

**PERSONALITY TRAITS, GENDER AND ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AS  
CORRELATES OF COMMUNICATION STYLES AMONG MANAGEMENT  
STAFF IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the Glory of the Almighty God, the giver of life and to my daughters - OtitoOluwa, EriOluwa and EwaOluwa.

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## ABSTRACT

The negative performance of most public organisations in Southwestern Nigeria are partly attributed to poor information sharing system arising from the defective Communication Styles (CS) being adopted by their management staff. Literature has shown that these defective CS can be corrected with a better understanding of factors such as personality traits, organisational and gender factors. However, previous studies on improving the CS and general performance in the public service have focused more on other issues such as culture, emotional intelligence and professional training than on the combined predictive effects of these factors. This study, therefore, examined the predisposing effects of personality traits (openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness), organisational (work overload, role ambiguity, organisational culture) and gender (gender-identity, gender-labelling, gender-linked conducts, peer preference and determinative role) factors on the communication styles of public management staff in Southwestern Nigeria.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Purposive sampling technique was used to select six best performing public organisations in each of the six states of the Southwest; while the entire 1,910 management staff on grade level 12 and above in these organisations were chosen as respondents. Four instruments were used: Gender Factors Questionnaire ( $r=0.78$ ), Personality Traits Inventory ( $r=0.86$ ), Organisational Factors Scale ( $r=0.92$ ) and Management Communications Inventory ( $r=0.93$ ). These were complemented with 12 sessions of in-depth interviews with permanent secretaries and senior directors. One research question was answered and four hypotheses tested at 0.05 significance level. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, percentages, Pearson's product moment correlation, multiple regression and content analysis.

Personality Traits (PT), Gender Factors (GF) and Organisational Factors (OF) had a significant joint prediction on communication styles (CS) ( $F_{(13,1896)} = 27.01$ ;  $R = .395$ ,  $R^2 = .156$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .150$ ). Their relative contributions were ranked: PT ( $\beta=0.335$ ), GF ( $\beta=-.103$ ) and OF ( $\beta=0.069$ ). A significant joint effect of PT on CS was observed ( $F_{(5,1904)} = 62.428$ ;  $R = .375$ ,  $R^2 = .141$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .139$ ); with following relative contributions: Agreeableness ( $\beta=0.342$ ), Conscientiousness ( $\beta=0.192$ ), Openness ( $\beta=0.067$ ), Extraversion ( $\beta=-0.095$ ) and Neuroticism ( $\beta=-0.072$ ). The GF had a joint significant effect on CS ( $F_{(5,1904)} = 16.771$ ) and accounted for about 4.0% of the variation. Their relative contributions were: gender-identity ( $\beta=0.139$ ), determinative role ( $\beta=0.126$ ), gender-linked conducts ( $\beta=0.096$ ), gender-labelling ( $\beta=-0.170$ ) and peer preference ( $\beta=-0.043$ ). There was also a significant joint effect of OF on CS ( $F_{(3,1906)} = 36.56$ ;  $R = .233$ ,  $R^2 = .054$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .053$ ). Their relative contributions were: role ambiguity ( $\beta=0.157$ ), work overload ( $\beta=0.148$ ) and organisational culture ( $\beta=0.143$ ). Interviews revealed that management staff communication style in public organisations was not exclusively a gender issue but a combination of some factors, particularly those relating to personality and organisation.

Personality traits, organisational and gender factors impacted positively on the communication styles of public management staff in Southwestern Nigeria. Public organisations, therefore, should ensure flexible and adaptive communication styles.

**Keywords:** Organisational communication styles, public management staff, Nigerian public service.

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Bola Oni  
July, 2013

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## CERTIFICATION

I certify this study was carried out by ONI Margaret 'Bola (Matric. No: 140910) under my supervision in the Department of Adult Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

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	Gender labelling and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
	Gender-linked conducts and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
	Peer preference and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
	Determinative role and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
	Personality traits and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
	Openness and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27
	Extraversion and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27
	Agreeableness and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
	Neuroticism and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
	Conscientiousness and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
	Organisational factors and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33
	Role ambiguity and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
	Work overload and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36
	Organisational culture and communication styles of management staff	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
2.2	Empirical studies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
2.3	Theoretical framework	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	39
2.6	Framework for communicative behaviour among managers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	45
2.4	Appraisal of Literature	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
2.5	Hypotheses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>									
3.1	Research design	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52
3.2	Study population	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52
3.3	Sample size and sampling technique	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52
3.4	Instrumentation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
3.5	Procedure for data collection	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	56
3.6	Method of data analysis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	56

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1	Summary	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	84
5.2	Conclusion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	85
5.3	Policy implications of the study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	86
5.4	Recommendations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	86
5.5	Contribution to knowledge	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	87
5.6	Limitations to the study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	87
5.9	Suggestions for further studies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	88
	References	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	89
	Appendix	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	104

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

Communication has been described as a dynamic, transactional process in which people send and receive messages, including feedback, in multiple channels, usually simultaneously, and within some context or system that probably contains 'noise' to distort messages (Adler and Towne, 1996; Wood, 2002). Communication in an organisation serves to establish managerial control, provide workers with job instruction, and enable managers to gather information for planning (Kreps, 1990). It involves the creation of meaning or the eliciting of a response (Barnlund, 1962) which may occur in face-to-face interaction, in small groups, in large groups and organisations, and through various mass media.

It is practically impossible for an individual to do everything on his/her own. He/she needs a medium which helps him/her discuss various ideas and evaluate proposed strategies with people around. Information, if not shared, is of no use. Communication plays a pivotal role in information sharing. Individuals working together in the same organisation need to speak to each other to keep themselves abreast of the latest developments. A successful manager is one who communicates effectively with his/her subordinates. It is essential for managers to express their views clearly for the team members to understand what exactly is expected from them.

Effective communication is important for managers in organisations to perform the basic functions of management; planning, organising, leading and controlling. In essence, communication helps managers to perform optimally their jobs and responsibilities. Communication serves as a foundation for organisational goal achievements, where all essential information for their actualisation must be communicated through the managers to the general employees for implementation. Further, leaders, as managers, must communicate effectively with their subordinates to achieve teamwork and task actualisation. Managers, particularly in public organisations, must devote a great part of their time to communication within the organisation. They are generally expected to devote quality time, approximately six

hours per day in communicating face-to-face or through telephone with their superiors, subordinates, colleagues, customers or suppliers (McPhee and Zaugg, 2000).

Managerial communication is a function which helps managers communicate with one another as well as with employees within the organisation and aids smooth flow of information towards a common goal. Usually, there are two ways public managers communicate amongst themselves and with subordinates, namely verbal and written. Verbal communication is done with the help of words, with no written records. Notably, managers need to be very careful about their speech, what they say and how they say it. They must choose the right words, be very careful and precise about the information given. Written communication is instructions done using emails, letters, manuals, notices and so on. Regardless of whether a manager is using verbal or written communication, it is essential that the message is clear and well-understood for effectiveness.

Communication is the life source of organisations because of people working in them. People cannot interact without communication; without communication, everything is grounded. When managers and other members of an organisation are ineffective communicators, organisational performance suffers and any comparative advantage the organisation has is likely to be lost. Poor communication can be dangerous and may even lead to tragic and unnecessary loss of organisational resources, particularly in the Nigerian public sector.

Public managers communicate daily to ensure the continuous existence of their organisations. Each manager has a distinct way of responding to people and events. The style of communication adopted or used by each individual public manager would largely determine the success or failure of the organisation. Good communication skills in organisations require a high level of self-awareness among the management staff. When management staff understand their style of communicating, creating good and lasting impressions on other employees becomes easy. By being more aware of how others perceive them, they can easily adapt more readily to their styles of communicating in day-to-day activities of their organisations. The consensus in the literature is that if a manager wants subordinates to understand what he/she desires, then he/she must speak with them in their preferred styles. Different styles reflect how an individual perceives him/herself and interacts with

others. Individuals exhibit different traits in their basic communication styles. This is essential for the success of organisational goals achievement.

Communication style of the management staff is individual patterns of behaviours observable to other employees. It has also been seen as a cognitive process which accumulates 'micro behaviour' form-giving of literal content, and adds up to 'macro judgment'. When a person communicates, it is considered an attempt of getting literal meanings across (Norton, 1983; Kirtley and Weaver, 1999). Communication style can also be viewed as a meta-message which contextualises how verbal messages should be acknowledged and interpreted (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988). This explains why the way a person communicates is reflective of his/her self-identity and affects others' perceptions of the individual. Communication style comprises fundamentals which institute dissimilar forms of language patterns and also viewed as a blend of spoken and illustrative elements of communication.

Callister (1992) and Heffner (1997) classify communication styles among manager in every organisation into four: passive, assertive, aggressive and passive-aggressive. The passive style is one in which a manager tends to value the rights of others as more important than his/her own to avoid confrontations. the assertive style is a communication style whereby a manager clearly and forthrightly stands up for his/her own right while maintaining respect for others in an attempt to care about the existing work relationship. The aggressive communication style is when a manager stands up for his/her right, feels superior, covertly or overtly violates the rights of others, and ignores their feelings, using intimidations and control tactics. The passive-aggressive communication style is a combination of the traits of both styles.

Regardless of the communication style adopted by management staff in public organisations in Nigeria, what matters most is the capability to mold different communication styles so that Nigerian public organisations can realise their potential. This will enhance teamwork, encourage innovation through collaboration and increase opportunities for continuous improvement because of open access to information. The direction of public organisational communication studies in Nigeria has centred around the issues and interests of how organisational peers or members, at different levels, interrelate, network and interact. It does not concentrate on factors predisposing communication styles among management staff and its attendant consequences on public organisations' performance.

There is lack of information on what actually influences communication styles among management staff in Nigerian public organisations. There are many studies on such areas as organisational communication system generally in the Nigerian public service (Itohan, 1990) communication behaviour of women in executive positions in Nigeria (Kester and Esan, 2008), influence of personality traits on employees transfer of training outcomes, (Adesanya, 2002) the impact of information technology on information dissemination. However, none of these previous studies attempted to empirically determine the multivariate effects of gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conducts, peer preferences, determinative role, openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness, role ambiguity, work overload, and organisational culture on the communication styles of management staff in public organisations. The need for this study is informed by the notion that a better understanding of the relationship between the public organisations' management communication styles and the various components of personality traits, organisational and gender factors will greatly help them achieve their stated objectives and goals of serving the Nigerian public generally and satisfactorily.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Communication is central to the running of organisations, because different people work there and they inevitably, interact with one another. Every manager must express his/her views clearly for the subordinates to understand what exactly is expected from them. The observed individual communication styles among management staff are patterns of managers' behaviours observable by other employees, reflecting how he/she perceives him/herself and interact with others.

The negative picture of most public organisations in Nigeria is attributed partly to the defective communication styles in place by their management staff. This has resulted into employees' complacency, nonchalant and lackadaisical attitude, concomitant with poor performance profile. This has affected the general image of the Nigerian public service. It raises the question of what can be done to ensure effective and better communication styles among public management staff with the aim of improving the performance and general image of the system.

Personality theorists and researchers have noted that that individuals do not and cannot react to situations in the same way. This, is due to some biological and genetic factors as well as to life experiences. The salient question is would personality traits, gender and organisational factors impact on the communication styles of management staff? It is on this basis, that this study examined the extent to which personality traits, gender and organisational factors correlate with communication styles of management staff in public organisations in southwestern Nigeria.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The broad objective of this study was to establish the extent to which personality traits, gender and organisational factors as correlates of communication styles of management staff in public organisations in southwestern Nigeria affect the performance of these managers and public service. The specific objectives were to:

- i. examine the extent to which each of gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conducts, peer preferences and determinative role influences communication styles of management staff;
- ii. ascertain the extent to which openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness affect on communication styles of management staff in public organisations;
- iii. assess the extent to which role ambiguity, work overload, and organisational culture influences the communication styles of management staff in public organisations; and
- iv. determine the level of differences in the impact of personality traits and organisational factors on communication styles of management staff on the basis of demographic characteristics (age, level of education, level of exposure, years of experience as manager, sex and marriage)

### **1.4 Research question**

The following research question was raised to serve as anchor for the study

**RQ1:** To what extent do personality traits, gender and organisational factors as correlates of communication styles impact on the performance of management staff in the selected public organisations?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

A study of this kind would be useful and beneficial to those who manage public organisations as they will improve on their handling of public organisational policies in such a way to bring out the best in both male and female managers. The government, as policy makers, would find this work useful in formulating good policies, given their improved understanding of some variables responsible for effective communication skills among male and female managers in public organisations. Experts in women development and gender issues would be provided pertinent information on the needs of women, using the unique advantage of the knowledge of those variables that positively correlate with the perceived effective communication of women managers.

The study would also be significant based on the expectations that the results should provide a basis for developing a more effective approach to the handling of gender-related issues, especially as it affects managerial communication. Also, this study would add to the body of literature on the theme covered.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study focused on the extent to which personality traits, gender and organisational factors correlate with the communication styles of management staff in selected public organisations in Southwestern Nigeria. The study covered the six states in southwestern Nigeria, namely: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo and Oyo.

Further, the study was restricted to six core ministries from each of the states. A total of 36 ministries were selected for the study. These were Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Budget, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance in each of the six states. The decision to choose these public organisations was based on the fact that these public organisations drive the economy of the nation. Besides, the government is the highest employer of labour, hence the presence of a number of male and female management staff in these organisations. The study comprised all male and female managers from Grade Level 12 and above in the different departments/units of the selected public organisations in southwestern.



## 1.7 Operational definitions of terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study to avoid ambiguity and vagueness.

**Communication style:** Communication style is the impression that others form about the selected management staff based on what they observe them saying and doing. It is the pattern of behaviour that can be observed. These styles are assertive communication style, passive-aggressive style, aggressive style and passive style of communication.

**Assertive style:** It is a communication style whereby a manager clearly and forthrightly stands up for his/her own right while maintaining respect for others in an attempt to care about the existing work relationship.

**Aggressive style:** This is a communication style in which a manager stands up for his/her right, feels superior, covertly or overtly violates the rights of others, and ignores their feelings, using intimidations and control tactics.

**Passive style:** This is a communication style in which a manager tends to value the rights of others as more important than his/her own to avoid confrontation.

**Passive-aggressive:** It is a combination of the traits of both the passive and the aggressive styles of communication. The manager appears to be passive but is indirectly aggressive.

**Gender Factors:** - Gender factors refer to the various aspects of public managers' gender stereotyping in terms of communication styles affecting their job performance with respect to communication styles. These are gender identity, gender labelling, determinative role, gender-linked conducts and peer preferences

**Gender Identity:** This refers to a person's private sense of, and subjective experience of his/her gender. It is one's private sense of being a man or a woman

**Gender Labelling:** This refers to the biologically assigned sex at birth. When a child is born, a quick look in between the legs will determine what label the child would carry for life.

**Gender-linked conducts:** It is engaging in conducts assumed to be for the sex label carried by the individual.

**Peer preference:** This refers to the act of identifying with members of the same gender group

**Determinative Role:** These are behavioural responsiveness to gender-related social norms.

**Management Staff:** This refers to a group of leaders/principal officers from Salary Grade Level 12 and above in the various organisations used in this study.

**Organisational Factors:** Organisational factors are elements and descriptors that define the public organisation's character, property, function, and impact. They are role ambiguity, work overload and organisational culture.

**Role ambiguity:** This is the perception of a lack of clear, consistent information about the expectations associated with one's position. It implies that norms for a specific position are vague, unclear and ill-defined.

**Work overload:** This refers to a situation when job demand exceeds human limits and people have to do too much, in too little time, with too few resources.

**Organisational culture:** Organisational culture refers to the design of an organisation, such as the division of product lines, market areas, functional responsibilities, and the reporting structure

**Personality traits:** These are enduring individual personality characteristics of the selected public managers that tend to lead to certain behaviours and are fundamental building blocks of each individual manager's behaviour and responses to issues and situations in public organisations. The personality traits in this study are; openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

**Openness to experience:** This character trait dimension includes imaginative, curious, and open-minded, creative, open to new and different ideas, and in touch with their feelings

**Conscientiousness:** The dimensions of this trait include high levels of thoughtfulness, with good impulse control and goal-directed behaviours. Those high in conscientiousness tend to be organised and mindful of details.

**Extraversion:** This trait is characterised by sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and excitability.

**Agreeableness:** This personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other pro-social behaviours.

**Neuroticism:** It refers to emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Every discipline has its frame of reference commonly known as a theory. It is the representation of social reality. This chapter attempts empirical review of all variables under the study as well as review of theories that served as anchor for the study. These are:

- ❖ Organisational communication;
- ❖ Communication styles;
- ❖ Assertive communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Aggressive communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Passive communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Passive-aggressive communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Gender and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ \Gender identity and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Gender labelling and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Gender-linked conducts and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Peer preference and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Determinative role and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Personality traits and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Openness and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Extraversion and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Agreeableness and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Neuroticism and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Conscientiousness and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Organisational factors and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Role ambiguity and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Work overload and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Organisational culture and communication style of management staff;
- ❖ Empirical studies;
- ❖ Theoretical framework; and
- ❖ Appraisal of Literature.

## **2.1 Literature Review**

The various literature related to the study were critically reviewed

### **2.1.1 Organisational Communication**

Communication is the means by which people are linked together and how they function to achieve a common goal. Communication is transactional, involving two or more people interacting within a defined environment.

Organisational communication is defined as the transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by the receiver. (Koontz 2001). Onuoha (1991) calls it “the process of transmitting meanings, ideas and information from sender to receiver. It has also been defined as any process in which people share information, ideas and feelings. It involves not only the spoken and written word, but also body language, personal mannerism and style — anything that adds meaning to a message (Hybels and Weaver, 2001). The study of organisational communication dates back to the middle of the last century (Miller,1999). Today, it is a well-established field and very important to library services. Some of the pioneer approaches originated in other fields, like sociology, psychology, business management, and industry, and provide the foundation upon which the field of organization was built.

Miller (1999) describes three schools of thought: the classical, human relations, and human resources approaches. These approaches are seen in organisations today. They are prescriptive by nature, describing how organisations should run rather than describing how they do run. These approaches are not designed as approaches to organizational communication, but have implications for communication in the organizational context.

There are various ways by which people communicate, including language, signals, facial expressions, music, body movements and gestures. In organisations, language, both oral and written, is the most frequent and important way people communicate. Non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and body language, is also important in any organisation. (Hybels and Weaver, 2001)

Communication is part of the process whereby rules, regulations, and responsibilities are designed and presented to members of the organisation. Communication should not be overlooked when considering ways to improve effectiveness and organisational goal achievement. Kreps (1990) states that, “communication in an organization serves to establish managerial control, provide workers with job instruction, and enable managers gather information for planning.” The functions of organisational communication include information sharing, feedback, integration to coordinate diverse functions, persuasion, emotion, and innovation (Champoux 1996).

Organisational communication is of the following two types:

i. **Formal communication**

Communication which follows hierarchy at the workplace is called formal communication. Employees communicate formally with each other to get work done within the desired time frame.

ii. **Informal communication**

Employees also communicate with each other just to know what is happening around. Such type of communication is called informal communication and it has nothing to do with the designation of individuals, level in the hierarchy and so on.

**Direction of communication flow**

i. **Upward communication**

The flow of information from employees to managers is called upward communication. Upward communication takes place when employees share their views with their managers on their nature of work, job responsibilities and how they feel about the organisation on the whole.

ii. **Downward communication**

Downward communication takes place when information flows from managers to the subordinates. Managers often give orders and directions to subordinates as to what to do and how to do various tasks. Such type of communication is called downward communication.

Communication in organisations encompasses all the means, formal and informal, by which information is passed up, down, and across the network of managers and employees in a business. These modes of communication may be used to disseminate official information between employees and management to exchange hearsay and rumours or anything in between. Organisational communication is a vast, fast-growing and multifaceted discipline, combining aspects of psychology, sociology, communication studies and management theory. The focus of the academic and professional literature has shifted significantly over the decades but has predominantly concentrated on private sector organisations.

