

## INTRA-COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The paper examined intra-communication patterns in academic libraries through a survey of tertiary institutions in Niger state, Nigeria. The research design used was survey. The researchers designed self constructed instrument tagged "Intra- Communication Patterns Questionnaire" (INTROCOPQ) which after thorough validation from experienced academic colleagues, was administered to selected library staff in the institutions under investigation. The findings from the data collected were analyzed using simple statistical tools. Part of the findings amongst other things are that the messages that are sent within the libraries are perfectly understood and acted upon accurately; and that communication breakdown that occur in libraries are part of normal human relationship and not because of ethnic or social-cultural diversity. The researchers recommended amongst other things that communication courses should be made core courses for librarians and Para professional librarians in training; and that library staff should be given in-service training on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).*

### Introduction

Communication, put succinctly can be described as the sharing of emotion, feelings, ideas with others. It can also be considered as the sending of messages or passing information from a sender (source) to the receiver (destination). Communication can be verbal, or non-verbal. It can take different forms and formats such as written, pictorial, graphic, electronic. It can be a monologue or a dialogue. Communication can be between one organization and another organization (inter-communication) and it can also be among individuals or groups within the same organization (Intra-Communication). (Longman Dictionary, 2005). The focus of

this paper is on the latter within academic libraries in Niger State . Academic libraries are libraries that are situated in tertiary institutions like universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. Aguolu (1989) cited by Okon (2005) described academic libraries as libraries that have been integral part of institutions of higher learning rather than an appendix or adjunct to them.

Edoka (2000) and Oyedum (2007) describe academic libraries as libraries that exist in institutions of higher education such as universities, colleges of education, colleges of technology and polytechnics. Edoka (2000), Odusanya and Osinulu (2004), Akintunde (2006), Ubogu (2006), Nnadozie and Nnadozie (2007), posit that the prime obligation of an academic library is to provide gamut of relevant and appropriate information resources for study and research to the members of its own institution. This is made possible by identifying, selecting, acquiring, processing, storing and disseminating knowledge in print and non print formats.

Edoka (2000) further identifies the general functions of academic libraries as follows:

1. to provide information materials required for the academic programmes of the parent institutions.
2. to provide research information resources in consonance with the needs of faculty and research students.
3. to provide information resources for recreation and for personal self- development of users.
4. to provide study accommodation in a useful variety of locations.
5. to provide protection and security for these materials.
6. to co-operate with other libraries at appropriate levels for improved information services.
7. to provide specialized information service to appropriate segments of the wider community.

Ubogu (2006) postulates that academic libraries and librarians play critical roles in the management of one of the key intellectual output of the concerned institutions.

Longman dictionary of contemporary English (2005) defines communication as the process by which people exchange information or express their thoughts and feelings. Good communication is vital in a large organization. Ojiambo (1993) observes that communication involves the giving and receiving of information signals or messages by talks, gestures and writings. Macquail and Windahl (1993) posit that communication could be any or all of the following: an action on others, an interaction with others and a reaction to others.

Odini (1999) and Kemoni (2004) see communication as one of the core competencies that all information professionals (including archivists) should possess. Hughes (2003) identifies the possession of the knowledge and skills in communication by record managers (including archivists) as indispensable prerequisites for them to survive in the present knowledge driven society and environment.

Vickery and Vickery (1987) posit that communication is a social pivot upon which all social processes are hinged. In other words, communication has an all embracing, pervasive and powerful influence on all human interactions at all times and in any settings. Afullo (2000) avers that communication can involve the use of the ubiquitous technology of the information age – internet, the information super – high way. The internet allows the flow of gamut of information among different groups with myriads of messages being sent across a panoply of people through the electronic infrastructure with all rapidity with little or no hitch. With

internet, it is possible to communicate with billions of people across the globe through the computer networks and telecommunication gadgets.

Faboyinde (2006) opines that the advent of the computer and its capacity for networking through the internet and the fusion and merger of information technology with that of communication has given rise to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). He contends further that computer has made such a tremendous impact on the organization, management and dissemination of information that it readily commends itself to every library to accept it or becomes limited in satisfying its clientele. Communication tools such as e-mail, fax, computer and video conferencing are being used to overcome barriers of space and time, and opens new possibilities for library services. In a similar vein, Usman (2006) views internet as the most important way of communication, which connects millions of computers and databases. He argues further that the internet has opened up numerous possibilities for resource sharing at the local and global levels of libraries environments.

