

ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION CHANGES AND WORKPLACE EFFICIENCY: A POST-PANDEMIC ANALYSIS OF NIGERIA TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS' LECTURERS

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Abstract

The study examines organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in the post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers. This study employed a descriptive research design. The study randomly sampled 680 lecturers drawn from Nigerian Universities in Edo State, Nigeria. The study found a relationship between organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in the post Pandemic among Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers. The study recommends among others that workers in higher institutions should adapt to the dynamic working environment by actively seeking out opportunities to learn new skills.

Keywords: Workplace, Communication, Changes, Post-Pandemic, Analysis.

1.0 Introduction

The capacity to maximize output while minimizing input is generally accepted as the definition of "work efficiency" among academics. Doing more with less refers to the practice of maximizing output while minimizing input, or maximizing productivity while minimizing costs. Work smarter, not harder, according to Robbins (2021). It has been hypothesized that if a business increases its efficiency, it would be able to produce more with the same number of resources. That is, great levels of production are possible if labor is done efficiently. Researchers have shown that measures such as job delegation, deadlines, clear communication, efficient time management, and the use of checklists significantly boost productivity in the workplace. The following are some methods recommended by Zhang (2022) for increasing productivity on the job: – Allow your mind to relax and rejuvenate by taking pauses while you work; Setting achievable objectives; keeping time; Stick to your deadlines, focus on your job, establish a routine, and make your office a pleasant place to be. Strive for a happy medium between your professional

and personal commitments, make a plan, restrict distractions, get input, incentivize good performance, and praise success.

Despite this, Arowojolu, Oyegoke, and Amusan (2022) joke that the availability of talented personnel is a key determinant in the success of any organization. Which is to say, people who were already equipped with the skills required for the job. Some of these talents, they maintained, are not limited by academic credentials or professional certificates and licenses. Due to its significance, management in businesses and sectors actively seeks for candidates with these abilities. Candidates with these abilities will have a better chance of being hired. The term "employability skills" was used to describe this set of abilities. Despite this, studies have shown that graduates often lack the transferable skills necessary to succeed in today's competitive job market. Iwintolu (2012); Onabamiro, Onuka, & Oyekanmi (2014); Ajayi (1994); Evers (2001); Rush (2001); & Berdrow (2001).

The ability to effectively communicate inside an organization is crucial for making the most of these employees. Communication inside an organization, be it a large company, a nonprofit, or a small business, is commonly referred to as "organizational communication," and this is a term that has been accepted by experts. There is a high correlation between organizational communication and employee productivity and fulfillment, according to the data that is currently available. Researchers have pinpointed four distinct modes of interaction inside an organization: formal, informal, horizontal, and vertical. Given the foregoing, it is essential to emphasize the significance of effective communication in the workplace, as it has been shown to be one of the techniques that can increase efficiency in the workplace. Through communication, employees can be coordinated, organized, interacted with, and given instructions for the betterment of the organization. As Nicotera (2019) points out, organizations are developed and maintained by constant dialogue between their members and internal and external sub-groups with common goals. According to Putnam, Woo, and Banghart (2017), "organizational communication" is the study of all facets of communication and information flow inside an organization. Internal and external parties are both included in the communication flow, which might be official or casual in nature. As stated by (Putnam, Woo, & Banghart, 2017).

Group and interpersonal communication in the workplace relied primarily on face-to-face interaction before the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic.

The workplace was impacted by the global Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic that began in the year 2020. As a result of the occurrence, people all across the world isolated themselves from their friends and family and avoided going out in public. This ushered in a brand-new age of the workplace, along with the difficulties of learning new procedures and adapting to novel forms of technology. As technology improved, more and more people could do their jobs from the comfort of their own homes. Technology has removed the need for a pen. So-called "smart phones," like the iPhone, iPad, and Android cell phone, become essential for this purpose. Using virtual facilities has added a

new dimension to conferences/workshops, seminars, learning, and evaluation. Because of this unexpected development, workers now need different expertise than before to survive and thrive in the wake of the epidemic. Furthermore, Arowojolu (2021) suggests that in order for University Senior Non-academic Staff to thrive in the face of global competition, Staff training in Information and Communication Technology-inclined skills should be put in place. This can be done through refresher courses and workshops on how to develop various skills. The administration of the university should make every effort to encourage the non-academic staff to participate in training and retraining conferences, workshops, and lectures that may be held both inside and outside the institution to help them acquire the necessary foundational knowledge and abilities to do their jobs more effectively.