The assumption that effective internal communication is essential to the effective functioning of any organisation is supported by a voluminous body of theoretical and empirical studies. Hall (1982) notes that effective communication should consist of “accurate information with the appropriate emotional overtones to all members who need the communication content. This assumes neither too much nor too little information is in the system and that it is clear from the outset who can utilise what is available”. Effective communication also results in a number of positive outcomes for managers.

These include increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and more commitment to organisational goals (Pincus, 1986; Clampitt and Downs, 1993). Further, communication practices that succeed in maintaining an informed and empowered workforce offer many benefits to staff such as improved morale and better working relationships (Brooks, Calliccoat and Siegerdt, 1979). Likert (1979) conceptualises communication satisfaction as an “intervening variable” of job satisfaction, influenced by “causal variables”, such as leadership strategies, organisational structure and climate. Subsequent studies have also reported that communication satisfaction plays an important role in overall job satisfaction (Walther, 1988). Although scholars recognise the importance of good communication

in organisations, in practice, the efficiency or inefficiency of communication systems and structures is often overlooked. Greenbaum and White (1976) note that “communication problems will always exist in complex organisations. The challenge for management is to “minimise the level of dysfunctional operation”.

Identifying the causes of poor communication is a complex task. Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) assert that the factors affecting communication are wide-ranging and often depend on multiple variables; “organisations systematically inhibit communication through hierarchical structures, power and status differences, the design and gendered differentiation of jobs, the nature of employment contracts, physical layouts, and rules.”

## **2.2 Communication styles**

Communication style is the impression that others form about others based on what they observe them saying and doing. It is the pattern of behaviour that can be observed and is characterised by the way people appear (or attempt to appear) in communication, the way they tend to relate to those they communicate with and how their messages are typically interpreted.

The satisfaction of subordinate and supervisor with their relationship is affected by each person’s communication styles and varying styles of communicating with other people have major impact on how people are perceived in their communication environment (Downs, Archer, McGrath, and Stafford, 1988). Norton’s (1978) conceptualisation of communication style is the most commonly used definition: “The way one verbally and para-verbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood”. It is about the way individuals perceive themselves communicating and interacting with others (Weaver, 2005). The study of Crawford and Strohkirch (2006) reveals that communication apprehension (level of fear or anxiety on communicating) has a significant effect on knowledge management overall, especially on information creation. Communication style as a communication behaviour includes the way one interacts to create expectation for future on both participants (Coeling and Cukr, 2000).

There are different communication styles being used by different managers. These are examined below:



### **2.2.1 The assertive communication style**

Assertive communication is born of high self-esteem. It is the healthiest and most effective style of communication - it is the sweet spot between being too aggressive and too passive. When we are assertive, we have the confidence to communicate without resorting to games or manipulation. We know our limits, and do not allow ourselves to be pushed beyond them just because someone else wants or needs something from us. Surprisingly however, this is the style most people use least. It has the following behavioural characteristics: achieving goals without hurting others, protective of own rights without violating the rights of others, socially and emotionally expressive, making one's choices and taking responsibility for them, asking directly for needs to be met, while accepting the possibility of rejection and accepting compliments. (Callister, 1992, Hefner, 1997)

### **2.2.2 The aggressive communication style**

This style is about winning – often at other people's expense. An aggressive person behaves as if his/her needs are the most important, as though they had more rights, and have more to contribute than other people. It is an ineffective communication style, as the content of the message may get lost because people are too busy reacting to the way it is delivered. The aggressive style has the following behavioural characteristics: frightening, threatening, loud, hostile, willing to achieve goals at the expense of others, out to "win", demanding, abrasive, belligerent, explosive, unpredictable, intimidating and bullying. (Callister, 1992, Hefner, 1997)

### **2.2.3 Passive communication style**

This is a style in which individuals have developed a pattern of avoiding expressing their opinions or feelings, protecting their rights, and identifying and meeting their needs. Passive communication is usually born of low self-esteem. These individuals believe: "I'm not worth taking care of." As a result, passive individuals do not respond overtly to hurtful or anger-inducing situations. Instead, they allow grievances and annoyances to mount, usually unaware of the build-up. But once they have reached their high tolerance threshold for unacceptable behaviour, they are prone to explosive outbursts, usually out of proportion, to the triggering incident. After the

outburst, however, they feel shame, guilt, and confusion, so they return to being passive. Passive communicators will often fail to assert for themselves, allow others deliberately or inadvertently infringe on their rights, fail to express their feelings, needs, or opinions, tend to speak softly or apologetically, and exhibit poor eye contact and slumped body posture. (Callister, 1992, Hefner, 1997)

The impact of passive communication is that such individuals often feel anxious because life seems out of their control, often feel depressed because they feel stuck and hopeless, often feel resentful (but are unaware of it) because their needs are not being met, often feel confused because they ignore their own feelings and are unable to mature because real issues are never addressed. A passive communicator will say, believe or behave like: "I'm unable to stand up for my rights"; "I don't know what my rights are"; "I get stepped on by everyone"; "I'm weak and unable to take care of myself"; and "People never consider my feelings."

#### **2.2.4 The Passive-aggressive communication style**

This is a style in which people appear passive on the surface but are actually acting out their anger in indirect or behind-the-scene ways. Prisoners of war often act in passive-aggressive ways in order to deal with an overwhelming lack of power. People who behave in this manner usually feel powerless and resentful, and express their feelings by subtly undermining the object (real or imagined) of their resentments – even if this ends up sabotaging themselves. The expression "cut off your nose to spite your face" is a perfect description of passive-aggressive behaviour. Behavioural characteristics of the passive-aggressive communicator includes indirectly aggressive; sarcastic; devious; unreliable; two-faced; that is, pleasant to people to their faces, but poisonous behind their backs (rumour, sabotage and so on.) People do things to actively harm the other person. (Callister, 1992, Hefner, 1997)

### **2.3 Gender factors and communication styles of management staff**

One of the areas in which gender has been widely applied is language. Gender, language and the relation between them are all social constructs or practices, under constant development by a group of individuals united in a common activity, for example, a family, a sports' team and colleagues. (Eckert and McConnel-Ginet, 1999; Claes, 1999).

Gender differences in communication have been one of the major areas of investigation. Researchers (Eakin and Eakin; 1978, Montgomery and Norton 1981) have articulated the importance of gender differences in communicative research. Communication researches which have investigated gender differences as a communication variable have focused on non-verbal cues (Isenhart 1980, Putman and McCallister 1980), folk linguistics (Bradley 1981), self-disclosure (Greenblatt, Hasenauer and Freimuth, 1980), styles of management and leadership (Baird and Bradley 1978; Bormann, Pratt and Putnam, 1978) language use (Liska, Mechling and Stathas, 1981), conflict resolution (Roloff and Greenberg, 1979) and public speaking (Infante and Fisher, 1978).

Gender has been defined as either physiological or psychological gender. It has been operationalised as physiological until Bem (1974) attempted to reconcile some of the conflicting results in gender research, and re-operationalised gender as a psychological orientation. He identified three types of psychological gender: (a) masculinity (primarily masculine psychological characteristics); (b) femininity (primarily feminine psychological characteristics); and (c) androgyny (both male and female psychological characteristics). Montgomery and Burgoon (1980) studied the effect of gender on persuasion and found Bem's psychological sex role concept to be a better predictor of acceptance of a persuasive message than was physiological gender.

Although many researchers have highlighted linguistic variations in male and female speech patterns (Spender, 1980; Tannen, 1990; 2001), differences in speech patterns may be attributable also to status, age, ethnicity, geographic location and education. Similarities and differences may be found between groups and within groups; the complexity means that overly simplistic gender attributions may be wide of the mark. Davis (1999) cited in Claes. (1999), claims that generalising about language use on the basis of socio-cultural constructs, such as gender or ethnicity, is problematic and can perpetuate a stereotype based on the assumption of group homogeneity. There are multiple interpretations of femininity and masculinity and behaviours can vary across time and context. For example, a woman in senior management may adopt a more masculine communication style in order to “fit in” with the dominant culture, sometimes becoming an "honorary male" in the process.

In addition, this co-option process may have its impact on men who may feel pressured to conform to the dominant image of an existing managerial model.

Other women survive using their communication styles in more female-friendly sections of the organisation, while there are others who continue to "rock the boat" (Peters, 2001), eventually deciding to leave in search of a more supportive environment. There are currently two approaches to perceived gender differences in communication styles: one stresses the dominance factor; the other stresses the cultural factor. The former focuses on the unequal distribution of power in society: men have more social power, which enables them define to and control situations. The latter stresses socialisation: men and women learn different communication strategies and develop distinct communication styles because they belong to different subcultures (Canary, Emmers-Sommer and Faulkner, 1997). As with most debates, the boundaries are blurred, and issues of power and culture intersect.

It is common for male speech to be taken as the norm, while that of female is assessed in relation to that of male. The female is seen as 'other', male as the accepted one or the normal one. "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her" (de Beauvoir, 1991; Cockburn, 1991). Female speech has been perceived as less rational, more sensitive, yet more straightforward in vocabulary and structure. At the same time, it is seen as more descriptive, with more interjections and tag questions. Female speech is seen as polite and may seem insecure, although hesitation or hedging is often used as a face-saving strategy, to relax the interchange, to encourage others and to avoid the imposition of status. Male language is often perceived as assertive and direct and tends to take dominance in mixed sex groupings. Female interchanges tend to be cooperative while male communication is often competitive. An assertive female is likely to be labelled as aggressive, whereas an assertive male is considered "good leadership material".

In recent times, women have made significant progress in obtaining responsible positions in organisations. Among the reasons for this development are laws governing fair employment practices, changing societal attitudes towards women in the workplace, and the desire of companies to project a favourable image by placing qualified women in managerial positions. In some organisations, women have difficulties in making it to the top.

Studies have shown that men and women have very different communication styles. Some experts have even described these different styles in completely different languages. Many authorities attribute communication differences to disparities in the way that men and women think. Women tend to think about the connections between people and events. They communicate in a narrative form that illustrates how things fit together. By contrast, men are more task-oriented; they are problem solvers. They think in a compartmentalised fashion and communicate similarly. They use fewer words and are mostly concerned with the bottom line as opposed to women that tend to use far more words and focus on the supporting story. Differences in communication styles between the genders often lead to misunderstandings. When people are misunderstood, they are likely to become frustrated, which can lead to defensiveness and, in some cases, even hostility. Many of the effects of ineffective communication lead to increased stress levels, which lead to greater incidence of depression and disease, including heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood sugar and even headaches (Warner, 2010).

Whether its nature or nurture, there may be individuals who possess almost none of the traits attributed to their gender. They may have been teased, harassed or excluded from things because of this, which is a reason it is important to know and understand male and female cultural norms but also recognise that many people do not fit the mould. Research has shown that different ways of thinking, processing, perceiving and behaving is present in at least 55% of the male and female population, that leaves 45% that may not fit the description (Lieberman, 2002).

### **2.3:1 Gender identity and communication styles of management staff**

Gender identity is a person's private sense of, and subjective experience of his/her gender. This is generally described as one's private sense of being a man or a woman, consisting primarily of the acceptance of membership into a category of people: male or female. All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a social identity in relation to other members of society. In most societies, there is a basic division between gender attributes assigned to male and female. In all societies, some individuals do not identify with some (or all) of the aspects of gender assigned their biological sex.

Gender identity is postulated as the basic organiser and regulator of children's gender learning (Kohlberg, 1966). Children develop the stereotypic conceptions of gender from what they see and hear around them. Once they achieve gender constancy - the belief that their own gender is fixed and irreversible - they positively value their gender identity and seek to behave only in ways that are congruent with that conception. Gender identity requires the simple ability to label oneself as a boy or girl and others as a boy, girl, man, or woman.

While many people may think that gender identity develops when a child is going through puberty, gender identity in children generally begins to form at age three or between the ages of four and six. It is affected by influence of others, social interactions, and a child's personal interest. Understanding gender can be broken down into four parts: understanding the concept of gender; learning gender role standards and stereotypes; identifying with parents; and forming gender preference. A three-year old can identify self as a boy or a girl, though he/she does not yet know gender is permanent. Gender identity is formed as children search for social cues and display approval for others based upon the gender with which the child identifies, though the concept is very fluid among young children. Studies suggest that children develop gender identity in three distinct stages: as toddlers and preschoolers, they learn about defined characteristics, which are socialised aspects of gender; the second stage is consolidation, in which identity becomes rigid, around the ages of five to seven years; after this "peak of rigidity," fluidity returns and socially defined gender roles relax somewhat.

Although the term "gender identity" was originally a medical term used to explain sex-reassignment surgery to the public, it is most often found in psychology today, often as core gender identity. Basic gender identity is usually formed by age three and is extremely difficult to change after that. Although the formation of gender identity is not completely understood, many factors have been suggested as influencing its development. Biological factors that may influence gender identity include pre and post-natal hormone levels and genetic make-up. Social factors which may influence gender identity include ideas regarding gender roles conveyed by family, authority figures, mass media, and other influential people in a child's life.

Another factor that has a significant role in the process of gender identity is language; there are ways that certain words are associated with specific genders.

"The relationship between language and gender has largely reflected how linguistic practices, among other kinds of practices, are used in the construction of social identities relating to issues of masculinity and femininity" (Adegoju, 2000). So, children, while learning a language, learn to separate masculine and feminine characteristics and unconsciously adjust their behaviour to these predetermined roles. Children are often shaped and moulded by the people surrounding them by trying to imitate and follow. One's gender identity is also influenced by the social learning theory, which assumes that children develop their gender identity through observing and imitating gender-linked behaviours, and then being rewarded or punished for behaving that way. In some cases, a person's gender identity may be inconsistent with his/her biological sex characteristics, resulting in such an individual dressing and/or behaving in a way perceived by others as being outside cultural gender norms; these gender expressions may be described as gender variant or transgender

Gender identity is distinct from the term sexual-orientation. It refers to a person's innate, deeply felt psychological identification as male or female, which may or may not correspond to the person's body or designated sex at birth (meaning what sex was originally listed on a person's birth certificate. Indeed, no other dichotomy in human experience appears to have as many entities linked to it as does the distinction between female and male (Bem, 1981).

### **2.3:2 Gender labelling and communication styles of management staff**

When a child is born, a quick glance between the legs determines the gender label he/she will carry for life. Traditionally, leadership has been equated with masculinity. Managerial jobs, at least in business and at senior levels, have been defined as a matter of instrumentality, autonomy, result-orientation, and so on, something not particularly much in line with what is broadly assumed to be typical for females. Today, however, there seems to be a broad interest in leadership being more participatory, non-hierarchical, flexible and group-oriented. These new ideas on leadership are often seen by students of gender as indicating a feminine

orientation. Researchers have argued that it is necessary to critically discuss the whole idea of labelling leadership as masculine or feminine and that we should be very careful and potentially aware of the unfortunate consequences when we use gender labels. Constructing leadership as feminine may be of some value as a contrast to conventional ideas on leadership and management but may also create a misleading impression of women's orientation to leadership as well as reproducing stereotypes and the traditional gender division of labour.

As children become more cognitively adept, their knowledge of gender extends beyond nonverbal categorization of people and objects, to explicit labeling of people, objects, and styles of behaviour according to gender. As children begin to comprehend speech, they notice that verbal labelling in masculine and feminine terms is used extensively by those around them. It does not take them long to learn that children are characterized as boys and girls, and adults as mothers and fathers, women and men. Gender labelling does not only give salience to sorting people on the basis of gender, but also aggregates the features and activities that characterise each gender.

Gender labelling takes on considerable importance because a great deal depends on it. It highlights gender as an important category for viewing the world, and as the basis for categorizing oneself. Once such self-categorisation occurs, the label takes on added significance, especially as children increasingly recognize that the social world around them is heavily structured around this categorical differentiation. One's gender status makes a big difference. It carries enormous significance for dress and play, the skills cultivated, the occupations pursued, the functions performed in family life, and the nature of one's leisure pursuits and social relationships.

### **2.3:3 Gender-linked conducts and Communication styles of management Staff**

Adults may be fully aware of gender stereotypes but not increase their gender-linked conducts. A woman may be a hard-driving manager while at work but a traditionalist in the functions at home. The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct relies on gender-label matching in which children want to be like others of their own sex. For example, dolls are labelled "'for girls' and 'I am a girl' which means 'dolls are for me'" (Martin and Halverson,1981).



It involves engaging in conducts assumed to be for the sex label carried by the individual. Parents play an active role in setting the course of their children's gender development by structuring, channelling, modelling, labelling and reacting evaluatively to gender-linked conduct. As children's verbal and cognitive capabilities increase, parents broaden the conception of gender by instructing their children about gender-linked styles of conduct and roles that extend beyond merely classifying objects, people, and discrete activities into male and female categories. Behavioural styles represent clusters of attributes organized in a coherent way. Girls are encouraged to be nurturant and polite and boys to be adventurous and independent (Huston, 1983; Zahn-Waxler, Cole, and Barrett, 1991).

Knowledge of gender stereotypes, which are generalized preconceptions about the attributes of males and females, is similarly unrelated to gender-linked conduct (Huston, 1983; Signorella, 1987; Martin, 1993). Children's preferences for gendered activities emerge before they know the gender linkage of such activities (Blakemore, Larue and Olejnik, 1979; Martin, 1990; Perry, White, and Perry, 1984; Weinraub et al., 1984)

#### **2.3:4 Peer preference and communication styles of management staff**

The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct relies on gender-label matching in which children want to be like others of their own sex; for example, dolls are labelled "'for girls' and 'I am a girl' which means 'dolls are for me'" (Martin and Halverson, 1981). Parents play an active role in structuring peer associations, fostering ties that are to their liking and discouraging those that they do not favour. Children who adopt parental values and standards choose friends on the basis of parental values (Bandura and Walters, 1959). Peer preference is a product of parental influence arising from gender labelling, 'you are a girl, don't play with boys' (Fagot and Leinbach, 1989)

#### **2.3:5 Determinative role and communication styles of management staff**

These are behavioural responsiveness to gender-related norms (Martins, 2002) Results of empirical tests call into question the determinative role of gender schema. The evidence linking gender labelling to activity and peer preferences is mixed at best. A few studies have found a link (Fagot and Leinbach,1989), some report

conflicting results across different measures of gender-linked conduct (Martin, 1990), others have failed to find any link at all (Fagot, 1985; Fagot, Leinbach, and Hagen, 1986). Even in the studies that report a relationship, it remains to be determined whether gender labelling and gender-linked preferences are causally linked or are merely co-effects of social influences and cognitive abilities.

#### **2.4 Personality traits**

Personality theorists and researchers have claimed that individuals do not and cannot react to situations in the same way. Some biological and genetic factors as well as life experiences account for this. Each individual has some unified and enduring core characteristics called “personality traits”. Personality traits are enduring individual personality characteristics that tend to lead to certain behaviours and are fundamental building blocks of each individual behaviour and responses to issues and situations. Although there are still considerable debates on what the key factors of personality traits are, but most personality theorists have agreed on a handful of factors considered as the most important dimensions of personality. (McCrae and Costa, 2003). These are referred to as the “Big Five factors” of personality- openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (emotional stability). The claim of the five-factor theorists is that these factors, singly or in combination, can be found in virtually all personalities. A number of authors have compiled tables showing the putative assignment of standard personality scales or factors to the five (Hogan, 1975; Digman, 1990)

Hogan (1987) notes that the five-factor model, perhaps for the first time, gives personality psychology a replicable phenomenon to be explained. It also provides a set of tools that can be used by psychologists in many different areas. Several new instruments which provide operationalisations of the model have been published. Rational and empirical methods for interpreting existing instruments in this framework have been proposed (McCrae, Piedmont, and Costa, 1990).

Theories of personality have been remarkably diverse, and it might have been anticipated that the questionnaire scales designed to operationalise them would show little resemblance to each other. There is considerable redundancy in what they measure. In particular, many scales measure the chronic negative emotions that are of such great concern to psychiatrists and clinical psychologists, and many others deal with the interpersonal activity so important for social psychologists. Eysenck

institutionalised these two dimensions as N (Neuroticism) and E (Extraversion), and provided useful measures (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964; 1975). These two factors were central dimensions of personality, to be found in a wide variety of instruments. But it also became clear that these two dimensions did not exhaust the full range of personality characteristics.