Wikipedia (2007), describes communication as a process that allows beings – in particular humans- to exchange information by several methods. Communication requires that all parties understand a common language that is exchanged. There are auditory means, such as speaking or singing and non-verbal physical means such as body language, sign language, para language, touch, eye contact, or the use of writing. Communication is a kind of social interaction where at least two interacting agents share a common set of signs and a common set of semiotic rules. In a simplistic model, information or content (e.g. a message in a natural language) is sent in some forms (as spoken language) from a source/sender/encoder to a destination/ receiver/ decoder. In a slightly more complex form, a sender and a receiver are linked reciprocally.

Communication is a fore-runner of development and cohesion in any organization. No establishment or organization can stand without effective communication. Without effective communication, no good human relationship can be established. It is impossible to pass any useful information without communication. Essential messages can be passed in appropriate media through the instrumentality of communication. There cannot be any breakthrough in the business circle without effective communication. It will be virtually difficult, if not completely impossible, to render any services like: banking, trading, building, tourism, working, feeding, resolving crises, studying, and researching, without effective communication. In fact, communication has been described as the precursor of happiness in any human relationships—marriage, business, etc (Communication, 2007).

It is difficult if not completely impossible to render any service in any library settings without effective communication. Both readers and technical services will crumble without effective communication. Materials can be good but they cannot organize themselves without the instrumentality of man. Classification and cataloguing of library materials can only be done effectively and with much proficiency when there is effective communication. In other words, no success and there can never be any breakthrough and remarkable achievement in any libraries—academic, school or public- without effective communication. If wrong information is communicated, the result will be a colossal loss. Thus, right information should be communicated through the right media (channel) from the right source (sender) to the right destination (receiver).

However, there are some impediments to effective communication in any libraries, academic libraries inclusive. These impediments serve as cogs in the wheels of progress of academic libraries. One of such impediments is educational qualification. For example, communication

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will tend to flow better amongst degree holders than between a school certificate holders and master degree holders. Another barrier is socio-cultural in nature. On most occasions, people may prefer to communicate with people who share the same socio cultural background with them than people who have divergent background. Another problem is lack of homophily. When a homophilous partner communicates with an heterophilous partner little or no success is achieved in communication. But when an heterophilous partner tries to show some understanding and tries to put himself in the place of his homophilous partner, effective communication is more likely to occur.

Communication becomes more effective when there is some sort of feed back between the source and the destination, when noise is removed or avoided as much as possible and when the parties involved try to show some degree of empathy for one another. Ajayi(2001) cited by Okon(2005) argued that the extent to which the formal and informal channels of communication are used within libraries will depend upon the types, size, complexity, corporate culture, organization of library and how well they integrate the information and communication technologies (ICTs) into the general functions and activities of the library.

Fidelity in communication is obtained when a particular communication source achieves what it intends to get. That is, fidelity in communication is achieved when a particular communication source gets the full import in form of feedback from the communication destination without any adulteration or embellishment. When a particular communication source or destination gets what it intends to get, fidelity in communication is achieved.

The human resources in any library (academic inclusive) can be categorized into three (3) main groups namely: the professional, the para – professional and the supportive staff. The professional refers to the staff members who have at least the bachelor degree in library science. By virtue of their training, exposure and intellectual acumen, they are usually saddled with the responsibility of managing both material and human resources in the libraries. The para-professional are staff members who have diploma in library science or any other related disciplines. They are to take instruction from the professional staff members. The support staff are the last in the categorization. They include: the drivers, the messengers, cleaners, library assistants and porters. Some of them are holders of school certificate, primary six certificate, trade test certificate and some do not have any formal education at all. But, for any successful communication to take place in any academic libraries all the afore stated categories of staff members are important. Hence, the pattern of communication among these categories of staff members are examined in this paper. That is, the paper is an attempt to examine how information flows among professionals, between professionals and para – professionals, between professionals and supportive staff, between supportive staff and para – professionals, among supportive staff, among para – professionals etc.

The choice of academic libraries for a research of this nature is hinged on the belief of the researchers that the productivity – economic, social, technological etc. of any nation is to some extent dependent on the productivity of academic and research institutions of such a nation. The productivity of academic and research institutions to some extent dependent on the type of information materials that are available and the quality of reference services that are rendered to library users by academic librarians. Moreover, if there is communication gap, conflict or misunderstanding among these library staff, it will be difficult if not completely impossible to render such invaluable services to the library patrons.

