus objectives, and schemes of work.
2. Information to elaborate task and its relation to other organizational tasks or job rational.
3. Information about organizational procedures and practices.
4. Feedback to a teacher or administrative staff about performance.
5. Information that can create a sense of mission, motivation, and commitment.

Downward flow of messages is dominated by orders, of which the greatest number deal with policy and procedure. There is also a constant flow of information that does not directly order anything, such information may help to increase the employee's general knowledge about the organization and its work or it may be a notice of staff meetings.

School principals, who fear their subordinates or that lack interest in, use only downward communication. Teachers are not given the chance of forwarding ideas regarding the directives passed from above but simply accept them as they are. One can have a better understanding of this if he examines the answer given by Gordon (1987:228) to the

question "Why do managers not involve their subordinates in two - way communications."

In some situations, managers do not trust their subordinates to contribute effectively. In other situations, lack of self confidence by the manager makes him or her appear uninterested or unconcerned about subordinates' opinions.

In downward flow, as the message crosses or travels through many people, it goes on loosing its previous content. "Information sent downward often becomes condensed or distorted as it passes through various levels" (Vecchio, 1988:422). Any message descending from the superior has to be clear and precise. Hence, administrators should not send vague messages to their subordinates because they can be easily distorted and create conflict.

Generally, since the purpose of downward communication is to give information to employees of the what, why, how, when, who, and where of the place in which they function, it needs much attention from both parties (Nwankwo, 1982:54).

2.5.1.2. Upward Communication

This is the movement of messages from the lower levels of the organization toward the top (Rue and Byars, 1986:479). When information, questions or any sorts of messages are sent from the subordinates to the superiors or from the workers to the bosses, the communication is said to be upward.

As opposed to downward communication which is one-to-many, this is a many-to-one communication situation.

According to Drucker (in Griffith, 1979:327), successful upward communication is the basis for downward communication because superiors have to know their subordinates before sending messages to them. The communication from the subordinate to the superior is a real necessity to the successful leader because it helps him to know his subordinates, to get symptoms of tensions and insecurities, and to know the way in which he is seen by his subordinates (Rudrabasavaraj, 1980:149). Moreover, it helps him to arrive at good decisions and to accomplish his task successfully.

Upward communication deals with reports, opinions, suggestions, and complaints. Messages are transmitted through written reports, face-to-face contacts, in conferences of all sorts, and at social gatherings and, as stated by Stoner and Freeman (1989:538), its main purpose is to supply information to the upper levels about what is happening at the lower levels.

Since upward communication is a necessity, school principals need to motivate their subordinates to suggest constructive ideas in meetings and through other mechanisms, they have to give them freedom to use their creativity to

initiate change and must give quick response to questions, suggestions etc. coming from teachers and administrative staff. It is very essential that they give freedom to the teachers, workers, and students to express their ideas and opinions without any fear. Above all, reports should include all the realities and genuine problems of each department.

One needs to check whether or not he has communicated effectively either by observing the result of the influence or through any other feedback. Regarding this, Haire (in Wilson, 1966:394) states as follows:

Unless one has some way of finding out what was heard, either by observing subsequent behavior or by some kind of restatement, communication must remain pretty much a matter of shooting in the dark, with very uncertain results.

It is also essential to check the messages coming from subordinates. If it is not correct, it can mislead the superior. The validity, reliability, timeliness, and pertinence of the information has to be evaluated before using it for decision.

Usually, subordinates try to communicate upwards if the message does not create anything against them. Concerning this Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll (1986:395) report that subordinates who have stronger motivation for promotion

do not communicate their job problems to their superiors. They don't also send messages that do not interest their bosses.

There are individuals that usually pass information to others or those who control messages before they reach authorities - gate keepers, commonly like secretaries and assistant managers. These people filter out some of the messages which they think should not reach their bosses. Filtering may be helpful in selecting information which is accurate and up-to-date from the garbage but in most cases it is harmful because 1) it deprives the administrators of valuable information needed for the successful direction of the organization and 2) it keeps the workers' grievances unheard and thus unrectified (Butler, 1986:365).

Free upward flow of messages can take place if teachers and administrative staff members are highly encouraged by school principals not only in words but also in deeds. For this, various suggestion schemes must be extended to gather information and opinions from staff members. Staff members must have freedom even to criticize the school administrators when they make mistakes. The school administrators also need to be ready to correct their mistakes when they are told by the staff members concretely. In general, the school administration has to have an open door policy so that there can be a smooth upward communication.

2.5.2. Horizontal Movement of Messages

This is the transmission of messages between people of similar positional level across the lines of the formal organization's chain of command. Interdepartmental committee meetings and distribution of written reports among members of the same hierarchical level are among the examples of lateral communication.

Senders and receivers of horizontal messages often share similar backgrounds of education and experience. Reports may move within a single organizational unit such as the personnel unit or among units of equal status in the school system as in physics and chemistry departments. Teachers who teach the same subject and grade usually discuss together to develop their teaching methods.

"People in the same boat share the same problems" (Katz and Kahn, 1987:445) and hence, workers at the same positional level or peer groups usually meet and discuss common problems. In addition to providing task coordination, this type of communication furnishes emotional and social support to the individual.

In schools where authoritarian principals are found, teachers and administrative staff members will not trust one another. The more a system becomes authoritarian, the more the workers will be suspicious of each other and so the more restricted horizontal communication will there be.

In such a system the unity of workers will be very low (Katz, and Kahn, 1978:445).

In organizations, schools included, all the three directions are very essential. Downward communication is the flow of information from superior to subordinate in the organizational chain of command. Upward communication refers to messages sent from subordinate to superior while lateral communication is exchange of messages between people at similar hierarchical level. In the words of Fisher (1981:44) "Downward communication commands and instructs; upward communication informs, and lateral communication coordinates."

2.6. Communication in the Classical and Human Relations Schools

The Classical School and the Human Relations School have different views on communication. The following discussion tries to elaborate how the two schools vary in their views.

2.6.1. The Classical School and Communication

According to Butler (1986:363), communication practices which occur within classical organizations are downward with little of them going upward or sideways. The classical school depended much on passing strong directives downwards which should be implemented without any questions.

Griffith (1979:23) confirms this fact as follows.

The classical organizational model conceived of communication mainly as the transmission of orders and information from higher to lower echelons. Little thought was given to the necessity of communication between ranks or from lower to higher ranks.

Downward communication alone cannot bring much progress to organizations because it focuses on what administrators want to say and it does not take into account what the subordinates say. If it disregards the information, opinions and attitudes of the subordinates, one can not expect that a long lasting harmonious working condition prevails in the organization.

Classical administrators consider workers as machines and allow only one way communication. They don't accept Drucker's statement - "communication is the act of the receipient" (1970:16). If they don't get the necessary feedback from their subordinates they can not have a thorough understanding of the problems existing in their organizations. Hence, they will not be able to solve the problems concretely.

School principals should not simply send directives, orders, and generally impose their attitudes and wishes on their subordinates. They need also to hear and follow what their teachers and administrative staff members say.

Actually, no matter how strong the administration may be, it can not have its goals and objectives fulfilled using only downward communication.

Therefore, the classical school was highly criticized by the human relations school for its disregard of subordinates' preferences, desires, values, and aspirations.

2.6.2. Communication in the Human Relations School

The major difference between the classical and the human relations schools was their view to organizational communication.

The human relations school of Elton Mayo recognized the failure of the traditional approach to communications. Its answer was to enjoin listening. Instead of starting out with what I, this is the executive, want to get across, the executive should start out by finding out what subordinates want to know, are interested in, are, in other words, receptive to (Drucker in Griffith, 1979:338).

"Communication in the human relations view is the life blood of an organization" (Griffith, 1979:24). This school gives due regard to both lateral and upward flow of messages. It recognizes that productivity much depends on the interest of the individual and that organization is the result of individuals and groups. Because of this, it tries to motivate subordinates and gives special attention to both upward and lateral communications in addition to the downward one.

For Griffith, understanding of the transmitted message by the subordinates is not enough but they have also to accept it. He says they must have the opportunity to voice their opinions and questions in face-to-face meetings if there is a possibility to have them listened with an open mind. According to this school of thought, participation is very essential to get the most out of workers (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1985:82).

2.7. Communication Networks

Organ and Hamner (1982:330) define communication network as "the flow of verbal and non-verbal messages exchanged between two or more group members". The direction of flow is usually indicated by an arrow and simple lines may show that communication is possible both ways.

In communication systems, the efficiency can be measured in terms of the number of communication links in a given network. It is cited by Katz and Kahn (1978:438) that the smaller the number of communication links in a group, the greater the efficiency of the group in task performance. This has been verified by many writers who tried to demonstrate using five member groups.

Generally, networks are of two types: centralized and decentralized.

2.7.1. Centralized Networks

In the centralized network all members are not interconnected. There are some members who act as connectors. Such networks may have three shapes - 'wheel', 'chain', and 'Y' (Figure 4).

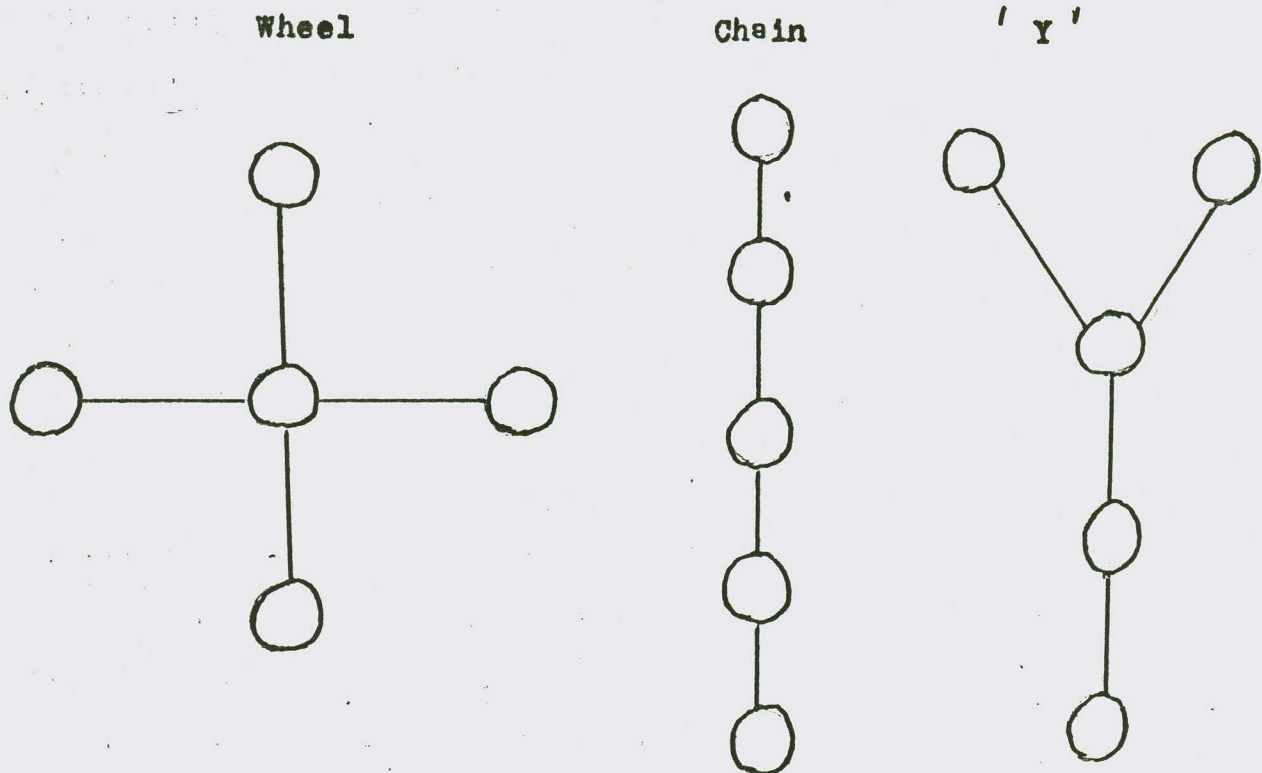


Figure 4. Centralized Communication Nets
(Vechhio, 1988:421)

The wheel net has a key person in the center to whom all the four colleagues can communicate. This means that it has two levels of hierarchy. The person who is at the center is the most satisfied one because he gets all the information in the system. The other four, who are at the periphery, since they can not communicate directly, are dissatisfied (Stoner and Freeman, 1989:537).

The chain is also to be categorized under the centralized network because here again one can not have a direct connection with the other members of the group. A person is connected only with one person and he has to communicate through other people.

The 'Y' shaped network is the same as the wheel except that the central member in 'y' can communicate with the fifth person through another member. He can not communicate with the fifth person directly. So the fifth member, who can not get the central person directly, will be the most dissatisfied (Gordon, 1987:284).

2.7.2. Decentralized Networks

Under this category, there are two types of nets - the circle and the all-channel. In the decentralized network, every member has equal chance to communicate. The circle type of network is characterized by decentrality because there is nobody acting as a center of communication.

Each is connected in two directions - he receives and pass information from one to the other and vice verse. Subjects can pass their messages to either or both of the two. Here, three levels are involved. Since all points in a circle are equally distant from the center, everybody has the same level of satisfaction. There is nobody at the center or at the periphery. All are equal (see Figure 5).

In the all-channel network, every member is directly connected with every one. It means that everybody can communicate with everyone else. It has two levels of hierarchy. Katz and Kahn (1978:437) say that the two level hierarchies are more efficient than the three level hierarchies and the highest performance is achieved from the least centralized.