In 1974, Tellegen and Atkinson proposed that there was a third broad domain of traits, all related to each other and all independent of N and E; they called this "Openness to Absorbing and Self-Altering Experience," or Absorption. Costa and McCrae (1976) proposed a similar dimension of Openness to Experience. Both sets of researchers admired Eysenck's strategy of looking for broad themes by which to organize groups of traits, and sought to extend them to new dimensions. By explaining as much as possible in terms of established factors, and then looking for commonalities in what remained unexplained, researchers could proceed to a systematic mapping of personality traits. Later, the lexical and questionnaire traditions merged, leading to the contemporary FFM (Digman, 1979; Hogan, 1983; McCrae and Costa, 1985).

The big-five trait structure provides a better, coherent and unified framework for the understanding of people's predictive behaviours. Personality theorists are of the opinion that consistency in individual personality traits depend on the kind of person the individual is, situations, and behaviours sampled. They assert that trait (person) and situations must be taken into account to understand the individuals (McCrae and Costa, 1993)

#### **2.4:1 Personality traits and communication styles of management staff**

##### **2.4:1.1 Openness and communication styles of management staff**

Openness is one of the personality traits of the big five personality theory. It indicates how open-minded a person is. Persons with a high level of openness to experience in a personality test enjoy trying new things. They are imaginative, curious, and open-minded. Individuals who are low in openness to experience would rather not try new things. They are close-minded, literal and enjoy having a routine. Openness is a general appreciation for art, unusual ideas, curiosity and imagination. This trait distinguishes people who are more imaginative from those who are down-

to-earth. People who are more open tend to be more creative, more likely to be open to new and different ideas and more in-touch with his/her feelings.

Individuals who score low in openness on a career test are generally more closed-off, resistant to change, and analytical. The traits of the openness domain are imagination, artistic interests, emotionality, adventurousness, intellect and liberalism. Having a high level of openness is important in jobs that require creative thinking and a flexible attitude. Jobs such as advertising, research, and other artistic occupations all benefit from high openness. A person who scores low in openness on a career test may excel in jobs that involve routine work and do not require creativity.

#### **2.4:1.2 Extraversion and communication styles of management staff**

Extraversion is the tendency to seek out the company and stimulation of other people. The trait is marked by pronounced engagement with the external world. These individuals thrive on excitement, and are enthusiastic, action-oriented people. They like to be the centre of attention in groups. The traits of the extraversion domain are friendliness, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity level, excitement-seeking and cheerfulness.

Different jobs require different levels of extraversion. A high level of extraversion may be useful for jobs that require a great deal of interaction with other people, like public relations, teaching, and sales. Positions that are more focused on working independently and alone may be more suited to individuals with a lower level of extraversion. In the big-five theory of personality, extraversion is one of the five core traits believed to make up human personality. Extraversion is characterised by sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and excitability. People high in extraversion tend to seek social stimulation and opportunities to engage with others. These individuals are often described as being full of life, energy and positivity. In group situations, extraverts are likely to talk often and assert themselves.

Introverts, on the other hand, are people low in extraversion. They tend to be quiet, reserved and less involved in social situations. It is important to note that introversion and shyness are not the same thing. People low in extraversion are not afraid of social situations. They simply prefer to spend more time alone and do not

need high social stimulation. Extraversion is often marked by a number of different sub-traits. Some of these include: warmth, seeking novelty and excitement, gregariousness, assertiveness, cheerfulness, talkativeness, being the centre of attention and being action-oriented.

Extraverts also have a tendency to jump into an intense discussion without allowing time for introverts to process the topic. This can result in a negative spiral, with the extravert becoming more intense as the introvert hesitates, wondering what to say. You can also notice the differences in how extraverts and introverts handle interruptions. Extraverts usually do not mind interruptions, and often switch between tasks to keep their interest level high, although they can be impatient with interruptions when on a deadline (Dunning, 2010).

The cadence of conversations differs as well. Introverts are often comfortable with silence and may take a few seconds to gather thoughts before speaking. Extraverts, on the other hand, tend to fill silence with words. They can get excited by a topic and might finish the introvert's sentences or interrupt to share information. These behaviours interfere with the opportunity to communicate. Extraverts may be comfortable talking to other extraverts, interrupting and finishing each other's sentences. However, two extraverts may compete for air space.

High levels of extraversion can be particularly well-suited to jobs that require a great deal of interaction with other people. Teaching, sales, marketing, public relations, and politics are all jobs in which an extravert might do well. Introverts prefer less social interaction. So jobs that require lots of independent work are often ideal. Writing, computer programming, engineering and accounting are all jobs that might appeal to a person low in extraversion.

Less extraverted managers may listen more carefully to employees' proactive ideas and suggestions. Whereas highly extraverted individuals tend to be assertive and confident in building visions and expressing ideas, individuals low in extraversion tend to be more quiet and more reserved (Gosling, John, Craik, and Robins, 1998; Fleeson, 2001). Research indicates that on average, less extraverted individuals speak more quietly than their highly extraverted counterparts. Scherer (1978) notes that less extraverted managers communication styles leave more room for employees to be

proactive. Further, less extraverted individuals tend to spend more time listening and less time talking (Ramsay, 1966), and feel more apprehensive about initiating communication in groups (Opt and Loffredo, 2000) and speaking in public (Feingold, 1983). As a result, less extraverted leaders may send more verbal and non-verbal signals such that they are open to proactivity, and may take more time to hear and consider ideas and suggestions. Of course, leaders are likely to derive the greatest benefits from these proactive behaviours when the ideas underlying them are relevant to organisational goals (Frese and Fay, 2001).

Generally, even when employees' proactive behaviours are not relevant to organisational goals, there are two reasons to believe that less extraverted leaders will respond to them in ways that enhance group performance. First, because less extraverted leaders listen more carefully, employees will be more likely to feel that their ideas are considered and appreciated, which will enhance and sustain their motivations to contribute (McFarlin and Sweeney, 1996). Second, even if employees' proactive suggestions are misguided, they can still facilitate constructive changes. Employees' proactive behaviours can introduce a novel perspective, which may "stimulate divergent attention and thought. As a result, even when they are wrong they contribute to the detection of novel solutions and decisions that, on balance, are qualitatively better" (Nemeth, 1986). Accordingly, since less extraverted management may be more willing to listen to divergent opinions and perspectives, they may be more capable of using misguided ideas constructively, reinforcing to employees that their ideas are valued.

It is proposed that when employees are proactive, more extraverted managers will respond less receptively to ideas and suggestions. In turn, perceiving a lack of management receptiveness will discourage employees from working hard on their behalf. From the standpoint of organisational support theory (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), when employees feel that their contributions are valued by their managers, they reciprocate by working harder. Feeling valued strengthens employees' perceived obligations to contribute, increases their identification with their management, and enhances their confidence that their contributions will be worthwhile and rewarded (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Research has shown that when employees feel that their contributions are valued, they respond by increasing their effort (Grant, 1996; Grant and Gino, 2010). When employees perceive that

management is not receptive to their contributions, they feel less valued and thus less motivated to reciprocate.

Consequently, the prediction is that the moderating effect of employee proactivity on the relationship between managers' extraversion and group performance will be mediated by employees' perceptions of management's receptivity. When employees are proactive, highly extraverted managers will respond less receptively, which will decrease employees' motivation to perform effectively.

#### **2.4:1.4 Agreeableness and communication styles of management staff**

Agreeableness is the tendency to be compassionate and cooperative with others. The trait reflects individual differences for social harmony. Agreeable individuals, as the name suggests, generally get along with others. They generally have an optimistic view of human nature. This personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other pro-social behaviours. A person with a high level of agreeableness in a personality test is usually warm, friendly, and tactful. Individuals who scores low on agreeableness may put their interests above those of others. They tend to be distant, unfriendly, and uncooperative.

Social harmony is an important goal for individuals that score high on agreeableness in a career test. Agreeable individuals find it important to get along with others. They are willing to put aside their interests for other people. These individuals are helpful, friendly, considerate, and generous. Their basic belief is that people are usually decent, honest, and trustworthy. Some of the traits of the agreeableness domain are trust, morality, altruism, cooperation, modesty and sympathy. Agreeableness is an obvious advantage for building teams and maintaining harmony on the work floor. It is a fact that agreeable people are more likeable than disagreeable people. However, agreeableness may not be useful in some occupational situations that require difficult or objective decisions. People who score low on agreeableness in a personality test often make excellent scientists, critics, or soldiers.

#### **2.4:1.5 Neuroticism and communication styles of management staff**

Neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, depression or anxiety. Individuals high in this trait tend to experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness. They are highly reactive in

stressful situations and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening or minor situations as too difficult or as impossible. Emotional stability or neuroticism is one of the five personality traits of the big-five personality theory. Emotional stability refers to a person's ability to remain stable and balanced. At the other end of the scale, a person who is high in neuroticism has a tendency to easily experience negative emotions. Neuroticism is similar but not identical to being neurotic in the Freudian sense. Some psychologists prefer to call neuroticism by the term emotional stability to differentiate it from the term neurotic in a career test.

People who score high in emotional stability (low in neuroticism) on a career test react less emotionally and are less easily upset. They tend to be emotionally stable, calm, and do not constantly experience negative feelings. The fact that these individuals are free from experiencing negative feelings does not mean that they experience a lot of positive feelings. The latter is a trait of the extraversion trait. People who score high in neuroticism are very emotionally reactive. They will have an emotional response to events that would not affect most people. High scorers in neuroticism on a personality test has a greater chance of feeling threatened or being in a bad mood in a normal situation. They may find it difficult to think clearly and cope with stress. The traits of the emotional stability are anxiety, anger, depression, self-consciousness, immoderation and vulnerability

Persons who has a high level of emotional stability is preferred in most professions because they have more control over their emotions at work. Employees with low emotional stability may be more easily distracted from work, by deadlines, personal situations and pressure.

#### **2.4:1.6 Conscientiousness and communication styles of management staff**

Conscientiousness is a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully and aim for achievement. This trait shows a preference for planned rather than spontaneous behaviour. Conscientious individuals achieve high levels of success through purposive planning and persistence. Common features of this dimension include high levels of thoughtfulness, with good impulse control and goal-directed behaviours. Those high in conscientiousness tend to be organised and mindful of details. A person scoring high in conscientiousness usually has a high level of self-discipline. These



individuals prefer to follow a plan, rather than act spontaneously. Their methodical planning and perseverance usually makes them highly successful in their chosen occupations.

Conscientiousness is about how a person controls, regulates, and directs his/her impulses. Individuals with a high level of conscientiousness on a career test are good at formulating long-range goals, organising and planning routes to these goals, and working consistently to achieve them, despite the short-term obstacles they may encounter. Other people usually perceive a conscientious personality type as a responsible and reliable person. Individuals who score high in conscientiousness on a personality test can be compulsive perfectionists and workaholics. They might also be seen as being boring or inflexible. The traits of conscientiousness are self-efficacy, orderliness, dutifulness, achievement-striving, self-discipline and cautiousness

A high score of conscientiousness in a career test is an important indicator of success. One reason is that this domain includes the trait known as need for achievement. These individuals are dependable, organised, and persevere, which means that they will accomplish their professional goals. Research shows that the conscientiousness personality trait relates to job performance across different types of occupations. This means that a person who scores high in conscientiousness on a personality test will be better suited to perform a job. With today's emphasis on team-based and collaborative management and decision-making, communication can make or break an organisation (Elving, 2005).

## **2.5 Organisational factors and communication styles of management staff**

Knowledge management process is about sharing, collaboration and making the best possible use of a strategic resource (Bollinger and Smith, 2001). Knowledge sharing is the process where individuals mutually exchange their implicit and explicit knowledge and jointly create new knowledge (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Knowledge sharing is also the most important ingredient of innovation (Bhirud, Rodrigues and Desai, 2005). Any knowledge sharing process consists of two parts - donating and collecting. Knowledge donating can be defined as "communicating to others what one's personal intellectual capital", whereas knowledge collecting is

defined as “consulting colleagues in order to get them share their intellectual capital” (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004).

Communication is at the centre of any complex, modern organisation (Thomas, 2001). It is accepted that communication has effects on individuals’ attitudes towards the organisation. Organisational communication is considered as the social glue (Greenberg and Baron, 2003). Communication helps create shared meaning, the norms, values and culture of the organisation (Wiesenfeld, Raghuram and Garud 1998). Some of the practices for such social notion can be innovation days, storytelling, best practices day, internal conference, and so on (Bhirud, Rodrigues and Desai, 2005). In a culture where the knowledge value is recognised, availability of information, its sharing and flows, IT infrastructure, personal networking, system thinking, leadership, communication climate, problem-solving, training and many other factors can be supportive factors for successful learning (Ali, Pascoe, and Warne, 2002). Organisational culture recognizing the value of knowledge allows personal contact that leads to capturing tacit knowledge. Thus, it can be transferred (Davenport and Prusack, 1998).

Knowledge is a human act; it is the residue of thinking; is created in the present moment; belongs to communities; circulates through communication in many ways; and it is created at the boundaries of old (McDermott, 1999). Sharing knowledge is crucial since its value and synergy are increased by sharing with others (Stewart, 1997; Yeniceri and Ince, 2005). Such sharing promotes common identity, mutual trust and organisational learning (Schein, 1993). Sharing tacit knowledge is possible through joint activities such as being together, spending time together, living in the same environment, known as socialisation stage for knowledge conversion (Nonaka and Konno, 1998). In other words, knowledge sharing depends on the quality of conversations, formally or informally (Davenport & Prusack, 1998). In case of accessing innovative thinking, building trust and facilitating experience sharing, an expressive communication in informal setting is necessary, contrary to the instrumental communication that is necessary for accomplishing task-related immediate organisational goals (Thomas, 2001).

Knowledge sharing is a form of communication (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Knowledge transferring between individuals in organisations requires

communication (Sveiby, 2000). Communication climate includes communicative elements of a work environment, such as judgements about the receptivity of management to employee communication, or the trust on information being disseminated in the organisation (Guzley, 1992). Listening, persuading, teaching, learning, presenting, collaborating and coordinating are factors of communication and partnering skills as one of the five competencies in knowledge organisations (Davenport *et al*, 2001). Without an environment that encourages sharing, knowledge sharing expectations fail (DeTienne and Jackson, 2001).

It is reasonable to distinguish communication climates as supportive and defensive (Larsen and Folgero, 1993). Supportive communication climate can be characterised by “open exchange of information, accessibility of co-workers, confirming and cooperative interactions and an overall culture of sharing knowledge” (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Supportive communication climate was found necessary for the generation, sharing and continual existence of organisational knowledge (Ali, Pascoe, and Warne, 2002). Communication climate is a crucial variable in explaining knowledge sharing. Supportive communication has positive impact on knowledge donating and collecting. It is a central condition for successful knowledge sharing (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Since employees having a strong identification with their organisations show a supportive attitude (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Dutton *et al*, 1994; Smidts *et al*, 2001), the influence of communication aspects are noteworthy. Communication climate is only one of the multi-dimensions of employee communication in organisations (Downs and Hazen, 1977). Employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with varying degrees on each dimension (Clampitt and Downs, 1993; Smidts, Pruyn, and Van Riel, 2001).

### **2.5:1 Role ambiguity and communication styles of management staff**

Role ambiguity implies that norms for a specific position are vague, unclear and ill-defined. Actors disagree on role expectations, not because there is role conflict but because role expectations are unclear. Role ambiguity has been defined as the perception of lack of clear, consistent information about the expectations associated with one's position (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal, 1964). The conceptual framework set forth by these scholars in organisational psychology has helped advance the foundation for assessing role ambiguity within the sport domain.

Beauchamp, Bray, Eys, and Carron (2002) adapted this framework to the interdependent team sport environment. Their model suggests that role ambiguity is reflected by the extent to which an athlete is clear about the scope of his or her role responsibilities; the behaviour required to fulfil those role responsibilities; how he or she is being evaluated for the performance of role responsibilities; and the consequences of not fulfilling role responsibilities. Further, role ambiguity as a multidimensional construct was proposed to exist in both physical contexts of interactive sport play: offence and defence (Beauchamp, 2002).

Effective intra-team communication has been operationally defined to include both verbal and non-verbal communication with regard to task and social factors. Sullivan and Feltz (2003) posit that for effective intra-team communication to exist within a team setting, communication between its members will include an appropriate amount of verbal and non verbal exchanges of acceptance, distinctiveness, negative and positive conflict. Acceptance refers to communication of consideration and appreciation between teammates. Distinctiveness means to the communication of a shared, but unique identity between team members.

Distinctiveness would include verbal (for example, nicknames, team exclusive slang) and non-verbal (such as high-fives, body language) exchanges. Negative conflict refers to communication dealing with interpersonal differences that are emotional and confrontational in nature. In contrast, positive conflict refers to communications that involve integrative ways of dealing with interpersonal differences that are non-emotional, constructive, and proactive. These latter two types of communication may also include verbal and non-verbal exchanges.

### **2.5:2 Work overload and communication styles of management staff**

Work overload occurs when job demand exceeds human limits and people have to do too much, in too little time, with too few resources. It is characterised by a combination of long and difficult working hours; unreasonable workloads; pressure to work unwanted overtime (paid and unpaid); less breaks, days off and holidays; faster, more pressured work pace; increased, excessive performance monitoring, unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved with the available time and resource; and additional, often inappropriate, tasks imposed on top of 'core' workload (more than one job).

When overload is a chronic condition, not an occasional emergence; there is little opportunity to recover, rest, and restore balance. This relates not only to the amount of work, but also the capacity to do work. It is quantitative and qualitative. Many hours of a well-defined job in full concentration may do more good to one's mental state than pure idleness. Even one hour of chaos can wreak havoc on one's ability to focus, rest in the night, communicate with peers, and so on. When one gets down to work, one subconsciously defines a set of expectations for one's working day. If these all go to ruin because of factors beyond one's control, one ends up with unmet expectations and stress.

Work overload affects an employee, but can also have an effect on the employee's family. Changes in the roles of couples at work and in the home are increasing the workload placed on them. As a result, married men and women are more likely to experience anxiety and depression than single men and women. (National campaign on work overload). This added stress has important effect on a family. There are two major concerns: first, the time couples should be spending with their children is spent working instead; second, there is no time for the couple to spend in developing their relationship as a couple. Work overload has a negative effect on the company, employers and employees. This results in employee absenteeism, with a direct affect on the productivity of a company (Quick, Nelson, and Quick, 1990).

### **2.5:3 Organisational culture and communication styles of management staff**

An organisational culture refers to the design of an organisation, such as the division of product lines, market areas, functional responsibilities, and the reporting structure of these entities. Managers within an organisation determine the organisational structure for optimal effectiveness and seek efficiencies in running operations.

How do leaders decide which organisational culture is best for an organisation at a particular point in time? Some leaders settle on one organisational structure and maintain this for years. Other leaders perceive that constantly changing external factors require them to redesign the organisational structure in response, prompting

many “reorganisations” and changing the structure, roles, and responsibilities of employees often.

Historically, many different organisational cultures have been used from tribal, agricultural, and family-business organisational structures to hierarchical and flatter structures. In today’s business world, complex problems cannot be solved by one person in a top-down (hierarchical) organisational structure. Because of the forces of change on the organisation and the complexity of the decisions, today’s business managers need partnership and collaboration to effectively lead their organisations. To be a strategic consultant and leader, professionals should have a sound understanding of different types of organisational cultures and leadership models, which provide them with a bird’s eye view of the dynamics involved in generating and sustaining an organisation’s culture and success.

## **2.7 Empirical studies**

Many studies have been carried out on gender and communication. For example, Hall (2002) proposes that effective communication should consist of “accurate information with the appropriate emotional overtones to all members who need the communication content”. Huston (1983), Signorella, (1987) and Martin (1993) contend that knowledge of gender stereotypes, which are generalised preconceptions about the attributes of males and females, is similarly unrelated to gender-linked conduct. Children’s preferences for gendered activities emerge before they know the gender linkage of such activities (Blakemore, Larue and Olejnik, 1979; Perry, White, and Perry, 1984; Martin, 1993).

Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) assert that the factors affecting communication are wide-ranging and often depend on multiple variables; “organisations systematically inhibit communication through hierarchical structures, power and status differences, the design and gendered differentiation of jobs, the nature of employment contracts, physical layouts, and rules”. The social psychological approaches advanced by Bem, Markus and others centre mainly on individual differences in gender schematic processing of information (Bem, 1981; Markus, Crane, Bernstein, and Siladi, 1982).

The genetic factors make low to moderate contribution to personality attributes (Plomin and Daniels, 1987; and Scarr, 1992; Plomin, Chipuer, and

Neiderhiser, 1994). A woman may be a hard-driving manager in the workplace but a traditionalist in the functions performed in the home. Bandura (1999) opines that gender differences in aggression are much smaller than claimed and further shrink under certain environmental conditions. According to Martin and Halverson (1981), once the schema is developed, children are expected to behave in ways consistent with traditional gender roles. The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct relies on gender-label matching in which children desire to be like others of their own sex. For example, dolls are labelled "for girls" and "I am a girl" which means "dolls are for me"

Liberal feminists explain this inequality in terms of differential opportunities between these sexes. This can be attributed to the patriarchal nature of society that has been transferred from wider society into organisations. O'Donnell (1993) supports this notion by arguing that the organisational culture is usually a mirror of the dominant culture in mainstream society. Because these female managers find themselves working in a masculine environment, they feel the pressure to adopt a more masculine role in an attempt to become more credible. Most recurring challenges faced by women in management positions are those posed by the context within which managerial women operate. Management positions are stereotyped as a male domain and, as part of gender conformity; men are more likely to pursue manager-oriented tasks compared with their female counterparts.

## **2.8 Theoretical framework**

A theory may be regarded as an analytical or conceptual analogy of issues, events or ideas that are potentially important in the explanation of observed relationships in a given phenomena. Thus, a theoretical framework provides the necessary explanatory propositions to which a study is anchored.

This section, sketches an abstract picture of the interdependent relationships among the three independent variables of personality traits, gender and organisational factors and how they impinge on the independent variable of communication styles using three major theories. These are text and communication theory, communication accommodation theory and the gender schema theory.

### **2.8.1 Text and conversation theory**

Text and conversation theory is a theory in the field of organisational communication illustrating how communication makes up an organisation. In the theory's simplest explanation, an organisation is created and defined by communication. Communication "is" the organisation and the organisation exists because communication takes place. The theory is built on the notion that an organisation is not seen as a physical unit holding communication; text and conversation theory puts communication processes at the heart of organisational communication and postulates that an organisation does not contain communication as a "causal influence," but is formed by the communication within. This theory is not intended for direct application, but rather to explain how communication exists. The theory provides a framework for better understanding of organisational communication.

Since the foundation of organisations is in communication, an organisation cannot exist without communication, and the organisation is defined as the result of communications happening within its context. Communications begin with individuals within the organisation discussing beliefs, goals, structures, plans and relationships. These communicators achieve this through constant development, delivery, and translation of "text and conversation." The foundation of this theory is the concepts of text and conversation. Text is defined as the content of interaction, or what is said in an interaction. Text is the meaning made available to individuals through face-to-face or electronic mode of communication. Conversation is defined as what is happening behaviourally between two or more participants in the communication process. Conversation is the exchange or interaction itself.

The process of the text and conversation exchange is reciprocal; text needs conversation and vice versa for the process of communication to occur. Text, or content, must have context to be effective; and conversation, or discourse, needs to have a beginning, middle and end. Individuals create the beginning, middle and end by using punctuation, bracketing or framing. When conversation is coupled with text, or meaning, communication occurs. Taylor submits that this process is a process of: translation of text to conversation and the translation of conversation into text. The text and conversation theory was introduced by James R. Taylor in 1996. He avers



that "organisation emerges in communication, which thus furnishes not only the site of its appearance to its members, but also the surface on which members read the meaning of the organisation to them." According to him, communication is the "site and emergence of organisation."

The text and conversation theory essentially relates to the content and the process of communication and is, therefore, relevant to this research. The content of the process of communication defines the style of communication. Communication style is a major variable in this study; and as Taylor observes, organisations are molded by communication which take on different styles.

### **2.8.2 Communication accommodation theory**

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) was developed by Howard Giles (1973). It argues that "when people interact they adjust their speech, their vocal patterns and their gestures, to accommodate others". It explores the various reasons why individuals emphasise or minimise the social differences between them and their interlocutors through verbal and non-verbal communication. This theory is concerned with the links between "language, context and identity". It focuses on both the inter-group and inter-personal factors that will lead to accommodation as well as the ways in which power, macro and micro-context concerns affect communication behaviours. There are two main accommodation processes described by this theory, namely convergence and divergence. Convergence refers to the strategies through which individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviours, to reduce social differences. Divergence refers to the instances in which individuals accentuate the speech and non-verbal differences between them and their interlocutors to emphasise social differences. Sometimes when individuals try to engage in convergence, they can end up over-accommodating and, despite their good intentions, their convergence can be seen as condescending.

The communication accommodation theory developed by Howard Giles, a professor of communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara, evolved from the speech accommodation theory (SAT), but could be traced back to Giles' (1973) accent mobility model. The SAT was developed to demonstrate the value of social psychological concepts to understanding the dynamics of speech. It sought to

explain “the motivations underlying certain shifts in people’s speech styles during social encounters and some of the social consequences arising from them”. Particularly, it focuses on the cognitive and affective processes underlying individuals’ convergence and divergence through speech. The communication accommodation theory has broadened this theory to include not only speech but also the “non-verbal and discursive dimensions of social interaction” Thus, it now encompasses other aspects of communication. In addition, CAT has moved in a more interdisciplinary direction than SAT. It now covers a wider range of phenomena.

Accommodative orientation in CAT refers to the communicator's "tendencies to perceive encounters with outgroup members in interpersonal terms, intergroup terms, or a combination of the two. There are three factors that are crucial to accommodative orientations: (1) “intrapersonal factors” (for example personality of the speakers), (2) “intergroup factors” (for instance communicators’ feelings toward outgroups), and (3) “initial orientations” (such as perceived potential for conflict). The issues which influence the last factor include: collectivistic culture context or whether the culture is collectivistic or individualistic; distressing history of interaction, the possible tensions that exist between groups owing to past interactions; stereotypes; norms for treatment of groups; and high group solidarity/ high group dependence, how dependent the person's self-worth is in the group. In the area of jobs and employment, accommodation theory was believed to influence the satisfaction one has with one’s job and the productivity that a person possesses in the said job through convergence with or divergence from the co-workers and their work environment (Giles, Coupland, Howard, Justine and Nikolas, 1991).

People use convergence based on their perceptions of others, as well as what they are able to infer about them and their backgrounds. Attraction (likability, charisma, credibility) also triggers convergence. As Turner and West note, “when communicators are attracted to others they will converge in their conversations” On the other hand, as the similarity attraction theory highlights, when people have similar beliefs, personality and behaviours they tend to be more attracted towards each other. Thus, when an individual shifts his speech and non-verbal behaviours in order to assimilate to the other, a more favourable appraisal of him can be the result; that is when convergence is perceived positively, it is likely to enhance both the

conversation and the attraction between the listener and the speaker. For this reason, it could be said that convergence reflects “an individual’s desire for social approval”

The communication and accommodation theory explains the role of behaviour and motives in colouring conversations. While the text and conversation theory provides an understanding of the mechanisms of communication, CAT elaborates on the methods of communication. These methods are influenced by individual behaviour and motives and are also largely molded by culture. This last factor explains the choice of a culturally homogeneous sample – southwestern Nigeria.

### **2.8.3 Gender schema theory**

Several gender schema theories have been proposed to explain gender development and differentiation. The social psychological approaches advanced by Bem (1983) and Markus and her associates centre mainly on individual differences in gender schematic processing of information (Bem, 1981; Markus, Crane, Bernstein, and Siladi, 1982). Martin and Halverson’s (1981) approach emphasises the developmental aspects of schema development and functioning. This theory has many similarities to cognitive-developmental theory, but also departs from it in several ways. Rather than requiring the attainment of gender constancy for development of gender orientations, only the mastery of gender identity, the ability of children to label themselves and others as males or females, is considered necessary for gender schema development to begin (Martin and Halverson, 1981). Once formed, the schema expands to include knowledge of activities and interests, personality and social attributes, and scripts about gender-linked activities (Halverson, 1981; Martin and Halverson 1981; Martin 1995). The schema is presumably formed from interactions with the environment, but the process by which gender features that constitute the knowledge structure of the schema are abstracted remains unspecified.

Once the schema is developed, children are expected to behave in ways consistent with traditional gender roles. The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct, as in cognitive developmental theory, relies on gender-label matching in which children want to be like others of their own sex. However, in addition to the lack of specification of the gender-abstraction process, empirical efforts to link gender schema to gender-linked conduct in young children have not fared well.

Results of empirical tests call into question the determinative role of gender schema. The evidence linking gender labelling to activity and peer preferences is mixed. A few studies have found a link (Fagot and Leinbach, 1989), some reported conflicting results across different measures of gender-linked conduct (Martin & Little, 1990), while some did not find any link at all (Fagot, 1985; Fagot, Leinbach, & Hagen, 1986). Even in the studies that report a relationship, whether gender labelling and gender-linked preferences are causally linked or are merely co-effects of social influences and cognitive abilities is yet to be determined. Parents who react evaluatively to gender-linked conduct have children who are early gender labellers (Fagot and Leinbach, 1989). Hence, gender labelling and preference may both be products of parental influence.

Knowledge of gender stereotypes, which are generalised preconceptions about the attributes of males and females, is also unrelated to gender-linked conduct (Huston, 1983; Signorella, 1987; Martin, 1993). Children's preferences for gendered activities emerge before they know the gender linkage of such activities (Blakemore, Larue and Olejnik, 1979; Perry, White, & Perry, 1984; Weinraub et al., 1984; Martin, 1993). A gender schema represents a more generic knowledge structure about maleness and femaleness. Gender schema theory would predict that the more elaborated the gender knowledge children possess, the more strongly they should show gender-linked preferences. However, this hypothesized relationship receives no empirical support (Martin, 1991). Adults, for example, may be fully aware of gender stereotypes but this does not produce incremental prediction of gender-linked conduct as such knowledge increases. These various results fail to confirm gender knowledge as the determinant of gender-linked conduct.

Gender schema theory has provided a useful framework for examining the cognitive processing of gender information once gender schemas are developed. In particular, it has shed light on how gender-schematic processing affects attention, organization, and memory of gender-related information (Carter and Levy, 1988; Ruble and Martin, 1998). Other models of gender schema that focus on adults have similarly demonstrated gender biases in information processing (Bem, 1981; Markus, Crane, Bernstein, and Siladi, 1982). The more salient or available the schema, the more individuals are expected to attend to, encode, represent, and retrieve information relevant to gender. However, gender-schematic processing is unrelated to either children's or adult's gender conduct or the findings are inconsistent across different

measures of gender schematization (Bem, 1981; Edwards and Spence, 1987; Signorella, 1987 Carter and Levy, 1988;).

A gender schema is not a monolithic entity. Children do not categorise themselves as "I am girl" or "I am a boy" and act in accordance with that schema invariantly across situations and activity domains. Rather, they vary in their gender conduct depending on a variety of circumstances. Variability is present at the adult level as well. A woman may be a hard-driving manager in the workplace but a traditionalist in the functions performed in the home. Some students of gender differentiation, drawing on Lifton's (1994) "protean self", explain contradictory gender-role behaviour in terms of subselves doing their separate things (Epstein, 1997).

Although findings on gender schematic processing of information in relationship to gender conduct present inconsistent findings, gender stereotypes which are culturally defined may influence behaviour and consequently methods of communication.

Together the three theories provide a basis for a holistic approach to the study of communication styles, which, in this study, is considered within the context of public organisations in southwestern Nigeria.

## **2.9 Framework for communicative behaviour among managers**

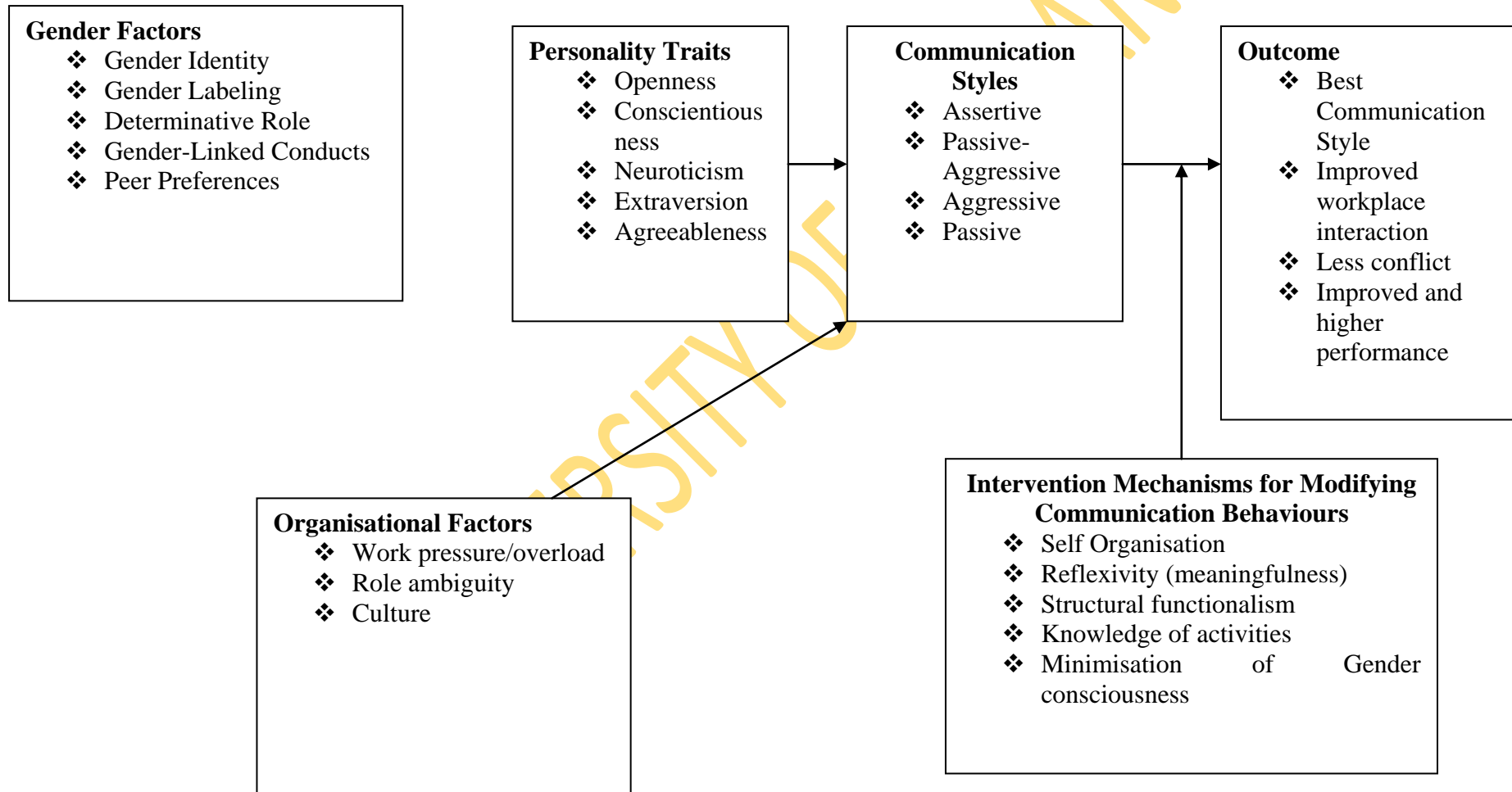
From the three theories used, the researcher came up with the framework below. It depicts that, every manager; particularly the female ones because of the culture and the environment in which they grew, have developed over time, gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conducts, determinative role and peer preferences. This situation determines the personality that would be exhibited by these individual managers. Coupled with these gender factors, the personality is further determined as a result of work pressure/overload, role ambiguity as well as culture in each of the various work organisations. This, in turn, tells on the communication styles to be exhibited by these managers, male and female.

For the communication style to be exhibited in harmony with the achievement of desired organisational goals, there is the need for every manager to have a sense of self-reorganisation, reflectivity (meaningfulness), knowledge of activities within the organisation and for the organisation itself to ensure perfect structural functionalisation and also to ensure minimisation of gender consciousness among

managers. If this is done, it is guaranteed that, regardless of gender, personality traits and the impending organisational factors, every organisation would be sure of a better communication system among its managers along with improved workplace interaction, performance and reduced conflict which will, in turn, guarantee an improved organisational goal achievement, particularly in the Nigerian public sector.

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

## Framework for Communicative Behaviour among Public Managers in Nigeria



Source: Adapted and modified from UNDP

## 2.10 Appraisal of literature

Effective communication styles are *sine qua non* for efficient performance in any organisation. Gender factor and personality traits play important roles in communication process. Organisational communication is a vast, fast growing and multifaceted discipline which combines psychology, sociology, communication studies and management theory. The assumption that effective internal communication is essential to the effective functioning of any organisation is supported by theoretical and empirical works, which have been discussed in this study. One major challenge for management is to minimise the level of dysfunctional operation. Identifying the causes of poor communication is a complex task, because the factors affecting communication are wide-ranging and often depend on multiple variables, particularly personality traits, gender and organisational factors are germane.

Differences in communication styles between the genders often lead to misunderstanding. When people are misunderstood, they are likely to become frustrated which can lead to defensiveness and, in some cases, hostility. Many of the effects of ineffective communication produce increased stress levels. Increased stress levels lead to more incidences of depression and disease, such as heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood sugar and even headaches. Communication style is characterised by the way people appear (or attempt to appear) in communication, the way they tend to relate to the ones they communicate with and how their messages are typically interpreted. Communication style could be specific, well-reasoned, confident, supportive, expressive or forceful. For communication to be effective among staff in an organisation, a synergy of knowledge management sharing, collaboration and making the best use of a strategic resource must be entrenched. Knowledge sharing is the process where individuals mutually exchange their implicit and explicit knowledge and jointly create new knowledge. Knowledge sharing is a form of communication. Knowledge transferring between individuals in organisations requires communication and openness.

Openness is one of the traits of the Big-Five personality theory. It indicates how open-minded a person is. Persons with a high level of openness to experience in a personality test enjoys trying new things. They are imaginative, curious, and open-



mindful. Individuals low in openness to experience would rather not try new things. They are close-minded, literal and enjoy having a routine. In addition, people tend to listen to such individuals with the trait. Extraversion is characterised by sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness and excitability. People high in extraversion tend to seek social stimulation and opportunities to engage with others. This attribute is required to carry the subordinates along. Social harmony is an important goal for individuals that score high on agreeableness in a career test.

Agreeableness is another element of the five personality traits of the Big Five personality theory. People with a high level of agreeableness in a personality test are usually warm, friendly, and tactful. They generally have an optimistic view of human nature and get along well with others. Individuals who scores low on agreeableness may put their interests above those of others. They tend to be distant, unfriendly, and uncooperative. Some of the traits of the agreeableness domain are trust, morality, altruism, cooperation, sympathy and modesty. Psychologists prefer to call neuroticism by the term emotional stability to differentiate it from the term neurotic in a career test. Individuals high in this trait tend to experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness. Emotional stability or neuroticism is one of the five personality traits of the Big Five personality theory. It is a person's ability to remain stable and balanced. At the other end of the scale, a person high in neuroticism has a tendency to easily experience negative emotions. Neuroticism is similar but not identical to being neurotic in the Freudian sense.

Role ambiguity is defined as the perception of lack of clear, consistent information about the expectations associated with one's position. This concept affects either positively or negatively the management communication styles as they relates to gender and personality traits. For effective intra-team communication to exist within a team setting, communication between its members will include an appropriate amount of verbal and non-verbal exchanges of acceptance, distinctiveness, negative conflict, and positive conflict. Acceptance refers to communications of consideration and appreciation between team mates. Distinctiveness means to the communication of a shared, but unique identity between team members. Distinctiveness would include verbal (for example, nicknames, team exclusive slang) and non-verbal (such as, high-fives, body language) exchanges. Also,

important in management communication styles as in relation to gender and personality traits is workload. Work overload occurs when job demand exceeds human limits and people have to do too much, in too little time, with too few resources. It is characterised by (a combination of) conditions, which include long and difficult working hours; unreasonable workloads, pressure to work unwanted overtime (paid and unpaid); less breaks, days off and holiday; faster, more pressured work pace; increased, excessive performance monitoring; unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved with the available time and resource; and additional, often inappropriate, tasks imposed on top of 'core' workload (more than one job).

