

Influence of organisational communication on employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

By

Daniel Calixtus Akarika, PhD

Department of Mass Communication,
Faculty of Communication and Media Studies,
Akwa Ibom State University,
Obio Akpa Campus.

Email: danielakarika@yahoo.com, danielakarika@aksu.edu.ng

Phone Number: 08025463731

Abstract

This study examined the influence of organisational communication on employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Akwa Ibom State. The research adopted the survey design with questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The objectives of the study were to identify the prevalent organisational communication flow pattern in Uyo Local Government Council, examine the effectiveness of the prevalent organisational communication pattern in enhancing employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, determine the extent to which the organisational communication flow pattern influences employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council. The study which was anchored on system theory and the theory of transactional process revealed that majority of respondents 150 (62.5%) agreed to downward communication flow, in response to the statement rating the level of effectiveness of organisational communication flow in enhancing employee productivity with a weighted mean score (WMS) 2.1 respondents agreed that the prevalent organisational communication flow is not effective. Further statement in Table 3 revealed that effective communication enhances employee productivity with a WMS of 3.3 and that ineffective communication negatively affect employee productivity with WMS 3.3, Table 3 (first statement) revealed that the prevalent organisational communication pattern had little influence on employee productivity with (WMS 1.9). The study concludes that organisational communication flow is essential for an organisation that desires to enhance its productivity. The study recommended that in order to maintain an effective organisational communication flow pattern in Uyo Local Government Council, Local government councils should make use of other communication patterns such as upward, lateral, diagonal and informal communication (grapevine) in order to provide feedback and make communication more effective.

Keywords: Influence, organisational communication, employee productivity, Uyo local government council and Akwa Ibom State.

Introduction

Organisational communication has become a critical and independent field of study and a function within public relations and corporate communication (Karanges, Benson & Lings, 2015). Communication takes a universal aspect in the work of management and manager in any organisation (Umoren, Akarika & Etop, 2023). Human beings cannot live in isolation. They need to reach out to other individuals in their environment in order to obtain co-operation for the attainment of goals and objectives. Undoubtedly, communication is an inevitable part of life, which is an essential tool for change and development. Today, communication goes beyond interpersonal communication to other forms like group, international, organisational and other forms of communication.

The advent of new media technologies has had a profound impact on the practice of communication in today's society. This shift in the media world, which is mostly based on the usage of digital computers and other portable digital devices has altered the surviving "old" media (Akpan, Peter & Akarika, 2022). Communication has not only spanned beyond interpersonal communication, it has advanced to cover a wider range of human communication. Organisational communication has been considered an important and challenging area which strengthen the connection between an organisation and its stakeholders, in particular employees, as it bridges the gap between management and employees. Communication is an integral part of the organisational process as the

flow of communication up and down the organisational hierarchy has its effects on efficiency, decision-making and morale of organisations (Akarika, Umoren & Etop, 2023).

According to Akarika, (2020), communication flow is essential for an organisation that desires to improve its performance. In the last decade, communication has become even more important due to the rise of remote work and virtual teams (Akarika, Iwok & Afangide, 2024). The main aim of organisational communication is to ensure smooth communication between the organisation and both its internal and external publics. There is no doubting the importance of communication in our everyday lives, with the average employee spending 50-80% of their workday conversing with co-workers. That is why psychologists stress the value of efficient communication in both personal and professional interactions (Ntuk, Essien & Akarika, 2022).

Communication has a vital role in an organisational life. It is one of the main thing that must be owned in order to achieve organisational goals and objectives (Akarika, Iwok & Ikon, 2021).

In the past, organisational communication was mostly a one-way communication process aimed at informing the various publics about policies, procedures, tasks, and focused less on feedback, but presently, there have been a paradigm shift. Modern organisation prioritises employee productivity, engagement, collaborations and feedback. Effective communication is essential for the functioning of organisations and for building relationships between individuals and groups (Iwok, Akarika & Afangide, 2024). Organisational information flow involves the organising, selecting and dissemination of information between and within internal and external audience of any organisation as well as institution. Organisational information management and information flow are very important for the achievement of set goals and objectives of any organisation (Akarika, Iwok & Ikon, 2019).

Communication effectiveness, reward systems and management style play a pivotal role in determining employee motivation and performance (Dessler, 2021). Effective communication reduces role ambiguity, fosters trust, and minimises workplace conflicts, thereby enhancing productivity (Guffey & Loewy, 2021). Organisational productivity serves as a cornerstone of a company's success, encompassing various facets that contribute to its efficient operation and goal attainment (Bouguern, 2024). It involves the output generated by utilising resources like labour, capital and materials, relative to the inputs required for production (Dzhumashev, 2024).