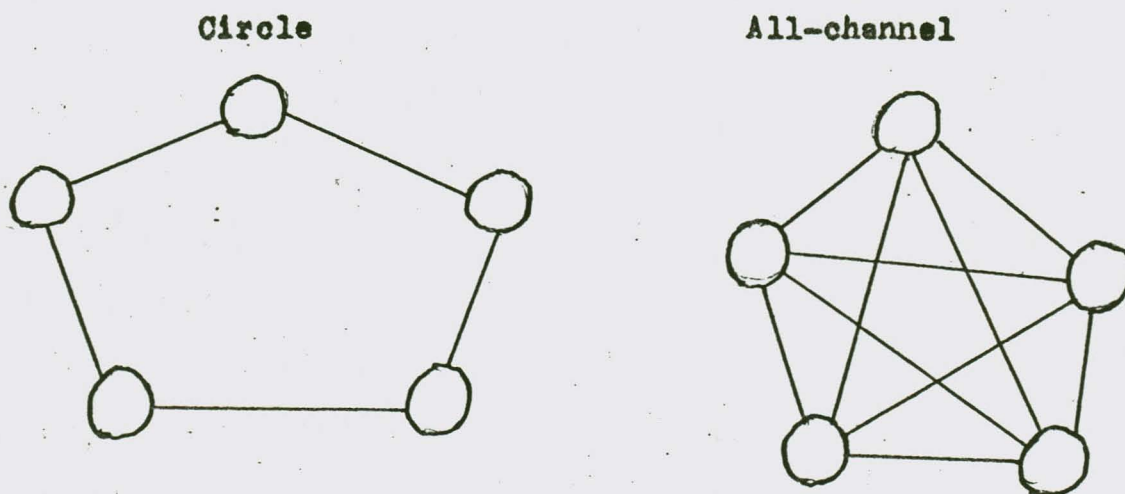


Figure 5. Decentralized Communication Nets
(Vecchio, 1988:421)

"Generally, members of decentralized networks report greater satisfaction, while the more centralized a structure is, the lower the satisfaction of its members" (Vecchio, 1988:421). In the decentralized network each member has an equal opportunity to participate in the communication process, whereas in the centralized network, members are characterized by varying abilities to obtain and pass on communication.

In organizations, networks must be decentralized as much as possible. This is because when messages pass from one person to another, they get distorted especially as they flow through different levels of hierarchy. It is very difficult to imagine that a message will carry and transmit exactly the same meaning to all people when travelling through various levels. Therefore, it is essential to decentralize, for it results in minimizing misinterpretation of messages and dissatisfaction of employees.

2.8. Informal Communication

Usually, when the formal or sanctioned channels do not satisfy their communication and information needs, employees use informal channels (Dailey, 1988:319). However, no matter how excellent the formal communication of an organization is, the presence of informal communication network is known as the grapevine (Rue and

Byars, 1986:482). In this network, messages usually travel outside the organization's chain of command- may be from secretary to personnel or from clerk to vice president and they mostly create rumours.

Davis and Newstrom (1985:319) report that the grapevine can have the following advantages if it is handled carefully and wisely.

1. It gives managers much feedback about employees and their jobs.
2. It helps to translate management's formal orders into employee language.
3. It can carry information that the formal system does not wish to carry.
4. It is flexible and can spread information faster than most management communication systems.
5. It can penetrate even the tightest security screen of the organization.

As in any organization, grapevines also exist in schools and active principals can use them to run their schools effectively. They can use them to introduce change and see the attitude of their employees towards the new program, to counterbalance rumours that are against the school administration and the school program. Morgan (1964:142) says "Since the grapevine is inevitably present,

use it as one of your communication tools." According to him, an effective leader is one who cultivates grapevine for fruitful use, Griffith (1979:21) also states that a skillful administrator is one who knows the various informal organizations in his school or district including their leaders because he can get opinions which might not be openly expressed in formal meetings.

However, since the grapevine information can carry gossip, rumours and half truths, it can be dangerous if it is not handled wisely. The principal has to watch it out so that it does not become the wildest. A grapevine grows the wildest when employees get incomplete and ambiguous information. Such type of information is usually misinterpreted and exaggerated as it passes through various people and so changes itself from half true to a completely false one (Morgan, 1964:137).

One way of controlling rumours is to know how they circulate and make a connection with the grapevine. The principal has to create a system of getting information everytime and correct the wild rumours.

Another method is correcting the common communication faults - ambiguity and incompleteness. A principal should give full information clearly and quickly. Anything related to the job is important to employees. Therefore corrections must be made even to the minor problems of communication

as much as possible. Hence, since informal communication has a lot of administrative advantages, school principals need to use it in their schools in order to be successful in their administration. However, since it is also dangerous if it is not handled with care, the principals have to watch it out so that it may not bring undesired results.

2.9. Communication Problems and their Corrective Measures

The importance of communication in the administration of organizations is unquestionable. It is a key element that facilitates organizational development. Although it is such an important thing, there are a lot of problems that can minimize its effectiveness. The following discussion is intended to deal with the major problems and their possible ways of overcoming them.

2.9.1. Communication Barriers

When a message is transmitted many factors hinder its free flow to its destination. The message may not reach the destination as intended by the sender. "Any factor that impedes the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver is a barrier to communication" (Stoner and Freeman, 1989:528). Barriers are elements that interfere with the receiver's understanding of the intended meaning of the sender's message. Because of these barriers, some

part of the message is lost on the way creating some sort of misunderstanding between the sender and the receiver.

In organizations, these barriers can create misunderstandings between the leaders and their subordinates or between the employees themselves. In order to have effective communication systems in their organizations, administrators have to know the sources of these barriers so that they can minimize their effect on the free flow of messages. Likewise, school principals need to be aware of these problems so that they can solve them and enhance easy flow of messages in their schools.

Authorities use different nomenclature and means of classification for these barriers. Gordon (1987:227) puts them as lack of feedback, noise, the use of language, and listening deficiencies while Quible, Johnson, and Mott (1981:86) list them as semantics, jargon, differences in hierarchical rank, failure to listen to what is being said, hearing only what we expect or want to hear, and stereotyping.

On the other hand, Davis and Newstrom (1985:368) and Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll (1986:401) have categorized them into three:

- 1) Personal barriers - interferences arising from human emotions, values and poor listening habits;

- 2) Physical barriers - hindrances occurring in the environment in which the communication takes place;
and
- 3) Semantic barriers - those arising from the limitations with which we communicate. They are mainly associated with the language employed.

According to Tosi, Rizzo and Carroll, the personal factors which effect the communication process are as follows.

- 1) Demographic characteristics
- 2) Physiological limitations - the capacity of the brain to put the message in memory
- 3) Source credibility - how much we believe the source
- 4) Communication style preferences
- 5) Openness and honesty
- 6) Self concept
- 7) Emotional state
- 8) Selective perception - We perceive what we want to perceive
- 9) Trust in others
- 10) Interpersonal anxiety
- 11) Personal connotations
12. Similarity of personal characteristics -
Communication between two persons that have similar characteristics is very effective.

Emotion is one barrier that can hinder the effectiveness of communication. The receiver's feeling at the time of receipt of a message will influence how he interpretes it. The person's emotion greatly affects how he decodes that message. The same message can have different meanings at various emotional tones.

The receiver's attitude towards the message and the source also affects communication effectiveness (Robbins, 1989:272). If the climate is conducive and if there is harmony among the people in the organization, messages can flow freely. "The more supportive the climate, the more willing people are to communicate" (Dailey, 1988:304). If employees are not motivated to communicate, if messages are not interesting to their receivers, and if there is no good inter-employee relationship, there can not be effective exchange of messages in that organization.

Jay (in Gibson, 1982:283) clearly indicates the relationship between organizational climate and communication breakdowns as follows.

When management is effective and relationships are sound, problems of communication tend not to occur. It is only when relationships among members of the organization are unsound and fraught with unarticulated tensions that one hears complaints of communication breakdown.

A school principal can effectively communicate with his subordinate if there is no any sort of disagreement between them. The stronger the disagreement, the less will be the effectiveness of the communication. It means that hostility among people is also a barrier that can hinder the smooth movement of messages between two parties (Vecchio, 1988:396); it can be between teachers and teachers, between teachers and administrative staff members, etc.

Nothing can be done effectively without the desire of the two parties. Both of them need to be motivated to communicate and they need to have similar belief on the idea to be communicated. If the receiver does not have positive attitude towards the sender and the message, the communicator and the communicatee can not understand each other as intended. Therefore, lack of motivation and inattractive messages can limit the effectiveness of communication.

Lack of feedback is also another communication barrier. Feedback indicates the receivers degree of understanding of the message and his attitude towards it. Gordon (1987:227) elaborates the concept as follows:

Feedback refers to an acknowledgement by the receiver that the message has been received; it provides the sender with information about the receiver's understanding of the message being sent.

If a sender does not receive any sort of feedback, the communication is said to be one-way. One-way communication is prevalent in autocratic type of leadership, where the leader gives direct orders to subordinates and the subordinates have to obey without any question.

The feedback can be in words or in deeds. If there is feedback the source can check whether or not the receiver has grasped the message correctly (Robbins, 1989:273). But lack of it results in discouraging the sender not to transmit at least any similar message in the future. For example if a teacher suggests an idea which he thinks will contribute something for the betterment of the school and if the school principal does not give him any feedback, the teacher will think that the principal does not want to receive any idea from him. Hence, he will not try to suggest any more because he thinks that it will not be accepted at any rate.

Messages which are intended to reach their destinations through other people are in many cases, exposed to distortion. In schools, principals may get information from teachers through secretaries, assistant directors, or unit leaders. In this case, the mediators may not be able to transmit the messages as the teachers encoded them. Although the degree of such distortion varies from person to person, mediators distort messages and they rarely transmit them as they are. Whatsoever, such communications can not be as effective as

those made in face-to-face interactions. Hence message distortion by mediators is one of the barriers that can hamper free flow of messages in an organization.

Appropriate and timely action can be taken if the message reaches the receiver on time (Vecchio, 1988:435). Out-of-date information is not required in organizations unless it is for recording purposes. Up-to-date information is very crucial in schools. Once the time of their implementation has passed, orders are no more orders. When such delayed messages reach employees, they become dissatisfied. The consequence of such delayed messages will be more severe if the employees lose some benefits such as transfer, promotion, or salary increment.

Too many words result in the loss of attention, interest, and meaning. So, if too many words are used to explain something, the message can not be transmitted effectively. Likewise, if too much information is sent to a destination at once, some of the information may not be understood or the action taken may not be as expected by the sender. So, information overload is also one barrier of communication that should be given due regard.

A very severe problem is created usually when leaders are unable to communicate well with their subordinates. This may happen especially when the leaders do not have a good knowledge of the basic principles of communication

and/or if they don't have good communication skills. Definitely, if they don't know them well they can't apply them in their organizations. So, lack of fundamental communication knowledge and skill is also one of the barriers to effective communication (Sigband, 1982:11).

In many cases organizational communication utilizes verbal systems. Be it face-to-face or written, it uses words of some languages. In many languages, some words have more than one meaning. When such words are employed by the sender, the receiver may not decode them as the sender planned them to be. If the receiver does not decode in the same way as the sender encodes messages, misunderstandings will be created between the communicator and the communicatee. In this regard, Certo and Appelbaum (1986:309) stress that "A manager should not assume that a word means the same thing to all people who use it." This means that the language used can create a communication problem and needs much attention.

Generally, the barriers may arise as a result of some deficiencies of the individuals who are communicating, because of the conditions under which the message is transmitted or due to the language used as a medium. Whatsoever, knowledge of these barriers helps people to correct them and conduct effective communication.

2.9.2. Correctives to Communication Barriers

Identifying the prevailing communication problems in an organization is not an end by itself but it is the first step towards creating a smooth organizational communication system. Once the barriers are identified, it will not be difficult to suggest how they can be remedied.

According to Fisher (1981:53), communication barriers are characterized by multiplicity and interdependency. Barriers tend to occur in clusters and one can be related to the other. This concept leads us to the fact that taking research based methods to resolve these barriers would be essential so that the roots of the major barriers can be identified and remedied easily.

Of course, there is no one best way that can be used by all organizations to solve problems of communication (Bavelas and Barrett in Huneryager and Heckman, 1967:573). Each system needs to be studied so that appropriate corrective measures can be suggested for it. And, because things change through time, the suggested measures may not work for long and hence the study has to be conducted regularly to combat the newly emerging problems. No doubt, "The very nature of an organization makes communication problems unavoidable" (Fisher, 1981:9). But, although it is not possible to avoid them totally, their effect can be minimized and the effectiveness of the communication system can be increased.

In view of the above facts, the following discussion tries to treat the major correctives of communication problems which have been suggested by many authors to improve the communication systems of organizations. Haney (in Griffith, 1979:323-325) has enumerated ten points that should be known by both the source and the receiver to exchange messages effectively.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Take notes, | 6. Simplify the message. |
| 2. Give details in order, | 7. Use dual media, |
| 3. Query and paraphrase. | 8. Highlight the important point. |
| 4. Distinguish between inference and observation. | 9. Reduce the number of links in the chain. |
| 5. Slow down your oral transmissions. | 10. Preview and review, |

These are general ideas which need the attention of both school principals and their subordinates. They are ideas which can be implemented in any organization to prevent distortion of messages and misunderstandings.

According to Gordon (1987:228), improving communication accuracy comes mainly from:

- 1) Creating a supportive communication climate,
- 2) Using non-verbal language productively, and
- 3) Using active listening techniques.

He further states that the leader, in trying to create

a supportive communication climate:

- 1) is open and frank;
- 2) respects and trusts others;
- 3) jointly collaborates in solving problems; and
- 4) gives and asks for information.

In schools, principals can be successful in overcoming communication barriers if they try their best to create a climate where teachers and administrative staff members feel free to communicate any idea with anybody in the school so long as the message is appropriate and timely.

