

# Challenges in Communication with Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN)

<sup>1</sup>Princewill Aghedo.  
London Professional Training Centre,  
Lagos state.

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah Dada Owoeye.  
Corresponding author  
Department of Nursing science,  
College of Medicine and Health Science  
Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state.

<sup>3</sup>Moses Adeyemo  
Nurses and Politics, Nigeria

<sup>4</sup>Victor Bayem Nwachukwu  
University of Benin Teaching  
Hospital,  
Benin-City, Edo state.

<sup>5</sup>Oluwatomisin Ogidan  
Department of Nursing,  
Obafemi Awolowo University,  
Ile-Ife, Osun state.

**Abstract:-** Communication is an important aspect of organisation's relationship in service to the public. The study investigates nurses' opinion on 'Challenges in communicating with Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN)'. This is a descriptive web-based study with 896 participants. Data analysis was done using Google form. The result showed that 91.1% majority of the respondents were Registered/Graduate nurses. Majority 74.1% have tried to reach out to Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) through email, phone calls, text messages, Letters etc. 39.2% of those who reached out by email never got any reply. The participants suggested a better customer service, embracement of online availability and prompt responses to the received messages by Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN). The study recommends that an active online availability by NMCN to improve communication.

**Keywords:-** Challenges, NMCN, Communication, Nursing.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral part of day-to-day activities. It is used to convey feeling, opinion and other relevant matters from one person to another and or across organisation. Effective communication in an organisation increases job output and makes the organisation to succeed [1]. The organisation that render services to the public has the onus of keeping in tune with the people it serves through continual and uninterrupted communication. Communication is stated as one of the core values of a nursing regulatory board [2]. An appraisal of organisation's standard is measured by the function of effective dissemination of information; therefore management team has the responsibilities of ensuring their employees are up to task in meeting up with the goal[3].

In the present age, there is a paradigm shift in the communication network and this is brought about by the advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT) which is the hallmark of communication means in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The key to up-to-date performance in the growing competitive world is the ability of the professionals to

utilize Information Communication Technology to aid service delivery [4]. In the world, there is a documented increase in the statistics of ICT users from one billion to three billion within the space of a decade, which is 2005 and 2015 respectively. ICT is now a key to human activities and a life wire of any organisation [5]. The increase in the need to be more efficient on the job, in order to secure the means of livelihood, has placed a top priority on the need to be Information Technology Communication compliant by individuals at work [6].

In comparison, the present means of communication is faster than the former means. In other to keep abreast with the current trends in communication, NMCN has also improved her services to be data driven with ICT compliance through the introduction of online registration for registration, licensing etc. According to Robinson-Bassey & Edet [4], Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria should reflect their service package to be in line with the use of modern technology as nursing service in this present dispensation needs the combination of nursing science with Information science and Computer science. The directive on these services, registration, licensing etc, has been communicated to nurses in Nigeria [7]. The Council had earlier mandated among many other things that the benchmark for the training of students in Schools of Nursing and Department of Nursing across Nigeria are internet facilities and appropriate number of computers [4].

Organisational appraisal for effectiveness is based on her ability to disseminate information or communicate thoughts to people and to receiving a due response that is aimed at meeting the organisational aims and objectives [3]. Although the Council has upgraded its communication link through the use ICT, however, there are still gaps as many nurses still complain of a delayed service in certain duties that NMCN renders to them. According to Geraets [8], challenges with communication could increase the waiting time and in turn increases the resolution time-frame, therefore staff training and orientation are the obvious means to implementing the new communication strategies. The difficulty associated with change in system of the nursing board has caused nurses to be worried about their status and credentialing as a registered nurse [9].

Some had put a call through to NMCN, travelled miles to get the issue solved to time or resolved to fate on the expected services. It is based on this premise that the study was conceived to investigate the challenges in Communicating with Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN).