In essence, organisational productivity reflects an organisation's ability to maximise output, while minimising input, thereby optimising performance and enhancing competitiveness in the marketplace (Tran, Dang, Luong, Pham & Cao, 2024). In today's dynamic business landscape, organisational productivity plays a pivotal role in driving success and maintaining competitiveness (Givan, 2024). Effective measurement and management of organisational productivity are critical for sustaining performance, excellence, and fostering long-term growth and success (Emon, Khan & Siam, 2024). Based on the aforementioned, this research examines the influence organisational communication has on employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Brief History of Uyo Local Government

Uyo was first created as a province in 1959 by the Colonial Masters. The aim was to split the Ibibio tribe into smaller administrative unit for effective governance. The history of the Ibibio cannot be complete without mentioning Uyo Local Government Area as the core or credit of the Ibibio. Uyo Local Government Area was created by the Federal Government of Nigeria and gives the Ibibio people an identity and representation. It was originally home to the "Afaha Lineage" who migrated from "Efik Afaha" in Cameroon.

Uyo is home to the University of Uyo formally known as University of Cross River State. Its name was changed when, in 1991, the Government of Nigeria established it as a Federal University. Uyo is also home to a campus of the National Open University of Nigeria, Uyo City Polytechnic and Ibom Polytechnic. (<https://propertypro.ng/guide/axes>).

Statement of the Problem

The major concern of any organisation, be it privately owned or owned by government is to be successful. In the present dispensation, where competition is keen, organisations and institutions depend on communication to be able to stay in business. One of the reasons usually advanced in favour of successful organisations or institutions depend mostly especially on effective organisational communication.

Organisational communication has emerged as an invaluable asset influencing employee productivity, especially at the local government level. In this digital age characterised by changing dynamics of human communication, organisations/institutions communication become imperative. Many government institutions especially state entities generally consider the information unit just to send memos and letters to employees. It has been observed in so many local government councils, management neither recognises nor appreciates information officer's effort in enhancing employee productivity for effective and efficient growth of local government councils in Nigeria. Management attitude towards communication unit (information unit) is unenthusiastic and as such no importance is attached to organisational communication. Like other local government councils in Nigeria, Uyo Local Government Council is not excluded. It is against this backdrop that this research examines the extent to which organisational communication influences employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated to guide the research.

1. identify the prevalent organisational communication flow pattern in Uyo Local Government Council.
2. examine the effectiveness of the prevalent organisational communication pattern in enhancing employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council.
3. determine the extent to which the organisational communication flow pattern influences employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council.

Literature Review

The concept of Organisational Communication

Organisational communication refers to the communication that takes place between people who are working towards common goals within an organisation (Kristen & Sherri (2023). Deetz (2001) defines organisational communication as the process whereby an organisational stakeholder (or group of stakeholders) attempts to stimulate meaning in the mind of another organisational stakeholder (or group of stakeholders) through intentional use of verbal, nonverbal, and/or mediated messages. It consists of the interactions that take place for the purpose of working together towards these goals or conducting business in general. Organisational communication is highly contextual and culturally dependent. Individuals in organisations transmit messages through face-to-face, written, and mediated channels.

Organisational communication is a vital component of organisational success, as it facilitates the exchange of information, ideas, and opinions among employees, management, and external stakeholders (Kumar et al., 2020). Organisational communication largely focuses on building relationships and interacting with its internal organisational members and interested external publics. Communication include; interactions between employees, interactions that take place between management and employees and communication that takes place with the public. Communication within the organisation that takes place between workers is called internal communication, while communication with outside parties, such as customers, investors, or other businesses is called external communication.

Effective organisational communication is essential for building trust, resolving conflicts, and enhancing employee engagement and productivity (Bharti, 2019). Its strategies and methods can significantly impact employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and ultimately, organisational performance. (Hallahan & Holtzhausen, 2019). Organisational communication has many purpose, as it aims to convey what the organisation stands for and why it exists. It is also used to communicate how the work is to be completed, the levels of authority within the organisation, and how to identify the customers of the organisation.

Types of Organisational Communication

According to Papa (2008), there are six types of organisational communication which are; formal communication, informal communication, upward communication, downward communication, lateral communication and diagonal communication.