Supportive communication climate presupposes the implementation of "open-door policy" (Davis and Newstrom, 1989:87) in schools. This policy can narrow the status gap between the principals and the staff members by paving the road for free flow of messages between the two parties.

The use of non-verbal communication, together with the verbal one, increases the effectiveness of the exchange of messages. Non-verbal symbols make messages more understandable and avoid vagueness. When more media are employed in transmitting messages, the effect of barriers decreases.

The use of active listening methods is also one of the most important methods of overcoming the barriers. Listening is usually interrupted by various external and internal

factors. Unnecessary sound (noise) and other things that take the attention of the listener minimize his listening effectiveness. So, active listeners can try to control these impediments and listen carefully to grasp the sender's message because real communication occurs when people listen with understanding and when they see an idea or attitude from the other person's point of view (Rogers in Griffith, 1979:308).

Another important method of overcoming communication barriers is knowing the recipient's range of perception. "There is no possibility of communications unless we first know what the recipient, the true communicator, can see and why" (Drucker, 1970:8). The message should not only be to the level of the receiver's understanding ability but also needs to be designed to attract him. This usually demands for creative method of presentation.

The other measure that should be taken to control communication barriers is to send the message through recognized organizational channels. Wolf (1979:9) seems to have given due regard to this point when he says

To ensure that your message is properly transmitted, send it through recognized organizational channels unless special authorization or extra ordinary circumstances compel you to do otherwise.

This helps the message to reach its destination on time and prevents it from being lost on the way.

Certo and Appelbaum (1986:308-309) give emphasis to the use of simple language and the transmission of simple messages. Complex and vague messages are less likely to be understood and accepted. School principals and staff members have to try to make their messages clear and simple as much as possible. It is not only the content of the message which has to be simple and clear but also the language of the transmission.

In this chapter, effort has been made to discuss the major concepts and views of various authors related to the research topic. These concepts will serve as the bases for the interpretation and analysis of the data in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

This chapter is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered through questionnaires distributed to the teachers, principals, and other administrative staff members of the sample schools. The interpretation and discussion is based on the principles and theories included in the previous chapter.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Study Population

Items		Academic Staff		Adm. Staff		Principals	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Sex							
1.1	Male	276	89.0	58	72.5	27	96.4
1.2	Female	34	11.0	22	27.5	1	3.6
Total		310	100	80	100	28	100
2. Educ. level							
2.1	Master's Degree	11	3.5	-	-	-	-
2.2	Bachelor's Degree	153	49.4	4	5.0	22	78.6
2.3	12 + 3	13	4.2	13	16.3	2	7.1
2.4	12 + 2	130	41.9	15	18.7	4	14.3
2.5	12 + 1	3	1.0	14	17.5	-	-
2.6	12 th grade	-	-	18	22.5	-	-
2.7	below grade 12	-	-	16	20.0	-	-
Total		310	100	80	100	-	-
3. Field of study							
3.1	Educ. Adm.	3	1.0	2	2.5	9	32.1
3.2	Ped. Science	15	4.8	-	-	3	10.7
3.3	Academic area	247	79.7	40	50.0	15	53.6
3.4	Vocational	45	14.5	4	5.0	1	3.6
3.5	Miscellaneous	-	-	34	42.5	-	-
Total		310	100	80	100	28	100
4. Years of service							
4.1	21 years and above	32	10.3	12	15.0	4	14.3
4.2	16 - 20 years	78	25.2	23	28.7	10	35.7
4.3	11 - 15 years	83	26.8	28	35.0	12	42.9
4.4	6 - 10 years	86	27.7	13	16.3	2	7.1
Total		310	100	80	100	28	100

3.1 Description of the Study Population

The purpose of this sub-topic is to give some basic information about the target population. Table 2 will be used as the basis for the general description. The target groups of this study were teachers, administrative staff members, and principals of the twelve schools taken from different corners of the country. Out of the 310 teachers, only 34 (11%) were females; while in the administrative staff, there were 22 (27.5%). The low proportion of female population to the males in both groups of staff members is a result of the cultural influence observed in many developing countries. In these countries, parents want their daughters to work at home. Even from those who get the chance of joining schools, many are forced by their families to withdraw after completing their elementary or secondary education because of marriage and other social problems.

A higher proportion of females is found in the administrative staff than in the teaching staff because of the lower educational qualification required by the type of work. One can also observe that there is only one female principal. This is a good indication that the participation of females in this area is still very low throughout the country.

Item 2 in Table 2 shows the educational background of the study population. More than half of the teaching staff (52.9%) are graduates. They are Bachelor's or Master's degree holders. One hundred and thirty (41.9%) of them are diploma graduates and only 3 (1%) are with the least qualification (12+1 level). So, this means that 99% of the teachers have a diploma or better qualification.

If the unqualified (1%) are given priority to improve their qualification or are transferred to elementary schools and if some of the diploma graduates get the chance of attending degree programs, the status of the academic staff can be at a very good condition although it is satisfactory at present.

Majority of the principals (78.6%) are first degree holders and the rest are of 12 + 2 and 12 + 3 level. It is common to see diploma graduates, with long years of service in the Ministry assigned as assistant principals in some senior secondary schools. Since this practice by the Ministry can have negative consequences on the work, it will be helpful to replace them by degree graduates with reasonable experience. at least to raise their acceptance by the staff.

The administrative staff has relatively lower educational qualification compared to the teachers and principals. Forty eight (60%) of them are of 12 + 1 level and below while only 4 (5%) are with B.A. degree.

Since the administrative staff comprises people assigned to accomplish tasks ranging from cleaning and gardening to personnel administration, it is not surprising to see 16 (20%) of them being below grade 12.

Regarding the fields of study of the staff members, 79.7% of the teachers, 50% of the administrative staff, and 53.6% of the principals have studied academic subjects. Three (1%) of the teachers, 2 (2.5%) of the administrative staff, and 9 (32.1%) of the principals are educational administration majors. It is reasonable to see a great majority of the teachers majoring in academic subjects as most of the subjects taught in the schools are of academic nature. But the presence of 15 (53.6%) academic subjects major principals and only 9 (32.1%) educational administration majors is something which attracts the attention of many educators. Senior secondary school principals should preferably be professional administrators and not academic subject majors.

As is the usual practice of the Ministry, these non professional principals have been promoted after serving as teachers for some years. The writer believes that such inappropriate assignments need special attention of the Ministry.

Item 4 in Table 2 indicates the distribution of the

staff members according to their service years. It reveals that 193 (62.3%) of the teachers, 63 (78.7%) of the administrative staff, and 26 (92.9%) of the principals have served for more than 10 years.

The long service of respondents is perhaps a good reason to believe that the information collected is reliable because the longer they serve in schools, the better understanding of their schools they can have. Similarly, they can also be in a better position to accomplish their tasks.

3.2. Analysis of the Research Data

This part of the thesis tries to analyse and discuss the data collected from the sample schools to seek appropriate answers for the basic questions raised at the beginning of the research.

Table 3. Favourableness of School Climate

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. The school administration encourages staff independence	1.9*	2.2	3.8
2. The school administration keeps good relations with the staff	1.8	1.9	3.5
3. The principals are open in their discussion	1.8	1.8	3.3
4. The principals promote high staff morale	1.6	1.7	2.9
5. The principals trust staff members	1.2	1.4	2.8
Grand Mean	1.7	1.8	3.3
Standard deviation	0.28	0.29	0.42

N.B. The following values are used in all tables involving ratings except in Table 17.

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = undecided
4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

The coefficient of correlation between the academic and the administrative staff (r) = 0.92.

The table above contains some elements that try to show the type of organizational climate prevailing in the schools. Both groups of the administrative and academic staff members responded that the school administrators do not encourage staff independence. The low mean rating of the academic

staff (1.9) and that of the administrative staff (2.2) reveal this fact. They have also indicated that the school administration does not keep good relations with the staff. The ratings given to this item are also very low (1.8 and 1.9). So, according to the responses of the employees, the school administrators do not encourage staff independence; nor do they have harmonious relations with their staff members.

As can be seen in the table, the responses of the principals seem to contradict with those of the subordinates. The principals responded that staff independence is encouraged and they have also good relations with the staff.

Undoubtedly, such responses are expected because the principals might assume that it will have negative effect on their personality if they give negative responses. In many instances people are not ready to accept their mistakes. They rather try to be on the defensive side as much as possible. However, it can be noted that even the principals did not choose the "strongly agree" response. The mean ratings 3.8 and 3.5 indicate that their responses lie somewhere between "undecided" and "agree".

For effective communication to take place, favourable and harmonious relations need to exist in schools. Staff

members should be encouraged to feel free. If staff members are not free to express their ideas and interact with their administrators and with their peers, exchange of messages between staff members will be limited and this can affect the school work to a great extent.

Item 3 in Table 3 was intended to investigate whether or not the principals are open in their discussion. Both the academic and administrative staff members rated it 1.8, to indicate that they are not open in their discussions, although the principals rated it higher (3.3).

When principals are not open in their discussions, staff members can not trust them and they can not feel free to send messages upwards. Horizontal communication too can not be as effective as it should be because the employees also will not be open in their discussions and will be reserved not to discuss things openly with their peers.

The lack of openness in discussions on the part of the principals may be the result of the lack of positive attitude towards the subordinates as has been revealed by the responses given for item 5 in the table. If principals do not trust their staff members, the staff members also can not trust them. Therefore in such type of inhibiting environment, where employees do not trust each other, one can not expect to see free flow of messages in any direction.

Staff members will be reluctant to communicate vertically and horizontally when the principals keep things secret unnecessarily.

According to the responses given for item 4, the principals do not promote high staff morale. Since employees with low morale can not communicate effectively and because effective communication is very essential for task accomplishment; principals should try their best to raise the staff morale. Otherwise, they can not be successful in achieving their goals.

The coefficient of correlation (0.92) between the ratings of the two groups of subordinates shows that they have similar views on the stated items. Both stated that there was not conducive climate in the schools to facilitate free transmission of messages. Effective communication takes place in organizations where employees feel free and a sense of belongingness. As stated by Prasad and Bannerjee (1985:76) "acceptance of any statement needs a smooth and proper climate of mutual trust and confidence". Unfortunately, no such type of climate seems to exist in the schools. This has been confirmed by the low grand mean ratings given of the respondents.

Table 4. The Status of Upward Communication

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff	Adm. Staff	Principals
	N = 310	N = 80	N = 28
1. The school administration has created various mechanisms through which it can get information from the staff.	1.3	1.4	2.3
2. When upward communication is received the school administration responds to it quickly.	1.5	1.6	3.4
3. The principals are aware of staff problems.	1.4	1.7	3.2
4. In the orientation sessions new staff members are advised to suggest ideas to the school administration.	1.5	1.7	3.5
5. When the principals' ideas are of little value staff members don't hesitate to tell them.	1.8	1.8	3.2
6. Staff members can discuss their performance evaluation with the principals.	1.6	1.4	3.8
7. Staff members are in good communicating terms with the principals.	1.9	2.0	2.3
8. The adm. body is accessible to all staff members to discuss school matters.	1.8	1.9	3.9
Grand mean	1.6	1.7	3.1
Standard deviation	0.21	0.22	0.70

The coefficient of correlation between the responses of the academic and the administration staff = 0.77

As can be seen in Table 4, the school administration has not created various mechanisms through which it can get information from the staff. The three groups of respondents have agreed on this point. Their ratings are very low and all disagreed to the statement indicating the availability of mechanisms like suggestion box for all upward bound messages.

Through upward communication school principals can get information about what is happening in their schools. It is through this type of communication that they can detect whether or not problems exist. If there are no ways through which teachers and administrative staff members can forward their ideas upwards, the principals will not be in a position to take appropriate measures to solve existing problems because they can't get up-to-date and concrete information about the nature of the problems. Timely and proper decisions can be arrived at when the principals try to gather ideas and opinions from various concerned people. Since school problems are interrelated, the principals can not solve them alone but together with other concerned school personnel.

Because of the absence of such types of mechanisms, the principals are not aware of staff problems. This can be clearly understood from the low ratings given to item 3 in the table above. The teachers and the administrative staff members have strongly stated that the principals are not

aware of the staff problems. They could be aware of the problems if they had created different kinds of channels for upward communication. Definitely, without the knowledge of their problems it is not possible to communicate with the staff effectively.

Even if upward communication is received, the administration does not respond to it quickly. As is indicated in item 2 of Table 4, the mean ratings given by the teachers and the administrative staff for this item are very low: 1.5 and 1.6 respectively. However, the principals rated this item relatively higher even though their mean rating is also below 3.5. When they receive messages from their subordinates, principals need to give the necessary feedback as soon as possible because the feedback can motivate them to send more messages when there is a need; but it is discouraging not to respond to it quickly.

It can also be seen from the ratings in Table 4 item 8 that the school administrators are not accessible to all staff members to discuss school matters. While both groups of subordinates confirmed this fact, the principals responded that they are accessible to all. It seems that the principals are becoming self defensive. On the other hand, one can see that similar ratings were given to item 6. According to these responses, staff members usually do not have the opportunity to discuss their performance evaluation with

their principals. The lowest rating value of the administrative staff (1.4) seems to indicate the reliability of the responses because the rules of the C.P.A. and the MOE do not allow the principals to discuss the performance evaluation results with the administrative staff members unless the result is very low (below 2.45). However, the academic staff should be given the opportunity to discuss such matters with their principals even though many principals are not willing to do so. The responses show that there are few school principals who conduct such discussions with their subordinates.