Okoye (2009) admits that education is an instrument per excellence for national development and that the greatest resource for development is the human resource. She argues further that

the library is central to the provision of the right type of information resources that empower the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people who can impact positively on national development. This is because the intellectual vitality and effectiveness of educational institutions in producing high quality graduates into the labour market depends largely on the quality of information resources that are available in their libraries to support the teaching, learning and research activities.

### Scope

The research covers only universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Niger State. Libraries in research institutes and other special libraries are not included.

### Statement of problem

On most occasions, library patrons are reported to be dissatisfied with the services that are rendered in most academic libraries. Is it right to say that the founding fathers of such libraries have not given enough attention to libraries in terms of investments- materials and human? If billions of naira are expended and men of great acumen are stationed in the libraries without effective intra- communication, such materials and human investment will tantamount to utter wastage.

### Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to know the pattern of intra organizational communication within academic libraries in Niger state.

The study is, however, premised on the following specific objectives.

1. To determine the degree with which messages that are sent within the library are perfectly understood and acted upon by people/librarian with full accuracy (import).
2. To ascertain the degree with which there are communication breakdown within the library due to disparity in social- cultural status.
3. To determine if the pattern of communication is vertical, lateral or cyclical.
4. To ascertain the level to which messages are conceived and encoded with high fidelity from the source to the sender within the library

### Research questions

The following research questions are asked.

1. To what degree are messages that are sent within the library perfectly understood and acted upon by people with full accuracy (import)?
2. To what degree are there communication breakdown within the organization due to disparity in social- cultural status (setting)?
3. To what extent can it be determined that the intra- organizational pattern of communication is vertical, lateral or cyclical?
4. To what extent can it be ascertained that messages are conceived and encoded from the source to the sender with high fidelity within the library?

## Methodology

The research design used was social survey which involved seeking the opinion of staff of academic libraries in Niger state. The affected institutions are: Federal University of Technology, Minna; Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai; Federal Polytechnic, Bida; Niger state Polytechnic, Zungeru; Federal College of Education, Kotangora and Niger State College of Education, Minna.

The researchers designed self- constructed questionnaire tagged intra- organizational communication patterns questionnaire (INTROCOPQ) 192 copies of which were distributed to all the staff members of the affected libraries. Out of the 192 copies of the questionnaire that were administered, 168 (87.5%) were successfully retrieved and used for analysis. All the 57 (100%) copies of the questionnaire that were distributed at Federal University of Technology Library, Minna were retrieved; 20 (76.9%) retrieved from Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai; 20 (66.7%) retrieved from the Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida; 24 (85.7%) retrieved from Niger State Polytechnic library, Zungeru; 27 (100%) retrieved from Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora; and 20 (83.3%) retrieved from Niger State College of Education Library, Minna

## Data presentation

The information that are extracted from the distributed copies of the questionnaire are presented and analyzed using simple statistical tools like frequencies and percentages.

Table 1 : Categorization of staff members in academic libraries in Niger State.

	libraries	professionals	Para-professionals	Support staff	Total
1.	FUTM	17(29.8%)	17(29.8%)	23(40.4%)	57(100%)
2.	LAPAI	8(30.8%)	7(27%)	11(42.3%)	26(100%)
3.	BIDA	5(16.7%)	8(26.7%)	17(56.7%)	30(100%)
4.	ZUNGERU	6(21.4%)	9(32.1%)	13(46.4%)	28(100%)
5.	KOTANGORA	3(11.1%)	8(29.6%)	16(59.3%)	27(100%)
6.	COEM	5(20.8%)	8(33.3%)	11(45.8%)	24(100%)
Total	-	28	41	91	192

### Key to table1

1. FUTM — Federal University of Technology, Library, Minna.
2. LAPAI— Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai. (Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai)
3. BIDA — Federal Polytechnic Bida, Library
4. ZUNGERU— Niger State Polytechnic library, Zungeru
5. KOTANGORA— Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora
6. COEM— Niger State College of Education Library, Minna.