Formal communication: Formal communication is a systematic and structure process that follows a hierarchical structure and chain of command, flowing through predetermined channels and routes (Kumar, Kumar & Singh, 2020). This type of communication is controlled and requires deliberate effort to ensure proper communication, typically flowing from top-level leaders and senior staff to lower-level employees (Bharti, 2019). Formal communication facilitates information flow and reduces ambiguity (Katz & Kahn, 2004). The primary objective of this communication is to communicate correctly and ensure that the information is conveyed correctly. It is typically used for official announcements, instructions and decisions.

Informal communication: Communication that does not use formal means to communicate is referred to as informal communication. It is usually a casual and spontaneous communication that takes place in a shared work environment or between people who have common preferences and inclinations. It is often used for personal or social purpose. The most effective form of informal form of communication is grapevine.

The term “Grapevine” refers to an informal communication network within an organisation where information is shared and spread through unofficial channels, often through rumors, gossip, and unverified reports (Bovee & Thill, 2002). Grapevine communication is quick and usually more direct than formal communication. Grapevine can include destructive miscommunication, but it can also be beneficial by allowing feelings to be expressed, and increasing the productivity of employees.

Upward communication: In this type of communication, messages flow from lower level employees to upper level employees. Upward communication is essential for organisations to encourage employee participation, engagement, and innovation (Tourish, 2005). This type of communication can include projects or deliverables that employees need to share with their managers, such as: through a work feedback survey where employees can make comments and suggestions to their managers about their work, their performance or the company’s business. This type of communication often provides management with information and data that is used to make important business decisions.

Downward communication: Downward communication refers to the flow of information from higher-level management to lower-level employees (Bharti, 2019). It involves the transmission of instructions, directions, and information from supervisors to subordinates (Kumar, 2020). This type of communication may also include organisational policy or performance reviews. It is mostly done in writing, e.g in the form of emails, memos and guidelines, it can also take place verbally in meetings and telephone calls. It helps to inform and direct employees.

Lateral communication: Lateral communication is also known as horizontal communication. This type of communication takes place between employees who are at the same level in the hierarchy. It involves communication among peers, colleagues, and team members, and is essential for coordination, collaboration, and problem-solving (Garton, 2002). Like informal communication, this type of communication is quick and often spontaneous. It makes it easier to coordinate, find solutions and share information between colleagues working in different departments or teams.

Diagonal communication: This refers to the type of communication that takes place at various levels of the organisation. It involves communication between people who are not in the same hierarchical level or department, but need to share information or collaborate on a project (Garton, 2002). Examples of diagonal communication include: communication between a manager and an employee from a different department, collaboration between team members from different levels of the organisation and information sharing between departments or unit. It helps to facilitate innovation and problem-solving.

Communication with one another is central to life in which all other activities depend. It enables every system to function effectively, such system may include institutions, government ministries, industries, parastatals as well as councils (Akarika, Iwok, Afangide & Akpan 2023). The concept of organisational communication has been considered an important and challenging area that strengthens the connection between an organisation and its stakeholders, in particular employees, as it bridges the gap between them and the management (Akarika, Iwok & Afangide 2024). The main objective of any management is to achieve desired goals and results. One way of achieving this goal and result is through effective communication to enhance organisational performance. A well-informed employee does not need to be told how to get a thing done, they take initiative. (Akarika, 2021).

Organisational communication theorists identify several critical dimensions that determine communication effectiveness, including clarity, timeliness, transparency, and feedback mechanism (Cornelissen, 2017). At Uyo Local Government Council, these dimensions directly influence employee's productivity by reducing role ambiguity, fostering collaboration, and enhancing decision making processes (Tourish & Hargie, 2018).

Organisational communication is the set of activities that the organisation carries out (Akpan, Akarika & Umoren, 2023). The concept of organisational communication, which emphasizes the process beyond any result and make important contributions to achieving organisational goals, points to the process of sharing information between managers and employees, who are actors of organisational communication (Shockley-Zalabak, 2015). Effective communication does not only lead to better management of council, but it is a means of making people more aware of their working environment (Akarika et al. 2023).

Organisational communication flow involves the organising, selecting, and disseminating of information between and within internal and external audience of any organisation, as well as institution (Akarika, 2020). According to Kreitner and Kinick (2001) cited in Akarika et al (2023) organisational effectiveness can be gauged by the prevalence of smooth flow of information, employee loyalty, and job satisfaction. Without organisational communication, organisational excellence and performance would not exist and the various parts of an organisation would not be bonded together for common goals (Akarika, Umoren & Okon, 2021).

