THE EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION IN ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY OF STAFF IN OLABISI ONABANJO UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: This study investigates the role of communication in enhancing organizational productivity. The methodology employed in this study was survey research design. The data used in this study were collected from primary sources which include administering of questionnaires. The study was carried out in Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. The population of this study included over 10,000 staffs while 200 staffs were randomly chosen for the the sample size. From the analysis of the results at 5% level of significance shows that communication has significant effect on organizational productivity in Olabisi Onabanjo University. The study concluded that effective communication to the management and staff is the panacea for sustained and increased productivity of the workforce and organizational performances. The study therefore recommends that managers should understand their audience. This helps using the right language which improves effectiveness of communication.

Keywords: Communication; Organizational Productivity; Social-Emotional Oriented; Work-Oriented

Introduction

The interpersonal interaction among employees in the organization is increasingly paid attention to. People do not only formally disseminate information related to work and their organization,
but also talk about themselves and their emotions. Talking about non-work-related topics for social reasons occurs commonly among members of organizations. Through this kind of communication, social networks can be built among employees in the organizations.

As a result of the organization members’ curiosity, interpersonal attraction, and social interaction, informal communication have become a common feature of the social networks in today’s organizations (Kreps, 2015). Scholars have argued that informal communication in the organization is the second most frequently used channel to communicate (coming only behind communication between the employee and his or her immediate supervisor), although it may not be the preferred source of reliable information in the organization (Tubbs & Moss, 2013). In terms of the communication in organizations, while the formal communication is primarily relied on, some organizations also do not discourage informal communication. One researcher has suggested that gossip plays a part in improving bonds between employees (Sostek, 2016)

Communication in this kind of organization has different features and effects from that in organizations with a formal style of management. Some organizations have begun to realize the need to provide an opportunity for employees to get to know each other and interact in informal settings (Robbins et al., 2010). They encourage employees to spend time together outside of work and to go on some kind of outing, such as going bowling, playing games, mountain climbing, and having dinner together (Robbins et al., 2010, 58; Tubbs & Moss, 2008). These kinds of experiences will open up the lines of communication and diminish barriers to effective communication (Mowle, 2004). The result is more effective communication, contributing to improved organizational outcomes.

While employees are talking about non-work related topics within or outside the workplace, they get to know in what way their co-workers are used to, and like to, communicate. When they find the “key” to open others’ hearts and mouths, they receive access to a greater amount of knowledge and information. It is not rare that employees know what their co-workers are interested in and what is going on in their co-workers’ lives. As a result of getting to know their
co-workers better they learn how to transmit information to them and make them understand it correctly, which is essential for communication regarding work and organization.

According to Farace, Monge and Russell (2016), there are three main kinds of communication at a workplace. They are task-related communication, innovation-related communication (new ideas), and maintenance-related communication (social topics that maintains human relationships). In this study, however, the task-related communication and innovation-related communication (new ideas) are jointly referred to as work-oriented communication. For instance, in an organization, managers tell subordinates what their tasks are and how to accomplish these tasks; salesmen report to their superiors about how much they have sold this week; employees of a newsroom talk with the other employees of the technique support department about how to use a new system. This type of communication may happen at a weekly meeting within departments, or may just be via email.

Researches in different areas of study have shown that organizational communication affects employees’ commitment to the organization; the previous literature does not offer guidance on how different types of organizational commitment are affected by different kinds of communication in the organization and through different flows of the communication.

First, we do not know the situation of social-emotional-oriented communication between the employees at the same level or the employees at different levels in an Organization. Second, we do not know the relationship between employees’ social-emotional-oriented communication with their peers or leaders and different types of organizational commitment. Third, we do not know the relationship between work-oriented communication and different types of employees’ organizational commitment in an Organization. Finally, we do not know the relationship between employees’ social-emotional-oriented communication with their peers or leaders and work-oriented communication in an Organization.

As a result, the broad objectives of this study the role of communication in enhancing organizational productivity. However, the specific objective is to find out the social-emotional oriented communication in the horizontal direction predicts organizational productivity.
Literature Review

Maslow’s Needs Hierarchy Theory

The tenet of human relations theory suggests that the organization should gear management design to meet the human needs of employees. This idea is illustrated by its proponents. Abraham Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow, 1943) that is applied as a prototype of a human relations approach to organizing and management (Miller, 2012). According to this theory, human beings are motivated by a series of basic needs. Maslow stated that the five types of human needs are sequenced in a hierarchy of prepotency. When the lower-level needs are satisfied, the higher-level needs will emerge and dominate conscious life and the organizational behavior (Maslow, 1943). That is to say, in an organization, if the employees are not provided adequate wages and safe working conditions, the social interaction among employees at the workplace will not be satisfied. Maslow’s theory, together with the Hawthorne Studies, manifests the importance of social interaction and managerial attention to this at the workplace, and reflects the move from classical approaches to human relations approaches (Miller, 2012).

McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y

In Douglas McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y which represent two distinct managerial assumptions that managers hold about organizational functioning, Theory X represents the ideas that are held by managers who are influenced by the classical theory, while Theory Y represents the beliefs of human relations theory managers. According to Theory X, people are indolent, gullible, irresponsible and self-centered; they lack ambition and are resistant to change (McGregor, 2010). Therefore, the three propositions of Theory X are: managers are responsible for organizing the tangibles and people for financial motivation; employees must be controlled and motivated to meet the organizational needs; and employees would be passive and indifferent to achieve the organizational needs if they are not directed and intervened (McGregor, 2010). On the contrary, Theory Y asserts that employees at a workplace naturally expend mental and physical effort; they exercise self-control and self-direction to which they are committed; they
are willing to be responsible, imaginative, creative, and ingenious; they are highly motivated to achieve the organizational goals and self-actualization needs; furthermore, commitment to the organizational objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their self-fulfillment (McGregor, 2010). Therefore, the role of managers should be to explore these motivated employees’ natural intellectual potentialities. It is not only the managers that are capable but also the workers. The managers should explore and use the intelligent workers’ resources, and nurture participative management and decision making among all the members in the organization to enhance organizational effectiveness (Kreps, 2015).

Social-Emotional Oriented Communication among Employees

According to Farace, Monge and Russell (2016), there are three main kinds of communication at a workplace. They are task-related communication, innovation-related communication (new ideas), and maintenance-related communication (social topics that maintain human relationships). Social-emotional-oriented communication in the current study refers to the last kind. That is to say, it is the communication that is oriented by topics that are not related to work and the organization. Instead, it involves topics that express emotion and plays a role in social needs and relationship maintenance. The current study aims to find the role of this kind of communication in the organization.

Through interpersonal communication people create social networks, and from these networks they get social support. Interpersonal communication has been studied as a means of social support in the workplace (Beehr, 2013; Madlock & Booth-Butterfield, 2015). Social support provides not only emotional support such as love, acceptance and respect, but also information, including knowledge and advice, and tangible assistance, including goods and services (Dunkel-Schetter & Skokan, 2015; Greenglass, 2012; Jacobson, 2011). Studies have also found that co-workers in the workplace can offer unique emotional support that family or friends cannot offer (Etzion, 2014). Social support is necessary for employees to be successful and satisfied in their jobs and careers (Stackman & Pinder, 2010). The organization that can provide an opportunity for employees to achieve self-actualization tends to get higher levels of commitment from the
employees (McGregor, 2010). Partially based on this, the current study assumes that social-emotional-oriented communication helps to improve both work-oriented communication and organizational commitment.

**Work-Oriented Communication in the Organization**

No organization can exist without communication among its members. Communication is “the process by which a person, group, or organization (the sender) transmits some type of information (the message) to another person, group, or organization (the receiver)” (Greenberg & Baron, 2013). Communication performs an important role in organizational functioning. In this sub chapter, the general understanding of communication that contributes to organizational functioning will be reviewed. Specifically, some relevant communication theories that can be employed for organizational management are presented.

**Organizational Communication**

In the context of an organization, members gather, send, and interpret relevant information about the organization and the changes occurring within the organization (Kreps, 2018). This process is organizational communication. Through communication the sender transmits a message to the receiver verbally or nonverbally. However, communication is not only about imparting a message but also involves understanding of its meaning. It is inarguable that an idea without a successful transmission and correct understanding, no matter how great it is, is useless (Robbinset, 2010). Perfect communication is when the receiver understands exactly what the sender wants to express. However, in reality, in an organization, there are many reasons restraining perfect communication.

Bilal (2017) examines the role of effective communication for enhancing organizational performance in an Afghan Non-Governmental Organization, Afghan Relief Committee (ARC). The problem that led the research is the delays in access to information and employees’ under achievement in end year performance evaluation. This research is using primary data, and survey research method is adopted for this purpose. However, some data will be collected from previous
researches under literature review of this study. The focused populations are active employees of the Afghan Relief Committee which makes a total of 150 people in Kabul. The research targets 30% of total population (35 employees) through random sampling and are approached through a questionnaire for data collection. The study found that there is direct link between effective communication and organization performance. The study has found out the most effective communication methods preferred by employees as well as concrete recommendations for effective communication in the organization.

Temitayo, Adedayo and Linus (2018) determined the relationship between effective communication and employee performance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and the total population of the study was 142 respondents. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the participants. Data gathered were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The result of the analysis revealed that there was significant relationship between effective communication and employee performance. It was therefore concluded that organizations should endeavor to make effective communication an essential strategy in achieving high employee performance.

Gerorge and Alexandru (2017) examines the role of communication in enhancing work effectiveness of an organization. Communication is one of the most important levers of management that a company can implement for the formation of teams and achieving valuable performance. Communication and management are complementary disciplines and strong business elements for success. Management skills are essential in a business, but all equally important are those relating to the rules for the communication and the way in which a manager knows how to interact with his staff. Being manager not only means to rein in business, but mostly means knowing to coordinate a team, leadership skills and most of all, communicate.