In table 1, Federal University of Technology, library, Minna ( FUTM) has the highest number of staff with a total population of 57. Also, in the categorization of staff into professional, para - professional and support staff, FUTM has the highest number compared to all other

libraries under investigation. Moreover, the preponderance of support staff above the professional staff in all the libraries is obvious. The support staff also outnumbered the para-professionals in all the libraries. In federal college of education library, kotangora (KOTANGORA) and Federal Polytechnic library, Bida (BIDA), the support staff outnumbered the population of both the professional and para – professional staff members. The librarians who are heads of the afore – stated libraries were also interviewed and counted as part of the professional group in their various libraries

**Table 2:** Understanding of messages within Library.

Libraries	Copies of questionnaire administered	Total respondents	No of respondents that understand messages	No of respondents that do not understand messages
FUTM	57	57(100%)	40(70.2%)	17(29.8%)
LAPAI	26	20(76.9%)	20(100%)	Nil
BIDA	30	20(66.7%)	12(60%)	8(40%)
ZUNGERU	28	24(85.7%)	20(83.3%)	4(16.7%)
KOTANGORA	27	27(100%)	24(88.9%)	3(11.1%)
COEM	24	20(83.3%)	20(100%)	Nil
Total	192	168	136	32

From table 2, forty (70.2%) of the respondents at the Federal University of Technology library, Minna affirm that they normally understand the messages that are sent to them while the remaining 29.8percent said they do not understand the messages. All the twenty (100%) respondents at Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai said that they normally understand the messages that are sent to them from superior officer or professional colleagues. 12(60%) of the 20 respondents at Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida, said they normally have perfect understanding of the messages that are sent to them while the remaining eight (40%) do not understand the messages. Twenty (83.3%) respondents at Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru, said they normally understand messages that are sent while the remaining four (16.7%) do not get the messages. Twenty four (88.8%) respondents at Federal College of education Library, Kotangora said messages that are sent are clear to them while three (11.1%) do not understand the messages that are sent. All the 20 (100%) respondents at Niger State College of Education Library, Minna said they normally understand the messages that are sent to them.

**Table 3:** Why communication and interpretation of messages become easy.

Libraries	Total respondents	Due to familiarity with superior officers	Due to trial and error	Because messages are sent in clear terms and languages
FUTM	57	8(14%)	0	49(86%)
LAPAI	20	2(10%)	3(15%)	15(75%)
BIDA	20	3(12.5%)	0	12(60%)
ZUNGERU	24	5(18.5%)	4(14.8%)	18(66.7%)
KOTANGORA	27	4(20%)	0	16(80%)
COEM	20			

In table 3, forty – nine (86%) of the 57 respondents from both the Federal University of Technology Library Minna and 21(87.5%) respondents of Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru affirmed that it was easy for them to interpret messages that are sent to them because such messages are sent in clear terms and language while eight (14%) respondents from Federal University of technology library, Minna, and three (12.5%) from Niger State Polytechnic library, zungeru respectively said that due to their familiarity with their superior officers, it was easy for them to understand what the officers wanted at any given time. At Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai, fifteen (75%) respondents were able to interpret the messages that are sent to them because such messages are sent in clear, unambiguous terms and languages while three (15%) respondents said they normally interpret the messages after a lot of trial and error. Two (10%) respondents affirmed that they were able to interpret messages that are sent from superior officers due to familiarity with such officers. 12(60%) of the 20 respondents at both Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida and 18(66.7%) of the Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora respectively affirmed that because messages are sent in clear terms and languages it was easy for them to interpret. 16(80%) of the 20 respondents at the Niger state College of Education Library, Minna said it was easy for them to interpret messages because such messages are usually sent to them in clear and unambiguous terms.

**Table 4:** Preference to communicate with people of the same ethnic background.

Libraries	Total respondents	Preference for	Do not prefer
FUTM	57	8(14%)	49(86%)
LAPAI	20	15(75%)	5(25%)
BIDA	20	17(85%)	3(15%)
ZUNGERU	24	20(83.3%)	4(16.7%)
KOTANGORA	27	4(14.8%)	23(85.2%)
COEM	20	2(10%)	18(90%)