Organisational culture means to the design of an organisation, such as the division of product lines, market areas, functional responsibilities, and the reporting structure of these entities. Managers in an organisation determine the organisational structure for optimal effectiveness and seek efficiencies in running operations. The type of organisational structure inadvertently determines the communication styles of the management. How do leaders decide which organisational structure is best for an organisation at a particular point in time? Some leaders settle on one organisational structure and maintain that same structure for years. Other leaders perceive that constantly changing external factors require them to redesign the organisational structure in response, prompting many "reorganisations" and changing the structure, roles, and responsibilities of employees often. Some of the organisation structures that could be adopted in an organisation include hierarchical model, flat management model, matrix model and fishnet model. Each of these models has its attendant merits and demerits. Organisation culture is also germane to management communication styles.

Culture is one very important aspect in developing personality and communication preferences. People develop a peer personality through shared influences and events that occur during their formative years approximately from ages 10 to 18, which impact their generational value system and methods of interaction. Over the years, women have attained prominence in different areas of life endeavour. Among the reasons for this development are laws governing fair employment practices, changing societal attitudes toward women in the workplace, and the desire

of companies to project a favourable image by placing qualified women in managerial positions.

Marriage affects communication of manager because no marriage is devoid of conflict and this affects communication. The internal culture of firms and government bureaucracies generally reflect and perpetuate norms and customs that prevail in broader society in segments of society. Within such organisations, invisible barriers to promotion create a “glass ceiling” that bars women from top management positions. In the social sphere, there are large gender differences in the modelling of aggression, which is widely regarded as a principal attribute of maleness. The heavy aggressive modelling by males is not lost on boys. Even at the very early age, preschool boys are higher adopters of modelled styles of aggression than girls, and even more so, if it is modelled by males than by females

The school functions as another primary setting for developing gender orientations. With regard to shaping gendered attributes, teachers criticise children for engaging in play activities considered inappropriate for their gender. School is the place where children expand their knowledge and competencies and form their sense of intellectual efficacy essential for participating effectively in the larger society. The self-beliefs and competencies acquired during this formative period carry especially heavy weight because they shape the course of career choices and development. Even as early as middle school, children's belief in their occupational efficacy rooted in their patterns of perceived efficacy, have begun to crystallise and steer their occupational considerations in directions congruent with their efficacy beliefs. The gender bias in the judgment and cultivation of competencies operates in classrooms as well as in homes. Despite the lack of gender differences in intelligence, there are differences in the courses boys and girls select and how they judge their capabilities in these varied academic domains.

Occupational activities make up a major part of daily living and serve as an important source of personal identity. The gendered practices of familial, educational, peer and media subsystems are essentially replicated in organisational structures and practices. The interplay of personal and socio-structural impediments creates disparity in the distribution of women and men across occupations that differ in prestige, status and monetary return. This leads to devaluation of women's work and the "feminised" occupations. Social change in organisational practices does not come

easy because beneficiaries build the privileges into protective organisational processes and structures.

### **2.11 Null hypotheses:**

The following null hypotheses were tested and served as anchor for the study.

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gender and each of the communication styles of assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles of management staff

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between each of the personality traits of openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness and assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles of management staff in public organisations.

**HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between each of the organisational factors of role ambiguity, work overload, and organisational culture and assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles of management staff in public organisations.

**HO<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference between each of the impacts of personality traits and organisational factors on assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles on management staff on the basis of age, level of education, level of exposure, years of experience as manager, sex, and marriage.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

The survey research design of the *ex-post facto* type was adopted for this study. This design was considered appropriate for the study because the researcher only had to collect data on the independent variables which had occurred earlier with influence over the dependent variables but without engaging in any manipulation. The researcher was only limited to observation of the cause-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

#### **3.2 Population**

The population for this study comprised all male and female directors from Grade Level 12 and above in the different departments/units of the thirty-six selected public organisations in southwestern Nigeria.

#### **3.3 Sample and sampling techniques**

The sample used in the survey was actual representative of people in management cadre of the selected organisations. In each organisation sampled, total enumeration sampling technique was used to select all directors on the managerial cadre of Grade Level 12 and above. This was to ensure a comprehensive sampling size for the selection of the respondents. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's offices. The interviewees were the Permanent Secretaries and Senior Directors in the various organisations. Six ministries were covered in each of the states in South West Nigeria. These were Economic Planning and Budget, Education, Finance, Health, Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters, and Women Affairs.

**Table 3.1: Population of management staff in the selected organisations**

S/N	State	Sample Size chosen
1	Osun State	268
2	Ondo State	327
3	Lagos State	446
4	Oyo State	227
5	Ogun State	326
6	Ekiti State	316
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,910</b>

### **3.4 Instrumentation**

The instrument for data collection was four sets of measuring scale which covered the major variables inherent in the study. These were Gender Factors Questionnaire, Personality Traits Inventory, Organisational Factors Scale and Management Communication Inventory. They were complemented with a qualitative method of In-depth Interview (IDI) to capture any information relevant to the work but that might not have been otherwise captured.

#### **3.4.1 Gender Factor Questionnaire**

This scale was a structured questionnaire adapted by the researcher. It was on a four-point Likert scale of 4= strongly Agree (SA), 3=Agree (A), 2= Disagree (D) and 1= Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity through criticisms from experts. The Gender Factor Questionnaire (GFQ) was a 39-item questionnaire eliciting information on gender factors and communication.

The contents were validated using peer review systems as well as criticism of experts in the area. The criticisms and suggestions made helped ensure the validation of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot study conducted on 40 management staff from the Ministry of Information, Oyo State. The analysis was done using the test retest reliability which results were obtained using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability coefficient. ( $r= 0.78$ ).

### **3.4.2 Personality Traits Inventory**

This scale was also adapted from Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) by Robert Hogan (1986). It was also on a four-point Likert scale of 4= strongly Agree, 3=Agree, 2= Disagree and 1=strongly agree. It was a - 14 item inventory, used to gather pertinent data on the personality traits of the selected managers. The personality traits inventory was subjected to face and content validity through criticisms from experts, while the test retest method was used in determining its level of reliability. The contents were validated using peer review systems as well as criticism of experts in the area. The criticisms and suggestions made helped ensure the validation of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot study conducted on 40 management staff from the Ministry of Information, Oyo State. The analysis was done using the test retest reliability whose results were obtained using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability coefficient. (r=0.86)

### **3.4.3 Organisational factors Scale**

The questionnaire consisted of a set of Likert-type scales of multiple choice items. Basically, the questionnaire items were designed to collect information on two areas of organisation, these are:

1. Workers response to job-based on management communication
2. Job organisation: work overload, organisational culture, role ambiguity and consciousness, namely:

The organisational factors scale contained 18 items. The organisational factors scale was subjected to face and content validity through criticisms from experts, while the test retest method was used in determining its level of reliability. The contents were validated using peer review systems as well as criticism of experts in the area. The criticisms and suggestions made helped ensure the validation of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot study conducted on 40 management staff from the Ministry of Information, Oyo State. The analysis was done using the test re-test reliability results obtained using the Pearson product moment correlation to determine the reliability coefficient. (r=0.92)

#### **3.4.4 Management Communication Inventory**

The 16 item management communication inventory was used to collect information on the management communication style. Norton's (1978) communicator style instrument was used as a means of collecting data. The instrument was designed to assess the 16 communicator style variables. Statements describing each variable were made and the respondents were instructed to assess the way the male and female managers communicate based on the description, along a four-point scale. The instrument has been found to be both valid and reliable with the North American sample (Norton 1978; Talley and Richmond 1980; Montgomery and Norton 1981). However, to test its validity across the Nigerian sample, validity test was conducted. The management communication inventory was subjected to face and content validity through criticisms from experts, while the test re-test method was used in determining its level of reliability. The contents of the inventory were validated using peer review systems as well as criticism of experts in the area. The criticisms and suggestions made helped ensure the validation of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot study conducted on 40 management staff from the Ministry of Information, Oyo State. The analysis was done using the test retest reliability whose results were obtained using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability coefficient. ( $r=0.93$ )

#### **3.5 In-depth Interview**

The qualitative method of in-depth interview (IDI) was used to supplement the questionnaires to ensure that some information that might not be captured by the survey technique was obtained through physical interaction between the researcher and the respondents. This was necessary because the questionnaire might not be sufficient to collect adequately all relevant information from the respondents. A total of 12 IDI sessions was conducted with two key respondents from two ministries randomly selected out of the six organisations for the study in each of the six states. The IDI sessions were conducted with the aid of discussion guide and tape recorder to capture accurately responses from respondents in addition to the notes taken.



**Table 3.2: Schedule IDI Sessions Conducted for the Study**

Name of Organisation	Location of IDI	No of Sessions	Date
Ondo State Ministry of Education, Akure	Akure	1	Oct 9, 2012
Ondo State Ministry of Women Affairs, Akure	Akure	1	Oct 12, 2012
Osun State Ministry of Education, Osogbo	Osogbo	1	Nov 12, 2012
Osun State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Osogbo	Osogbo	1	Nov 14, 2012
Lagos State Ministry of Health, Alausa Lagos	Lagos	1	Dec 5, 2012
Lagos State Ministry of Education, Alausa, Ikeja	Lagos	1	Dec 7, 2012
Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs, Abeokuta	Abeokuta	1	Jan 10, 2013
Ogun State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Abeokuta	Abeokuta	1	Jan 21, 2013
Ekiti State Ministry of Education, Ado-Ekiti	Ado-Ekiti	1	Jan 14, 2013
Ekiti State Ministry of Women Affairs, Ado-Ekiti	Ado-Ekiti	1	Jan 14, 2013
Oyo State Ministry of Health, Ibadan	Ibadan	1	Feb 20, 2013
Oyo State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Ibadan	Ibadan	1	Feb 22, 2013

### 3.6 Procedure for data collection

The researcher employed the assistance of some research assistants. These research assistants were field staff in the various locations that knew the areas and were trained by the researcher to carry out research.

### 3.7 Method of data analysis

The demographic data collected on the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency counts, while the data on the core variables covered by the study were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, t-test and multiple regression. The qualitative data collected through the IDI sessions were content analysed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

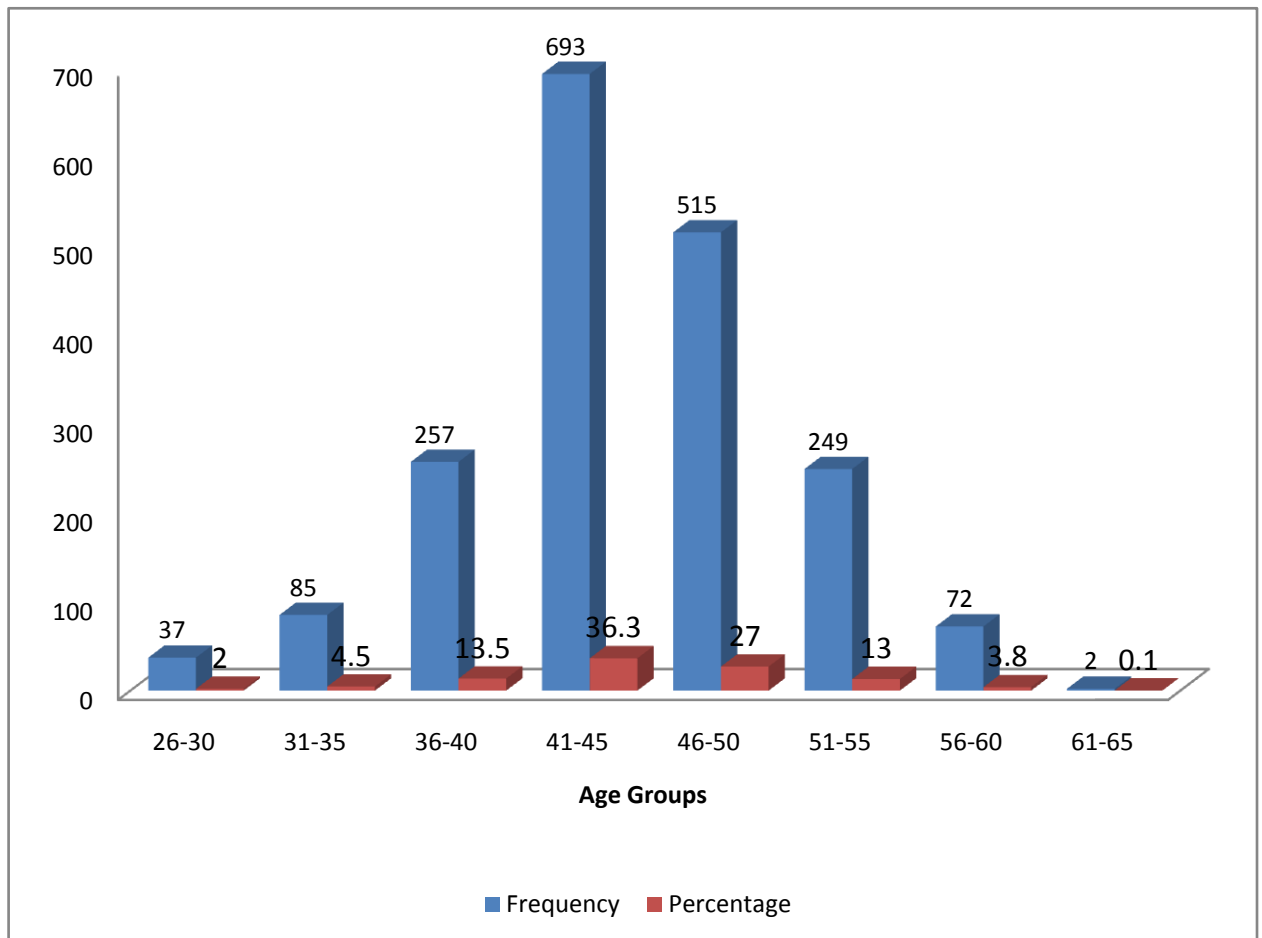
### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This chapter focuses on the presentation of results and discussion of findings. It also includes the analysis of demographic information, interpretation of results and testing of the generated hypotheses for the study. This chapter is divided into two parts: A and B. Part A deals with the demographic information of the respondents, while part B is on the analysis and interpretations of data collected from the respondents in respect of the stated objectives, the research question, and the hypotheses raised to serve as anchor and guide in achieving the objectives.

#### **PART A**

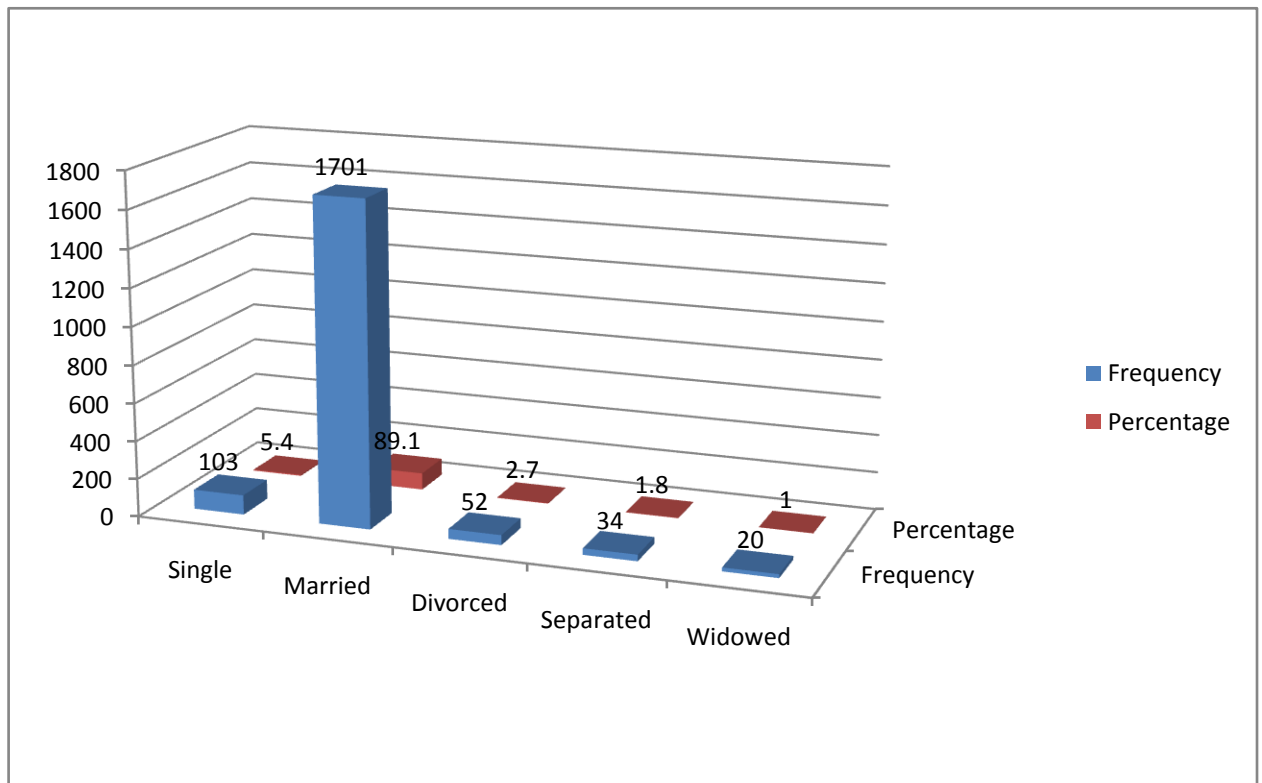
##### **4.1 Analysis of demographic information**

The analysis of data on demographic characteristics of the respondents collected through the research instruments is presented in this section. The information was on age, marital status, highest educational qualification, length of years of service, ethnicity, salary grade level, present position in the organisation and religion. This was done to provide information about the social background of the respondents with the aim of drawing inferences and deductions.



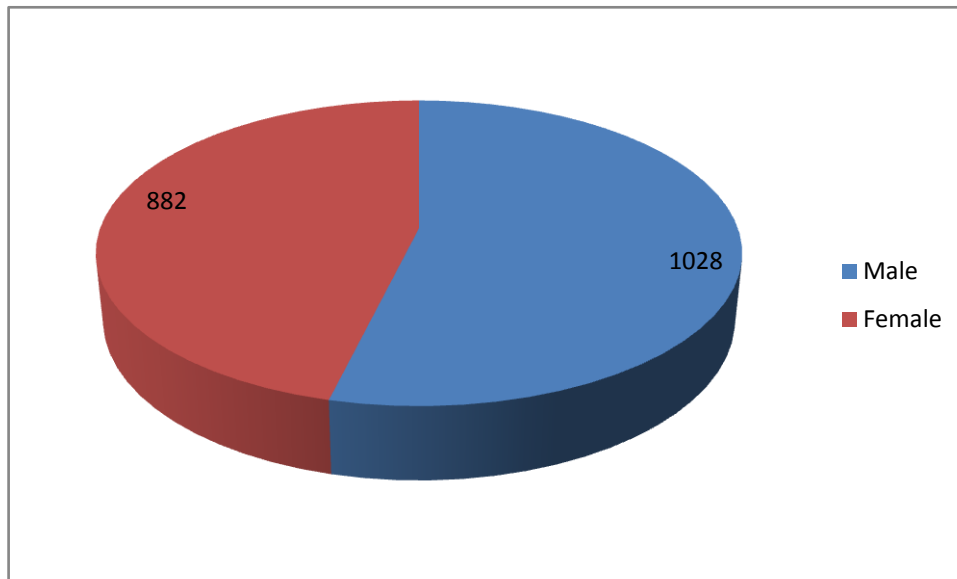
**Fig 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group**  
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

Figure 4.1 shows the age distribution of the respondents with numerical values and percentages attached to each age cohorts. In the figure, 37(2%) of the respondents were from 26 to 30 year bracket, 85(4.5%) were aged 31-35 years, 257(13.5%) were aged 36-40 years. Respondents between age brackets of 41 and 45 years were the highest respondents, with numerical value of 693(36.3%). In addition, 515(27.0%) were aged 46-50 years, 249(13.0%) were aged 51-55 years, 72(3.8%) were aged 56-60 years, while 2(0.1%) were aged 61-65 years.



