

VIDEO CONFERENCING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS: A STUDY OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study used cross sectional survey design to assess the relationship between Video Conferencing and Administrative Effectiveness in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers state. The population of the study was 260 administrative staff in the two tertiary institutions from where a sample size of 155 was gotten. Random and purposive sampling method was used in selecting the respondents. A self-administered structured questionnaire was distributed to respondents. Mean, Standard deviation and percentages were used to analyse responses from the questionnaire while Pearson's product momentum correlation was used to test hypothesis. For the data analysis, SPSS (23.0) was used. The findings of this research revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between video conferencing and administrative effectiveness. The study thus, concludes that administrative effectiveness is a measure of the use of online communication tools. Effective and efficient use of OCTs significantly increase administrative effectiveness.

Keywords: Video Conferencing, Administrative, Effectiveness, Communication, Timeliness

INTRODUCTION

As Nigeria is striving hard to play a leadership role in Africa, particularly in the period of pragmatic and competitive science and technology, there is an urgent need to pay more prominent attention to the improvement in administering the education sector particularly in Nigerian tertiary institutions by the incorporation of Information and communications technology (ICT) to ensure continuous interaction between managers and their subordinates. Technology is the key in improving performance in an organization. In modern times, it is not uncommon to find some organizations still subjecting administrators to rigorous meetings, moving from one point to the other to pass information. When administrators are not provided with efficient and effective communication tools, efficiency in job performance and productivity is definitely bound to be low.

Many scholars (Bao, 2009; Dennis, Rennecker and Hensen, 2010) both local and international, had made advances in the study of online communication tools, its use and influence of students performance, business enhancement among others. None of these was aimed at assessing the impact online communication tools has on the administration of tertiary institutions especially in Rivers State. It is in consideration of this lacunae in literatures this study is embarked on.

According to Costea (2012) the provision of efficient and effective communication tools entails the adoption of online communication in the institutions. The online communication tools are invaluable intervention of this modern time. Its inherent attributes such as

accuracy, high speed performance, reliability and capability to store and transmit very large amount of data have made it possible for its applicability to all human endeavours including teaching, learning and research in educational institutions. On the other hand, administrators need to meet the challenges by acquiring new skills and competencies for efficient operations in the use of modern technology noting that there is continuous advancement in technology which has affected the administrative profession in terms of the quality, speed and accuracy of works performed.

Despite the importance of video conferencing to the effectiveness of tertiary institutions, the video conferencing system conceptualization has gained limited attention by scholars and practitioners of information and communication studies in Nigeria as such it is extremely not clear if these modern technologies (especially as it pertain to video conferencing) is correlated with positive change in the administrative effectiveness of tertiary institutions. It is on this premise that the study seek to know whether or not relationship exist between video conferencing and administrative effectiveness.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the extent of use of video-conferencing and timely decision making and implementation

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the extent of use of video-conferencing and cost effectiveness

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the extent of use of video-conferencing and smooth flow of information

Video Conferencing and Administrative effectiveness

Modern institutions have come to appreciate the roles and importance of video conferencing, and the need to provide necessary communication gadgets to facilitate administrative functions (Barber and Bretz, 2000). Margaret and Pac (2009) assert that, based on the reorganization of the office and introduction of automated office equipment, administrators' work is produced faster and with a professional touch. The manager is also able to concentrate on more creative tasks with the assistance of modern technologies. Advances in communications technology always bring with them the possibility that communication will somehow be affected by the medium itself. The recent explosion of video conferencing via the internet and e-mail on mobile phones and computers has led to concerns being voiced about how such technologies may be changing the very nature of communication (McKenna and Bargh, 2000). However, other writers have argued that the effects of these new technologies are no more dramatic than the effect that, what are now considered to be 'old' technologies, had when they were introduced. Gackenbach and Ellerman (1998), for example, argue that many scholars are reinventing the wheel when discussing the implications of the video conferencing on job performance. Joinson (2003) examines the impact that a number of technologies had when they were first introduced, including video conferencing. The introduction of the video conferencing using satellite technology has made online communication possible whilst people are on the move and without the need to be connected face to face.

Systems Theory in organizational communication.

Systems Theory has demonstrated how communication holds together each component of the organization, both internally and externally, in order to insure stability, organizational growth, and goal attainment (Almaney, 2004). According to Gunaratne (2008), systems theorist Luhmann theorized that modern organizations each have their own 'communication

medium’ that determines how it interacts with its environment. Modaff et al. (2009), claimed that communication is what maintains the flow of relevant information within an organization, therefore confirming that it is necessary for all organizations to be concerned with information processing, as it is “at the very least, one of the most important factors in the analysis and functioning of organizations (Hickson III, 2003). Almaney (2004) states that, “it is inconceivable to have an organization without communication and is also inconceivable to have an efficient organization without efficient communication”. Taken together, today this research resonates with how social media has become an efficient way to exchange information both within and externally. Therefore, suggesting that Systems Theory would be a workable approach from which to study the effectiveness of the use of online media in organizations.

