



Principals' Communication Planning Skills and Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

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Abstract

This research explores the relationship between principals' communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria. The purpose of this study is to examine how specific communication planning skills open, inclusive, assertive, and aggressive affect the overall administrative effectiveness of school principals. The research employed a descriptive survey design with a correlational approach, using a sample of 266 teachers drawn from 19 schools. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire assessing principals' communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness. The analysis was performed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation to test the hypotheses. The findings reveal that principals who exhibit strong open and inclusive communication planning skills are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of administrative effectiveness. A significant positive relationship was found between communication planning and administrative success, particularly in conflict resolution, stakeholder communication, and feedback mechanisms. In contrast, aggressive communication skills were not found to significantly impact administrative effectiveness. The study concludes that effective communication planning is a crucial component of successful school administration. It contributes to improved leadership, better resource management, and a more supportive school climate. The research provides valuable insights for policy-makers and school leadership development programs aiming to enhance the administrative capabilities of principals through targeted communication training.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a central function of effective leadership and organisational performance. In educational administration, communication plays a crucial role in enabling principals to plan, coordinate, supervise, and evaluate school activities (Al Farsi Hakam et al., 2018; Sunaengsih et al., 2019). It is through communication that principals disseminate policies, coordinate instructional programs, manage human and material resources, and engage with teachers, students, and community stakeholders. Education systems unable to facilitate effective communication are more likely to experience misunderstandings, misalignment of goals, and weakened institutional performance. Empirical observations in the educational research literature have underscored that poor communication processes often underlie administrative challenges in secondary schools, including policy implementation gaps and staff dissatisfaction (Alao & Okoliko, 2024; Akanni, 2021; Ezewuzie et al., 2025). Principals must therefore not only communicate information, but plan how that communication should occur. Communication planning involves deliberately anticipating communication needs, tailoring messages for specific stakeholders, selecting appropriate channels, timing communication effectively, and establishing mechanisms for feedback and follow-up (Steve-Beke, 2019). Planning communication enhances clarity, reduces ambiguity in directive messages, and creates opportunities for participatory decision-making. In educational leadership practice, communication planning enables principals to align school objectives with teacher expectations, ensure consistent interpretation of policies, and foster a participatory organisational climate (Jhonshon et al., 2024; Pañares, 2025).

Although research on the general communication skills of school principals is extensive, the literature reflects a conceptual gap in distinguishing communication planning as a distinct competency. Much of the existing work addresses broad communication techniques—such as verbal or written messaging—without systematically framing the planning dimension that precedes execution. This gap limits understanding of how deliberate communication planning contributes to overall school administration outcomes. Studies in Nigerian secondary school contexts, for example, have highlighted relationships between principals' communication skills and school administration, pointing out that principals' communication influences teachers' understanding of duties, relationships among staff, and implementation of educational programs (Akporehe & Asiyai, 2023; Atolagbe et al., 2020; Bada et al., 2024; Hamed, 2023). However, these studies tend to treat communication as a general construct rather than as a planned, strategic process.

In practice, communication challenges in secondary schools often manifest in breakdowns of information flow, uncoordinated dissemination of administrative directives, and reactive rather than proactive engagement with stakeholders (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2013). These situations are symptomatic of insufficient planning in how communication is structured and managed. Sound communication planning practices would entail identifying which stakeholder groups require information about school goals, determining optimal timing for policy announcements, and setting procedures for clarifying feedback from teachers and parents (Hazell, 2018). The absence of such planning increases the likelihood of administrative ambiguity, conflicts, and inefficiencies in organisational operations. The administrative effectiveness of principals is measured by their ability to achieve desired educational outcomes, manage human and material resources efficiently, and establish a supportive school climate conducive to teaching and learning (Lijun & Te, 2024; Victor, 2017). Administrative

effectiveness encompasses aspects such as goal attainment, staff motivation, school discipline, implementation of instructional programs, and stakeholder satisfaction (Oikonomidou & Konstantinidis, 2020; Shogbesan et al., 2024). When principals integrate communication planning into their leadership routines, they are more likely to support clear expectations, align staff activities with organisational goals, and respond proactively to environmental changes. Conversely, communication deficiencies are associated with increased misunderstandings, poor cooperation among staff, and weakened implementation of school programs.