➤ *Objectives of Study*

The broad objective of the study is to investigate challenges in Communicating with NMCN. The specific objectives for the study are;

- To assess nurses’ attempt to communicate with NMCN.
- To determine the time-frame in NMCN reply of the messages.
- To assess nurses’ access to NMCN offices

**II. METHOD AND MATERIAL**

A descriptive survey was used to access challenges in Communicating with NMCN. The study setting was online. The population for the study is 250,000 nurses in Nigeria. At 99% Confidence interval and 5% margin of error, a sample size of 667 was computed using the Creative Research Systems Survey software of the Sample

size calculator [10]. 20% non-response/attrition rate was computed to be 730 sample sizes. Since restriction is not controlled online, the response rate makes up to 896, thereby making the Data Generating Sample to be 896. The instrument used was a self-constructed instrument designed to elicit responses in line with the study. The instrument was created in a Google form and it contains 8 test items to make it time friendly for the respondents. Data collection spanned over 8 weeks. Data analysis was through Google automatic analysis. Consent was through implied filling of the questionnaire with willingness.

**III. RESULTS**

Majority 91.1% of the respondents are Registered/Graduate nurses. 74.1% of the respondents had tried to reach out to NMCN through email, phone calls, text messages, Letters and social media of which 39.2% never got any reply when they reached out to NMCN via email. Majority 78% stated that it is not convenient to travel from their location to any of the NMCN offices and 65.8% know that NMCN have zonal offices across the Six (6) geo-political zones in Nigeria.