Moreover, there are also some items where the three groups of respondents have given similar responses. Item 5 can be a good example for this although the principal rated it a bit higher. All the groups agreed that when staff members think that the principals' ideas are of little value they don't usually let them know. This is a good indication that the staff members are not in good communicating terms with the principals (See item 7). Teachers and administrative staff members can correct their principals whenever they make mistakes if the staff members are oriented and if they think that the principals will accept such practices with pleasure. Otherwise if they know that the principals will not take them positively, they will be forced to feed the grapevines instead of telling them in face-to-face talks.

Actually, the staff members could also use suggestion boxes to show that the principals' ideas are of little value. Better and valuable suggestions could come through them; but unfortunately, as has been indicated earlier, such opportunities are almost non-existent in the schools.

So, generally, the table clearly shows that upward communication has not been given the necessary attention in the schools. The low grand means of the ratings of the two groups of subordinates (1.7) and that of the principals (3.1) with very low standard deviation reveal that upward movement of messages is very much limited although it has many benefits.

Since it is a necessity, school principals need to motivate their subordinates to suggest constructive ideas in meetings and through other mechanisms. They have to give them freedom to use their creativity and initiate change. They must give quick response to questions, suggestions, etc. coming from teachers and administrative staff members. But in reality, both the teachers and the administrative staff of the schools have reported that their principals neither encourage them to communicate upwards nor do they give the opportunity to do so.

Both groups of subordinates gave negative responses with very low variation for each item (standard deviation

is less than 0.5). Their responses are also very much related i.e., having great relationship ($r = 0.77$). This shows that the teachers and the administrative staff members perceive the upward movement of messages in their schools in the same way.

Table 5. Purposes of Upward Communication

Item	Mean Ranks		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. Give feedback for downward communication	3.0	2.0	3.0
2. Report how things were performed	3.0	2.6	3.0
3. Gain personal popularity	3.4	5.1	4.1
4. Tell the fault of others	4.4	4.2	4.6
5. Ask for personal benefits	4.6	4.3	4.9
6. Ask for clarity	5.0	5.3	4.8
7. Suggest new ways of doing things	5.6	5.8	6.1
8. Criticize the school administration	7.0	6.7	5.5

Rank order correlation coefficient (r) between the academic and administrative staff = 0.95.

Upward communication in the schools, as reported by the teachers, administrative staff members and the principals,

has been mainly used to give feedback for downward communication (to report how things were performed, since both item 1 and 2 are more or less similar), to gain personal popularity, and to tell the fault of others. The academic staff and the principals ranked items 1-4 similarly while they differed with the administrative staff with regard to item 3 (see the table). The first two items are, definitely, the genuine and legal purposes of sending messages from subordinates to the heads. On the other hand, items 3 and 4 are not legally accepted in organizational communication because they are not meant to enhance the work of the organization but rather for the growth of the individual at the expense of others. So, since such practices should not continue, principals have to design mechanisms by which they can discourage them because offices should not be centers where gossips are entertained. If people want to tell the fault of others, they have to do it in front of the concerned parties so that they can learn from their mistakes when ever they make.

The other important purpose of why subordinates communicate with their heads is to ask for personal benefits. There are some benefits which school employees want to get although the type and range of these benefits varies from school to school. Some of these can be employment in the evening school, promotion opportunities, reasonable work load, etc. It is a common practice to see arguments between

teachers and administrative staff on one hand and principals on the other about the sharing of some benefits among them.

It is also surprising to see asking for clarity, suggesting new ways of doing things, and commenting on the work of school administrators being ranked th seventh, and eighth respectively. Logically, these items should be third, fourth and fifth important purposes. But, unfortunately, they were ranked last and this is an indication of the misuse of upward communication in the schools except for items 1 and 2. This condition makes the existing limited upward movement of messages defficient.

The very high rank order correlation coefficient (0.95) between the ranks given by the academic and the administrative staff members shows the degree of agreement between them in rating the purposes of upward communication in the list. Both groups have similar views and attitudes towards these elements.

Table 6. The Status of Downward Communication

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Princi- pals N = 28
1. The principals appreciate the work of the staff.	1.3	1.8	2.3
2. Employees are provided with the necessary information during work assignment.	2.1	2.4	3.6
3. Employees receive their job description upon first reporting to work.	2.5	2.8	3.6
4. Employees are given written rules and regulations of their schools.	2.4	2.7	3.5
5. Administration arranges an orientation session for the new staff.	1.8	2.3	3.0
Grand Mean	2.0	2.4	3.2
Standard deviation	0.49	0.39	0.58

The coefficient of correlation between the academic and the administrative staff = 0.99

Table 6 shows the general picture of downward communication in the schools under study. In this table, item 5 indicates that the administrators do not arrange orientation sessions for new staff members. This can be understood from the low ratings given by the academic staff (1.8), the administrative staff (2.3), and by the principals

(3.0). Even the principals have not confirmed the organization of orientation sessions in their schools. It shows that most of them do not arrange such sessions. Orientation programs are very essential to welcome the new staff members and to give them some basic information how they can tackle some of the major problems they face. It is generally recognised that despite the sound professional preparation of the new staff, there are many frustrating and difficult problems in getting off to a good start in a new school situation. It is the purpose of orientation sessions to anticipate as many of the problems as possible and provide help in solving them so that new teachers can do their work with minimum discomfort.

Some of the information which the new employees need to know are the overall picture of the school, desired relationships between staff members, school regulations, etc. The programs are to help the staff to think that their success is important to the school community as a whole and that each staff member matters as an individual. Generally, since such programs are organized to acquaint the new staff with the school and its program, failure to arrange such sessions at school level is to make the new employees more confused. Therefore school principals need to give very high attention to the organization of such sessions in their schools.

Item 3 in the same table is also very much related to

the above concept. It deals with the provision of job description to the new staff upon first reporting to work. According to the mean rating of the academic staff (2.5) and that of the administrative staff (2.8), job descriptions are not given upon first arrival at school. On the other hand, most of the principals reported something contrary to this. According to the ratings, new staff members are provided with job descriptions right at their first arrival. This shows that the principals have understood the necessity of the provision before the staff members begin work. The writer has observed many schools where new employees get their job descriptions after a month or so, or not at all in some cases.

Usually principals assign teachers simply to teach classes or assign typists to type, etc. without giving their respective detailed job descriptions stated by the Ministry. This kind of assignment, together with the lack of orientation, can frustrate the staff and therefore needs to get due regard. The subordinates also indicated that the principals don't give them written rules and regulations of their schools. This has been reported by their low ratings given to item 4 of Table 6. Although the principals gave relatively higher scores, they did not strongly indicate the issuance of the school rules and regulations to the staff.

Besides, the staff pointed out that the principals don't give them the necessary information when they assign

them to accomplish tasks even though the principals reported that they did. Staff members need to know what is exactly expected from them. Therefore it will be essential to give them the necessary information and guidance which is needed for the successful completion of their assignments. Lack of such guidance can result in wastage of time and other resources. The result obtained may not also be as expected. Such practices should be improved because employees can develop negative attitude towards work assignments.

All the three groups of respondents agreed that the principals don't usually appreciate the work of their subordinates. The teachers, the administrative staff, and the principals rated this items 1.3, 1.8, and 2.3 respectively. So these very low ratings reveal lack of appreciation on the part of the principals. When staff members do something beneficial to their schools, the principals have to give them the necessary feedback. They need to appreciate their good work and encourage them to do more in the future.

Generally, it can be seen from the grand mean ratings that downward communication is not effectively utilized. Orientation sessions to acquaint the new staff with the school environment, written rules and regulations to secure uniformity, and feedback to encourage good results and to prevent unnecessary practices are some of the phenomena which should be strengthened in schools in order to have effective downward communication.

Table 7. Purposes of Downward Communication

Items	Mean Ranks		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Princi- pals N = 28
1. Introduce policies and programs	1.6	2.2	2.3
2. Free oneself from blame	3.1	3.2	4.3
3. Show authority	3.1	4.5	6.2
4. Criticize employees	4.0	3.2	6.0
5. Elaborate duties	5.2	4.9	5.9
6. Give feedback for upward communication	5.4	5.8	3.6
7. Solve staff problems	6.5	5.6	3.8
8. Motivate employees	7.1	6.6	3.8

Rank order correlation coefficient between the academic and the adm. staff = 0.95

The most important purpose of downward communication in the schools as reported by the three groups of respondents is the introduction of policies and programs. This item has been ranked first by a great majority of them (see Appendix B.5). Since school policies and programs need to be discussed and should be clearly understood by all members of the school community, it is logical to give them the first priority. These documents are very essential because they help the staff members to accomplish their tasks not only according to the broadly drafted requirements

of the Ministry of Education but also to organize them in line with the specific directives and procedures passed by the authorities at school level. Without the knowledge of policies and programs, the teachers and administrative staff members can not fulfill the requirements of their institutions. Therefore, using downward communication to introduce policies and programs is quite acceptable. In this regard, a committee organized to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational administration structure and planning of the Ethiopian educational system (1985:31) stated that policies, directives, and guidelines of the Ministry of Education should be clearly known by teachers and administrative staff because it ^{is} believed that knowledge of these policies and directives helps to minimize conflict and misunderstanding among staff members.

The next important purposes of sending messages downwards as indicated by the subordinates are to free oneself from blame, to show authority, and to criticize employees. However, the principals denied this fact. It seems that the responses of the teachers and administrative staff members are acceptable because there are some signs that betray the principals as authoritative. All groups have agreed that the most important direction of communication is downwards (see Table 9) and that upward communication has not been given due regard (see Table 4). This is an indication that the principals can use downward communication to show

authority and to criticize employees. One can see that the responses of the subordinates are very much similar: with a rank order correlation coefficient of 0.95. This makes their report more acceptable than that of the principals. It is also known that, it is not common to hear people saying negative things about themselves.

On the other hand, it can be seen that the academic and administrative staff members have shown that giving feedback for upward communication, solving staff problems, and motivating employees are given the least importance in downward communication although the principals have ranked them higher. Still here, the disagreement seems to be as a result of putting oneself on the safe side because the principals have also indicated that they don't promote high staff morale when responding to other items (see Table 3 item 4). It is to be remembered that the low scores given to item 2 and 3 in Table 4 are also in congruence with the responses of the subordinates. So, from this it appears safe to conclude that the principals are trying to defend themselves.

As principals are working mainly with professionals and not with daily labourers, they need to be sociable and approachable. If they are authoritarian and if they don't try to understand and solve staff problems, their employees will not be effective in accomplishing their tasks.

Table 8. The Status of Horizontal Communication

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 89	Principals N = 28
1. There is good cooperation between the academic and administration staff.	1.2	1.3	1.9
2. Staff members enjoy friendly relationship with each other	1.4	1.6	2.0
3. Staff members are usually seen working cooperatively	1.3	1.6	1.9
4. There is high spirit of cooperation in the school	1.5	1.8	2.2
Grand Mean	1.4	1.6	2.0
Standard deviation	0.13	0.21	0.14

The coefficient of correlation between the responses of the academic and adm. staff members = 0.94.

It is really unfortunate that there is no good cooperation between the academic and administrative staff members in the schools. The very low scores given by subordinates have also been confirmed by the principals (see Table 8 item 1). The problem is not only between the teachers and the administrative staff but also among the staff members as a whole (see item 2). Horizontal communication is very much helpful to facilitate school work. Teachers who teach the same subject and grade need to discuss their problems and try to solve them together. They need

to prepare similar lesson plans, handouts, tests, and exams because they are using the same type of syllabus and guide. They can also conduct research together to develop their teaching methods. Likewise, teachers have to cooperate with administrative staff members because one cannot do his work effectively without the genuine help of the other. Absence of good cooperation and friendly relationship can result in low employee performance because the staff members do not feel easy and free to do their best in fulfilling what is expected from them.

This is indicated by the responses of the three groups of respondents. They gave very low scores to items 3 and 4 (see Table 8). The teachers, the administrative staff, and the principals agreed in rating the two items from 1.3 to 2.2 stating that the staff members are not usually seen working cooperatively and that there is no high spirit of cooperation in the schools as a whole. This can be clearly understood from the very low grand means rated by all groups of respondents and from the highly related responses ($r = 0.94$) of both groups of subordinates. So it means that the absence of sound and friendly relationship has led to absence of satisfactory work cooperation. In such a very inhibiting climate it will be very difficult to expect high or even satisfactory results. Since staff members are working in isolation and because there is no mutual help, the room for sharing of experience can be

closed and creativity of staff members may be very much limited. Undoubtedly, such inhibiting and frustrating circumstances can lower staff productivity and affect the quality of education if they are not improved soon.

Table 9. Major Direction of Communication

Items	Academic Staff		Adm. Staff		Principals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Downward	270	87.1	63	78.8	21	75.0
2. Upward	7	2.3	2	2.5	-	-
3. Horizontal	6	1.9	2	2.5	-	-
4. Three of them equally	21	6.8	6	7.5	4	14.3
5. Up and Downward equally	6	1.9	7	8.5	3	10.7
Total	310	100	80	100	28	100

One can easily see from the table that the principal direction of communication in the schools is downward. This has been indicated by 270 (87.1%) of the academic staff, 63 (78.8%) of the administrative staff, and 21 (75.0%) of the principals. This item was selected by a great majority of all groups of the respondents while the other items were chosen by only a very low number. This reveals that the movement of messages is highly dominated by the downward direction and the other directions of communication are utilized very little.