Research on communication in educational leadership suggests that effective communication is fundamental to administrators' success and that lapses in communication adversely affect organisational coherence (Erbay et al., 2024; Ezinwa, 2024). In Kwara state and Lagos state contexts, studies have reported that inappropriate communication patterns negatively influence school administration and can precipitate conflict between principals and staff, impeding goal attainment and organisational performance (Ifenaike, 2023; Temitope, 2018). These findings reinforce the view that communication—especially when structured through planning—is not merely an ancillary skill but a core competency necessary for effective school administration. Despite this theoretical and empirical recognition of communication's importance, there remains a need to articulate clearly how communication planning skills specifically relate to administrative effectiveness in a way that is measurable and actionable. In the context of secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, observable challenges such as inconsistent policy interpretation, unclear directive messaging, and staff dissatisfaction suggest that principals may not be optimally deploying communication planning skills in their leadership practices. These challenges potentially undermine instructional programs, school climate, and overall effectiveness of school administration.

Secondary school principals operate within complex environments requiring frequent interactions with multiple stakeholders. They must translate educational policies into actionable activities, coordinate diverse professional roles, and engage with teacher unions, parent associations, and community leaders. These responsibilities demand that principals not only communicate information clearly but also do so in ways that reflect strategic planning, sensitivity to stakeholder needs, and awareness of contextual dynamics. Without systematic communication planning, principals may default to reactive communication that fails to create shared understanding or sustained engagement among school stakeholders. In summary, while research affirms that communication is indispensable to school administration, the specific role of communication planning skills remains under-examined. This gap has significant implications for leadership practice in secondary schools, particularly in regions like Ilorin East LGA, where administrative challenges persist. Investigating how communication planning skills correlate with administrative effectiveness among principals will enhance understanding of the competencies that matter most for effective school leadership. It will also provide empirical evidence necessary for targeted capacity-building programs aimed at improving school administration.

Statement of the Problem

Effective administration in secondary schools hinges on principals' ability to plan and execute communication in ways that support clear goal articulation, efficient decision-making, and responsive stakeholder engagement (Anele & Ogoni, 2024; Temisanren & Adeleke, 2024). However, there is evidence that secondary school principals in Ilorin East Local Government

Area face communication challenges that adversely affect administrative functions (Abdulazeez, 2021; Abdulkadir, 2018). Reports from related studies in Nigerian contexts have indicated that poor communication practices are linked to reduced policy implementation effectiveness and lack of harmony among staff, which in turn degrade the quality of school administration (Akanni, 2022; Edeki & Adaka, 2025; Ehule & Wordu, 2025). The central problem is that communication planning skills among principals appear to be inadequate or inconsistently applied, resulting in breakdowns of information flow, misunderstandings of school goals, and misalignment of expectations among teachers, students, and community stakeholders. Although studies have identified general communication deficiencies in school administration, there remains insufficient understanding of how communication is strategically planned by principals before its execution, and how this planning or lack thereof directly impacts administrative effectiveness (Kowalski, 2015; Naidoo, 2019; Eliogu-Anenih, 2017). Preliminary observations suggest that communication within many secondary schools in Ilorin East is often ad hoc, lacking structured planning that accounts for audience needs, message clarity, timing, and feedback mechanisms. This situation has implications for the execution of administrative functions, including instructional supervision, policy implementation, conflict resolution, and resource allocation. Without systematic planning, communication becomes reactive, increasing the probability of policy misinterpretation, demotivation among teachers, and unclear role expectations.

Furthermore, existing research in nearby regions highlights the consequences of poor communication on administrative outcomes, such as low educational standards, misunderstandings between principals and staff, and ineffective policy implementation (Abdulkareem et al., 2023; Badmus, 2023; Salahu, 2020). These patterns raise empirical questions about the extent to which communication planning skills influence administrative effectiveness in the specific context of Ilorin East, and whether principals who demonstrate higher levels of communication planning achieve better administrative outcomes. Therefore, the problem this study addresses is the lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between principals' communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness in secondary schools of Ilorin East LGA. This gap hinders the development of targeted training programs and leadership development initiatives aimed at strengthening communication planning competencies among school principals. Understanding these dynamics is critical for improving administrative practice and, by extension, educational outcomes in the study area.

