

# Mastery of Communication Skill: Implication for Science Teaching and Learning in Kwara State Colleges of Education, Nigeria

By

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## Abstract

*The study investigated the impact that mastery of communication skill has on teaching and learning of science courses in Kwara State colleges of education, Nigeria. Descriptive survey type of design was adopted for the study. Simple random sampling techniques were employed to select two hundred (200) science students in 200level from the four government-owned colleges of education in Kwara state. A researcher-designed questionnaire entitled "Mastery Communication Skill Questionnaire" (MCSQ) was used to collect the data. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and means to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the hypothesis. The results of the finding revealed that mannerism, misinterpretation and overloading of the information can affect communication while teacher's methods of teaching and establishment of good students/teachers' relationship enhance adequate flow of communication. Mastery communication skill has greater influence on science teaching and learning process in colleges of education in Kwara State. Recommendations were made that; both science teachers in colleges of education and pre-service science teachers should improve on their communication skill to enhance enabling environment for teaching and learning; good teaching method by the teachers in the classroom should be improved to reduce overloading of information and mannerism in the classroom discussion*

**Keywords:** *Mastery; Skill; Communication; implication; Science; Teaching; Learning.*

## Introduction

Teaching and learning process is a double action involving imparting and receiving knowledge. Each is so related to the other which makes it convenient to explain the teaching/learning process. The process involves the interaction between the teacher and the students. Formal education takes place in schools, colleges and universities so that individuals will be able to read and write as well as

acquire basic skills and moral values that will enable them to live a fulfilled life. To achieve these goals, teaching and learning processes must be effectively carried out, (Ogunsola, 2008). Science is an activity-based discipline and requires efficient teacher who may involve his students to foster the teaching and learning, (Abubakar, 2016). The author explains furthermore that teacher plays the role of guiding the students on the right path in learning by preparing for the lesson, use appropriate instructional materials for lesson delivery and use acceptable students-centered methods of teaching so that students are able to learn efficiently. In the teaching/learning process, information goes from the teacher to the students through communication and feedback comes from the students to the teacher through writing of examination.

Ogunmakin (1999) explain teaching behavior as a way to reciprocate contacts between the teacher and the students and the encounter itself is called teaching. This reciprocal contact can be perceived as a series of events which occur one after the other. The center of all teaching and learning is the inter-personal relationship between teacher and students (Nkom, 2000). In essence, teaching in its generic term is a communication event that involves active interaction between teacher and individual student. In teaching, teacher communicates in several ways by using the words suitable for the topic and which are within the understanding range of the students. Teacher cannot just communicate to the students anyhow, since communication requires certain skills. If the teacher has the required skills, the teaching will be effective, which will lead to good academic achievement of the students.

Communication, according to oxford learners' dictionary, is the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information. Similarly, Salman (2009) defined communication as the transfer of information, idea or message from one person to the other with the use of a sign, symbol, words etc. Salman (2009) stated that the most important reason for communication is to ensure that information is passed and understood in order to maintain good human relations with all persons concerned. It also ensures more enlightenment about the issues discussed and there will be established confidence between the person communicating and the people being communicated to. Salman (2009) emphasized that with effective communication, an extensively large organization; even the whole world can be unified.

Edward (2009) was of the view that the major aim of communication in the classroom situation is for the teacher to pass valid information to the students to get exact message passed by the teacher, and the message means what the sender (teacher) intends it to mean in the mind of the receiver (students). Competence in communication, according to Ajayi (2011) can only be ascertained when relevant question(s) are asked and correctly and completely answered. Hence in a classroom situation, it can be inferred that because a teacher has taught does not necessarily means that the students have learnt. Effectiveness and competence in

communication should always be ascertained by asking students relevant questions on the given information.

Communication skill is the process of communication which requires creation of rapport between the sender (teacher) and the receiver (student). Rapport is refers to as inter-connectivity that enables the purpose of the information to be adequately decoded by the receiver.