**Methodology**

The survey research design was employed in this study. The entire population to be used for this study includes staffs from the various department of Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU) Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, with a population of over 10,000 staffs. The sample size is therefore
censured on various departments in the organization where 200 staffs were randomly chosen for the study, and the sample size was large enough. The cross-sectional data to be used for the research work was done using the questionnaire. The research instrument was valid after pre-testing the questionnaire for the study and the responses on the questionnaire showed that it measured and provided answers to achieve the purpose of the research study. The reliability test statistic for each construct is over 0.78. After the data collection, there was the need to organize it into meaningful information for decision-making. The first stage was the coding and classification into various groups for the production of statistical tables. All data collected were presented in a tabular form for easy understanding, simple content and basic percentage (%) analysis technique was applied in analysis of information and data collected, all decision made were based on the analysis of both primary data collected. Data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) which is a software tool for data analysis.

Result and Discussion

Table I: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>NO OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender of respondents</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>86.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIABLE</td>
<td>MEASURE</td>
<td>NO OF RESPONSES</td>
<td>PERCENTAGE (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td>BSc/BA/HND</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MSc/MA/MPhil</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD/DBA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm’s No of Employee</td>
<td>10 to 49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 to 199</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent’s Years of</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 and above</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey (2022)
Table II: Barriers and Breakdowns in communication Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>T-test/T-value=1</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34.885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.121</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.063</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36.824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.388</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1.19 By what channels do you communicate with direct supervisor?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written (Memos)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail/internet</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table III: By what channels do you communicate with co-workers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written (Memos)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail/internet</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2022
Discussion of Results

The study results showed that communication levels are low in OOU. The potential of communication to coordination in assigned tasks, solve problems, resolve conflicts and generally improve information flow and commitment to duty requires open and candid opinions being shared between and among employees. Although somehow informal, reprimands as well as encouragements from co-workers more often than not improve worker performance and efficiency. However, they may have a negative implication of “dampening spirits”, discouraging commitment, and eventually reducing efficiency, productivity and output. Hence, even though it is necessary that open and candid expressions of views and opinions exist, they must to a large extent serve as effective communication channels that eventually increase output instead of productivity-efficiency-and-output-reducing “woes”. The implication is that communication must be improved. Doing so will ensure that systems work well and carry along the objectives and goals of the organization. A situation where one or some departments are far more efficient and effective than others does not promote overall organization output growth. Distortions and omissions in information flows between and among departments must be either eliminated or kept to the least possible.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study is an attempt to the role of communication in enhancing organizational productivity. It also measured the effectiveness of organizational communication on employee’s performance. It identified the channels of communication considered by employees to be most useful barriers and breakdowns in the communication system were also identified. Even though employees of Olabisi Onabanjo University frequently use face to face telephone, written (memos), email/internet and sometimes grapevines as channels of communication they consider face to face as the most useful channel of communication.

The finding of this research has shown that effective communication should be highly recommended to every organization in all the sectors of the economy. Any management both
governments established and private is desirous of ensuring the success and efficiency of its workforce, should be conscious of implementing effective communication programmes to their employees for better performances. Therefore, effective communication process should be an integral part of management strategy because it goes a long way to enhancing the realization of organizational goals.

The study also established that effective communication enhances performance since employees perform better when they are informed or communicated to than those who are not informed. However, inability of training the staff on the new innovation and techniques has made the manager insecure and overzealous in carrying out their duties. Thus, organization must spend time to determine the communication needs and finance, the cost of it to get employees informed and be able to evaluate the impact of it on organizational activities.

Conclusively, effective communication to the management and staff is the panacea for sustained and increased productivity of the workforce and organizational performances. It is not enough to have a good idea but awareness and participation of will go a long way to enhance organizational performance.

**Recommendations**

Communication is a skill-based aspect. In aiming to improve communication problems in management, managers should, therefore, look to acquire skills that ensure effective communication. Effective communication is usually associated with several skills that help one to adjust their communication depending on the variables being addressed and at a given time. Many principles help in ensuring the communication skills are effective. Firstly, a manager has to understand himself. Managers are encouraged to be chatty; this makes it appropriate for them to start conversations. Secondly, managers should understand their audience. This helps using the right language which improves effectiveness of communication. Listening is also another principle in ensuring effective communication. To convey the right message, managers must listen to others and understand what the question is or their points of concern.
Also, for effective communication, the message should also be simple, concise and straightforward. Finally, the message should be conveyed at the right time in the right place to the right audience. Also, it is important for the management to develop ways to gauge the effectiveness of the communication process. This can be achieved by following up on whatever information was passed. Managers could also pay special attention to feedback from their employees after passing information. This would help the manager to gauge whether their information was interpreted correctly.

Suggestion for Further Studies
This study focused on the role of organizational communication. Therefore, generalizations cannot adequately extend to another sector. Based on this fact among others, it is therefore, suggested that a broad-based study covering both public and private institutions be done to find out the effect of the factors under study on the role of communication. It is also suggested that future research should focus on the factors under study on organizational performance.

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