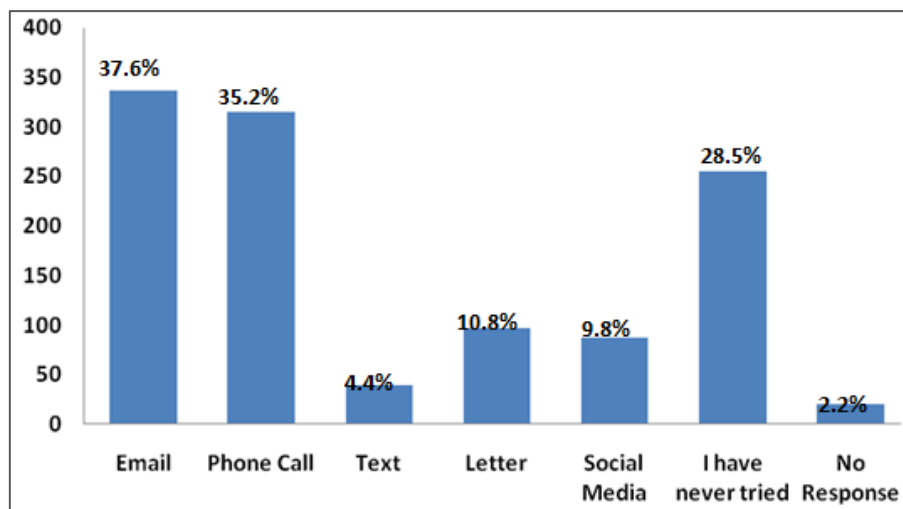


Fig 1:- Attempt to reach out to NMCN

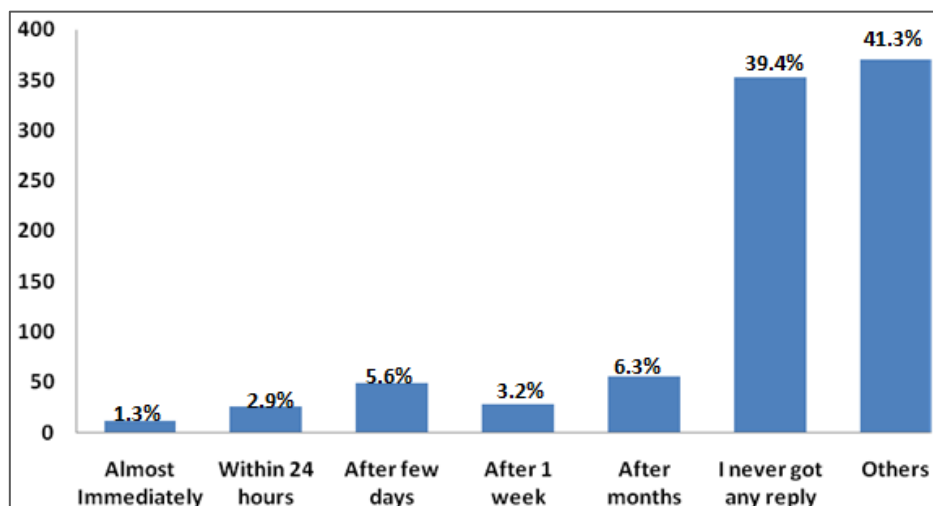


Fig 2:- Time frame in NMCN reply to messages.

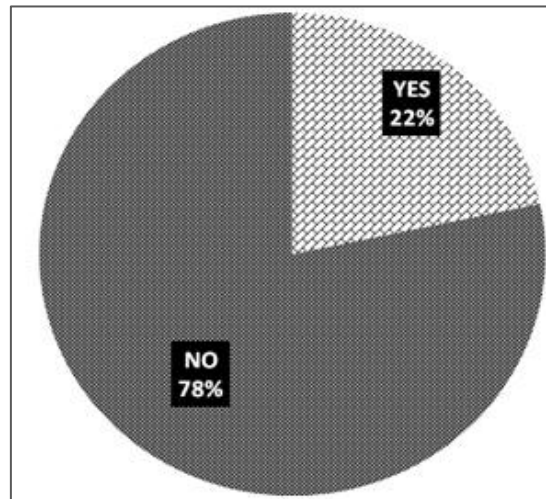


Fig 3:- Is it convenient to travel from your present location to any NMCN offices in Nigeria

#### IV. DISCUSSION

##### ➤ Nurses' attempt to communicate with NMCN

Majority 91.1% of the respondents are Registered/Graduate nurses. This is in line with a study on communication barriers perceived by nurses and patients by Norouzinia et. al., [11] where 92.7% of nurses held a degree in nursing. Ahmad et. al., [12] (2018) asserted that nurses who hold an academic degree utilise Information Communication Technology at ease than those who hold only a professional certificates. This is not similar with a study by Amoah et al., [13], where 69% of the respondents had a Diploma in Nursing.

74.1% of the respondents had tried to reach out to NMCN through email, phone calls, text messages, Letters and social media. This revealed that majority of the participants utilized Information Communication Technology in reaching out to NMCN. In a study by Bello et.al, [14], 95.9% of the respondents utilised an active e-mail address for communication and over half of the respondents 55% checked their e-mail on an average of three times on daily basis. 68% of the respondents predominantly use email as a means of Information Communication Technology for communication, followed by mobile phone communication which account for 65%. In another study by Odiwuor [15], 27.6% of the study participants utilized Information Communication Technology on their jobs. The study further stated that 64.8% of the respondents were provided with Desktops while 24.4% and 10.8% of the respondents had desktops/laptops and laptops respectively. The study is in contrast to a study by Niemi, Hupli & Koivumen [16] where 5% of the respondents had quite poor Information Communication Technology skill. This means that the participants do not possess the technical know-how on the use of Information Communication Technology. In another study by Oyeboade & Gbotosho [6], 67.3% of the stated that they have phobia for the use of Information Communication Technology. It could be deduced that the fear associated with the use of Information Communication

Technology in this case may be due to inability to embrace change or inadequate knowledge on the use of ICT.