Communication skills are paramount for every teacher. This then calls for an initiative by every teacher to cultivate these skills. It is important for us to remember that it is how we say what we say that affects learning. Mastery of the subject matter is of no essence if we can't impart the knowledge, (Times Reporter, 2017).

Some of the communication skills that a teacher must possess to make them interact properly with their students according to Communication Skills World (2017) are; positive motivation, effective body language, sense of humor, understanding the students, team formation and technical skills. Lack of necessary communication skills can lead to poor lesson delivery which can cause poor academic achievement on the part of the students. Teachers must realize that all students have different levels of understanding based on their strengths and weaknesses. Through communication skills, a teacher can introduce creative and effective solutions to the problems of the students which enhance learning process, (Communication Skills World, 2017).

Freddie (2018) pointed out that communication skill is important for many professions but very crucial for teaching profession. The author summarizes benefits of good communication skill to include:

- Good communication skill help students to understand better in the classroom situation;
- It help the teacher to deal with the parents in polite manner;
- It help both the students and teachers to have good interpersonal relationship and
- Teacher will be able to interact with the administrators effectively.

Ogunsaju (2008) identified some factors that can affect communication skills to include:

- \* Overloading of the information: When the message is unnecessarily overloaded, a barrier is created. This can be in form of unnecessary repetition, emphasis, using several synonyms to covey a single message or too lengthy instruction. It then becomes boring for the recipient; therefore, teacher must be brief, concise and talk straight to the point.
- \* Misinterpretation of the information: People can interpret words wrongly and there is the tendency for misinterpretation.

- \* Inadequacies of the communicator: Stammering, jabbering, mannerism, poor lay out written communication or vague worded reports or notes, all these hamper effective communication.
- \* Problem perception: Human being perceive thing differently, which may cause a lot of arguments, for example, some see sneezing without cover up the mouth as a normal natural occurrence, others see it as a sign of lack of self-discipline.
- \* Superiority: When a teacher tries to be too formal, strict and too superior to the students, barrier in communication can be created.

Kolawole (2006) reports that good strategies of communication produce good communication skills. Darlington (2010) reveals that good information and communication strategies produced higher grades among the students. Also, Peter (2011) findings show that the groups of students taught by teachers with well-developed communication skills performed outstandingly better in academic work than the groups of students taught by teachers with poor communication skills.

### **Statement of the problem**

Fundamental to teacher and student success is the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students, parents and colleagues. Teachers must have good communication skills to help their students achieve academic success. Teacher also needs good communication skill to further their careers in education. Without good communication skill, teacher disables the learning process as well as their own career mobility, (Mayhew, 2018). Therefore, it was on this background that the researcher investigates the implication of mastery communication skill for teaching and learning sciences in Kwara State colleges of education, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the implication of mastery communication skill for teaching and learning in Kwara State Colleges of Education. Specifically, the study investigates;

1. factors that can affect communication skill in Colleges of education in Kwara State;
2. benefits of mastery communication skill in teaching and learning process in colleges of education in Kwara State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What are the factors affecting communication skill in Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

2. Does mastery communication skill influence learning in Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

### **Research Hypothesis**

One hypothesis was formulated for the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant influence of mastery communication skill on science learning in Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for the study to determine the influence of mastery communication skill on science teaching and learning in colleges of education in Kwara state. The population for the study was all science students in four government owned colleges of education in Kwara state.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Simple random sampling technique was employed to select two hundred (200) science students in 200 levels in the four colleges of education owned by kwara state government.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument for the study was an adapted questionnaire from Amadi and Akpan (2017)'s study on the benefits/importance of communication skills using four point likert scales of strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed entitled "Mastery Communication Skill Questionnaire" (MCSQ) to generate response from the students. The data collected were analyzed with both descriptive and inferential statistical tools of frequency counts, percentage, means and chi square. Validity of the instrument was done by three science educators in colleges of education in Kwara State and the reliability of the instrument has been done by Amadi and Akpan (2017) where 0.75 reliability coefficients was obtained using Cronbach's Alpha Analysis.