In table 4, forty–nine (86%) of the 57 respondents at Federal University of Technology Library, Minna said they dislike communicating with people who are not of the same ethnic background with them while eight(14%) have preference for the people of the same ethnic background. Fifteen (75%) of the twenty respondents at Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai said they prefer to communicate with people of the same ethnic background while five (25%) do not have flair for communicating with people of the same or similar ethnic background with them. 17 (85%) of the 20 respondents at Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida said they prefer communicating with people of the same ethnic and cultural background while three (15%) respondents said they do not prefer communicating with people of the same ethnic background with them. Twenty (83.3%) of the twenty four respondents at Niger state Polytechnic Library, Zungeru said they prefer communicating with people of the same ethnic background with them. 23(85.28%) of the 27 respondents at Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora said they do not prefer communicating with people of the same ethnic background with them while four (14.8%) said they have preference for their own people. Eighteen (90%) of the 20 respondents at the Niger State College of Education Library, Minna do not have a flair for communicating with people of the same ethnic background with them while two (10%) respondents have preference for it



**Table 5:** Reasons for communication breakdown in libraries.

Libraries	Total respondents	Communication breakdown is normal	Due to association of incompatible people	Unspecified other reasons
FUTM	57	50(87.7%)	7(12.3%)	Nil
LAPAI	20	17(85%)	3(15%)	Nil
BIDA	20	13(65%)	7(35%)	Nil
ZUNGERU	24	20(83.3%)	4(16.7%)	Nil
KOTANGORA	27	27(100%)	0	Nil
COEM	20	20(100%)	0	Nil

From table 5, fifty (87.7%) out of the 57 respondents from the Federal University of Technology Library, Minna and twenty (83.3%) from Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru are of the opinion that communication breakdown is normal in any human relationship while seven (12.3%) from Federal University of Technology Library, Minna and four (16.7%) from Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru said communication breakdown can be attributed to association of incompatible people. All the 27 (100%) respondents and 20 (100%) respondents from Niger State College of education Library, Minna and Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora respectively are of the view that communication breakdown is normal in any human relationship. Seven (35%) out of the 20 respondents from the Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida are of the opinion that communication breakdown is due to the association of incompatible people in an organization, while the remaining 13 (65%) said communication breakdown is normal in any human setting.

**Table 6:** Patterns of communication

Libraries	Total respondents	Vertical	Lateral	Cyclical	Others
FUTM	57	48(84.2%)	9(15.8%)	0	0
LAPAI	20	15(75%)	5(25%)	0	0
BIDA	20	8(40%)	5(25%)	7(35%)	0
ZUNGERU	24	16(67%)	4(16.7%)	4(16.7%)	0
KOTANGORA	27	18(66.7%)	9(33.3%)	0	0
COEM	20	17(85%)	3(15%)	0	0

From table 6, forty eight (84%) of the respondents from the Federal University of Technology Library, Minna and fifteen (75%) from Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai said that the pattern of communication within their various libraries is vertical. Eight (40%) respondents from Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida affirm that the pattern of communication within their Library is Vertical, while five (25%) said it is lateral and the remaining seven (35%) are of the view that communication flows in all directions (cyclical). Sixteen (67%) respondents from the Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru said that communication within their library is vertical in form while four (16.7%) said communication is lateral and the remaining four (16.7%) said that communication pattern is cyclical in nature. Eighteen (66.7%) respondents from the Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora affirmed that the pattern of communication within their library is vertical while the remaining nine

(33.3%) said the flow of information is lateral. Seventeen (85%) respondents from the Niger state College of Education Library, Minna said the flow of communication within their library is vertical.

**Table 7: Comment on patterns of communication**

Libraries	Total respondents	Authoritarian	Porous	Flexible with human face	Others
FUTM	57	5(8.8%)	0	52(91.2%)	0
LAPAI	20	2(10%)	0	18(90%)	0
BIDA	20	0	0	20(100%)	0
ZUNGERU	24	5(20.8%)	5(20.8%)	14(58.30%)	0
KOTANGORA	27	4(14.8%)	2(7.4%)	21(77.8%)	0
COEM	20	10(50%)	3(15%)	7(35%)	0

In table 7, fifty two (91.2%) out of the 57 respondents from the Federal University of Technology Library, Minna are of the view that the flow of communication within the library is flexible and has human face, while five (8.8%) respondents said the communication pattern is authoritarian. Eighteen (90%) respondents out of the twenty respondents from Abubakar Gimba Library, Lapai said that the pattern of communication within their library is flexible and has human face. All the 20 (100%) respondents from the Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida are of the view that the pattern of communication within their library is flexible and has human face. Fourteen (58.30%) respondents from the Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru and 21(77.8%) respondents from the Federal College of Education Library, Kotangora said that the pattern of communication is flexible. Ten (50%) respondents from Niger State College of education Library, Minna are of the opinion that the pattern of communication within their library is authoritarian while three (15%) said it is porous and the remaining 7 (35%) said it is flexible and has human face.