##### ➤ Time-frame in NMCN reply of the messages

39.2% never got any reply when they reached out to NMCN via email. This is not in line with a study by Mutua [17] where 83% of the respondents disagreed that the use of ICT is a challenge confronting the Department of Extra Mural Studies. In a study by Lyngstad et al., [18], most of the respondents 94.9% who were nurses complained that electronic communication was an obstacle to communication due to different reason which were; Inefficient performance (31%), System operation below expectation (31.1%) and software problems (32.7%). These variables could make a delay in the response to messages to be worsened as there is multi-causality on these themes of obstacle stated. The result of the present study is incongruence with the study by Wagner, Bezuidenhout & Roos [19], where more than half of the respondents (56.1%) stated that they were satisfied with the immediate response from the communication. It could be noted that a prompt feedback in communication enhances satisfaction of the public who the organisation is serving. In a study by Geraets [9], it was reported that health organisations are now in tune with the use of electronic means to bridging the gap in communication errors, delay or failure which were the factors to about 80% challenges of the health institution. The same study stated that most of the nurses (97%) would utilize Information Communication Technology in four years to come. This trend utilization of ICT to enhancing communication is to allow room for easy transaction and effectiveness of the services to the public which the organisation serves.

##### ➤ Access to NMCN offices for information

Majority 78% stated that it is not convenient to travel from their location to any of the NMCN offices, even though 65.8% of the participants know that NMCN have zonal offices across the Six (6) geo-political zones in Nigeria. This corroborates the study by Mutua [17] where 93% of the respondents agreed that distance was a challenge to communication in the department. In a study

by Ahmad et al., [12] 65% of the participants had preference for accessing information through the modern technology than through the use of hard-copies. In the same study, 73% of the participants considered bringing the gap of distance by accessing information through the use of Information Communication Technologies. The present effort in saving time and cost of traveling in accessing services is now being made possible through the utilization of ICT. Modern technology could mitigate for the hardship of travelling distance to getting a problem solved. In another study by Odiwuor et. al., [15], more than half 58.28% of the participants had no access to Information Communication Technology. In a study by Lyngstad et al., [18], 97.2% of the respondents agreed that electronic communication is a veritable for interaction. In a study by Dash, Haller, Sommer et. al., [20], it was revealed that 85% of medical professionals utilise the internet and about 64% make use of email to communication. In the same study, it was stated that the use of electronic media has brought about increase in communication access with adequate functioning of delivery of services

## V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that most of the respondents who are graduate nurses had reached out to NMCN through different means among which the communication means were through emails and phone calls. Majority of the respondents stated that the geographical access to NMCN office is not easy for them even though most of them know that NMCN zonal offices exist in all the geopolitical zone of the country. Suggestion to improve communication by NMCN were stated as; Improved information Communication Technology, Personnel training and designation to man the electronic communication and active involvement of the NMCN personnel in positive projection of NMCN through effective communication to the people it is meant to serve.

### ➤ Implication for nursing management

The study on Challenges in Communication with NMCN revealed that majority of the respondents who utilised ICT to reach out to NMCN are graduates. The implication of this to nursing management is that higher education for nursing could influence the use of modern technology as a mode of communication rather than the other system of communication like writing of letters in pen and paper. The respondents also noted that reaching the NMCN office from their domain is not easy; though they are aware there are zonal offices across the country. This implies that the present age of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is geared towards making life convenient through the use of ICT in reaching out rather than travelling miles away to communicate and solve issues with NMCN. From the study, it is observed that the feedback in communication was noted to be poor; the implication is that it is expedient that service to be rendered should take cognisance of the present age strategies in its mode of communication.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study the researchers hereby recommend that;

- NMCN should create a 24 hour per week communication feedback system that will attend to nurses requesting for any form of information through any means from the NMCN.
- NMCN should set up an active social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) with hotlines (toll free) and employ internet savvy professionals who are fully trained in customer care and ready to respond to calls, mails and any request from nurses globally.
- NMCN should have an active and effective email service with auto-response immediately and prosper response within 24hours.
- NMCN should make provision for self-service portal on her website to be interactive 24 hours with the use of bot (Artificial Intelligence apps) that can automatically return Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
- NMCN should continue to seek the support of the government and non-governmental organisation e.g SW Global, where need be, in a bid to improving communication network.

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