### **Analysis and Results**

Analysis of the respondents' bio-data

**Table 1: Gender distribution of the respondents**

Gender	No	Percentage
Male	86	43.0
Female	114	57.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents, where 43% represent number of male science students and 57% were female science students participated in the study.

**Answering the research questions**

Research Question 1: What are the factors affecting communication skill in Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

**Table 3: Factors affecting communication skill in colleges of education**

Item	Mean	Rank
Heredity	3.11	5th
Mannerism	3.17	3rd
Accident	3.14	4th
Misinterpretation of information	3.30	1st
Overloading of information	3.24	2nd

From table 3 it was reveals that all the factors under study can affect communication skill but misinterpretation of information, overloading of information and mannerism were ranked high while accident and heredity ranked as the least factors that can affect communication skill in colleges of education.

Research Question 2 has a corresponding hypothesis and was answered through the hypothesis

**Research Question 2:** Does mastery communication skill influence learning in Colleges of Education in Kwara State?

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant influence of mastery communication skill on science learning in Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

**Table 4:** Chi-square item Analysis of the influence of mastery communication skill on science learning in colleges of education in Kwara State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	df	Cal.x2 Value	Tab.x2 Value	Remark
1	Mastery communication skill improves students/teachers classroom interaction	126	30	24	20	200				

2	Teachers' method of teaching influence mastery communication skill in the classroom	104	20	44	32	200				
3	Effective class control by teacher help reduce internal disturbance that cause distraction in students from learning	80	26	40	54	200				
4	Mastery communication skill help students correct their mistakes in the classroom interaction	114	22	28	36	200	199	23.29	15.50	Ho is rejected
5	Mastery communication skill enhance students presentation skill	93	50	34	23	200				
6	Communication skill provides feedback and performance reports for both students and teachers	105	33	35	27	200				
7	Collaboration can be achieved through students/teachers effective communication	97	22	43	38	200				
8	Mastery communication skill facilitates teaching/learning process	124	11	26	39	200				

Table 4 revealed that the calculated chi-square value is 23.29 and the chi-square table value is 15.50 with degree of freedom 199 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected, because calculated value is greater than the table value. This implies that mastery communication skill has greater influence on the teaching and learning of sciences in colleges of education in Kwara State.

### **Discussion**

The result of the analysis in research question one shows that misinterpretation of information, overloading of information and mannerism were ranked high. In the same vein, findings from the corresponding hypothesis of research question two revealed that there is a significant influence of mastery communication skill on science teaching and learning in colleges of education in

Kwara State. The findings agreed with Ogunsaju (2008) who identifying overloading of information, misinterpretation of the information, inadequate of the communicator as some of the factors that affect communication skills. Also, the finding conformed to Peter (2011) whose finding shows that the groups of student taught by teachers with well-developed communication skills performed outstandingly better in academic work than the groups of students taught by teachers with poor communication skills.

### **Conclusion**

It was concluded from the study that misinterpretation of information, overloading of information and teacher's mannerism are the most important factors that are affecting communication skills in the colleges of education classroom while teachers' methods of teaching and establishment of good students/teachers' relationship enhance adequate flow of communication. Also a significant influence exists between mastery of communication skill and science teaching and learning.

### **Recommendations**

Following recommendations were made that;

1. Both science teachers in colleges of education and pre-service science teachers should improve in their communication skill to enhance enabling environment for teaching and learning process;
2. Public address system should be available in the classrooms to aid effective communication in teaching and learning process;
3. Students-teacher's relationship should be allowed in Colleges of Education in order to keep the students focused on the course contents discussion in the classroom;
4. Appropriate instructional materials should be used in the classroom to enhance adequate flow of communication;
5. Good teaching method by the teachers in the classroom should be improved to reduce overloading of information and mannerism in the classroom discussion;
6. Pre-service science teachers should master good communication skill so as to help their presentation when they find themselves in the classroom;
7. Seminars and workshops should be regularly organized for pre-service science teachers in colleges of education on area of information and communication technology so as to improve their skill in communication.

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