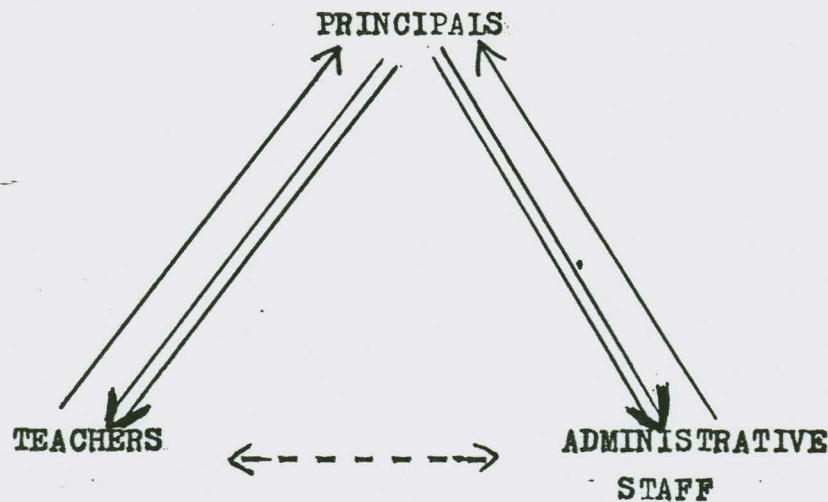
In the previous discussions effort was made to see the status of the three directions (down, up, and horizontal). In all the discussions the data collected from the respondents indicate that although downward communication is the most utilized of the three, that itself is found to be inefficient; it has neither given due regard to the motivation of staff members nor has it been effective to give feedback for upward communication. In addition to increasing the effectiveness of the downward flow of messages, principals also need to develop the upward and lateral ways of transmitting ideas, opinions, comments, etc. This can be practical if they try to create a conducive environment that facilitates easy flow of messages in all directions. Although it is common to see more messages descending the hierarchical echelons, it is not fair to leave the other directions aside. Hence, school principals are expected to lubricate the other communication loops in addition to cultivating the downward communication for more fruitful purposes.

Table 10. Communication with the Highest Frequency

Items	Academic Staff		Adm. Staff		Principals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Principals with teachers	180	58.0	36	45.0	15	57.1
2. Principals with adm. staff	60	19.4	6	7.5	4	14.3
3. Teachers with adm. staff	20	6.5	15	18.8	-	-
4. Teachers with teachers	40	12.9	20	25.0	8	28.6
5. Adm. staff with adm. staff	10	3.2	3	3.7	-	-
Total	310	100	80	100	28	100

As can be seen in Table 10, formal communication between the principals and their subordinates (both teachers and administrative staff members) is relatively higher. This has been confirmed by 240 (77.4%) of the teachers, 42 (52.5%) of the administrative staff, and 20 (71.4%) of the principals. According to the responses given, vertical communication has been used more frequently than the lateral one. This reveals the fact that interaction between and among the subordinates is very much limited. It is to be remembered that similar responses were obtained to items dealing with friendly relationships and cooperations between staff members (see Table 8). This ensures the reliability of the data collected because the respondents have given similar responses to items of similar concepts.

Generally, one can understand from the previous discussions that there is more downward movement of messages to the teachers and administrative staff followed by upward movement from both of them than between people of similar hierarchical level. Thus, the movement in the three directions may be diagrammatically depicted as follows.



Legend

 relatively strong downward com.

 weak upward com.

 very weak lateral com.

Figure 6. Intrastaff Communication Network.

No doubt, the frequency of vertical communication will be higher than that of the horizontal in many effective organizations and so, it is reasonable to see more messages moving up and down than laterally. However, since the exchange of messages among teachers and administrative staff members is also very essential, it has to get due regard otherwise the school work will be unorganized and unintegrated leading to undesirable consequences.

Table 11. Channels of Communication

Channels	Mean Ranks		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. Face-to-face talks	1.3	1.7	1.6
2. Notices	2.3	3.4	3.3
3. Through mediators	3.1	3.1	3.6
4. Meetings	4.1	3.9	3.4
5. Letters	4.8	4.3	4.5
6. Telephones	5.4	4.6	4.6

Rank order correlation coefficient between the two groups of subordinates = 0.93.

As reported by many of the respondents of all groups, face-to-face communication is the major way of exchanging ideas, comments, information, etc. in the schools. Among the six different kinds of channels, face-to-face interaction was ranked first followed by various notices (see Table 11).

It is to be recalled from the discussion on the review of the related literature that face-to-face communication is advantageous to both the sender and the receiver. When principals give directives to their subordinates using this channel, they can immediately see the subordinates' reaction towards the given directives. The subordinates can also ask questions and get immediate responses. Similarly, when an employee (a teacher or an administrative staff) tries to give suggestions to the principal in face-to-face talks, he can explain his suggestion well and the principal can ask and clear doubts if any. In the mean time, the employee can also observe whether or not his suggestions are accepted. Hence, because of the opportunity it gives for immediate feedback and due to the fact that it helps to have a clear picture of the message, face-to-face communication is a good method which should be utilized more in the future.

The teachers and the principals ranked the distribution of various notices second while the administrative staff put it in the third place. For the administrative staff members, exchange of messages through mediators (through other people or third party) is the second important means of formal communication although it is the third for the teachers and fourth for the principals (see Table 11). According to principles of communication, messages get distorted as they go through various levels or individuals.

So, this type of transmitting or receiving messages is not recommended at all unless other methods are not possible. School principals may communicate with teachers or administrative staff members through their secretaries or their assistants. In such cases, the secretaries or assistant principals tend to transmit the messages according to their own interpretations and interests. Hence, in so doing, they may add or drop an element of the original message thereby distorting or modifying the true message. In many cases, such modified messages create misunderstandings between the sender and the receiver, between the principals and their subordinates or among the subordinates as in this case. Since face-to-face interactions and meetings avoid these pitfalls, it will be helpful to use them frequently and to try to minimize exchanging ideas through other people.

On the contrary, it can be seen that letters and telephone are ranked fifth and sixth respectively. Obviously, since there aren't many offices equipped with telephone services in the schools, it is not surprising to see the use of this item ranked last. Likewise, because of the short distance between each staff member in all schools, it is not necessary to communicate with each staff member through letters unless the nature of the message forces them to do so.

Table 12. Effectiveness of Written Communication

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. The written materials transmit short and precise messages.	1.5	1.4	3.4
2. The messages are clear and easy to understand.	1.6	1.5	3.4
3. The organization of the materials is attractive and inviting.	1.5	1.3	3.2
4. The written materials convey timely messages.	1.6	1.6	3.4
Grand mean	1.6	1.5	3.4
Standard deviation	0.06	0.13	0.10

The coefficient of correlation between the responses of the academic and the adm. staff = 0.89.

The preciseness and briefness of the written messages transmitted by the principals are rated very low; 1.5 and 1.4 respectively (see Table 12 item 1). Usually, when messages are short and precise, people can read and understand them easily. On the other hand, if they are long and not to the point, people get fed up and lose interest to read them. Even if they read them they can't grasp the message easily. Item 2 of the same table also shows the same thing. The low ratings (1.6 of the teachers

and 1.5 of the adm. staff) reveal this fact. Both groups responded that the principals don't usually send clear messages that can be easily understood by their subordinates. The responses given to the related items are more or less similar: negative, indicating that the written materials (letters, notices etc.) transmitted by the principals are neither short and precise nor clear enough to be understood.

Item 4 (Table 11) deals with the timeliness of the messages conveyed by the written materials. Both groups of respondents replied that principals don't transmit timely messages. The ratings are not very much different from those of items 1 and 2. If messages are to be effectively used, they need to reach their destinations in time. Out-of-date messages can frustrate employees especially if they are beneficial to them. For example, if it is a notice that invites staff members for promotion or transfer to a better place and if they lose the chance because of its delay, they tend to lose morale. Similarly, if it conveys instructions that should be put into practice and reported about, the delay of the instructions can affect their implementation and may make the employees develop negative attitude towards the organization if it happens repeatedly.

Even if the messages are clear, short, and timely, they should be organized in such a way that they attract people to read them. But as can be understood from the responses

of the subordinates given to item 3, the principals do not usually organize their written messages so that they can be attractive and inviting because it is not only the content that matters but also its organization. Generally, it can be seen that, although the principals gave relatively higher ratings, of course not high enough to lead to a positive conclusion, both groups of subordinates rated the organization of the written messages coming from the principals very low (grand means of 1.6 and 1.5 with very low standard deviation). One can also see that there is high correlation (0.80) between the responses of the administrative and academic staff members which means that both of them have similar perception of the written messages of their schools i.e., both see them as ineffective.

Table 13. Items Related to Listening

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. Principals do more listening than taking in discussions with staff members.	1.8	1.8	2.8
2. The principals listen carefully when staff members talk to them.	1.8	1.9	3.8
3. The principals are generally good listeners.	1.9	2.1	3.8
Grand mean	1.8	1.9	3.5
Standard deviation	0.06	0.15	0.58

The coefficient of correlation between the responses of the academic and the adm. staff = 0.94.

Table 13 carries some elements that illuminate on the listening effectiveness of the principals. According to the responses given to item 1, when staff members come to their offices to discuss some problems, the principals do more talking than listening. The teachers, administrative staff members, and the principals rated this item low; 1.8, 1.8, and 2.8 respectively. However as many communication experts state, effective managers are those who devote more time to listening when discussing some problems with their subordinates. This helps them to have a thorough understanding of the subordinates' problems and thereby leading them to logical solutions. If the principals try to solve the problems of their staff members without understanding them thoroughly, they can't arrive at practical conclusions and this can be a step forward towards failure.

The low scores given to item 2 in the same table also show that the principals do not listen carefully when staff members talk to them although the principals gave a higher one - 3.8. Similar scores were obtained from the respondents for item 3 i.e., negative from the subordinates and positive from the principals. It means that, while the principals rated themselves as good listeners, their subordinates rated them as having low listening tendency. It can be seen that there is high correlation coefficient (0.94) between the scores given by the teachers and the administrative staff members. Both groups have rated the principals' listening

tendency to be low. It appears that their responses are more acceptable because the principals have also confirmed this with their low scores given to the first item in this table. From this we can understand that the principals do not listen to the staff members very carefully or critically. It also seems that the principals have understood the necessity of good listening and may try to practice it in the future.

Table 14. The Management of Meetings

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff	Adm. Staff	Principals
	N = 310	N = 80	N = 28
1. Democratic procedures are used	2.1	2.3	4.1
2. Appropriate premeeting details are communicated and well arranged	1.9	2.1	3.9
3. Time is well managed	1.5	1.9	3.8
4. The meetings usually achieve their objectives	2.0	2.6	3.8
5. Oral presentations of the principals are well prepared and delivered	1.9	2.3	4.0
6. Participants feel free to suggest any idea	1.6	1.8	3.9
Grand Mean	1.8	2.2	3.9
Standard deviation	0.23	0.29	0.12

The coefficient of correlation between the scores of the academic and adm. staff = 0.87.

The teachers and the administrative staff rated item 2 of Table 14 low, stating that appropriate premeeting details like agenda, room, etc. are not well arranged and communicated beforehand. The distribution of agenda earlier helps the participants to organize and bring to the meeting whatever ideas or document they have on the issue to be discussed. It helps the participants to see the topics raised from different angles and digest them well. Generally, it can make them ready for effective participation and can reduce confusion.

The teachers and the administrative staff stated that the oral presentations of the principals are not well prepared and well delivered (see item 5). They indicated this by giving low scores (1.9 and 2.3). When principals are unable to deliver their oral presentations well in meetings they chair, the participants may not be in good mood to participate and time also can be wasted unnecessarily. Lack of effective time management has been reported by both groups of subordinates. Both gave low ratings to this item (see Table 14 item 3). They also responded that, in meetings led by the principals, participants do not feel free to suggest any idea which they think is relevant (see item 6). This item is related to the concepts of upward communication. In schools where upward communication is encouraged, staff members can suggest ideas which they think will contribute for the betterment of their schools. On the other hand,

in places where school principals don't encourage such practices, staff members fear to suggest ideas and hence may become reserved; or, as is observed in many cases, they don't give ideas which are not supported by their principals.

The responses of the academic and administrative staff members also show that the principals do not follow democratic procedures while conducting meetings. Both groups gave low scores on this item (see item 1 Table 14). Finally, as can be seen in the table item 4, the low ratings (2.0 and 2.6) indicate that the meetings do not usually achieve their objectives. Obviously, if premeeting arrangements are not well communicated, if participants can not suggest ideas freely, and if democratic procedures are not employed, it will be very difficult for the meetings to hit their targets.

On the contrary, when one tries to see the ratings of the principals, he finds that they are all high indicating the existence of favourable situations in meetings. The grand mean rating of the principals (3.9) states that participants are free to suggest any idea, time is well managed, democratic procedures are employed, and the meetings achieve their objectives. Since responding negatively to these items puts the principals as ineffective in leading meetings, it is not surprising to see higher scores. Actually, it is uncommon to see people judging themselves as undemocratic and unable to lead meetings effectively.

Therefore it appears fair to take the reports of the teachers and administrative staff as reflecting the true situations of the meetings.

Table 15. The Use of Informal Communication in Administration

Items	Mean Ratings		
	Academic Staff	Adm. Staff	Principals
	N = 310	N = 80	N = 28
1. Principals use the informal channel to introduce change	1.5	1.9	3.4
2. Principals try to use informal com. to counter-balance rumors against the school adm.	1.6	2.0	3.2
3. Principals try to use the formal and informal com. side by side.	1.8	2.3	3.5
4. Principals welcome staff members to discuss school matters informally.	1.8	2.1	3.4
Grand Mean	1.7	2.1	3.4
Standard deviation	0.15	0.17	0.13

Coefficient of correlation between the scores of the academic and the adm. staff = 0.88

Item 1 in the above table shows that the school principals are not usually observed using the informal channel to introduce some changes in their schools. Even though the principals' ratings are not high enough to show

the use of this channel in the introduction of changes, those of the teachers and administrative staff members are so low to lead the writer to conclude that its use for such purpose is not common in the schools (see Table 15 item 1). If school principals want to see whether or not their new proposals can be accepted by the staff and if they want to test their applicability in their schools, they can send their proposals through the grapevine before they make them official. This helps them to make some necessary modifications or to abandon the new proposals if situations are not favourable at all.