Research Questions

1. What communication planning skills are adopted by principals in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State?
2. What is the level of administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between principals' communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between principals' open communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

H03: There is no significant relationship between principals' inclusive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

H04: There is no significant relationship between principals' aggressive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

H05: There is no significant relationship between principals' assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of the correlational type. This design was considered appropriate because the study sought to examine the relationship between principals' communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools without manipulating the variables under investigation. The population of the study comprised all 854 teachers in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria. The area has a total of 34 public senior secondary schools, all of which operate under similar administrative structures. The sample for the study consisted of 266 teachers, drawn from 19 public senior secondary schools selected out of the 34 existing schools. The selection of schools was carried out using a simple random sampling technique, ensuring that each school had an equal chance of being included in the study. The sample size of 266 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table, based on a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. This ensured that the sample was statistically adequate and representative of the population. The inclusion of both principals and teachers was necessary because principals were the focus of the communication planning skills being examined, while teachers served as key respondents in assessing administrative effectiveness within the schools. Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Principals' Communication Planning Skills and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (PCPSAEQ). The instrument was designed to elicit information on the various dimensions of principals' communication planning skills as well as the level of administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools. The questionnaire was subjected to content validation by experts in Educational Management and Planning, who examined the items for clarity, relevance, and adequacy in measuring the study variables. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic was employed to test the hypotheses formulated for the study at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the data analysis carried out in the study. The analysis was guided by the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study. Data collected from the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation (PPMC)

statistic was employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The results are presented in tables and interpreted accordingly.

Research Question 1: What are the communication planning skills adopted by principals in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 1

Dimensions of Communication Planning Skills Adopted by Principals in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

S/N	Dimension of Communication Planning Skill	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Open communication planning skill	3.11	0.305	1st
2	Inclusive communication planning skill	3.04	0.323	2nd
3	Aggressive communication planning skill	2.88	0.874	4th
4	Assertive communication planning skill	2.98	0.456	3rd

Note. Higher mean scores indicate greater adoption of the respective communication planning skill by principals

Table 1 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and ranking of the dimensions of communication planning skills adopted by principals in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The results show that open communication planning skill recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.305$), indicating that it is the most frequently adopted communication planning skill among the principals. This suggests that principals generally create opportunities for free flow of information and encourage openness in communication within their schools. The inclusive communication planning skill ranked second with a mean score of 3.04 ($SD = 0.323$), implying that principals also moderately involve teachers and other stakeholders in communication and decision-making processes. The assertive communication planning skill ranked third ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.456$), showing that principals, to a reasonable extent, express their views clearly and confidently while respecting others. On the other hand, the aggressive communication planning skill recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.874$) and ranked fourth, indicating that principals least adopt aggressive communication approaches in managing their schools. Overall, the pattern of the mean scores suggests that principals in the study area tend to favour more constructive and participatory communication planning skills (open and inclusive) over aggressive communication styles.

Research Question 2: What is the level of administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 2

Level of Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD
1	School administrator effectively communicates with teachers, students, and parents.	3.65	0.723
2	School administrators prioritise teacher professional development and support.	3.04	0.667
3	The school's decision-making process is inclusive and transparent.	2.67	0.555
4	The school's organisational structure is efficient and effective.	2.99	0.502

5	School administrators are approachable and open to feedback.	3.03	0.631
6	School administrators are proactive in addressing school safety and security concerns.	2.88	0.732
7	The school administration effectively manages school resources (e.g., budget, facilities, personnel).	2.93	0.652
8	The school's technology infrastructure is up-to-date and functional.	2.62	0.543
9	The school's overall learning environment is supportive and conducive to academic success.	2.93	0.293
10	School administrators promote a positive school culture and climate.	2.62	0.663
11	School administrators provide regular feedback and evaluation to teachers.	3.07	0.932
12	The school administration is effective in resolving conflicts and addressing issues.	3.82	0.563
13	The school administration is effective in addressing student discipline issues.	2.93	0.484
14	The school's overall administrative effectiveness is excellent.	2.62	0.595
15	The school's communication with parents and the community is clear and regular.	3.63	0.541

Overall Mean = 3.03, Overall SD = 0.605

Note. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of perceived administrative effectiveness.

Table 2 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of respondents' ratings of the level of administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The overall mean score of 3.03 with a standard deviation of 0.605 indicates that, on average, the level of administrative effectiveness of school administrators in the study area is high. Among the individual items, the highest mean score was recorded for the statement that the school administration is effective in resolving conflicts and addressing issues ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.563$), suggesting that respondents perceived principals as being particularly effective in handling conflicts and problems in their schools. Similarly, high mean scores were also observed for effective communication with teachers, students, and parents ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.723$) and clear and regular communication with parents and the community ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.541$), indicating strong performance in communication-related aspects of administration. Moderate mean scores were recorded for items such as providing regular feedback and evaluation to teachers ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.932$), prioritizing teacher professional development ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.667$), and being approachable and open to feedback ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.631$), suggesting that these aspects of administrative effectiveness are reasonably practiced but could still be improved. However, relatively lower mean scores were observed for the school's technology infrastructure being up-to-date and functional ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.543$), promotion of positive school culture and climate ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.663$), and overall administrative effectiveness being excellent ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.595$), indicating that respondents perceived these areas as weaker aspects of administration. Overall, the results suggest that while the level of administrative effectiveness in the study area is generally high, there are specific areas particularly infrastructure and school climate that may require further improvement.