Statement of the Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic period provided a lot of shocks in the workplace owing to the varied activities like lockdown and social distances that lead to alterations in communication in workplace including higher institutions of learning. Most places of work were fully stopped to limit the spread of COVID-19 while in certain situations only senior members and those on important roles in the company were allow to physically present in their workplaces so decreasing the transmission of the virus. The spectacular issue about this era was the fact that it opens up new dimensions to communication, organisations were made to communicate and hold meetings through zoom meeting, goggle meet, WhatsApp communication and even some workplace encouraged their employees to work from home due to the fear of the spread of virus. This age saw changes in the pattern of corporate communication. The objective of this study is to examine organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in the post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.

Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

- i. To find out the role of organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.
- ii. To find out the various means of communication between workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.
- iii. To find out the influence of workplace communication changes and workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.

Research Hypothesis

This research formulates the following hypothesis:

- H₀₁: Organizational communication changes do not influence workplace efficiency in the post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.

- H₀₂: Various means of communication does not influence workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers
- H₀₃: Workplace communication changes and workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.

2.0 Literature Review

Concept of Organizational Communication Changes

Employees are expected to shift from face-to-face contact to the use of electronic channels like as email, instant messaging, and video conferencing as a result of changes in organizational communication (Sarfraz et al., 2018). Both good and negative impacts on organizational communication have been brought about as a result of the use of these technologies (Mancini & Alcott, 2019). The speed and efficiency with which information is exchanged is one of the fundamental changes that has occurred in the communication inside organizations. The instantaneous delivery of communications made possible by electronic channels also makes it possible for employees to communicate with one another regardless of where they are physically located (Sarfraz et al., 2018). As a result, overall productivity has grown, and the amount of time needed for decision-making procedures has decreased (Mancini & Alcott, 2019).

In addition, the advent of electronic channels has resulted in an increase in the asynchronous nature of organizational communication. It is not necessary for employees to plan their calendars in order to attend face-to-face meetings because they are able to send messages and get replies whenever it is convenient for them (Sarfraz et al., 2018). The work-life balance has been enhanced as a result of this flexibility, and greater autonomy in accomplishing duties has been provided (Mancini & Alcott, 2019). The dependence on electronic channels, on the other hand, has also resulted in difficulties in the administration of organizational communication. The lack of nonverbal clues, such as facial expressions and body language, can result in misunderstandings and misinterpretations of what is being said (Sarfraz et al., 2018). In addition, the continual availability of electronic communication can cause the lines between one's personal life and professional life to become blurred, which can result in increased stress and the possibility of developing burnout (Mancini & Alcott, 2019). It is imperative that organizations set unambiguous norms and expectations for electronic communication in order to effectively manage these difficulties (Mancini & Alcott, 2019). The capacity of employees to effectively read communications in the absence of nonverbal indicators may also be improved by the implementation of training programs specifically designed to improve employees' written communication abilities (Sarfraz et al., 2018). Furthermore, organizations have the ability to encourage the usage of video conferencing as a means of incorporating a visual element into virtual meetings, so enhancing both overall comprehension and cooperation (Mancini & Alcott, 2019). In conclusion, the implementation of electronic channels has resulted in substantial modifications to the

communication styles utilized inside organizations. Despite the fact that it has increased both efficiency and flexibility, there are still issues that need to be solved in order to guarantee efficient communication in this age of digital technology.