In the second item, the respondents have reported that it is not common to see principals using this type of communication to counter-balance rumors that are against the school administration. The teachers, the administrative staff members, and the principals gave low scores to this item; 1.6, 2.0, and 3.2 respectively. As is stated in the review of the related literature, effective principals cultivate the grapevine for fruitful use. This is usually done by trying to get important information from this network and also by feeding it with appropriate information to correct half truths and gossips that are against the school administration. This is usually done in situations where the informal channel is more useful than the formal one. But here, it seems that the principals have not yet understood its importance because they did not cultivate it for

fruitful use and that may be why they are not usually seen using it side by side with the formal channel, although they have rated this item 3.5 (see item 3). In this regard, it can be advantageous to use both types of communication side by side whenever necessary but of course with great care because the grapevine can be harmful if used unwisely.

Table 16. School Principals and Principles of Communication (Part 1)

Items	Mean Ratings
1. Information should be given in the language suitable to the receiver and not that most convenient to the giver.	2.8
2. If a sender does not have a thorough understanding of the receiver's background it will be very difficult to have effective com.	2.2
3. There is strong relationship between organizational com. and employee productivity.	2.8
4. To see the effectiveness of the com., the sender needs to assess the action taken as a result of the influence.	2.7
5. Information should be given only to the concerned people even if it is not secret.	2.4
6. Information should be given at the right time because out-of-date information is as bad as no information	3.6
Grand mean	2.8

The purpose of this table is to see whether or not the principals have a thorough understanding of the theoretical concepts of organizational communication. Table 16 consists of some of the general principles of organizational communication which should get positive responses (high scores) from the school principals because they are items that favour effective exchange of ideas in schools. Item 1 deals with the suitability of the language used in communication. The score given to this item is low (2.8). It means that they did not agree to the concept which states that information should be given in the language suitable to the receiver and not that most convenient to the giver. In principle, this is a correct statement because the main target in communication is the receiver. The receiver can understand the message if it is sent in the language most suitable to him. Therefore, the sender has to first ask himself as to how he should send it. He must try to choose the method and medium that most suits the communicatee as much as possible.

Item 2 also deals with similar concepts. It states that for communication to be effective, the receiver's background needs to be known by the sender. Background in this case comprises many elements such as educational level, culture, interest, attitude towards the sender and the message, etc. As can be seen in Table 16, item 2, the principals gave the lowest score (2.2) to this item out of

the six items in the table. This shows that they don't agree with the concept. Item 4 of the same table states that the effectiveness of communication can be understood by assessing the action taken by the receiver as a result of the message. This is true although the principals gave it low score (2.7). By evaluating the action of the receiver, the sender can understand how successful he has become in transmitting the message. If the communicatee accomplishes the task as designed by the communicator, the communication between the two is said to be effective. In other words, if a principal assigns a teacher to accomplish some tasks, he can see how successful he is in transmitting that particular message by evaluating the work done by the teacher.

Item 3 seeks to see the extent to which principals believe the existence of relationship between organizational communication and employee productivity. Many authors believe that the existence of effective communication in an organization enhances the productivity of the workers. On the other hand, if there is no smooth exchange of ideas between them, staff members tend not to work hard. The principals however, did not rate this item high; which means that they don't agree with the concept or they don't know that organizational communication affects employee productivity.

The objective of item 5 is to see if the principals have a good understanding of the problem of information

overload. As the score given to this item shows, the principals believe that as long as it is not secret, there is no harm if information is released to anybody. According to the principles of communication however, since information is an important tool for work, it must be released only to the employees who need it for task accomplishment. Only concerned people should get and no other people, as far as possible, because it can have a negative impact if released unnecessarily.

The only item with relatively higher score (3.6) in Table 16 is item 6. From this item it can be understood that time is very important in transmitting messages. In schools, principals need to give the necessary information (whatever type) to people who need it in time; otherwise, out-of-date information is not needed except for record purposes. It seems that the principals have understood the importance of transmitting messages at the right time because they rated it 3.6 although this is also not very high as it should be. Generally, it can be observed that the grand mean for all items included in Table 16 is 2.8 which means that the principals do not have a thorough understanding of the stated principles of communication.

Table 17. School Principals and Principles of
Communication (Part 2)

Items	Mean Ratings
1. Too much information does not harm an employee	2.5
2. No need of telling details to teachers because they can understand easily even if they get very little information	2.2
3. Principals should try to withhold as much information as possible because information is power	1.7
4. There is no harm if staff members do not send comments and suggestions so long as there is smooth downward com.	2.6
5. The more channels are used the less effective will the com. be	2.7
6. The more a message crosses various hierarchies, the more it becomes clear	2.8
7. openness and trust between superiors and subordinates is not a prerequisite for effective organizational com.	3.3
Grand Mean	2.5

N.B. 1 = strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = undecided
4 = disagree 5 = strongly disagree

In Table 17, since the items are stated in negative form, the direction of the item scores is reversed expecting low scores for "agree" and higher ones for "disagree" so that higher scores can indicate favourable conditions for communication. Both items 1 and 5 in Table 17 involve the

same concept and have been rated alike. Item 1 was included here to serve as a cross-check. The response given to this item again indicates that the principals do not take information overload as a communication problem. The principals also gave low score to item 2 (see Table 17) stating that there is no need of telling details to teachers because they can understand things easily even if they get very little information. This statement is not correct because appropriate information must be made available to all elements, be they teachers or others. If it is not enough (if it is very little) they can not do their assignments effectively and efficiently and therefore, since such situations can hamper job effectiveness, the principals need to understand the necessity of sufficient amount of information to all staff members.

Item 3 (Table 17) shows the strong belief principals have to withhold as much information as possible assuming it will make them powerful. The lowest mean score of all the items given to it (1.7) reveals this fact. Although the statement "information is power", is true, it becomes power if it is used wisely and not if simply kept somewhere. Here, it is important to note that information is a resource to be distributed to people who need it and not to be held in one's own self interest unless it is something which should be kept confidential (Farnsworth, 1975:63). If principals try to withhold information unnecessarily, staff members will also start playing a "tit for tat" game.

The principals rated item 4 to be 2.6. This item states that there is no harm if staff members do not send comments and suggestions upwards as long as there is smooth downward communication. When staff members are unable to give comments and suggest ideas to their administrators, the administrators also will not be able to give directives and instructions to the staff smoothly. In schools where there is no smooth upward communication, there can not ^{be} effective downward flow of messages because the two are interrelated and one affects the other. The statement is also wrong because it takes downward communication as a substitute to upward communication and downgrades the importance of comments and suggestions from staff members. Therefore, the low rating given to this item indicates that the principals do not pay proper attention to upward communication and focus on downward.

In item 5 (Table 17) one can see that the principals have rated it 2.7. This statement is not correct because it is against the idea: messages get understood better when transmitted through various channels (Cambell, Corbally, and Nystrand; 1983:147). The principals were expected to disagree but instead, they agreed to it. Similarly, they rated item 6 low (2.8). The concept in this item is opposed to the principle which states that messages get distorted and lose their originality as they cross various hierarchical levels. People interpret things based on

their perceptions, interests, and abilities. So, since the people in the various hierarchies have different abilities and interests, they interpret the message in different ways and hence the message loses its original meaning as it goes from one person to another and that is why communication through mediators is not accepted as good means of transmitting messages.

The last item in Table 17 deals with the relationship between harmony and communication among staff members. Although a bit higher than those of others, the rating given to this item (3.3) is not high enough to enable the researcher arrive at a conclusion that principals have a good understanding of the idea. The existence of openness and trust between superiors and subordinates is definitely a precondition for effective organizational communication. If there is no harmonious relationship between them and if one does not trust the other, they can not exchange ideas smoothly and effectively. As item 7 is stated in a form contrary to this, the principals should strongly agree to it and the mean rating should have been quite higher. Unfortunately, it is below 3.5 and it shows that they don't have strong belief in the importance of openness and trust for communication.

Generally, it can be seen that the grand mean for the items in Table 16 is 2.8 while for those in Table 17 it is 2.5. The cumulative mean for these two groups of items

is 2.6 which indicates the principals' low understanding of the major principles of communication. Hence, it is believed that since they don't have the basic knowledge of these principles, these people can not implement them practically in their schools.

Table 18. Communication Barriers

Items	Mean Ranks		
	Academic Staff N = 310	Adm. Staff N = 80	Principals N = 28
1. Lack of interest in the messages	2.3	4.3	3.3
2. Lack of motivation to communicate	3.1	1.9	2.8
3. Message distortion by mediators	3.5	4.9	5.0
4. Lack of feedback	4.3	4.1	3.1
5. Information delay	5.0	3.6	4.9
6. Lack of communication skill	5.4	5.6	5.4
7. Hostility among staff members	6.1	5.6	5.2
8. Information overload	6.3	6.5	6.3

Rank order correlation coefficient between the academic and the adm. staff = 0.86.

The major communication barrier in the schools as reported by the academic staff is lack of interest in the

transmitted messages followed by lack of motivation for communication. For the administrative staff members, the two major problems of communication are lack of motivation to communicate and information delay; whereas for the principals, lack of motivation and lack of feedback are the major ones. From this, one can observe that lack of motivation for communication is the principal communication problem selected by the three groups of respondents. It can be clearly seen in Table 18 that the responses of the teachers and those of the administrative staff have much in common, with rank order correlation coefficient of 0.86.

One can also see that the three groups have agreed in selecting the first five problems of communication. According to them, these are: lack of interest in the messages, lack of motivation to communicate, message distortion by mediators, lack of feedback, and information delay. On the other hand, they reported that lack of communication skill, hostility among staff members, and information overload have less effect in their schools as compared to the above mentioned barriers.

Many authors agree that people tend to hear those things they are attracted to or believe in (Hanson, 1985:273). If the messages do not attract them, staff members tend to lose interest in the messages and will be forced to ignore them totally or delay them for some time. Hence, there will be no positive feedback. Similarly, the staff

members can not communicate effectively if their messages are distorted by mediators or if they receive distorted messages. Perhaps, this in turn may result in loss of morale to communicate because communication problems are interrelated and one can bring or aggravate the other.

Table 19. Correctives to the Barriers

Items	Mean Ranks		
	Academic Staff	Adm. Staff	Principals
	N = 310	N = 80	N = 28
1. Make messages attractive	2.5	4.9	3.2
2. Motivate employees to communicate	3.0	2.7	2.8
3. Use direct transmission of messages	3.3	4.6	5.0
4. Give opportunity for feedback	4.3	3.8	3.2
5. Send messages on time	5.0	3.6	4.9
6. Develop the communication skill of the staff	5.1	5.0	5.4
7. Resolve hostility among staff members	6.3	5.2	5.3
8. Give details in order.	6.5	6.2	6.2

Rank order correlation coefficient between the academic and the adm. staff = 0.87.

As can be seen in Table 18 and Table 19, the respondents have made a good match between the barriers of communication prevailing in the schools and their corrective measures except that the administrative staff members have exchanged the proper responses of the first and the third items. As has been the usual case in all the responses, there is high rank order correlation coefficient (0.87) between the responses of the administrative staff and those of the academic staff members here also. The first five problems already cited in Table 18 are lack of interest in the messages, lack of motivation to communicate, message distortion by mediators, lack of feedback, and information delay. Similarly, the first five measures suggested by the respondents that can be used to remedy the problems are making messages attractive, motivating employees to communicate, using direct transmission of messages, giving opportunity for feedback, and sending messages on time (see Table 19).

If both the sender and the receiver clearly know the sources of the barriers, they can minimize them and increase the effectiveness of communication; but of course if both have the goodwill to do so. For communication to be effective, the message must be found in the psychological make up of the receiver as it is in the sender (Hanson, 1985:280). Principals have to try their best to know the interests and wishes of their subordinates. It is very important that they

know what they like and what they don't so that they can organize their messages in such a way that they can be easily accepted. Unless the staff members are interested in the messages that are transmitted to them and if the messages are not transmitted in the right channel at the right time, successful exchange of ideas can not take place. Hence, school principals need to encourage their subordinates to communicate by giving appropriate feedback and by sending appropriate messages at the right time otherwise, effective communication in these schools will be unthinkable.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major concern of this chapter is to give the highlights of the findings, to put the generalized trend of the study briefly, and to cite some feasible solutions to the prevailing problems.

4.1. Summary

The main objective of the study was to examine the status of communication problems in senior secondary schools of Ethiopia. The researcher used the descriptive survey method and his focal points were the following basic questions.

1. What are the major channels of communication used by principals and their subordinates ?
2. Do school principals have a good knowledge of the major principles of communication ? How is the implementation of these principles in schools ?
3. What are the major barriers of communication ?
4. Is there a smooth upward flow of messages ?
5. Do administrative staff members and teachers have similar perception toward the communication systems of their schools ?

In seeking answers to these questions, the researcher reviewed the relevant literature and prepared two types of questionnaires based on the existing related literature to collect data from the randomly selected schools. While one group of the questionnaires focused on the school principals, the other was designed to gather information from the teachers and administrative staff members. Totally, 310 teachers, 80 administrative staff members, and 28 principals and assistant principals of 12 senior secondary schools systematically picked from different corners of the country have been involved in the study. Since the questionnaires were designed using the Likert Rating Scale, the data was analysed with the help of various statistical tools - mean rating, standard deviation, coefficient of correlation, and rank order coefficient.

4.2. Major Findings

The following major findings have emerged from the study. But one should also take a note that these findings might have been possibly colored by the general negative attitude people have towards bureaucracy.