Research Design

The Study uses a descriptive survey design to assess the influence of video conferencing on administrative effectiveness in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

Population of the Study

The study is targeted at all administrative staff of the two Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State selected at random for this study. These include: Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

Distribution of administrative staff population in the two institutions

Name of Tertiary Institution	Principal officers	Top Management	Middle Management	Total
Rivers State University	5	25	101	131
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.	7	25	97	129
TOTAL	12	50	198	260

Source: Establishment office in the Institutions

The total population of this study is summed up to 260

Sample/sampling Techniques

A sample size of 155 respondents was selected for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Sample Determination Table. Sampling was therefore summarized below

Distribution of sample size among administrative staff population in the two institutions

Name of Tertiary Institution	Principal officers	Top Management	Middle Management	TOTAL
Rivers State University	3	17	58	78
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.	3	17	57	77
TOTAL	6	34	115	155

Method of Data Analysis

The questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23: Mean, and Pearson correlation was the means of analysis. Mean was used to determine the strength of some variables to the weakness of others. Cross tabulation was used because it is one of the simplest and most common ways of demonstrating the presence or absence of a relationship (Bryman & Cramer, 2011). Pearson correlation analysis, set at $p < 0.05$ significance level, was used to determine the relationship between variables. The mean scores determine the acceptance or rejection of the rating items in the section.

Results

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the use of video-conferencing and timeliness in decision making and implementation

Table depicting the relationship between the use of video-conferencing and timeliness in decision making and implementation

		video-conferencing	Decision making	Decision
video-conferencing	Pearson Correlation	1	.361**	
	(R)			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	Significant
	N	87	87	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: SPSS Output

The table above depicts the correlation coefficient (r) is .361, the result showed that there is a medium positive correlation between the use of video conferencing and timeliness in decision making. At $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ at 5% confident interval there is a significant relationship between use of video conferencing and timeliness in decision making hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between use of video conferencing and timeliness in decision making and implementation is accepted.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the use of video-conferencing and cost effectiveness

Table depicting the relationship between the use of video-conferencing and cost effectiveness

		video-conferencing	cost effectiveness	Decision
video-conferencing	Pearson Correlation	1	.465**	
	(R)			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	Significant
	N	87	87	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: SPSS Output

The table above depicts the correlation coefficient (r) is .465, the result showed that there is a medium positive correlation between the use of video conferencing and cost effectiveness. At $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ at 5% confident interval there is a significant relationship

between use of video conferencing and cost effectiveness hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between use of video conferencing and cost effectiveness is accepted.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the use of video-conferencing and smooth flow of information

Table depicting the relationship between the use of video-conferencing and smooth flow of information

		video-conferencing	Smooth flow of Decision information	
video-conferencing	Pearson Correlation	1	.349**	
	(R)			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	Significant
	N	87	87	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: SPSS Output

The table above depicts the correlation coefficient (r) is .349, the result showed that there is a medium positive correlation between the use of video conferencing and smooth flow of information. At $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ at 5% confident interval there is a significant relationship between use of video conferencing and smooth flow of information hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between use of video conferencing and smooth flow of information is accepted.

Video Conferencing and Administrative effectiveness

Descriptive analysis data collected from the study revealed that the use of video conferencing among administrators in the various institution sampled was uncommon which on the other hand by implication increase real-time face to face meeting. It was also reported that video conferencing had not in anyway enhanced the relationship between administrators in the institutions. From this findings it can be asserted that an increased level of administrative effectiveness in the institutions could be recorded beyond what it is if the use of this tool is made common in the institutions. This assertion is further strengthened following acceptance of certain perception on the benefit of video conferencing by the respondents to the study. The study revealed that contents like desktop, files, softwares etc can be shared via video conferencing to enhance better understanding of a subject matter. It was also accepted that video conferencing makes communication more vivid and intuitive and make the communicants stay focused and alert. This findings are in agreement with that of Chepkurui, (2015) outlining benefits of video conferencing to include some of those listed above. Since these benefits are elements of effectiveness which results in which performance, one can assert that use of video conferencing contributes to high effectiveness. The above assertion is true relying of high correlation between video conferencing and measures of administrative effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between the use of email and administrative effectiveness in tertiary institutions. The researchers had her focus on two selected tertiary

institutions in Port Harcourt. The notion of tertiary institutions came into play as it is worthy of note that most tertiary institutions are now been digitalized following the current trends in digital communications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations put forward by the researcher to effectively address the observed weakness by this study:

1. All administrative staff in tertiary institutions should be knowledgeable in the use of online communication tools
2. Tertiary institutions should as a policy make the knowledge of online communication tools as prerequisites for employment and promotion of administrative staff
3. Regular refresher course on the effective use of online communication tools by administrators should be held and organized by school management

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