According to Akarika (2021), the benefits of organisational communication include increase in organisational performance, boost employee morale, encourages team communication network, enhances productivity, and help reduce diversity. How well resources are brought together in organisations and utilised for accomplishing a set result enhances productivity (Cole, 2015). Productivity could be said to increase when employees have job satisfaction and are satisfied with the communication they receive from management. Organisational productivity can be conceptualised through multiple indicators, including effectiveness, output, community engagement, and administrative efficiency (Pinder, 2024).

Theoretical Framework

System theory

System theory sees an organisation as a structure with many parts that function together to form a whole. The theory emphasises that one part of a system enables us to know something about another part, and that a change in one part of the system will affect other components of the system and its environment, Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008). Scholars of this school of thought contends that the whole is more than the sum total of all the parts. Aina (2002) gave the basic assumptions of the systems theory as follows:

- (1) An organisation of many inter-related parts which function for the attainment of organisational goals.
- (2) Co-operation between separated departments ensures increased output, unlike what would have happened if each had functioned in isolation.
- (3) There are continuous interactions between organisations and their environment for input-output department. Organisations that do not interact with their environment operate closed system and those that do otherwise operate open system.

The element of feedback is necessary for effective functioning of an organisation as a system. Through feedback mechanisms, managements get vital information for self-assessment and correction. This enables them to adjust to changes or become adaptive. This adaptive nature is called homeostatic equilibrium.

This theory is related to the study because it views civil service as a holistic system, comprising interdependent components, including employees, communication channels, and processes. Effective communication is essential for coordinating and integrating these components, ensuring balance within the system. When communication flows properly employees or civil servants' needs are met, and job satisfaction increases. Communication breakdowns can lead to dissatisfaction and systemic imbalance. Also, the theory emphasizes on feedback and its role in achieving an effective communication process which increases the level of job satisfaction among civil servants.

Theory of Transactional Process

The theory of transactional process (TTP) explains how communication occurs between individuals or organisations. It views communication as a transactional process, where participants exchange messages, feedback, and meaning. The TTP emphasizes that communication is a mutual and dynamic process, where participants co-create meaning through transactions. The transactional model is a two-way, interactive model used in communication to portray communication that occurs simultaneously in both directions. In the transactional paradigm, each party is both a sender and a receiver.

The key concepts are as follows;

1. Transaction: A communication event where participants exchange messages.
2. Process: Communication is a dynamic and ongoing process.
3. Feedback: Essential for understand and clarifying messages
4. Meaning: Created through the transactional process.

The theory highlights the dynamic and mutual nature of communication between civil servants in different level of hierarchy and the heads or group of people in charge of each departments, ministries and parastatals in Akwa Ibom State. Through effective communication, civil servants exchange messages, feedback, and meaning with their heads, which helps in influencing their job satisfaction. Also, effective transactions or communications foster clear understanding, meet employee needs, and boost satisfaction, while ineffective transactions lead to confusion, dissatisfaction, and turnover.

Research Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. According to Ben (2008) survey is a research design employed to obtain information from the target population of the study through the aid of the questionnaire. The population of the study comprised of the entire staff of Uyo Local Government Council, which is 490 (Directorate of Administration and General Services). The sample size for this study was determined using Philip Meyer's sample size determination table cited in Akarika, (2021). According to Philip Meyer's table, a population of less than 1000 has the sample size of 248, therefore the sample size for this study is 248.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the study. At first, cluster sampling was used to divide Uyo Local Government Council into clusters (Departments/units). Secondly availability sampling was used to pick respondents for the study. Finally, purposive sampling procedure was used to purposively select respondents for the study. Data were tabulated and analysed using tables, simple percentages and weighted means score.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Organisational communication flow patterns in Uyo Local Government Council

Patterns of communication flow	Frequency	Percentage
Upward communication	30	12.5
Downward communication	150	62.5
Horizontal communication	30	12.5
Informal communication	20	8.3
All of the above	10	4.2
Total	240	100

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 1 revealed that majority of respondents 150 (62.5%) agreed to downward communication prevalent in Uyo Local Government Council. This implies that communication flows from top management to bottom.

Out of 248 copies of the questionnaire administered on respondents, 240 copies were returned and found useable for analysis, representing a return rate of 97% and a mortality rate of 3%.