**Table 8: Types of responses to messages sent from superior officers to subordinates**

Libraries	Total respondents	Always getting Correct responses	Always getting improper responses	Getting Correct responses occasionally
FUTM	9	9(100%)	0	0
LAPAI	4	3(75%)	0	1(25%)
BIDA	3	3(100%)	0	0
ZUNGERU	3	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0
KOTANGORA	2	2(100%)	0	0
COEM	3	2(66.7%)	0	1(33.3%)

In table 8, nine (100%) respondents from the Federal University of Technology Library Minna, three (100%) respondents from the Federal Polytechnic Library Bida and two (100%) respondents from the Federal College of Education Library Kotangora who are superior officer in the aforementioned libraries affirmed that when they send messages to their subordinates they always get right and correct responses. Two (66.7%) respondents from the Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru said they always get correct responses from their subordinates when they send messages while one (33.3%) respondent affirmed that he always gets improper responses from his junior officers. Two (66.7%) respondents at Niger State

College of Education Library, Minna said they always get correct responses from their subordinates whenever they send messages, while one (33.3%) respondent claimed that he gets correct responses occasionally.

**Table 9:** Reasons why superior officers get correct responses from messages sent to subordinates.

Libraries	Total respondents	Because messages are sent in clear term without ambiguity	Due to familiarity with the style of the boss	Others
FUTM	9	9(100%)	0	0
LAPAI	4	3(75%)	1(25%)	0
BIDA	3	3(100%)	0	0
ZUNGERU	3	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0
KOTANGORA	2	2(100%)	0	0
COEM	3	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0

From table 9, nine (100%) respondents from the Federal University of Technology Library, Minna, three (100%) respondents from the Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida and two (100%) respondents from the Federal College of education Library Kotangora who are superior officers in their various libraries affirmed that it was easy for them to get correct responses from the messages sent to their subordinates because such messages were usually sent in clear, unambiguous terms. Two (66.7%) respondents from Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru and two (66.7%) respondents from Niger State College of Education library, Minna confirmed that it was easy for their subordinates to give them correct responses when they sent messages because such messages were usually sent in clear term without ambiguity. One (33.3%) respondent each from both Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru and Niger state College of Education Library, Minna said they were able to get correct responses from messages that were sent to their subordinates due to the familiarity and closeness of their subordinate officers to them

**Discussion of findings**

From the data presented in this study, it is evident that the library staff in the institutions studied are homophilous partners. Even, if there are heterophilous pairs of individuals before, such lines of demarcation and marked differences have fallen out and given way to a feeling of oneness, togetherness, love and empathy. This is evident from the way in which most of the respondents affirm and claim to understand and act accurately and precisely on messages that are passed to them. It should be stressed that it is only in an atmosphere where all staff members have a sense of belonging, togetherness, oneness and where each member of staff sees himself or herself as an incomplete part of the other staff member that such wholesome and progressive communication can take place. Hence, a homely and family atmosphere as opposed to a cat and mouse relationship will engender organizational advancement.

Moreover, while it is true that on most occasions the messages that are sent from a sender (superior officer or subordinate library officer) to a receiver are normally sent in clear and unambiguous terms that makes it easy for the decoder to get the full and appropriate gist

of the messages, a friendly atmosphere is nevertheless important. Familiarity of the library subordinate officers with the superior officers will go a long way to enhance a tense-free working atmosphere. This will go a long way to enhance productivity, loyalty, commitment and sacrificial devotion to their chosen career.

There should be no master-slave relationship among staff. In any organization, like the library, where a master-slave relationship is encouraged, even when members of staff have good, innovative and creative ideas, they may decide to pocket such ideas for fear of being ridiculed, misconstrued or misrepresented. Hence, love is the hallmark of any successful human relationship. Love can also be communicated between people or between groups of individuals in the library. However, familiarity with the superior officers that results in laziness and lackadaisical attitude to work should be checked and avoided. All members of staff should be led to the point of seeing the organizational goals as the ultimate and within which their own personal successes reside.