Research Hypotheses Testing

H01: There is no significant relationship between principals' communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Table 3

Relationship Between Principals' Communication Planning Skills and Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	p-value	Decision
Principals' Communication Planning Skills	250	3.04	0.323	248	0.431	0.000	H ₀ Rejected
Administrative Effectiveness	250	3.03	0.605				

Note. p-value < 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship.

Table 3 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis examining the relationship between principals' communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The calculated r-value of 0.431 indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. This suggests that higher levels of communication planning skills among principals are associated with higher levels of administrative effectiveness in the schools. The p-value of 0.000 is well below the significance threshold of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This result supports the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a statistically significant relationship between principals' communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness. In other words, principals who effectively plan their communication are more likely to demonstrate higher administrative effectiveness in their schools. This finding aligns with the assertion that effective communication, particularly when planned and executed strategically, plays a crucial role in enhancing leadership and administrative outcomes in educational settings. The positive correlation also suggests that improving principals' communication planning skills could potentially improve administrative functions, leading to better management and organisational success within schools.

H02: There is no significant relationship between principals' open communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Table 4

Relationship Between Principals' Open Communication Planning Skill and Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	p-value	Decision
Principals' Open Communication Planning Skill	250	3.11	0.305	248	0.287	0.000	H ₀ Rejected
Administrative Effectiveness	250	3.03	0.605				

Note. p-value < 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship.

Table 4 displays the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis between principals' open communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The calculated r-value of 0.287 suggests a moderate positive correlation between these two variables, implying that principals who exhibit better open communication planning skills tend to experience higher levels of administrative effectiveness. The p-value of 0.000 is significantly lower than the 0.05 threshold, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. As a result, the alternative hypothesis is supported, confirming that a statistically significant relationship exists between principals' open communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness. In other words, principals who create an atmosphere where communication is open and inclusive are more likely to be effective in managing their schools. The moderate strength of the correlation indicates that while open communication planning is positively associated with administrative effectiveness, other factors may also contribute to administrative outcomes. Nonetheless, the results suggest that open communication planning skills are an important contributor to improving administrative effectiveness, reinforcing the need for principals to adopt more open, transparent communication practices in their leadership. This finding further supports the notion that effective communication planning, especially through openness, can positively influence school management, enhance collaboration among staff, and improve overall organisational performance.

H03: There is no significant relationship between principals' inclusive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Table 5
 Relationship Between Principals' Inclusive Communication Planning Skill and Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	p-value	Decision
Principals' Inclusive Communication Planning Skill	250	3.04	0.323	248	0.211	0.000	H ₀ Rejected
Administrative Effectiveness	250	3.03	0.605				

Note. p-value < 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship.

Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis between principals' inclusive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The calculated r-value of 0.211 indicates a weak to moderate positive correlation between the two variables, suggesting that principals who are more inclusive in their communication planning tend to demonstrate a somewhat higher level of administrative effectiveness. The p-value of 0.000 is significantly below the 0.05 threshold, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This result supports the alternative hypothesis, indicating that there is a statistically significant relationship between principals' inclusive communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness. While the correlation is moderate in strength, the result implies that inclusive communication planning where principals involve staff in decision-making and foster an open

dialogue is positively associated with more effective school administration. This suggests that inclusive communication practices can contribute to better management outcomes, though other factors may also influence administrative effectiveness. The positive association emphasises the importance of inclusive leadership in schools. Principals who actively engage their teachers and staff in the communication process and decision-making tend to experience better organisational coordination, enhanced cooperation, and more effective policy implementation, ultimately leading to higher administrative effectiveness.