Approaches to Communication Changes in an Organization

There are several approaches to communication changes in an organization, including the following:

- i. **Two-Way Communication:** Utilizing this strategy places an emphasis on the need of maintaining an open and continuous conversation between management and employees. Creating chances for employees to offer feedback, discuss ideas, and participate to decision-making processes is a part of this process. It has been discovered that this strategy may increase the overall performance of the firm, as well as the happiness and engagement of the workforce (Loomis, 2017).
- ii. **Transparent Communication:** One of the primary goals of this strategy is to ensure that all stakeholders within the company receive information that is both clear and concise. Through the open and transparent exchange of information on the objectives, strategies, and results of the organization, it is possible to cultivate trust and accountability. It has been demonstrated via research that open and honest communication has the potential to increase trust and commitment inside a business, which in turn leads to enhanced employee performance and retention (Bosch-Sijtsema et al., 2014).
- iii. **Technology-Enabled Communication:** For the purpose of facilitating communication within the business, this strategy entails making use of various technology resources, such as intranets, collaboration platforms, and social media. Technology-enabled communication has the potential to assist in overcoming obstacles such as geographical distance and time zone differences, therefore enabling employees to communicate in a manner that is both more efficient and effective (Gibson et al., 2015).
- iv. **Diversity and Inclusion Communication:** The goal of this strategy is to guarantee that communication techniques are able to meet the requirements and points of view of all employees. This approach acknowledges the significance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Organizations have the ability to cultivate a sense of belonging, creativity, and innovation within their diverse workforce by supporting communication that is inclusive (Kandola, 2017).

The Relationship between Organizational Communication changes and Workplace Efficiency

There has been a significant amount of research conducted on the connection between changes in organizational communication and the efficiency of the workplace. There have been a number of studies that have shed light on the influence that good communication has on the enhancement of productivity, employee happiness, and overall

organizational level of performance. The following are some references that show that this relationship exists:

- i. **Communication Effectiveness and Workplace Efficiency:** The findings of a study that was carried out by Knight, Kennedy, and O'Leary-Kelly (2014) indicate that efficient communication in the workplace has a favorable affect on job performance. When the authors conducted their research, they discovered that firms that had excellent communication procedures saw greater levels of cooperation, coordination, and task achievement.
- ii. **Role of Communication in Improving Productivity:** A study that was carried out by Golan and Dvir (2014) shed light on the significance of communication in leading to increased levels of productivity. In their research, they discovered that better communication led to greater productivity and overall workplace efficiency by promoting task clarity, reducing misconceptions, and facilitating efficient decision-making.
- iii. **Impact of Open and Transparent Communication on Employee Satisfaction:** Matsaganis and Wilkin (2019) conducted research that highlighted the significance of open and transparent communication in the process of increasing employee happiness, which in turn has a good impact on the efficiency of the workplace. According to the findings of the study, businesses that used communication strategies that were open and honest among their employees enjoyed better levels of employee engagement and productivity.
- iv. **Effect of Communication Technology on Workplace Efficiency:** The influence of communication technology on the effectiveness of workplace operations was investigated in a research that was carried out by Golden and Veiga (2005). They discovered that businesses who successfully included technology into their communication procedures had increased levels of cooperation, decreased response times, and increased levels of production.

Theoretical Framework

The Cultural Approach to Organizations, which was created by Clifford Geertz and other members of the academic community, serves as the foundation for this research. This approach places an emphasis on the role that culture plays in determining organizational behavior and communication methods. It posits that companies are cultural systems that are made up of common meanings, symbols, and values that have an effect on communication inside the workplace. Within the framework of this theory, communication is regarded as a process that allows members of an organization to develop and negotiate their knowledge of the organization and the goals it seeks to achieve. The practices of communication inside an organization are impacted by a variety of factors, including cultural norms, social structures, power dynamics, as well as the

history and setting of the organization. "It is argued in the cultural approach to organizations that organizations are symbolic systems in which communication methods are shaped by culture, collective meanings, and shared values. This places an emphasis on the role that organizational culture has in affecting the communication processes and behaviors that occur inside the workplace " (Putnam & Nicotera, 2009). By utilizing this theory, we are able to gain a better understanding of the ways in which changes in organizational communication take place when the culture of the company undergoes purposeful adjustments, adapts to new difficulties, or evolves over time. When it comes to the implementation of successful communication methods and the management of organizational changes, this underscores the need of taking into consideration cultural dynamics and shared meanings.