**Fig 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**  
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

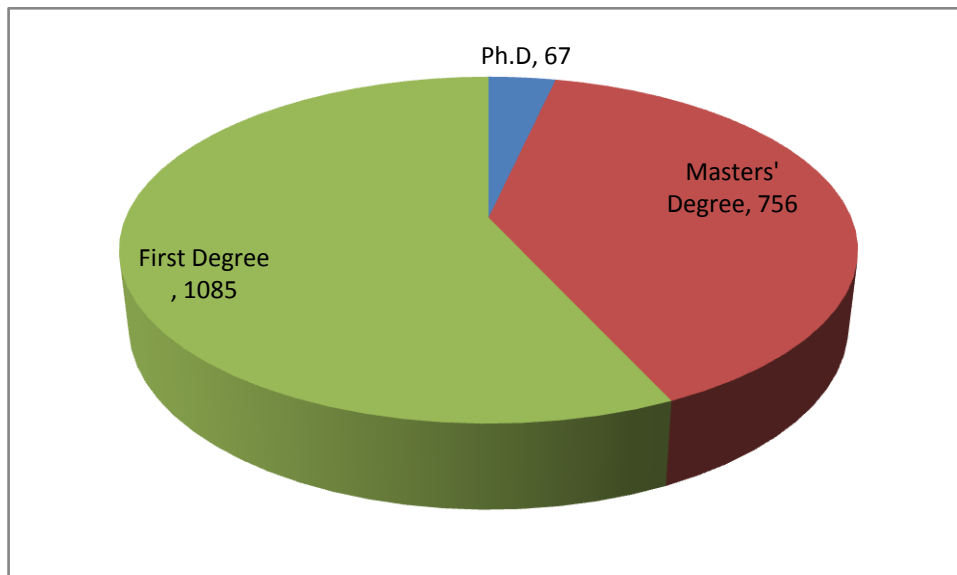
Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of the respondents by marital status. The figure reveals that 1701 respondents, representing 89.1% were married, 103 (5.4%) were single, 52 (2.7%) were divorced, 34 (1.8%) were separated, and 20 (1%) were widowed. The figure indicates that overwhelming majority of the respondents were married. This might not be unconnected with the social responsibility attached to the marital status in the Nigerian working environment.



**Fig 4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Sex**

*Source: Field survey, 2013*

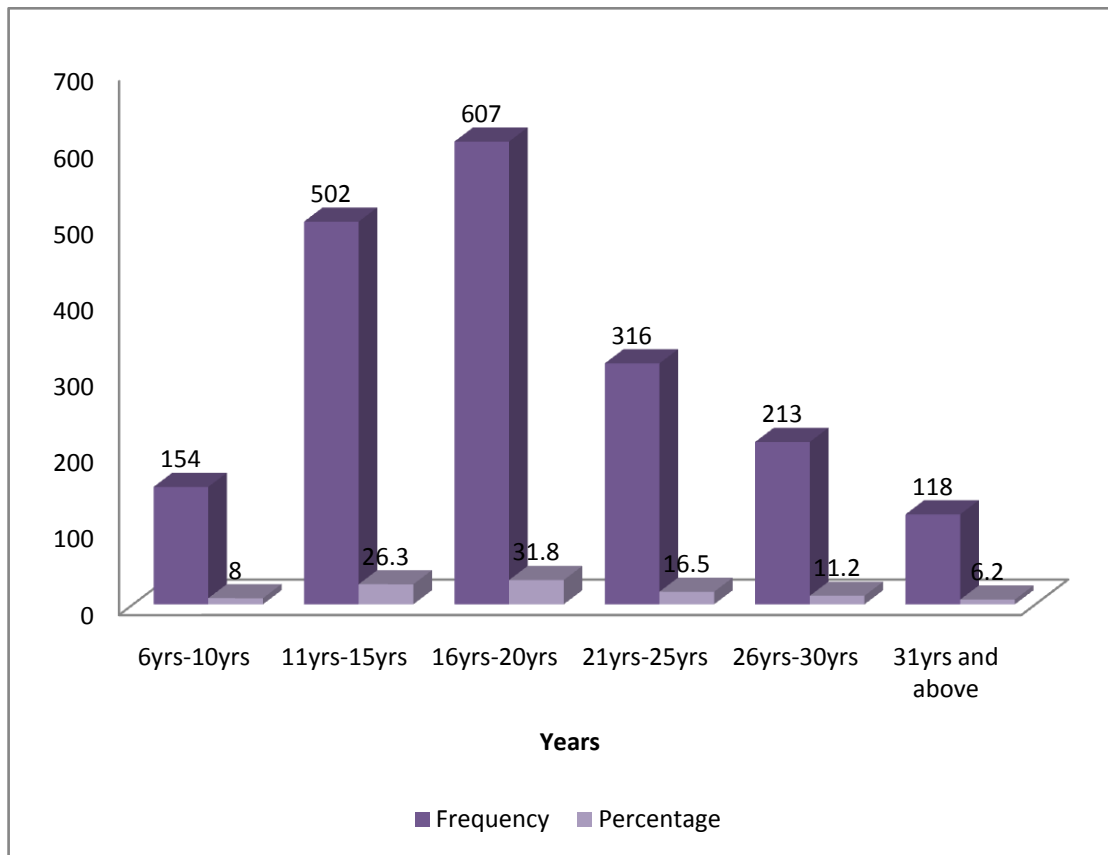
Figure 4.3 indicates the respondents' distribution by sex. A total of 1028(53.8%) were males, while 882(46.2%) were females. The result revealed that there were more males than females respondents. This was accounted for by the fact that more females were previously, mainly engaged in domestic and household work; hence, there are many more males at the top echelon of public organisations.



**Fig: 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Highest Educational Qualification**

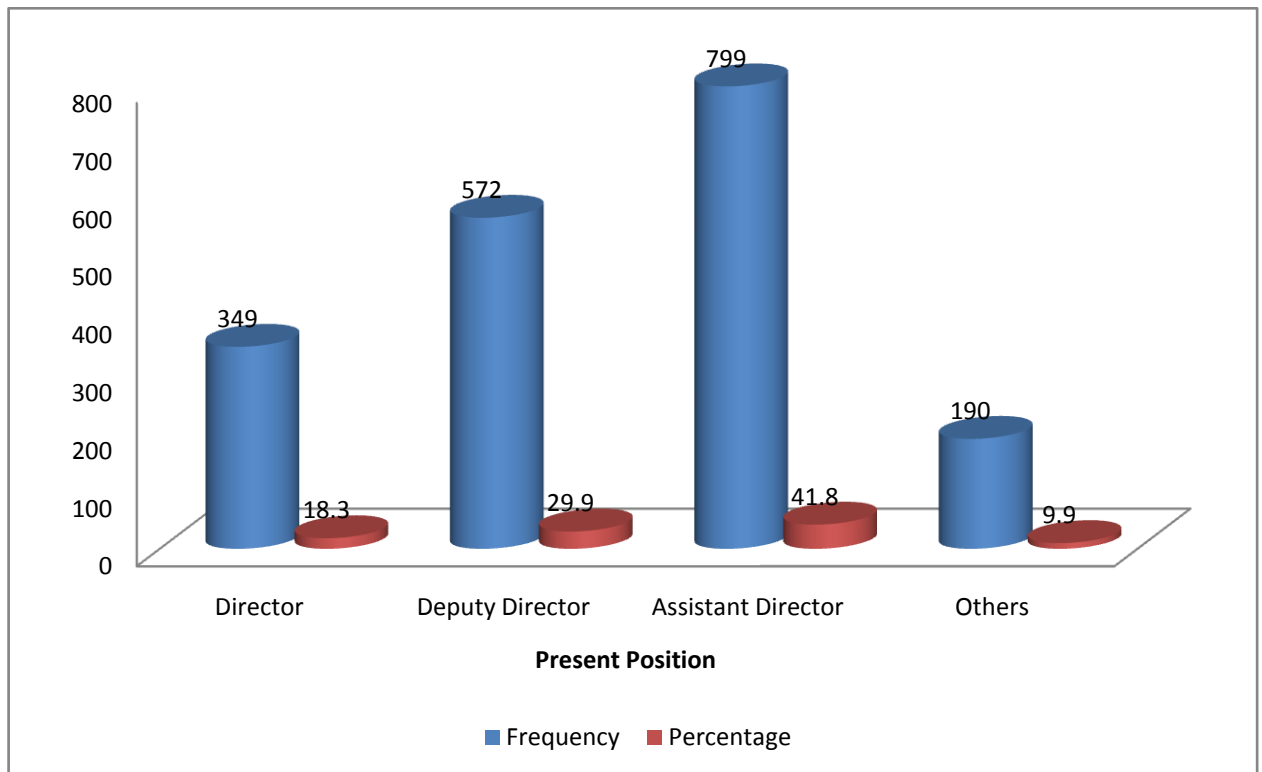
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

Figure 4.4 presents the distribution of respondents by highest educational qualification. Expectedly, respondents with first degree, which comprised the university and polytechnic graduates, had the highest numerical value of 1085, which stands for 56.8% of the total respondents. This was followed by those with Masters' degree; respondents in this category were 756 representing 39.7%; while respondents with Ph.D were 67, representing 3.5% of the total respondents. Based on the information, it is pertinent to note that all the respondents were educated and had the understanding of issues relating to communication styles in an organisation.



**Fig 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Length of Years in Service**  
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

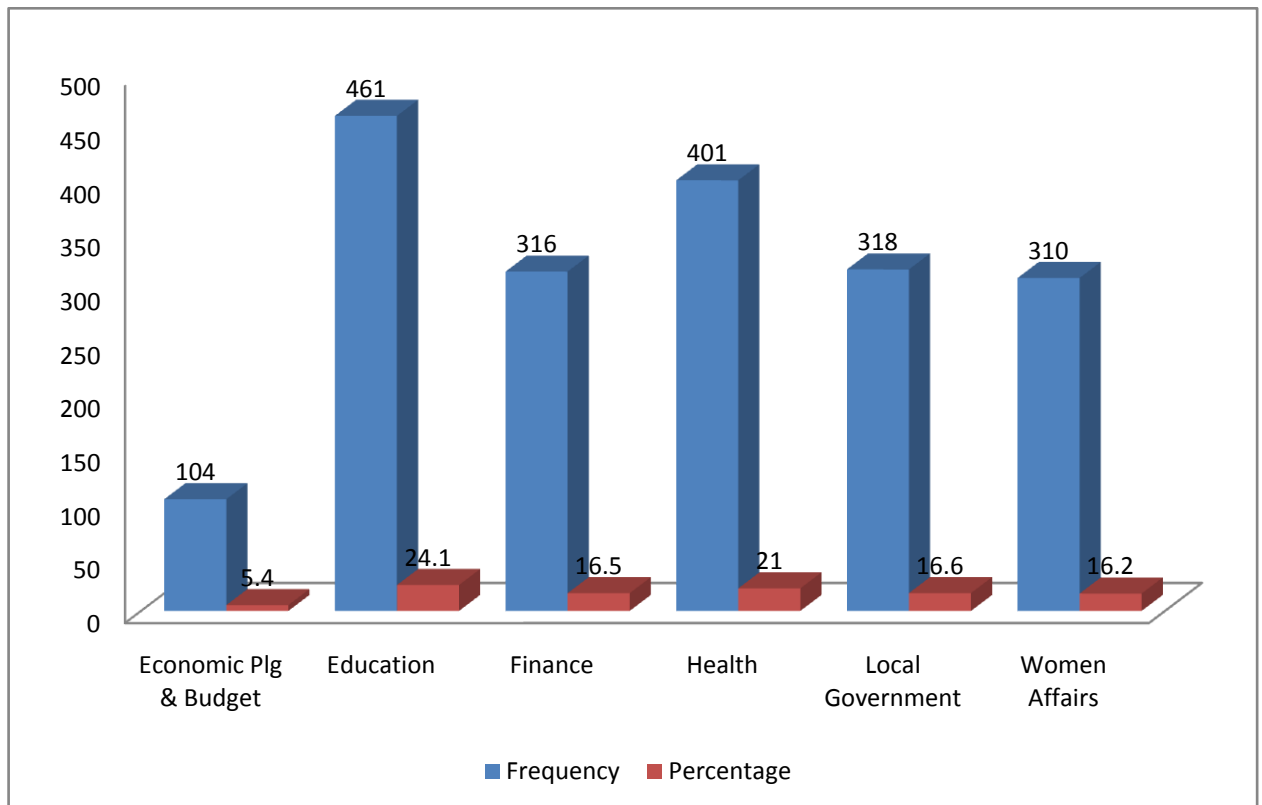
Figure 4.5 portrays the distribution of respondents by length of years in service. The figure shows that the majority of the respondents had spent between 11 years and 30 years in service. Cumulatively, those within this bracket were more than 85% of the total respondents. This suggests that there were highly experienced individuals who had related over the years with different categories of people. Most of them had been led and they had also led people. Some 154(8%) of the respondents had spent 6-10 years in the service, 502(26.3%) had spent 11-15 years in the service, 607(31.8%) had spent 16-20 years in the service, 316(16.5%) had spent 21-25 years in the service, 213(11.2%) had spent 26-30 years in the service, while 118(6.2%) had spent 31 years and above in the service.



**Fig 4.6: Distribution of Respondents by Present Position in Organisations**  
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

The management staff in the civil service comprises the directorate cadre (Assistant Director, Deputy Director and Director) and above. Figure 4.6 above indicates the distribution of respondents by present positions in the organisation. Most of the respondents were in the Assistant Directors' cadre. There were 799 (41.8%) of them, followed by those in the Deputy Directors' cadre, with a figure of 572 (29.9%). Those in the directors' cadre were 349 (18.3%), and other categories of management staff were 190 (9.9%). The results indicated that most of the respondents fell within the middle-level management which enhanced the objectivity of the findings, since factual information could better be collected from the middle management level than the top management. The others were accounted for other senior officers, who, though on the Directors' cadre, did not have the nomenclature of director.

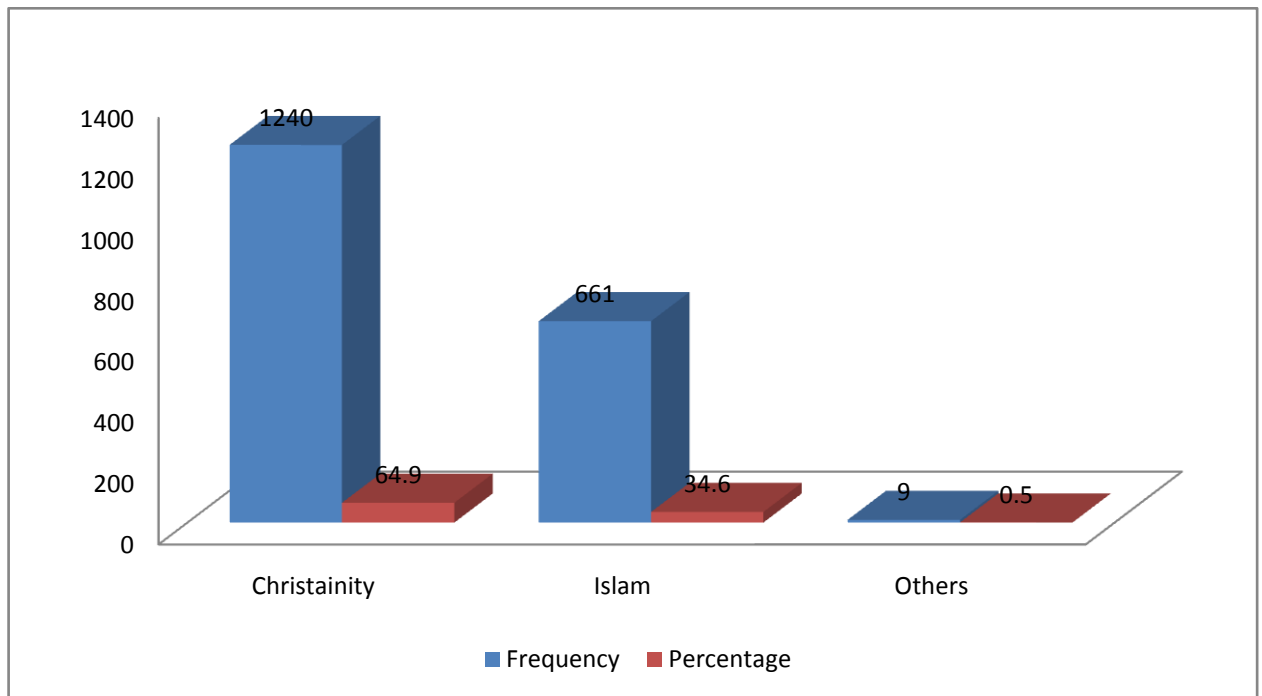




**Fig 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by Organisation**

*Source: Field survey, 2013*

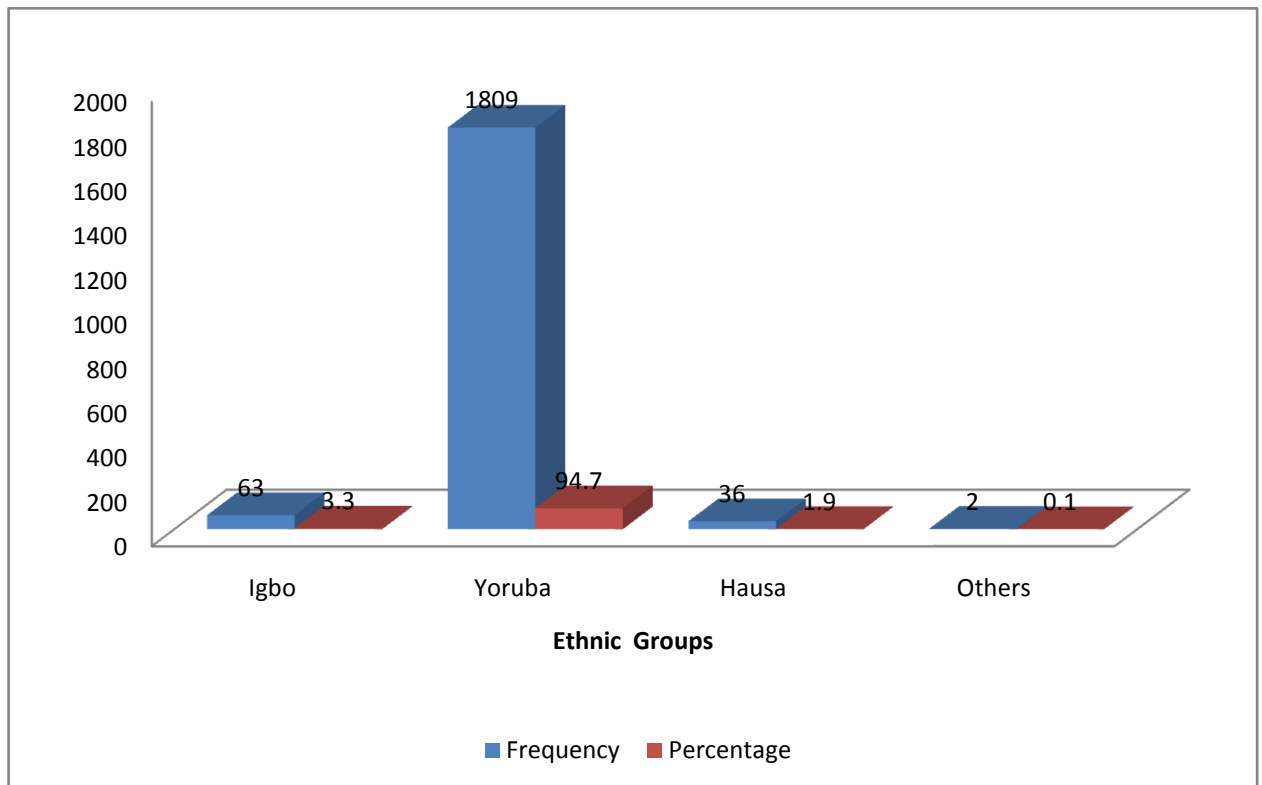
Figure 4.7 portrays the distribution of respondents by organisation (ministry). The figure shows that 104(5.4%) of the respondent were in Economic Planning and Budget, 461(24.1%) were in Ministry of Education, 316(16.5%) were in Ministry of Finance, 401(21.0%) were in Ministry of Health, 318(16.6%) were in Ministry of Local Government, while 310(16.2%) were in Ministry of Women Affairs.