1. The proportion of females to males is higher in the administrative staff than in the academic one.
2. In the selected schools more than 75% of the principals are first degree holders and only one-

third of them have specialized in educational administration.

3. Staff members do not seem to feel free to suggest ideas to their principals nor do they have the opportunity to do so.
4. Although the major direction of communication in the schools is downward, that itself is not effectively used to motivate employees and solve their problems.
5. There seems to be very low friendly and cooperative relationship among staff members.
6. The major channels of communication used by principals and their subordinates are face-to-face talks and notices.
7. It appears that the principals are not effective in conducting staff meetings and in listening as well as in transmitting written messages to their staff members.
8. The use of informal communication to enhance administrative activities in the schools seems to be very low.
9. It appears that the principals do not have a thorough understanding of the basic principles of communication.

10. The major problems of communication as reported by the school employees are lack of motivation for communication, lack of feedback and the use of inappropriate channels.
11. There is high correlation (agreement) between the responses of the academic and those of the administrative staff members.

4.3. Conclusions

From the above stated findings the following conclusions have been made.

1. Because of the poor upward communication systems, staff members have very little opportunity to voice what they like and what they don't; to give comments and suggestions; etc. Hence, one can safely conclude that the principals do not know much about the interests and the needs of their subordinates. This also shows that the schools are not using their human resource as effectively as they ought.
2. There is not much interaction between the principals and their subordinates. As a result of the lack of open communication system in the schools a sort of misunderstanding seems to prevail between them.

Under this circumstance misunderstandings can develop and a conducive climate for effective communication can be lacking.

3. Since the principals do not have a thorough understanding of the basic principles of communication, they can not be successful in implementing them in their schools.
4. The high correlation between the responses of the academic and the administrative staff members is a good indication that both groups of subordinates have similar attitude towards the communication systems of their schools.

4.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions of the study, the following solutions are suggested to minimize the effect of the problems of communication prevailing in the schools.

1. Principals need not force teachers and administrative staff members to "go by the book". Staff members have to be free to use their creative minds for the betterment of their schools. They should not be restricted to the rules and procedures coming from above. Of course, this does not mean that schools must be devoid of policies, regulations, or standard operating procedures but it is to indicate that there needs to be a room for deviation so long as this deviation does not bring about undesirable consequences.

2. Since administration is working with and through people to achieve organizational goals, school principals need to be capable of coordinating and mobilizing their subordinates. They can do this successfully if they have a thorough understanding of the major principles of communication and if they are able to implement them practically. Hence, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education organizes workshops and seminars on organizational communication regularly both at national and regional levels. This helps the principals to acquaint themselves with the major principles of communication and to develop their communication skills as well. After the workshops and seminars, the principals can organize training sessions for their staff members.
3. As the study reveals most of the principals are trained in fields other than educational administration. Therefore it is advisable that the Ministry of Education tries to assign principals who have enough training in the field. This can be done by creating a close connection with the Department of Educational Administration in A. Ababa University. To solve this problem, the department can conduct a post graduate diploma program, in addition to its current programs, to train those principals who are unable to join the degree program because of various reasons.

Besides, the Ministry could also try its best to find free scholarship opportunities to train some of its high school principals.

4. It has been found that the principals do not know the problems of their staff members well and there is very little opportunity for upward communication. This can be improved if the principals arrange formal vehicles, like complaint programs, school newsletters, etc. for listening to the gripes and problems of employees because such mechanisms can give staff members opportunities to say what they feel.
5. Lack of feedback and deffective upward communication prevent the principals from getting the necessary comments and information about what is going on in their schools and what problems their staff members are facing. Therefore, it will be helpful if they try to develop positive attitude towards communication and encourage their staff members by giving quick and appropriate feedback for their comments and questions so that their subordinates can also follow their models.
6. Since there can be other undiscovered factors, the researcher recommends that an indepth study be conducted to investigate how school employees can be motivated to communicate effectively.

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A P P E N D I X A

Questionnaires distributed to the respondents.

Page 7 of the questionnaire was prepared only
for the principals.

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATE PROGRAM

GENERAL

This is a research questionnaire designed to gather information necessary for the study of Organizational Communication in Senior Secondary Schools of Ethiopia. Since your school is selected as one of the sample areas, your genuine response will undoubtedly contribute to the accuracy the study seeks to achieve. Therefore, you are kindly requested to respond to each item in the questionnaire carefully.

Thank you in advance

- N.B. 1. Throughout the questionnaire the word "directors" includes both the director (principal) of your school and his assistant (s).
2. Please answer all questions.
3. Please do not write your name.

PART I

PLEASE FILL IN ~~THE~~ FOLLOWING BLANK SPACES WITH THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSES.

1. Your School _____
2. Your educational qualification _____
3. Your field of Study _____
4. Years of Service _____
5. Your sex _____
6. Your responsibility now (Teacher or Director or adm. Staff) _____

PART II

IN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS, YOU ARE KINDLY REQUESTED TO CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER AND INDICATE YOUR CHOICE BY CIRCLING ITS CORRESPONDING NUMBER.

1. The school administration encourages staff independence.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
2. The school administration keeps good relations with the staff.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
3. The directors are open in their discussion.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree

4. The directors promote high staff morale.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
5. The directors trust staff members.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS (6 - 3) DEAL WITH THE UPWARD COMMUNICATION IN THE SCHOOL

6. The school administration has created Various mechanisms (like suggestion box) through which it can get information from the staff.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
7. When an upward communication is received the school administration responds to it soon.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
8. The directors are generally aware of the problems of the staff.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
9. In orientation sessions (if any) thenow staff member is advised to suggest ideas to the school administration whenever he finds it appropriate.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
10. When staff member think that the directors' ideas are of little Value, they don't hesitate to let them know.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
11. Staff members can discuss their performance evaluation with the directors.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
12. Staff members are in the good communicating terms with the directors.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	
13. The administrative body is accessible to all staff members to discuss school matters.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS (14 - 18) ARE RELATED TO DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION.

14. The directors appreciate the work of the staff.

1) strongly disagree	2) disagree	3) undecided
4) agree	5) strongly agree	

15. When a staff member is assigned to some individual or group work, he is given with all the necessary information about the work to be done.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
16. Each staff member receives his job description upon first reporting to work.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
17. Each staff member is given written rules and regulations of the school.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
18. When a new staff member is assigned to the school, the school administration arranges for an orientation session to orient the new staff.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS (19 - 22) DEAL WITH HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION IN THE SCHOOL.

19. There is good cooperation between the academic and administrative staff members.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
20. Staff members enjoy friendly personal relationship with each other.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
21. Staff members are usually seen working cooperatively.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
22. There is high spirit of cooperation in the school
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------|

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS (23 - 26) REFER TO THE LETTERS, NOTICES, AND OTHER MATERIALS WRITTEN BY THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR AND /OR HIS ASSISTANT(S).

23. In these materials the directors transmit short and precise messages.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
24. The messages are clear and easy to understand.
- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree. | |

25. The organization of the written materials is attractive and inviting.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
26. These materials usually convey timely messages.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS (27 - 29) DEAL WITH HOW THE DIRECTORS TRY TO LISTEN TO WHAT STAFF MEMBERS SAY.

27. When a staff member comes to their offices to discuss some problems, the directors do more listening than talking.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
28. The directors listen carefully when staff members talk to them.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
29. The directors are generally good listeners.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS (30 - 35) REFER TO THE MEETINGS CONDUCTED BY THE DIRECTOR AND/OR HIS ASSISTANT(S).

30. The procedures used in the meetings are democratic.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
31. Appropriate premeeting details (agends, room etc.) are communicated and well arranged.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
32. In the meetings, time is well managed.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
33. The meetings usually achieve their objectives.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
34. In the meetings the oral presentations of the directors are well prepared and well delivered.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

35. In the meetings participants fell free to suggest any idea which they think is relevant.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS (36 - 39) ARE RELATED TO INFORMAL COMMUNICATION.

36. Occasionally the directors try to use the informal channel of communication to introduce some chanes inthe school.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
37. The directors try to use informal ways to Counter-balance rumors that are against the school administration.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
38. The directors try to use bothe formal and informal channels side by side to facilitate the school wirk.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |
39. The directors welcome when stuff members try to discuss school matters with them ininformally.
- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

THE FOLLOWING (40 - 41) ARE GENERAL QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE FORMAL CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION.

40. Which of the following do you think have the highest frequency of communication in your school ?
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1) the directors with teachers | |
| 2) the directors with adm. staff | |
| 3) teachers with adm. staff | |
| 4) teachers with teachers | |
| 5) adm. staff with adm. staff. | |
41. What is the major direction of information flow in the school ?
- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1) downward | 4) three ofthem equally |
| 2) upward | 5) up and downward equally |
| 3) horizontally | |

PART III

IN THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS YOU ARE REQUIRED TO RANK THE IWEMS IN EACH GROUP ACCORDING TO THEIR RESPECTIVE DIRECTION.

1. Rank the following ways of communication from 1 to 6 according to their order of importance in your school and write the rank number infront of each item.
- | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1) letters | 2) meetings | 3) face - to-face talks |
| 4) notices | 5) telephone | 6) through mediators |

2. Rank the following purposes of why heads communicate with their subordinate (downward communication) from 1 to 8 according to their order of importance in your school and write the rank number in front of each item.

_____ a) to introduce policies and programs
_____ b) to solve staff problems
_____ c) to show authority
_____ d) to free oneself from blame
_____ e) to give feedback for upward communication
_____ f) to motivate employees
_____ g) to elaborate duties
_____ h) to criticize employees.

3. Rank the following purposes of why subordinates communicate with their heads (upward communication) from 1 to 8 according to their order of importance in your school and write the rank number in front of each item.

_____ a) to give feedback for downward communication
_____ b) to gain personal popularity
_____ c) to tell the fault of others
_____ d) to ask for clarity
_____ e) to ask for personal benefits
_____ f) to report how things were performed
_____ g) to suggest new ways of doing things
_____ h) to criticize the school administration.

4. Rank the following problems of communication according to their order of severity in your school and write the rank number in front of each item.

_____ a) lack of motivation to communicate
_____ b) information delay
_____ c) message distortion by mediators
_____ d) hostility among staff members
_____ e) lack of communication skill
_____ f) lack of feedback
_____ g) information overload
_____ h) inattractiveness of messages (information)

5. Rank the following correctives to communication barriers in their order of importance in resolving communication problems in your school.

_____ a) use direct transmission of messages
_____ b) resolve hostility among staff members
_____ c) give opportunity for feedback
_____ d) develop the communication skill of the staff
_____ e) motivate employees to communicate
_____ f) send messages on time
_____ g) give details in order
_____ h) make messages attractive.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS (1 - 13) REFER TO THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION.

1. Information should be given in the language suitable to the receiver and not that most convenient to the giver.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
2. There is no harm if too much information is given to an employee.
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
3. There is no need of telling details to teachers because they can understand things easily even if they get very little information.
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
4. If the sender does not have thorough understanding of the receiver's background it will be very difficult to have effective com.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
5. Directors should try to withhold (keep secret) as much information as possible because information is power.
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
6. There is no harm if staff member do not send comments and suggestions upwards as long as there is smooth downward communication.
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
7. Usually, the more channels are used the less effective will the communication be
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
8. There is strong relationship between organizational com. & employee productivity.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
9. Usually the more messages cross various levels of organizational hierarchies the more it becomes clear.
1) strongly agree 2) agree 3) undecided
4) disagree 5) strongly disagree
10. To see the effectiveness of the communication, the sender needs to assess the action taken as a result of the influence.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) agree 5) strongly agree
11. Information should be given only to the concerned people even if it is not secret.
1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) undecided
4) strongly agree 5) agree

12. Information should be given at the right time because out of date information is as bad as no information .

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly disagree | 2) disagree | 3) undecided |
| 4) agree | 5) strongly agree | |

13. The existence of openness and trust between superiors and subordinates is not a prerequisite for effective organizational communication.

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1) strongly agree | 2) agree | 3) undecided |
| 4) disagree | 5) strongly disagree | |

APPENDIX B

Tables indicating how the respondents
rated each item in the questionnaires

APPENDIX B. 1

Responses (Ratings)

Item No	Teachers N=310						Adm. Staff N= 80						Principals N= 28					
	1	2	3	4	5	(m.r.)	1	2	3	4	5	(m.r.)	1	2	3	4	5	(m.r.)
1.	112	166	29	21	2	1.9	31	19	16	10	4	2.2	2	2	3	15	6	3.5
2.	135	127	18	25	5	1.8	42	18	10	5	5	1.9	1	6	5	10	6	3.5
3.	153	101	22	23	11	1.8	45	19	9	4	3	1.8	4	5	5	7	7	3.3
4.	166	104	27	11	2	1.6	47	20	7	3	3	1.7	5	6	6	8	3	2.9
5.	268	32	4	4	2	1.2	64	6	4	3	3	1.4	5	7	7	6	3	2.8
6.	256	32	8	8	6	1.3	63	7	4	3	3	1.4	7	11	6	2	2	2.3
7.	243	30	12	10	15	1.5	53	13	8	2	4	1.6	3	5	4	9	7	3.4
8.	228	46	9	9	18	1.4	50	16	8	3	3	1.7	6	4	3	8	7	3.2
9.	240	31	13	10	16	1.5	50	16	6	4	4	1.7	4	3	3	10	8	3.5
10.	142	120	30	10	8	1.8	48	16	5	6	5	1.8	10	9	4	3	2	2.2
11.	165	105	27	11	2	1.6	63	7	4	3	3	1.4	5	2	2	5	14	3.8
12.	114	136	33	20	7	1.9	38	20	12	6	4	2.0	7	11	6	2	2	2.3
13.	153	101	22	23	11	1.8	42	17	11	5	5	1.9	2	4	2	8	12	3.9

N.B. Item numbers in all appendices indicate serial numbers of items in the questionnaires.