Methodology

This section discusses the methods used in the study. The methodology, population, sample, and demographics are all described in depth. This study employed a descriptive research strategy. This study's overarching goal is to analyze how lecturers at Nigerian universities have adjusted to new ways of communicating and working during the pandemic. The study used a random sample of 680 universities lecturers in Edo state, Nigeria. There were five different methods used to collect data. Workers' demographic and personal data, information gleaned from the questionnaire on the influence of organizational communication changes on productivity in the workplace, and a post-pandemic survey of lecturers at Nigerian universities are all examples. These five (5) questions are part of a post-pandemic survey designed to assess lecturers' impressions of the impact of organizational communication reforms on productivity in the workplace. They utilized the phrases "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" for the answers. A subject-matter expert reviewed the questionnaire against the study questions and provided feedback before data collection began. All suggestions were carefully considered before the data collection process began. The information was presented in tables and percentages. The hypothesis in the study was tested using correlation coefficients.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In accordance with the stated aims of the study, this part analyzes and displays the data collected by questionnaire from a representative sample of university lecturers. In all, 680 surveys were sent out as part of this investigation. However, a large percentage (96%) of the surveys (650) were returned with responses. Analysis of the data obtained and the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses based on a cut-off mean of 2.50 are expected to achieve the study's aims.

Table 1: To find out the role of organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in a post Pandemic Analysis of Nigeria Tertiary Institutions' Lecturers.

		N = 650					
S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	What is the level of your knowledge of Organisational communication?	330 (51%)	200 (32%)	50 (8%)	60 (9%)	2.98	Good
2	Have you engaged in Organisational communication?	234 (36%)	199 (31%)	117 (18%)	100 (15%)	2.77	Good
3.	Organisational communication exists in your tertiary institution	445 (69%)	200 (30%)	1 (0.1%)	4 (0.6%)	2.78	Good
4	What is the extent of organisational communication engaged in?	333 (51%)	198 (31%)	19 (3%)	100 (15%)	2.72	Good
5	Organisational communication exists during the Covid-19 Pandemic	245 (38%)	233 (36%)	18 (2%)	154 (24%)	2.86	Good
	Overall mean = 2.82						

* Highest proportional percentage

Significant mean ($\bar{X} \geq 2.50$)

Most respondents (N=333, 51%) strongly agreed that they understand the significance of post-pandemic changes in organizational communication and workplace efficiency (see Table 1). A post-pandemic analysis of Nigerian universities found that 200 students and faculty members (32% of the sample) felt that the pandemic had a major impact on their work style and the way they communicated with each other at work. However, 50 respondents were unsure, and 9 percent, or 60 respondents, argued that the Pandemic had no effect on corporate communication changes or workplace efficiency. With a mean score of 2.98, respondents' responses to items 2, 3, 4, and 5 revealed that the pandemic had a significant impact on organizational communication and workplace efficiency at their institutions. When compared to the standard 2.50-point scale, the mean score of 2.82 is higher. Therefore, research demonstrates that a post-pandemic analysis of Nigerian university professors' productivity was affected by shifts in organizational communication.

Table 2: To find out the extent to which various means of communication between employers and tertiary institution lecturers in post pandemic era.

S/N	Items	N = 650				Mean	Remark
		Zoom	Google Meet	WhatsApp	Others		
1	Organizational communication changes exist during Covid-19 Pandemic through which means.	211 (32%)	276 (42%)	50 (8%)	113 (18%)	3.98	Good
2	Organisational communication changes influenced workplace efficiency during the pandemic by which mode of communication.	234 (36%)	233 (36%)	59 (9%)	124 (19%)	3.00	Good
3.	Organisational communication changes were greatly embraced using the various means identified above in your tertiary institution during and after COVID-19 era.	200 (30%)	445 (69%)	4 (0.6%)	1 (0.1%)	2.78	Good
4	Did Covid-19 Pandemic affect Lecturer-students' Communication using the methods identified above?	100 (15%)	198 (31%)	19 (3%)	333 (51%)	3.35	Good
5	Where this means adopted affects organizational communication utilized during the Covid-19 Pandemic?	233 (36%)	245 (38%)	154 (24%)	18 (2%)	3.86	Good
	Overall mean = 3.39						

* Highest proportional percentage

Significant mean ($\bar{X} \geq 2.50$)