**Fig 4.8: Distribution of Respondents by Religion**

*Source: Field survey, 2013*

Figure 4.8 shows the distribution of respondents by religion. The figure shows numerical value and percentage representations. Two religious beliefs, Christianity and Islam were prominent, with a small number of other forms of worship represented. The majority of the respondents were Christians. This is not unexpected because of the large presence of Christianity in the South West. The Christian respondents were 1240 constituting 64.9% of the total respondents; followed by Muslims, with 661 (34.6%), while other forms of religion recorded just 9 (0.5%) of the respondents. Religion plays a very important role in the life of every individual; each religion has its perception about gender issues and communication styles. Thus, it was pertinent to know the religious beliefs of the respondents; it was discovered in the IDI that religion does not affect career progression or communication as there are laid-down rules of the public service to be followed irrespective of religious beliefs.



**Fig 4.9: Distribution of Respondents by Ethnicity**  
*Source: Field survey, 2013*

Figure 4.9 indicates the distribution of respondents by ethnicity. The majority of the respondents were Yoruba, the dominant ethnic group in the South West of Nigeria. Nonetheless, other ethnic nationalities were represented in the management cadre of the civil service in the region. This would not be unconnected to the general accommodating nature of the people of the South West. The Yoruba ethnic group had numerical value of 1809 (94.7%), Igbo 63 (3.3%), Hausa (1.9%); and others 3(0.1%).

#### **4.2 PART B:**

The study set out to determine the extent to which personality traits, gender and organisational factors correlate with the communication styles of management staff in the selected public organisations in southwestern Nigeria. The results of the study were presented based on the hypotheses generated and the research questions raised.

**RQ1:** To what extent do personality traits, gender and organisational factors as correlates of communication styles impact on the performance of management staff in the selected public organisations?

**Influence of Personality Traits, Organisational and Gender Factors on Communication Styles**

Tables 4:1a and 4:1b as well as the discussion that follows provide explanation for the understanding of data collected on objective 1 and the research question one (RQ1) which states that: to what extent do personality traits, gender and organisational factors correlate with the communication styles of management staff in the selected public organisations

There will be no joint effect of independent variables (Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Gender Identity, Gender labelling, Gender-linked Conducts, Peer Preference, Determinative Role, Work Overload, Role Ambiguity, Organisational Culture) on Communication Styles

**Table 4.1a: F- Ratio on the joint effect of the independent variables on Communication Styles**

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	13463.048	13	1035.619	27.008	.000
Residual	72701.719	1896	38.345		
Total	861264.766	1909			

R = .395, R<sup>2</sup> = .156, Adj R<sup>2</sup> = .150

**Table 4.1b: Relative effect of the independent variables on Communication Styles**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	24.126	1.605		15.030	.000
Personality Traits	.411	.035	.335	11.641	.000
Organisational Factors	.607	.220	.069	2.765	.000
Gender Factors	-.330	0.116	-.103	-2.853	.000

*Field Survey, 2012*

## Interpretation and Discussion

It is shown in tables 4.1a and 4.1b that the joint effect of independent variables (Personality Traits, Organisational Factors and Gender Factors) on communication Styles was significant ( $F_{(13,1896)} = 27.008$ ;  $R = .395$ ,  $R^2 = .156$ ,  $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .150$ ;  $P < .05$ ). About 16% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. The results above showed that Personality Traits, Organisational Factors and Gender Factors were good predictors of communication styles. This result corroborates the assertion by Warner (2010), that men and women have different communication styles as a result of disparities in the way that men and women think. Also, Elving (2005) asserts that trait has a part to play in the way that individuals communicate

The result in Table 4.1b shows the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable: Personality traits ( $\beta = .335$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Organisational Factors ( $\beta = .069$ ,  $P < .05$ ) and Gender Factors ( $\beta = -.103$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

The findings of this work revealed that personality traits as a factor was positively correlated with communications style, with a .335 significant level. This is in tandem with the work by personality theorists, such as McCrae and Costa (1990), that consistency in individual personality traits depend on the kind of person the individual is, situations, and behaviours sampled. It is perfectly in agreement with their conclusion that trait (person) and situations must be taken into account to understand the individuals and how they communicate.

The result further showed that gender factors were negatively correlated with communications at a significant level of -.103. This result is a complete opposite of Warner's (2010) assertion, that men and women have very different communication styles and even described these different styles as completely different languages. A number of authorities attribute communication differences to disparities in the way men and women think. Women tend to think about the connections between people and events. They communicate in a narrative form that illustrates how things fit together (Warner, 2010). By contrast, men are more task-oriented or problem-solvers. They think in a compartmentalised fashion and communicate similarly. They use few words and are mostly concerned with the bottom line as opposed to women who use far more words and focus on the supporting story (Warner, 2010). Differences in communication styles between the genders often lead to misunderstanding. When

people are misunderstood, they are likely to become frustrated, which can lead to defensiveness and, in some cases, even hostility.

This finding from this research revealed that personality traits, gender and organisational factors have effect on communication styles of managers. These variables are good predictors of communication styles. In terms of personality traits, the finding is in tandem with the submission of personality theorists, that the satisfaction of subordinate and supervisor with their relationship is affected by each other's communication style (Downs *et al.*, 1988), Norton's (1978) conceptualises communication style as "The way one verbally and para-verbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood".

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gender and each of the communication styles of assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles of management staff

Tables 4.2a, 4.2b and 4.2c provide explanations for hypothesis 1 which states that: To what extent do personality traits, gender and organisational factors correlate with the communication styles of management staff in the selected public organisations?

**Table 4.2a: Relationship between Gender Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3634.679	5	726.936	16.771	.000
Residual	82530.088	1904	43.346		
Total	86164.766	1909			

R = .205, R<sup>2</sup> = .042, Adj R<sup>2</sup> = .040

**Table 4.2b: Relationship between Gender Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	38.000	1.303		29.166	.000
Gender Identity	.230	.061	.139	3.742	.000
Gender Labelling	-.544	.117	-.170	-4.655	.000
Gender-Linked Conducts	.175	.055	.096	3.172	.002
Peer Preference	-.347	.186	-.043	-1.863	.063
Determinative Role	.315	.076	.126	4.154	.000

*Field Survey, 2012*

**Table 4.2c: Relationship between Gender Factors and Communication Styles**

	Comm. Styles	Gender Identity	Gender Labeling	Gender-Linked Conducts	Peer Preference	Determinative Role
Comm. Styles	1					
Gender Identity	.139**	1				
Gender Labelling	.042	.678**	1			
Gender-Linked Conducts	.160**	.627**	.356**	1		
Peer Preference	.002	.114*	-.026	.231**	1	
Determinate Role	.117**	.478**	.652**	.380**	.024	1
Mean	47.1958	29.4424	10.5628	277052	2.9429	13.8068
S.D.	6.7183	4.0445	2.0937	3.6799	0.8374	2.6879

*Field Survey, 2012*

### **Interpretation and discussion**

It was shown in the Table 4.2c that the joint effect of independent variables (Gender Identity, Gender Labelling, Gender-linked Conducts, Peer Preference and Determinative Role) on communication styles was significant ( $F(5,1904) = 16.771$ ;  $R =$



.205,  $R^2 = .042$ , Adj.  $R^2 = .040$ ;  $P < .05$ ). About 4% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. (Table 4.2a)

The result in Table 4.2b showed the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable: Gender Identity ( $\beta = .139$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Gender Labelling ( $\beta = -.170$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Gender-linked Conducts ( $\beta = .096$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Peer Preference ( $\beta = -.043$ ,  $P > .05$ ) and Determinative Role ( $\beta = .126$ ,  $P < .05$ ). (Table 4.2b).

The results revealed that, while gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conducts and determinative role were significant, peer preference was not. Thus peer preference and gender labelling were negatively correlated to communication styles, while gender identity, determinative role and gender-linked conducts were positively correlated.

This result might be due to the fact that gender identity is a person's private sense of, and subjective experience of their gender. This is generally described as one's private sense of being a man or woman, consisting primarily of the acceptance of membership into a category of people: male

Gender identity had the highest level of significant correlation with a significant level of .139. This is in agreement with the submission from Ondo State by a respondent during the IDI thus:

Sometimes the gender identity of a person makes them one gender, but their genitals and their body's secondary sex characteristics suggest a different sex, they will likely experience surnames that they have not been given from home but the fact that a woman speaks loudly does not make her less a woman just like being soft spoken does not make a man a woman.

Permanent Secretary/male/Ondo/October2012

It also corroborates the gender schema theory which states that: children do not categorise themselves as "I am a girl" or "I am a boy" and act in accordance with that schema invariantly across situations and activity domains. Rather, they vary in their gender conduct, depending on a variety of circumstances. Variability is present at the adult level as well. A woman may be a hard-driving manager in the workplace but a traditionalist in the functions performed at home. Some students of gender differentiation, drawing on Lifton's (1994) "protean self" explain contradictory

gender-role behaviour in terms of subselves doing their separate things (Epstein, 1997).

Gender labelling is negatively correlated with a significant level of  $-.170$ , thereby confirming the findings of Spence (1980), in his child development: It is tempting to put a label on someone and then assume that label reveals to you everything you need to know about that person. Instead of saying there's a people problem (meaning people in general do things a certain way), they take out their paint brush and paint an ugly picture of all men and women as if everyone is at fault for a certain situation.

Gender-linked conducts were however, positively correlated with a significant value of  $.096$ . This result is contrary to the view of Lephala and Mabunda, as cited in Malherbe, Kleijwegt and Koen (2000), that "it is assumed that women are born with 'natural roles' and should be reared to fulfill these roles." Finding a balance between work and family is difficult for women in general, particularly in Nigeria, which has a very strong family-oriented culture. This assertion was rejected by the opinion of a respondent during the IDI:

To say that the place of the woman is in the kitchen is also to say that the place of the man is in the farm. It has been scientifically proven that women can multi-task effectively, a feat the men cannot achieve. The ability to multi-task has given the women upper hands even as managers

*Director/male/Oyo/February 2013*

This is at variance with Bandura (1999) who opines that gender differences in aggression are much smaller than claimed and further shrink under certain environmental conditions. According to Martin and Halverson, 1981, once the schema is developed, children are expected to behave in ways consistent with traditional gender roles. The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct, as in cognitive developmental theory, relies on gender-label matching in which children want to be like others of their own sex.

Table 4.2c showed that there was a significant relationship between communication styles and gender identity; between communication styles and gender labelling; between communication styles and gender-linked conducts; and between communication styles and determinative role; but none between communication styles and peer preference.

This result agreed with Acker (1990), Adams and Welsh (2008), Britton, 2000 and Creese (1999)

“Especially in male-dominated fields, women are less able to live up to the image of the ‘ideal’ worker and, hence, are less likely to be successful. While more women have recently broken through the proverbial ‘glass ceiling’, many women are locked into lower paying, lower echelon, female-dominated jobs with little opportunity for advancement”.

A respondent in the IDI sessions contradicted the above. Her submission is as follows:

“What matters most in these days that we are in is the personality, integrity and capability of the individual manager – male or female. If you know your onions, you will break through every ceiling or closed door. For instance, all the top nine (9) management staff that we have in the Lagos State Ministry of Health are females and things are going on well”

*Dep. Director/Female/Lagos/Feb 2013*

The above assertion is a total negation of the work of Wirth, 2001: almost without exception, women who are at or near the highest levels in corporations say that the most significant obstacle to their progress is organisational culture’

Women have historically been absent from top management levels and so culture has been shaped by men and reflect male preoccupations, ways of working, styles of leadership. But this work has been able to show that moving up the organisational ladder is not a function of gender.

The Tables 4.3a, 4.3b and 4.3c below offer explanations for objective 3

**Table 4.3a: Relationship between Personality Traits and Communication Styles**

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	12136.184	5	2427.237	62.428	.000
Residual	74028.582	1904	38.881		
Total	86164.766	1909			

$R = .375$ ,  $R^2 = .141$ ,  $Adj R^2 = .139$

**Table 4.3b: Relationship between Personality Traits and Communication Styles**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	25.655	1.388		18.478	.000
Openess	-.186	.094	-.067	-1.983	.047
Extraversion	-.215	.066	-.095	-3.233	.001
Agreeableness	.419	.034	.342	12.303	.000
Neuroticism	-.224	.088	-.072	-2.538	.011
Conscientiousness	.210	.032	.192	6.652	.000

**Table 4.3c: Relationship between Personality Traits and Communication Styles**

	Communication Styles	Openness	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Neuroticism	Conscientiousness
Communication Styles	1					
Openness	.123**	1				
Extraversion	.134**	.559**	1			
Agreeableness	.340**	.511**	.590**	1		
Neuroticism	.073**	.594**	.142**	.353**	1	
Conscientiousness	.266**	.580**	.520**	.558**	.401**	1
Mean	47.1958	14.2225	17.5848	46.0042	10.5031	52.6016
Std. Dev.	6.7183	2.4220	2.9799	5.4722	2.1582	6.1636

### Interpretation and discussion

The results in Table 4.3c showed that there were significant relationships between communication styles and openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness.

It is shown in Table 4.3c that the joint effect of independent variables (Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness) on communication styles was significant ( $F(5,1904) = 62.428$ ;  $R = .375$ ,  $R^2 = .141$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .139$ ;  $P < .05$ ). About 14% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. (Table 4.3b)

The result indicated the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable: Openness ( $\beta = -.067$ ,  $P > .05$ ), Extraversion ( $\beta = -.095$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Agreeableness ( $\beta = .342$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Neuroticism ( $\beta = -.072$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Conscientiousness ( $\beta = .192$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Thus, all the five independent variables had positive significant relationships with communication styles.

The results also showed that openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness are good predictors of communication styles. This suggests that individuals with these traits have a general appreciation for unusual ideas and art. They are usually imaginative, rather than being practical, creative and open to new and different ideas, and in touch with their feelings. Individuals who score low in openness on a career test are generally more closed-off, resistant to change, and analytical.

The assertion by one of the respondents from the IDI further corroborates the work of the Big Five theorists: Personality theorists submit that consistency in individual personality traits depend on the kind of person the individual is, situations, and behaviours sampled. According to the respondent,

communication is a personality issue, you can find a female who is soft spoken and caring in passing instruction and communication with others; while it is possible to have a male manager that shouts information and force instructions down the throat of his subordinates' it all depends on the person and the trait carried by the person

*Permanent Secretary/Female/Ekiti//January, 2013*

This is in perfect agreement with McCrae and Costa (1997):

People who score high in neuroticism are very emotionally reactive. They will have an emotional response to events that would not affect most people. They may find it difficult to think clearly and cope with stress

This is to say that the manager who shouts down instruction may be under emotional stress and as a result of his/her personality trait, will snap and shout.

**HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between each of each of the organisational factors of role ambiguity, work overload, and organisational culture and assertive, aggressive, passive and passive-aggressive communication styles of management staff in public organisations.

**Table 4.4a: Relationship between Organisational Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4690.494	3	1563.498	36.576	.000
Residual	81474.273	1906	42.746		
Total	86164.766	1908			

R = .233, R<sup>2</sup> = .054, Adj R<sup>2</sup> = .053

**Table 4.4b: Relationship between Organisational Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	34.235	1.342		25.507	.000
Work Overload	.411	.078	.121	5.290	.000
Role Ambiguity	1.252	.198	.142	6.338	.000
Organisational Culture		.025		4.276	.000
			.099		

*Field Survey, 2012*

**Table: 4.4c: Relationship between Organisational Factors and Communication Styles**

	<b>Communication Styles</b>	<b>Work Overload</b>	<b>Role Ambiguity</b>	<b>Organisational Culture</b>
Communication Styles	1			
Work Overload	.148**	1		
Role Ambiguity	.157**	.031	1	
Organisational Culture	.143**	.231**	.117**	1
Mean	47.1958	10.4770	2.8953	47.7859
Std. Dev.	6.7183	1.9793	0.7629	6.2677

*Field Survey, 2012*

### **Interpretation and discussion**

It is shown in the table 4.4c that the joint effect of the independent variables (Work Overload, Role Ambiguity, Organisational Culture) on communication styles was significant ( $F(3,1906) = 36.576$ ;  $R = .233$ ,  $R^2 = .054$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .053$ ;  $P < .05$ ). About 6% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. (Table 4.4.a)

Table 4.4c indicated that work overload, role ambiguity, and organisational culture were good predictors of communication styles. The result revealed the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable: Work Overload ( $\beta = .121$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Role Ambiguity ( $\beta = .142$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Organisational Culture ( $\beta = .099$ ,  $P > .05$ ).

All the three independent variables, work overload, role ambiguity, organisational culture, were significant. There were significant relationships between communication styles and work overload, role ambiguity, organisational culture. Role ambiguity carried the highest level of significance with a significant level of .142 (Table 4.4b).



Liberal feminists explain this inequality in terms of differential opportunities between these sexes. This can be attributed to the patriarchal nature of society that has been transferred from wider society into organisations. O'Donnell (1993) supports this notion by arguing that the organisational culture is usually a mirror of the dominant culture in mainstream society. Generally, because female managers found themselves working in a masculine environment, they often feel the pressure to adopt a more masculine role in an attempt to become more credible. Most recurring challenges faced by women in management positions are those posed by the context within which they operate. Management positions are stereotyped as a male domain and, as part of gender conformity; men are more likely to pursue manager-oriented tasks compared with their female counterparts.

The submission by one of the respondents during the IDI was contrary to the work of Adler (1993): 'of the categories of situational factors is the work situation (e.g. organisational culture and practices). A male-dominated organisational culture is an obstacle to women's success. Below is the respondent's submission:

In the public service/civil service, there is nothing like organisational culture disturbing women, each manager rises through the ranks, and once it is your turn to be the next director, it doesn't matter whether you're male or female

*Director/Male/Ondo/October, 2012*

The above submission is a complete departure from the work of Thomas-West and Worker (2005):

There are a number of perceived organisational barriers to career progression that hold women back. Whilst direct discrimination has been largely eradicated, discrimination may linger on in subtle work practices and structures, climate, culture and cultural norms. They are more pernicious for women and have a disproportionate effect on their career advancement.

Male-dominated professions, like Medicine, Law, Dentistry, and Engineering are similarly typified by "masculine" characteristics, including mental toughness, aggressiveness, rationality (and being unemotional), authority, competence, and a commitment to work that entailed long hours on the job (Pierce, 1995; Hinze, 1999; Dryburgh, 1999 and Adams, 2000). On coping with work pressure/overload, a respondent during the IDI sessions disagreed with the above assertion and stated as follows:

When under pressure, anybody can snap! Male or female, afterall, everybody is human. We have Nine (9) Directors and all are females, so to say that medicine is male dominated may not be correct especially where Lagos State is concerned. Looking at other directors, deputy directors and assistant directors, we have a ratio of 60/40 – 60 females and 40 males. The world is actually shifting from being male or female unto competence and being the best at what you do

*Dep. Director/Female/Lagos/December, 2012*

The explanation from McCrae and Costa (1993) about emotional instability can be used to understand the assertion of this respondent. According to them:

Neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, depression or anxiety. Individuals high in this trait tend to experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness. They are highly reactive in stressful situations and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening or minor situations as too difficult or as impossible.

This suggests that to snap is not as a result of someone's gender but as a result of personality.

### Other Findings

Although demographic factors are not in the original design for the study, some useful facts emerged in the course of carrying out the research, hence the report on them.