APPENDIX B.1.

Responses (Ratings)

Item	Academic staff						Adm. Staff						Directors					
NO.	N = 310						N = 80						N = 28					
	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)
14.	254	34	8	8	6	1.3	48	16	5	6	5	1.8	8	10	5	3	2	2.3
15.	110	120	38	12	30	2.1	27	20	13	14	6	2.4	3	4	4	8	9	3.6
16.	84	132	2	53	39	2.5	16	26	7	23	8	2.8	3	4	3	9	9	3.6
17.	88	138	4	31	49	2.4	18	25	7	20	10	2.7	4	4	3	8	9	3.5
18.	140	122	30	10	8	1.8	25	30	9	9	7	2.3	7	6	2	5	8	3.0
19.	267	32	5	4	2	1.2	69	3	3	2	3	1.3	15	7	2	2	2	1.9
20.	236	52	8	8	6	1.4	53	13	8	2	4	1.6	13	8	3	2	2	2.0
21.	254	33	9	8	6	1.3	58	7	8	3	4	1.6	15	7	2	2	2	1.9
22.	239	32	13	11	15	1.5	49	15	4	8	4	1.8	10	9	4	3	2	2.2
23.	239	31	14	12	14	1.5	64	6	3	4	3	1.4	4	5	3	7	9	3.4
24.	233	30	12	15	20	1.6	63	6	4	2	5	1.5	4	4	4	8	8	3.4
25.	236	33	15	12	14	1.5	70	2	2	3	3	1.3	6	4	3	8	7	3.2
26.	232	29	12	17	20	1.6	53	13	8	2	4	1.6	4	4	5	7	8	3.4

APPENDIX B. 1.

Responses (Ratings)

Item No.	Academic Staff N = 310						Adm. Staff N = 80						Principals N = 28					
	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)	1	2	3	4	5	(Mean)
27.	140	122	31	9	8	1.8	44	20	9	4	3	1.8	5	7	7	6	3	2.8
28.	136	124	33	11	6	1.8	42	18	10	5	5	1.9	2	3	5	8	10	3.8
29.	128	144	31	32	5	1.9	34	26	5	7	8	2.1	2	2	6	8	10	3.8
30.	109	121	38	13	29	2.1	25	30	9	9	7	2.3	2	3	2	5	16	4.1
31.	131	118	21	30	10	1.9	35	25	5	7	8	2.1	2	4	2	8	12	3.9
32.	239	31	14	12	14	1.5	39	20	11	7	3	1.9	2	2	3	15	6	3.8
33.	62	196	29	21	2	2.0	24	22	6	18	10	2.6	5	2	2	5	14	3.8
34.	136	120	20	29	5	1.9	24	31	9	8	8	2.3	2	3	3	5	15	4.0
35.	136	123	34	10	7	1.6	49	15	4	7	5	1.8	2	3	3	8	12	3.9
36.	235	34	16	11	14	1.5	43	16	12	4	5	1.9	4	4	5	7	8	3.4
37.	128	135	30	9	8	1.6	38	20	12	6	4	2.0	6	4	3	8	7	3.2
38.	128	132	32	10	8	1.8	25	30	9	9	7	2.3	4	3	3	10	8	3.5
39.	129	136	30	12	3	1.8	35	25	5	7	8	2.1	3	5	4	9	7	3.4

APPENDIX B.2

40.

Item	Academic Staff		Adm Staff		Principals	
No	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	180	58.0	36	45.0	16	57.1
2	60	19.4	6	7.5	4	14.3
3	20	6.5	15	18.8	-	-
4	40	12.9	20	25.0	8	28.6
5	10	3.2	3	3.7	-	-
Total	310	100	80	100	28	100

APPENDIX B.3

41.

Item	Academic Staff		Adm, Staff		Principals	
No	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	270	87.1	63	78.8	21	75.0
2	7	2.3	2	2.5	-	-
3	6	1.9	2	2.5	-	-
4	21	6.8	6	7.5	4	14.3
5	6	1.9	7	8.7	3	10.7
Total	310	100	80	100	28	100

APPENDIX B.4.1

PART III

1 Channels of Communication

1.a. Academic Staff

Items	NO. of respondents under each rank						Mean rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Face - to - face talks	261	33	6	4	3	3	1.3
2. Notices	9	248	33	6	4	10	2.3
3. Through Mediators	20	10	222	32	2	14	3.1
4. Meetings	10	7	21	190	68	14	4.1
5. Letters	6	3	15	36	208	42	4.8
6. Telephone	4	9	3	42	25	227	5.4

APPENDIX B.4.2.

1.b Adm. Staff

Items	NO. of respondents under each rank						Mean rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Face - to - face talks	54	13	3	4	5	2	1.7
2. Notices	8	7	39	7	10	9	3.4
3. Through Mediators	7	35	6	11	16	5	3.1
4. Meetings	3	6	8	46	13	4	3.9
5. Letters	2	8	16	8	34	12	4.3
6. Telephone	6	11	8	4	3	48	4.6

APPENDIX B.5.2

2.b. Adm. Staff

Items	No. of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6	7	8	
1 To introduce policies and programs	55	3	2	5	7	2	4	2	2.2
2 To free oneself from blame	11	5	49	3	5	2	2	3	3.2
3 To show authority	2	5	2	47	8	2	10	4	4.5
4 To criticize employees	2	45	8	6	9	4	4	2	3.2
5 To elaborate duties	2	6	5	6	41	5	13	2	4.9
6 To give feedback for upward communication	3	4	8	7	4	5	39	10	5.8
7 To solve staff problems	2	4	4	3	2	58	2	5	5.6
8 To motivate employees	3	8	2	3	4	2	6	52	6.6

APPENDIX B.5.3.

2.C. Principals

Items		No. of respondent under each rank								Mean rank
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	To introduce policies and programe	15	1	3	5	4	—	—	—	2.3
2	To free oneself from bleme	—	4	3	10	1	2	2	2	4.3
3	To show authority	—	1	1	2	2	1	12	5	6.2
4	To criticize employees	1	2	1	2	1	4	4	9	6.0
5	To elaborate duties	—	3	3	1	2	6	5	8	5.9
6	To give feedback for upmard communication	5	8	3	2	2	3	3	2	3.6
		3	4	6	2	10	2	1	—	3.8
7	To solve staff problems	3	4	6	2	10	2	1	—	3.8
8	To motivate employees	3	4	8	2	3	8	—	—	3.8

APPENDIX B.6.1

3. Purposes of Upward Communication

3a. Academic Staff

Items	No of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
	1 .	2 .	3	4.	5	6.	7	8	
1 To give feedback for downward communication	138	47	8	5	37	60	12	3	3.0
2 To report how things were performed	51	184	3	4	8	10	15	35	3.0
3 To gain personal popularity	14	9	210	41	6	7	13	10	3.4
4 To tell the fault of others	23	11	21	168	26	12	17	32	4.4
5 To ask for personal benefits	42	25	18	20	64	92	36	13	4.6
6 To ask for clarity	9	16	11	57	99	89	23	6	5.0
7 To suggest new ways of doing things	22	14	32	6	39	21	169	7	5.6
8 To criticize the school administration	11	4	7	9	31	19	25	204	7.0

APPENDIX B.6.2

3.b. Adm Staff

	Items	No. of respondents Under each rank order								Mean rank
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	To give feedback for downward Communication	47	12	13	2	1	2	2	1	2.0
2	To report how things were performed	13	39	12	10	2	1	1	2	2.6
3	To gain personal popularity	3	2	4	36	3	8	14	10	5.1
4	To tell the fault of others	3	6	33	8	4	4	19	3	4.2
5	To ask for personal benefits	3	12	7	9	41	2	3	3	4.3
6	To ask for Clarity	6	4	3	5	17	25	12	8	5.3
7	To suggest new ways of doing things	2	2	4	6	9	31	20	6	5.8
8	To Criticize the school administration	3	3	4	4	3	7	9	47	6.7

APPENDIX B.6.3

3.C. Principals

	Items	No. of respondents under each rank order								Mean rank
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	To give feedback for downward communication	12	4	2	2	3	2	2	1	3.0
2	To report how things were performed	5	13	2	2	1	2	2	1	3.0
3	To gain personal popularity	2	3	7	6	3	3	3	3	4.1
4	To tell the fault of others	1	2	5	6	5	3	4	2	4.6
5	To ask for personal benefits	3	1	1	4	10	4	2	3	4.9
6	To ask for clarity	3	2	2	3	3	12	2	1	4.8
7	To Suggest new ways of doing things	1	1	2	3	2	1	12	6	6.1
8	To Criticize the school	1	2	7	2	1	1	2	12	5.5

APPENDIX B.7.1

4. Communication Barriers

4.a. Academic Staff

Items		No of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Lack of interest in the messages	189	34	15	9	6	6	37	5	2.3
2	Lack of motivation to communicate	21	181	30	11	23	15	6	23	3.1
3	Message distortion by mediators	25	19	160	67	7	21	3	8	3.5
4	Lack of feedback	16	7	26	158	17	22	33	31	4.3
5	Information delay	16	23	17	4	179	13	26	32	5.0
6	Lack of communication skill	9	12	21	14	52	84	15	3	5.4
7	Hostility among staff members	18	19	28	26	15	13	22	169	6.1
8	Information overload	7	15	13	21	11	36	168	39	6.3

APPENDIX B. 7. 2.

4.b. Adm, Staff

Items	No. of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1 Lack of interest in the messages	3	2	6	50	4	8	4	3	4.3
2 Lack of motivation to communica	52	10	6	4	2	3	1	2	1.9
3 Message distortion by Mediators	4	5	4	6	38	14	6	3	4.9
4 Lack of feedback	2	35	4	4	8	7	11	9	4.1
5 Information delay	8	14	46	4	1	2	3	2	3.1
6 Lack of Communication Skill	2	4	3	4	14	36	12	5	5.6
7 Hostility among staff members	6	5	7	3	5	7	41	6	5.6
8 Information Overload	3	5	4	5	8	3	2	50	6.5

APPENDIX B.7.3

4.o. Principals

	Items	No of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Lack of interest in the	3	13	2	3	1	3	2	1	3.3
2	Lack of motivation to communicate	13	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	2.8
3	Message distortion by mediators	2	1	3	4	5	6	6	1	5.0
4	Lack of feedback	5	7	9	1	3	1	1	1	3.1
5	Information delay	1	1	2	12	2	4	1	5	4.9
6	Lack of communication skill	2	1	4	1	3	4	11	2	5.4
7	Hostility among staff members	1	2	2	1	10	6	3	3	5.2
8	Information overload	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	14	6.3

APPENDIX B.8.1

5. Correctives to the barriers of communication

5.a. Academic staff

Items		No of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
		1.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
\$	Make messages attractive	202	27	8	8	6	18	18	23	2.5
2	Motivate employees to communicate	23	182	27	10	25	7	19	17	3.0
3	Use direct transmission of messages	26	32	198	8	10	13	7	16	3.3
4	Give opportunity for Feedback	11	21	17	174	38	14	16	19	4.3
5	Send messages on time	6	11	25	31	153	48	28	8	5.0
6	Develop the Communication Skill of the Staff	19	21	8	41	36	167	5	13	5.1
7	Resolve hostility among staff members	5	9	17	16	23	18	180	42	6.3
8	Give details in order	18	7	10	22	19	25	37	172	6.5

. APPENDIX B.8.2.

5.b. Adm Staff

Items	NO. of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1 Make messages attractive	2	5	3	14	39	6	8	3	4.9
2 Motivate employees to Communicate	4	6	8	2	2	7	5	5	2.7
3 Use direct transmission of messages	2	4	6	41	8	1	10	8	4.6
4 Give opportunity for feedback	5	39	2	6	8	1	9	10	3.8
5 Send messages on time	4	9	45	8	2	3	2	7	3.6
6 Develop the Communication skill of the staff	7	4	5	6	10	43	3	2	5.0
7 Resolve hostility among staff members	13	9	8	1	6	2	8	33	5.2
8 Give details in order	2	4	3	2	5	17	35	12	6.2

APPENDIX B.8.3

5.c. Principals

Items	NO. of respondents under each rank								Mean rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1 Make messages attractive	4	12	2	3	3	1	2	1	3.2
2 Motivate employees to Communicate	13	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	2.8
3 Use direct transmission of messages	2	1	3	4	5	6	6	1	5.0
4 Give opportunity for deedback	3	8	10	1	3	1	1	1	3.2
5 Send messages on time	1	1	2	12	2	4	1	5	4.9
6 Develop the Communication skill of the staff	2	1	4	1	3	4	11	2	5.4
7 Reslove hostility among staff members	1	2	2	1	9	7	3	3	5.3
8 Give details in order	2	1	1	3	1	3	3	14	6.2

APPENDIX B.9.

Items related to the principles of communication

	.No of principals in each score					Mean rating
	1	2	3	4	5	
1.	3	10	6	8	1	2.8
2.	9	7	5	4	3	2.5
3.	12	6	5	3	2	2.2
4.	8	12	5	1	2	2.2
5.	18	4	3	2	1	1.7
6.	6	10	5	4	3	2.6
7.	4	8	10	4	2	2.7
8.	4	6	12	3	3	2.8
9.	3	12	3	8	2	2.8
10.	4	8	10	4	2	2.7
11.	6	7	13	1	1	2.4
12.	2	3	6	9	8	3.6
13.	3	7	4	8	6	3.3

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Girmay K/Mariam

Signature 

Place and date of submission Addis Ababa University,

June 1992