Furthermore, communication and interrelationships among pairs or groups of pairs in the library that dissolve and submerge social-cultural, ethnic and educational bulwarks as evidenced from the study conducted is the best. In fact, ethnic, tribal, socio-cultural or educational considerations should not and cannot be used as basis or pivot of any strong and formidable relationship. The beauty of our relationship as librarians, library officers, other staff of the library, staff of the same institution or as citizens of the same country, Nigeria is to sink tribal or socio-cultural differences and be enthusiastically willing to relate well and work with people of different and divergent socio-cultural leanings.

Where people prefer to communicate mainly with the people of the same ethnic, socio-cultural and educational background as discovered from the findings at the Federal Polytechnic Library, Bida and Niger State Polytechnic library, Zungeru is not too good. The situation in Bida and Zungeru may be attributed to lack of wide exposure. It may also be due to unwholesome local indoctrination or orientation. The joy and the happiness of our relationship as social beings is to mix freely and be lost in our relationship with people of divergent socio-economic, educational, ethno-cultural and demographic leanings.

Finally, the fact that most of the respondents agree that communication break-down is normal in any human relationship is a good omen. Communication breakdown should not be allowed to degenerate into crisis. Areas of misunderstanding should be looked into, proper solution should be proffered to pre-empt such communication breakdown into escalating into crisis. When such communication breakdowns are properly managed it makes the organization to emerge stronger and invincible than ever (Oyesola, 2005).

It is also a good omen that even though the pattern of communication in most of the libraries is vertical, it gives room for some flexibility and also allows for proper feedback. But, communication should not be lopsided such as obtained in most of the libraries studied where the pattern of communication is mainly vertical and a negligible proportion is lateral. The situation at Federal Polytechnic library, Bida and Niger State Polytechnic Library, Zungeru where the mode of communication is in all directions is better and preferable. In these two libraries, communication flows vertically, laterally and cyclically. Communication should be cyclical, lateral, and vertical. It should be a process that has no beginning or ending. It flows from the top to bottom, bottom to top and across all cadres in the library. Communication that flows in one direction may tilt towards authoritarianism and totalitarianism, Such flow of communication will be unhealthy for growth and development and also antithetical to organizational progress.

### **Contribution to knowledge.**

The major line of demarcation between man and all other beings is communication. While it is true that animals communicate among themselves and machine also (because of technology), the uniqueness and the complexity of man relationship and the complexity of man's communication has been the only distinguishing factor between man and all other beings animate and inanimate. (Wikipedia, 2007)

It is clear from this study that the only cohesive force, unifying factor, bond of unity and togetherness in any human society, libraries inclusive is communication. Without effective communication, no progress, no success, no message, no happiness, no development, no research and in fact nothing meaningful can take place in any human organization. Hence, communication has been the only potent weapon and the life wire that has sustained and still sustaining man's civilization till the present electronic age. Machines and materials cannot operate by themselves. Operators depend on the efficacy of communication. All epochal and remarkable breakthroughs in man's history right from the stone age has been made possible through effective communication. When we talk of scientific revolution, industrial revolution and the present electronically-knitted information age (society), where information flows in all facets, directions and formats; all have been made possible through effective communication and man has been the brain behind the scene.

### **Conclusion**

In the light of this study, it is safe to conclude as follows:

1. Messages that are sent within the libraries are perfectly understood and acted upon with full accuracy to a very great degree.
2. The communication break-down that occur in the libraries under investigation are part of any normal human relationship. Such communication break-down are not due to ethnic, social-cultural or educational dichotomy.
3. The most pronounced pattern of communication in most of the libraries is vertical in nature.
4. Messages are conceived and encoded from the source to the sender with high fidelity in most of the libraries. However; there are occasional hic-cups in the messages that are sent in some libraries like what obtains at the Federal Polytechnic library, Bida and Federal University of Technology Library, Minna.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. All library staff should be given in-service training on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in this electronic age.
2. Communication courses should be made core courses for librarians and para professional librarians in training. This will help to improve and enhance positively the communication ability and interrelationship of these officers among senior and junior colleagues within and outside the library.

3. Courses like citizenship education that will make library staff to cherish organizational goal above personal, tribal, cultural goals etc should also be taught.
4. It is strongly recommended that all communication break-down should be resolved and addressed in an atmosphere of love and friendliness .
5. It is strongly recommended that the pattern of communication in all libraries, academic inclusive should be cyclical. It should be seen and practically observed as a process that has no beginning nor ending.

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