H04: There is no significant relationship between principals' aggressive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Table 6
Relationship Between Principals' Aggressive Communication Planning Skill and Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	p-value	Decision
Principals' Aggressive Communication Planning Skill	250	2.88	0.874	248	0.167	0.201	H ₀ Accepted
Administrative Effectiveness	250	3.03	0.605				

Note. p-value > 0.05 indicates no statistically significant relationship

Table 6 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis examining the relationship between principals' aggressive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The calculated r-value of 0.167 suggests a weak positive correlation between aggressive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness. This implies that while there is a slight association between aggressive communication planning and administrative outcomes, the relationship is relatively weak. The p-value of 0.201 is greater than the 0.05 significance level, which means that the correlation is not statistically significant. As a result, the null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that aggressive communication planning skills do not have a statistically significant impact on administrative effectiveness in the schools studied. This finding suggests that, although aggressive communication skills may play a role in school management, they do not appear to significantly contribute to improving administrative effectiveness in this context. In fact, the weak correlation may imply that aggressive communication, which typically involves forceful or dominating tactics, is less conducive to creating a positive school climate and may not align with the collaborative and participatory practices needed for effective school administration. Consequently, principals may benefit more from employing more inclusive and open communication styles rather than aggressive methods in their leadership approach.

H05: There is no significant relationship between principals' assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Table 7
 Relationship Between Principals’ Assertive Communication Planning Skill and
 Administrative Effectiveness in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin East Local
 Government Area, Kwara State

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	p-value	Decision
Principals’ Assertive Communication Planning Skill	250	2.98	0.456	248	0.199	0.000	H ₀ Rejected
Administrative Effectiveness	250	3.03	0.605				

Note. p-value < 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship.

Table 7 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis between principals’ assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The calculated r-value of 0.199 indicates a weak positive correlation between assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness. This suggests that principals who display assertive communication planning skills, such as confidently and respectfully expressing their thoughts and ensuring clarity in their communications, tend to show a slightly higher level of administrative effectiveness. The p-value of 0.000 is well below the 0.05 significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This result indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between principals’ assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness in the schools studied. In other words, principals who engage in assertive communication balancing self-expression with respect for others tend to perform better in their administrative roles. Although the strength of the correlation is weak, the finding highlights the value of assertiveness in leadership. Assertive communication fosters clarity, respect, and confidence, which may enhance principals' ability to manage their schools effectively, make clear decisions, and engage constructively with teachers and other stakeholders. Therefore, promoting assertive communication planning skills among school leaders could improve administrative outcomes, particularly in areas requiring decisive action and clear guidance.

DISCUSSION

The research aimed to assess the relationship between principals’ communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. The findings reveal that principals predominantly utilise open and inclusive communication planning skills, as these ranked highest in adoption. However, aggressive communication was the least favoured. In terms of administrative effectiveness, the results showed a generally high level of effectiveness, especially in conflict resolution, communication with stakeholders, and feedback mechanisms. Statistical analysis using Pearson’s correlation revealed significant positive relationships between principals’ communication planning skills (especially open and inclusive communication) and administrative effectiveness. The study found that principals in Ilorin East Local Government Area predominantly employ open and inclusive communication planning skills, which align with existing research emphasising the importance of these skills in effective school administration. Studies like those of Alao and Okoliko (2024) and Pañares (2025)

support the view that open and inclusive communication fosters a collaborative school culture, leading to better coordination and goal attainment. These findings resonate with the positive correlations found between principals' open communication skills and administrative effectiveness, and between inclusive communication skills and administrative effectiveness. However, the study also found that principals' aggressive communication planning skills were least adopted, which contrasts with research that indicates varying degrees of aggressive communication in school leadership practices. The findings from Hazell (2018) and Sunaengsih et al. (2019) advocate for non-aggressive, inclusive communication approaches, and this study's results support this claim by showing a weaker, non-significant relationship between aggressive communication skills and administrative effectiveness. This discrepancy suggests that while aggressive communication may have some leadership role, it is less conducive to fostering the collaborative, supportive environments needed for effective school administration. Another key finding from this study was a positive, albeit weak, statistically significant correlation between assertive communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness. Assertive communication involves clear, confident expression while respecting others, which has been linked to effective leadership in previous research by Kowalski (2015) and Rook (2024). These researchers argue that assertiveness contributes to clarity in decision-making, an important element of administrative effectiveness. This study's results support this, suggesting that principals who are assertive in their communication tend to exhibit more effective management practices, although the relationship is weaker compared to open and inclusive communication skills.