**Table 4.5a: Relationship between Demographic Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Sum Squares	of DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1353.331	5	270.666	6.076	.000
Residual	84811.436	1904	44.544		
Total	86164.766	1909			

$R = .125, R^2 = .016, \text{Adj } R^2 = .013$

**Table 4.5b: Relationship between Demographic Factors and Communication Styles**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	49.691	1.252		36.674	.000
Age	.125	.150	.023	.837	.402
Education	-.140	.273	-.012	-.513	.608
Years of Service	-.417	.137	-.084	-3.035	.002
Sex	-1.387	.309	-.103	-4.490	.000
Marital Status	.459	.312	.034	1.472	.141

*Field Survey, 2012*

### Interpretation and discussion

The joint effect of the independent variables (There will be no joint effect of independent variables (Age, Education, Years of Service, Sex, Marital Status) on communication styles is shown in the table. This was significant ( $F(5,1904) = 6.076$ ;  $R = .125$ ,  $R^2 = .016$ ,  $Adj. R^2 = .013$ ;  $P < .05$ ). About 2% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables (Table 4.5a). Also shown in the table above are Age, education, years of service, sex, marital status, which turned out to be good predictors of communication styles.

The result above revealed the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable: Age ( $\beta = .023$ ,  $P > .05$ ), Education ( $\beta = -.012$ ,  $P > .05$ ), Years of Service ( $\beta = -.084$ ,  $P < .05$ ), Sex ( $\beta = -.103$ ,  $P < .05$ ) and Marital Status ( $\beta = .034$ ,  $P > .05$ ). Thus, while years of service and sex were found significant, age, education and marital status were not.

The findings of this research showed that the independent variable, age was positively correlated to communication style at a significant level of .023, followed by sex at a negatively correlated significant level of -.103. Also, years of service was also

negatively correlated, at a significant level of  $-.084$ . This result is in tandem with Gove and Style, (1983); Riley, Foner and Johnson, (1968).

“There is a large body of evidence indicating that as persons’ age, they are more inclined to conform to social norms (Gove and Style, 1983; Riley, Foner and Johnson, 1968). The evidence is strong that with increasing age, people show a need for approval and behave and communicate in a socially appropriate fashion”.

A submission by a respondent in the IDI tallied with the result of this research;

Yes, age has a lot to do with communication because with advancement in age, people who, normally, would be hard and inflexible tend to relax rules and speak more calmly and kindly; so I say yes, with age, people can be better in communication.

*Permanent Secretary/Male/Ondo/October, 2012*

Women in traditionally male occupations are evaluated more negatively than women in traditional occupations or men in occupations dominated by women (Pfof and Fiore, 1990). They are not viewed as positively or as competent as men of comparable skill in the same positions (Paludi and Strayer, 1985; Alban-Metcalf and West, 1991). They receive less support from peers and mentors than do male employees (Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Alban-Metcalf and West, 1991). They are excluded from informal networks and activities where important information is exchanged and business transactions are conducted (Kanter, 1977). They experience more impediments to advancement to the higher managerial ranks in the organisational structure (Jacobs, 1989).

## **CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion, policy implications as well as recommendations premised on the major findings in the study. The educational implications, limitations and suggested areas for further studies are also discussed.

### **5.1 Summary**

This study examined the extent to which personality traits, organisational and gender factors correlate with the communication styles of management staff of public organisations in southwestern Nigeria. To achieve this, the study was divided into five chapters. Chapter one dealt with the background, statement of the problem, statement of the objectives and the research question. It also stated the significance of the study, the scope and defined the related terms as they apply to this study.

An extensive review of related literature was carried out to have an insight into previous works related to this study. A critical review of the empirical study was done, there was a theoretical framework generated and also, related theories were raised for the study. An appraisal of the literature reviewed was also carried out. Hypotheses were also stated to guide the study.

The study adopted the survey research design of the *ex-post facto* type involving a sample size of 1,910 respondents, representing the total number of directors, deputy directors and assistant directors and all male and female staff from Grade Level 12 and above in the different departments/units of the selected public organisations in the six states of the southwestern Nigeria.

The participants responded to gender factors scale, personality traits Inventory and organisational management and communication inventory questionnaires. The questionnaires were complemented with In-depth Interview (IDI) sessions. The demographic data collected on the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency counts, while the data on core variables covered by the study were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, t-Test and Multiple Regression. The qualitative data collected through the IDI sessions was content analysed.

The results of the study revealed that sometimes the gender identity of a person makes him/her one gender, but his/her genitals and their body's secondary sex characteristics suggest a different sex hence the need to allow the person (trait) to show up rather than judge by being a male or a female. It further revealed that it is not totally correct to put a label on someone and then assume that label depicts everything one needs to know about that person. Almost all the respondents agreed that what matters most is the personality, integrity and capability of the individual manager and not being a male or female; and that communication is a personality issue and not a factor of gender.

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that gender factors do not determine communication effectiveness of male and female managers. It was noted that the females were not many in the top echelon of management. In the public service, there was nothing like organisational culture raising a glass ceiling and halting females in their career progression. It was established that communication is a personality issue and not a function of gender. The result showed that personality traits as a factor was positively correlated with communication styles.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The issue of organisational performance as well as biases for judging the effectiveness of communication style among male and female management has become a polemical issue in public organisations in the developing world. Scholars have conducted various researches on the relevance of public organisations to national development, particularly in the area of providing public utilities, which have been a major concern to government and the majority of the populace of the developing world including Nigeria. This study has been able to establish and conclude, deducing from the results and findings of this study, that openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness, gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conduct peer preference as well as determinative role, work overload, organisational culture and role ambiguity are potent factors in determining organisational communication.

### **5.3 Policy implications of the study**

There is a need to have a policy that will play down subtlety on senior female staff to encourage them to climb the organisational hierarchy and besides, that would encourage a good work-based interaction across all hierarchy regardless of sex.

Also, organisational policies as well as traditions should be flexible and gender-friendly to accommodate males and females; hence, there is need for every organisation to have gender-neutral cultures, traditions and structures. This is with the aim of removing gender-labelling and biases as well as gender preference.

Policies in public organisations should also ensure flexible work schedules as well as less ambiguity in defining the roles of the individual across all levels of the hierarchy in the organisation. The communication system in public organisations should be flexible enough and adaptive to all management regardless of the personality traits being exhibited by the individual. Besides, all management staff, on assuming that status, should be given an in-service or on-the-job training in the area of communication in organisation. This is to allow them blend with existing situation in which they may likely find themselves in the course of carrying out their management functions.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research work, the following were recommended:

- (1) It is imperative to encourage the female middle and senior staff by preparing them for increased level of responsibilities that they are likely to assume as they get to the management status.
- (2) There is also the need to establish formal and informal work relationships in such a way to encourage interaction among both sexes in the organisation.
- (3) There should be less work schedule for the management staff to allow them concentrate on their management functions and it is equally necessary to clearly define the work schedules of each officer to avoid role conflict and ambiguity
- (4) Public organisations should ensure flexible and adaptive communication systems with work schedules that can easily accommodate all staff regardless of sex and personality.

- (5) Management training for new and existing management staff is very important with focus on organisation communication for both categories of management staff.
- (6) Work schedules and roles need to be properly defined.

## **5.5 Contributions to Knowledge**

First, the work will breach the existing gap in the literature on the personality traits, gender and organisational factors as correlates of communication styles. The study has shown that personality traits and organisational factors increase communication effectiveness of management staff. It was discovered that the combination of openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness are potent factors in determining organisational communication.

The study showed that personality traits, gender and organisational factors were potent factors in ensuring effective communication styles among management staff in public organisations. The study also showed that openness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness were critical factors in effective communication among management staff of public organisations. Further, gender identity, gender labelling, gender-linked conduct, peer preference as well as determinative role are essential factors in bringing about positive communication styles in public organisations. Work overload, organisational culture and role ambiguity are critical factors to be given considerations to ensure effective communication among management staff of public organisations.

## **5.6 Limitations to the study**

The study covered the six states in southwestern Nigeria: Ekiti, Lagos, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, and Oyo. If not for financial constraints, the study could have been carried out to cover all the thirty-six states of the federation for a wider coverage. Again, in the six states, only six ministries were covered in each of the states; this was also due to time and financial constraints.



The study focused only on the public sector organisations, meanwhile, it would have been a more robust study to compare the public and private sectors, but the dual constraint of finances and time did not permit this to happen.

There is also the problem of bureaucracy and bottlenecks. It takes as long as two weeks to get the ethical approval from some permanent secretaries to administer questionnaires and conduct the interviews. Even with the ethical approval on hand, some of the officers still refused to be recorded because they do not want to be quoted.

Notwithstanding the identified problems, the findings of the study are cogent and empirically sustainable and could be generalised for all the ministries in southwestern Nigeria.

### **5.7 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Arising from the limitations, this researcher wishes to state that it is very expedient that other researchers should carry out more studies to cover a wider scope. The researcher suggests that the same study should be carried out in the private organisations in southwestern Nigeria. Also, a comparative study should be carried out between the communication styles of management staff in public organisations and those of their counterparts in the private organisations. It is also expedient that another study would be carried out to suggest solutions to the predisposing factors to the defective communication.

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APPENDIX  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN.

Dear Sir/Ma,

This questionnaire is designed to collect information on the topic: Personality Traits, Gender and Organisational Factors as Correlates of Communication Styles among Management Staff of Public Organisations in Southwestern Nigeria. All information so given will be used purely for the research purpose and shall be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you for your time.

The Researcher

**SECTION A**

**Instruction:** Please fill in by ticking the most appropriate response that best describes your personal characteristics.

1. **Name of Organisation:** .....

2. **Age last Birthday**

20years – 25years ( ) 26years – 30years ( ) 31years – 35years ( )

36years – 40 years ( ) 41years – 45 years ( ) 46years – 50 years ( )

51 years – 55years( ) 56 years – 60 years( ) 61years – 65years( )

3. **Sex:** Male ( ) Female ( )

4. **Grade Level:**

GL 12 – GL 15 ( ) GL 16 and above ( )

5. **Marital Status:**

Single ( ) Married ( ) Divorced ( ) Separated ( ) Widowed ( )

**6. Length of years in Service**

1-5years ( ) 6-10years ( ) 11– 15 years ( ) 16 -20years ( )  
21- 25years ( ) 26-30years ( ) 30years and above ( )

**7. Highest Educational Qualification:** PhD ( ) Master's Degree ( ) First Degree/HND ( )

**8. Present Position in Organisation:** Director ( ) Deputy Director ( ) Assistant Director ( ) Others ( )

**9. Religion:** Christianity ( ) Islam ( ) Others ( )

**10. Ethnicity:** Igbo ( ) Yoruba ( ) Hausa ( ) Others ( )

**Instructions:**

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements by ticking the number (1-4) which best represents your response on the following scale:

Strongly Agree = 4  
Agree = 3  
Disagree = 2  
Strongly Disagree = 1

## SECTION B – GENDER FACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

		SA	A	D	SD
1	There is a relationship between gender and communication effectiveness.	4	3	2	1
2	The older I am, the more effective my communication styles are.	4	3	2	1
3	My academic background has no effect on my communication style and effectiveness at work.	4	3	2	1
4	My marital status affects my communication style.	4	3	2	1
5	Female bosses bring their family problems to work, thus affecting their communication and interpersonal relationship.	4	3	2	1
6	Family problems of female bosses affect their communication, attitude and achievement at work.	4	3	2	1
7	Female managers build trust through open and collaborative relationships.	4	3	2	1
8	Female managers set specific, measurable goals and holds people accountable for results.	4	3	2	1
9	Female managers develop and implements clear logical policies and procedure.	4	3	2	1
10	Female managers fosters high level of participation and involvement.	4	3	2	1
11	Female managers inspire others to do their best.	4	3	2	1
12	Female managers listens well and is usually receptive to other people's ideas and input.	4	3	2	1
13	Female managers anticipate and deal skillfully with organisational conflict through effective communication.	4	3	2	1
14	Female managers show empathy and concern in dealing with subordinates.	4	3	2	1
15	Your gender type affects your relationship and communication with subordinates.	4	3	2	1
16	Your relationship with superiors is a function of your gender type.	4	3	2	1
17	Role perception has nothing to do with gender type.	4	3	2	1
18	Relationship with peers has nothing to do with gender type.	4	3	2	1
19	Ability to control the organisation is not a gender problem.	4	3	2	1
20	Ability to maintain the organisation is dependent on your gender type.	4	3	2	1
21	Controlling the finance of the organisation is not a function of gender.	4	3	2	1
22	Ability control the organisation technically is determined by your gender	4	3	2	1

	type.				
23	Female managers show exceptional ability to mobilise people to get work done.	4	3	2	1
24	Female managers bring a sense of order into the organisation.	4	3	2	1
25	Ability to allocate resources is a gender problem.	4	3	2	1
26	Male managers are better resource managers.	4	3	2	1
27	Female managers are better at organisational management than their male counterparts.	4	3	2	1
28	Female managers anticipate and deals skillfully with organisational Communication.	4	3	2	1
29	Female managers carefully review detailed report.	4	3	2	1
30	Female managers focus on result for the organisation.	4	3	2	1
31	Believes in clear structure and chain of command and communication.	4	3	2	1
32	Female managers ensure the organisation delivers on stated goals.	4	3	2	1
33	Female managers face problems that their male counterparts don't have to face.	4	3	2	1
34	Women are more effective as managers than men.	4	3	2	1
35	Male managers do easily compromise and often show degrees of flexibility in matter that relate to communication, policies and guidelines.	4	3	2	1
36	Women managers are too strict.	4	3	2	1
37	Female managers are more effective in not compromising on communication, policies and guidelines.	4	3	2	1
38	Your ability to cope with stress is due to your gender type.	4	3	2	1
39	Yourself motivation is not affected by your gender type.	4	3	2	1

### Section C – PERSONALITY TRAITS INVENTORY

		SA	A	D	SD
40	My subordinates can see and discuss with me whenever they like regardless of their position	4	3	2	1
41	I always settle dispute among my subordinates	4	3	2	1
42	My communication style motivate my subordinates to perform better	4	3	2	1

43	I give freedom to my subordinates to take decisions that help the department/organisation	4	3	2	1
44	I prefer formal medium of communication with my subordinates.	4	3	2	1
45	Communication interaction is encouraged with my subordinates.	4	3	2	1
46	I believe strictly in going through the hierarchical level when addressing issues.	4	3	2	1
47	I give orders when I want things done in the dept /organisation.	4	3	2	1
48	I don't allow my subordinates in decision making.	4	3	2	1
49	I inform my subordinates the reason for certain actions that I take in the organisation.	4	3	2	1
50	I ensure my subordinates attend to their duties.	4	3	2	1
51	I hardly respect the confidence of staff or others who bring personal matters to official duties.	4	3	2	1
52	My kind of communication styles has positive impact on my staff performance.	4	3	2	1
53	If I have choice I will change some staff in my department.	4	3	2	1

#### Section D – ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS SCALE

		SA	A	D	SD
54	My boss does not allow his subordinate to express their views.	4	3	2	1
55	I participate in decision making relating to my existence in the organisation.	4	3	2	1
56	I receive adequate information on aims and objectives of the organisation and the duties assigned to me.	4	3	2	1
57	I believe a boss should be firm in communicating.	4	3	2	1
58	The most frequently used medium of communication for passing information in the organisation is through internal memorandum.	4	3	2	1
59	The subordinates are consulted before decisions are reached.	4	3	2	1
60	My boss relates with me at the friendship level.	4	3	2	1
61	Female bosses bring their personal problems to bear on subordinates and	4	3	2	1



	this affects the way they communicate.				
62	Communication style is a function of gender.	4	3	2	1
63	The communication style of my boss motivates me to perform better.	4	3	2	1
65	I prefer to work with a female boss.	4	3	2	1
65	My boss is a man and I prefer it.	4	3	2	1
66	The boss is always brash in his/her expression while communicating.	4	3	2	1
67	I spend extra hours on my job in order to finish a task.	4	3	2	1
68	I receive support from my boss.	4	3	2	1
69	Female directors are better communicators.	4	3	2	1
70	Male directors are better communicators.	4	3	2	1
71	Female directors are more empathic to staff.	4	3	2	1

### MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

Rank the female communication styles against subordinate effectiveness

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
72	Dominant				
73	Dramatic				
74	Contentious				
75	Animated				
76	Impression Leaving				
77	Relaxed				
78	Attentive				
79	Open				
80	Friendly				
81	Communicator Image				
82	Distance				
83	Supportive				
84	Trustworthy				
85	Honest				
86	Selfish				

87	Cooperative				

Rank the male communication styles against subordinate effectiveness

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
88	Dominant				
89	Dramatic				
90	Contentious				
91	Animated				
92	Impression Leaving				
93	Relaxed				
94	Attentive				
95	Open				
96	Friendly				
97	Communicator Image				
98	Distance				
99	Supportive				
100	Trustworthy				
101	Honest				
102	Selfish				
103	Cooperative				

THANK YOU.

## **IDI GUIDE**

1. There is a general disregard for and resistance of females in management.
2. People readily accept and respects male authority easily and constantly.
3. There is gender- stereotyping.
4. Females in the management gets cold shoulders sometimes because male colleagues believe you're subverting natural order by competing with them.
5. Males in management believe that females in management are subverting natural order by competing with males.
6. Females in management have to 'prove' their competence.
7. Males in management feel the females in management can match their competence.
8. Realm of management is highly male biased.
9. Organisation is gender neutral.
10. Female/male managers force instructions down the throat of subordinates.
11. Males in management have the ability to effectively communicate objectives and deadlines.
12. Females in management have the ability to effectively communicate objectives and deadlines.
13. Female managers are tougher and stricter.
14. Male managers are tougher and stricter.
15. Females are better communicators.
16. Males in management are better communicators.

### Population of Management Staff in the Selected Organisation

S/N	Organisation	POPULATION OF MANAGEMENT STAFF	SAMPLE SIZE CHOSEN
1	Osun State Ministry of Education, Osogbo	54	54
2	Osun State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Osogbo	47	47
3	Osun State Ministry of Women Affairs, Osogbo	50	50
4	Osun State Ministry of Health, Osogbo	64	64
5	Osun State Ministry of Planning\Budget, Osogbo	13	13
6	Osun State Ministry of Finance, Osogbo	40	40
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>268</b>
7	Ondo State Ministry of Education, Akure	60	60
8	Ondo State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Akure	48	48
9	Ondo State Ministry of Women Affairs, Akure	68	68
10	Ondo State Ministry of Health, Akure	63	63
11	Ondo State Ministry of Planning\Budget, Akure	18	18
12	Ondo State Ministry of Finance, Akure	70	70
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>327</b>
13	Lagos State Ministry of Education, Alausa, Ikeja	128	128
14	Lagos State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Alausa, Ikeja	95	95
15	Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs, Alausa, Ikeja	61	61
16	Lagos State Ministry of	23	23

	Planning\Budget, Alausa, Ikeja		
17	Lagos State Ministry of Health, Alausa, Ikeja	82	82
18	Lagos State Ministry of Finance, Alausa, Ikeja	52	52
0	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>446</b>
19	Oyo State Ministry of Education, Ibadan	48	48
20	Oyo State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Ibadan	31	31
21	Oyo State Ministry of Women Affairs, Ibadan	32	32
22	Oyo State Ministry of Health, Ibadan	42	42
23	Oyo State Ministry of Planning\Budget, Ibadan	14	14
24	Oyo State Ministry of Finance, Ibadan	36	36
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>
25	Ogun State Ministry of Education, Abeokuta	70	70
26	Ogun State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Abeokuta	64	64
27	Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs, Abeokuta	40	40
28	Ogun State Ministry of Health, Abeokuta	32	32
29	Ogun State Ministry of Planning\Budget, Abeokuta	15	15
30	Ogun State Ministry of Finance, Abeokuta	56	56
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>326</b>
31	Ekiti State Ministry of Education, Ado-Ekiti	100	100
32	Ekiti State Ministry of Local Government & Chieftaincy Matters, Ado-Ekiti	33	33
33	Ekiti State Ministry of Women Affairs, Ado-Ekiti	34	34
34	Ekiti State Ministry of Health, Ado-Ekiti	68	68
35	Ekiti State Ministry of	20	20

	Planning\Budget, Ado-Ekiti		
36	Ekiti State Ministry of Finance, Ado-Ekiti	61	61
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>316</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>1,910</b>

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