Table 1 shows that the vast majority of respondents (N=487) stated that the introduction of video conferencing tools like Zoom and Google Hangouts after the epidemic had a significant impact on their daily lives. The reason for this is because both types of communication can accommodate a sizable audience. In spite of zoom's

advantages, most businesses switched to using Google Meet instead because of its greater capacity for hosting meetings (up to 500 attendees at once), which allowed for simultaneous participation from all members of an organization's personnel without disruption. Even though it is less efficient than the previously stated software, WhatsApp is often used for meetings and lectures. Eighteen percent of those who filled out the survey said they thought improvements in communication weren't only limited to the channels listed there. Table 2 displays data from other study questions, with a large majority indicating that workplace communication was impacted by the aforementioned communication developments during and after the COVID-19 era. As can be seen from the results (mean scores of 3.00, 2.78, 3.35, and 3.86 for items 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively), respondents were significantly impacted by the pandemic, leading to changes in organizational communication and workplace efficiency at their institutions. Since the mean score of 3.39 outperforms the minimum requirement of 2.50 ($\bar{X} > 2.50$). Therefore, this demonstrates that despite being deplored by most organizations, post-pandemic changes in organizational communication and workplace efficiency in Nigerian tertiary institutions were achieved through various means of communication between employers and tertiary institution lecturers.

Table 3: To find out the influence of organizational communication changes and workplace efficiency in the Nigerian Tertiary Institution.

		N = 650					
S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Extent of Workplace efficiency after the Covid-19 Pandemic is better	302 (46%)	212 (32.6%)	50 (8%)	86 (13.4%)	2.98	Good
2	Workplace efficiency during the Covid-19 Pandemic was bad	234 (36%)	199 (31%)	117 (18%)	100 (15%)	2.55	Good
3.	Workplace efficiency before the Covid-19 Pandemic was better	237 (36%)	200 (31%)	100 (15.4%)	113 (17.4%)	2.67	Good
4	What are the most significant challenges encountered in organisational communication in your tertiary institution during the Covid-19 Pandemic	222 (34%)	298 (46%)	19 (3%)	111 (17%)	2.54	Good
5	Challenges exist in organisational communication of my tertiary institution	245 (37.8%)	188 (28.9%)	18 (2.8%)	199 (30.5%)	2.76	Good
	Overall mean = 2.70						

* Highest proportional percentage

Significant mean ($\bar{X} \geq 2.50$)

A post-pandemic survey of lecturers at Nigerian universities found that 302 (or 46 percent) strongly agreed that shifts in organizational communication impact productivity on the job. Similarly, 212 respondents, or 32.6%, agreed that communication patterns altered during the pandemic, which impacted workplace and workplace productivity as different cadres of workers were forced to work from home to lessen the impact of COVID-19's spread. However, 50 people were unsure whether or not the changes in organizational communication would have a substantial influence on workplace productivity during and after the Pandemic, whereas 86 people (13.4 percent of the total) disagreed. Table 3 shows that most respondents agree or strongly agree that changes in workplace communication influence workplace efficiency during and after the COVID-19 epidemic, implying that organizational changes affect workplace efficiency. The average scores for items 2–4 in the study were 2.55, 2.67, 2.54, and 2.76. Since the average score was higher than the minimum requirement ($X\ 2.76 > 2.50$), we may conclude that the standard was met. As a result, a post-pandemic analysis of Nigerian university professors reveals that shifts in organizational communication have a substantial impact on productivity in the workplace.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The research made the following findings:

- i. that a post-pandemic analysis of lecturers at Nigerian universities found that improvements in organizational communication had a significant impact on workplace productivity (mean score 2.82, over cut-off scores of 2.5).
- ii. Organizational communication modifications and workplace efficiency in a post-pandemic analysis of Nigerian universities were achieved through a variety of mediums, including those deplored by most organizations but adequate to keep universities open and teaching staff employed. This was supported by an average score that was 3.39 points higher than required.
- iii. a post-pandemic study of lecturers at Nigeria's universities found (with a mean score of 2.70, over the cut-off points of 2.50) that improvements in organizational communication had a significant impact on workplace efficiency.

After a careful analysis of the data gathered, we therefore make the following recommendations:

- i. Workers in higher institutions should adapt to the changing way of working by actively seeking out opportunities to learn new skills.
- ii. The evaluation form must be updated to reflect the supplementary abilities. Nonetheless, tertiary institutions and other organizations can use the existing assessment scales and methodologies with minor adjustments.
- iii. To make the work of the staff at Nigeria's universities easier and more efficient, document automation across all departments is essential.

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