All the hypotheses in this study were tested using Pearson's correlation, and the results were significant for most of the variables. The study found a moderate positive correlation between principals' overall communication planning skills and administrative effectiveness, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms that better communication planning by principals is associated with more effective school management, aligning with the broader body of literature on the role of communication in leadership effectiveness (Akanni, 2021; Shogbesan et al., 2024). Further, the specific dimensions of communication planning (open, inclusive, assertive, and aggressive) were explored in relation to administrative effectiveness. The findings support the rejection of the null hypotheses for both open communication planning and inclusive communication planning, showing moderate positive correlations with administrative effectiveness. This signifies that principals who employ open and inclusive communication strategies are more likely to achieve higher administrative effectiveness, which reflects similar findings in the literature regarding the role of transparency and stakeholder involvement in educational leadership. On the other hand, the hypothesis testing revealed no significant relationship between aggressive communication planning and administrative effectiveness. The weak correlation and non-significant p-value suggest that aggressive communication strategies do not play a critical role in improving administrative effectiveness, contradicting the findings of studies that explore more confrontational leadership styles. This is consistent with the literature that cautions against the potential negative effects of aggressive communication in educational settings (Hazell, 2018; Sunaengsih et al., 2019). Additionally, assertive communication skills were found to have a weak but statistically significant positive correlation with administrative effectiveness, supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding complements earlier research by Kowalski (2015) and Rook

(2024), which suggests that assertiveness, though less impactful than open or inclusive communication, still plays a valuable role in effective leadership.

The results of this research emphasise the significant role that strategic communication planning plays in fostering effective school leadership. Principals who plan their communication practices whether by being open, inclusive, or assertive are more likely to lead schools that function efficiently, with improved staff coordination and reduced conflicts. The significance of this research lies in its ability to connect communication planning with tangible outcomes such as better school climate, improved resource management, and more effective policy implementation. On a larger scale, the study reflects broader challenges in the educational system, particularly in Nigeria, where communication deficiencies often result in administrative inefficiencies. By focusing on the specific skills of communication planning, this research highlights a gap that could be addressed through targeted professional development for school leaders, thus contributing to the improvement of educational administration at both local and national levels. The findings of this study have several important implications for educational leadership and policy. First, they suggest that improving principals' communication planning skills can lead to enhanced administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. This underscores the need for training programs that focus on developing strategic communication competencies among principals. School leadership training initiatives should be designed to incorporate communication planning as a critical component, emphasising how to structure and tailor communication for various stakeholders, such as teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. Second, the study provides insights into the practical realities of school administration in Ilorin East and other similar regions, indicating that a lack of communication planning may hinder administrative success. Addressing this gap could enhance leadership outcomes, particularly in conflict resolution and policy implementation, areas identified as crucial in the findings. Finally, the research highlights the need for educational policymakers to incorporate structured communication planning into the criteria for assessing school leadership effectiveness. Future research could further explore the impact of communication planning on other facets of school leadership, such as curriculum development or staff professional development, to broaden the understanding of its role in school success.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between principals' communication planning skills and their administrative effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State. One of the most important findings of this research that differentiates it from previous studies is the distinct role that communication planning plays in school administration. While existing research has extensively explored general communication skills in school leadership, this study highlights communication planning as a specific, strategic competency that directly influences administrative effectiveness. The findings demonstrate that principals who adopt open and inclusive communication planning strategies tend to show higher levels of administrative effectiveness, a significant contribution to the field. This focus on communication planning, as opposed to more general communication approaches, provides a new understanding of how strategic communication can improve leadership outcomes in secondary schools. Additionally, the study revealed that aggressive

communication planning does not significantly correlate with administrative effectiveness. This was a notable departure from some existing literature, which occasionally implies that forceful or dominant communication tactics may contribute to school leadership. The weak and statistically insignificant relationship found between aggressive communication and administrative effectiveness suggests that these communication styles may not be conducive to creating the collaborative and supportive environments necessary for effective school management. The value of this research lies in its ability to shed light on the specific communication planning skills that enhance school leadership, offering a more nuanced view of how principals can strategically plan their communication to improve school administration. By emphasising the importance of open, inclusive, and assertive communication over aggressive methods, this study contributes to the ongoing conversation about leadership practices in education, particularly in the Nigerian context. Furthermore, it underscores the need for targeted professional development programs that focus on communication planning skills, equipping school leaders with the tools they need to foster a more effective, cooperative, and well-managed educational environment. This research provides empirical evidence that can guide future leadership training initiatives and policymaking in the education sector, especially in regions where communication challenges undermine administrative outcomes. By building principals' competencies in communication planning, it is possible to improve the overall administrative efficiency of schools, thereby contributing to better educational outcomes for students and greater satisfaction among teachers and other stakeholders.

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