Table 2: Level of effectiveness of the prevalent organisational communication flow patterns in enhancing employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council

Statements	Very effective	Effective	Not effective	Not very effective	Weighted mean score	Deviation
Rate the level of effectiveness of organisational communication flow in enhancing employee productivity	40	20	100	80	2.1	Rejected
Those at the top of organisations are concerned with the communication effectiveness of their downward communication because of job instruction, procedures and practices.	150	40	30	20	3.3	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Data gathered and presented in table 2 vividly captured the level of effectiveness of the prevalent organisational communication flow pattern in enhancing employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council. With a weighted mean score of 2.1 respondents rated the level of effective as not effective. Nevertheless, with weighted means score of 3.3, respondents agreed that top management are concerned with the communication effectiveness of their downward communication because of job instructions, procedure and practices.

Table 3: Extent to which the prevalent organisational communication flow patterns influences employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council

Statements	Very great extent	Great extent	Little extent	Very little extent	Weighted mean score	Decision
The prevalent organisational communication flow pattern influences employee productivity	20	40	80	100	1.9	Rejected
Effective communication enhances employee productivity	SA 150	A 35	D 25	SD 30	3.3	Accepted
Ineffective communication negatively affects employee productivity	135	50	35	20	3.3	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 3 show that with a weighted mean score of 1.9, the prevalent organisational communication flow patterns had little influence on employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council. Further statements revealed that effective communication enhances employee productivity with weighted mean score of 3.3, and that ineffective communication negatively affect employee productivity, with a weighted mean score of 3.3.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are discussed in line with the objectives raised for the study. On the prevalent organisational communication flow pattern in Uyo Local Government Council, Table 1. revealed that majority of respondents 150 (62.5%) agreed to downward communication flow. This implies that communication flows from top to bottom. That is from management to employees. Downward communication refers to the flow of information from higher level management to lower-level employees (Bharti, 2019). It involves transmission of instruction, directions, and information from supervisors to subordinates (Kumar, 2020). This type of communication may also include organisational policy or performance reviews, it is mostly done in writing for example in the form of e-mails, memos and guidelines. It can also take place verbally in meetings and telephone calls with the purpose of informing and directing employees.

Findings of this research gives credence to the assertion that communication is an integral part of the organisational process as the flow of communication up and down the organisational hierarchy has its effects on efficiency, decision making and morale of organisations (Akarika et al 2023). Effective communication is essential for the functioning of organisations and for building relationships (Iwok, et al. 2024). Effective communication reduces role ambiguity, foster trust, and minimises workplace conflicts, thereby enhancing productivity (Guffey & Loewy, 2021).

Regarding the effectiveness of the prevalent organisational communication pattern in enhancing employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Table 2 (first statement) vividly provided answer to this. In response to the statement rating the level of effectiveness of organisational communication flow in enhancing employee productivity with a weighted mean score (WMS) 21, respondents agreed that the prevalent organisational communication flow is not effective. Further statement in Table 3 revealed that effective communication enhances employee productivity with a WMS of 3.3 and that ineffective communication negatively affect employee productivity with WMS 3.3.

Effective organisational communication is essential for building trust, resolving conflicts, and enhancing employee engagement and productivity (Bharti, 2019). Communication effectiveness, rewards systems and management style play a pivotal role in determining employee motivation and performance (Dessler, 2021). Table 2 further revealed that with a weighted mean score of 3.3, respondents agreed that top management are only concerned with the communication effectiveness of their downward communication because of job instruction, procedure and practices. Finding of this study corroborates Kumar (2020) who observed that downward communication involves transmission of instruction, direction and information from supervisors to subordinates.

Concerning the extent to which the prevalent organisational communication flow pattern influences employee productivity in Uyo Local Government Council, Table 3 (first statement) revealed that the prevalent organisational communication pattern had little influence on employee productivity with (WMS 1.9). Organisational productivity serves as a cornerstone of a company's success, encompassing various facets that contribute to its efficient operation and goal attainment (Bouguern, 2024). It involves the output generated by utilising resources like labour, capital and materials relative to the inputs required for production (Dzhumasher, 2024). In essence, organisational productivity reflects an organisations ability to maximise output, while minimising input, thereby optimising performance and enhancing competitiveness in the market place (Tran et al. 2024). In today's dynamic business landscape, organisational productivity plays a pivotal role in drawing success and maintaining competitiveness (Givan, 2024).

Conclusion/Recommendation

The findings of this study underscore the influence organisational communication has on employee productivity. It is evident that organisational communication flow is essential for an organisation that desires to enhance its productivity. The main objective of any organisation is to achieve desired goals and results. One way of achieving this goal is through effective organisational communication in order to enhance employee productivity.

In order to maintain an effective organisational communication flow pattern in Uyo Local Government Council, Local government councils should make use of other communication patterns such as upward, lateral, diagonal and informal communication (grapevine) in order to provide feedback and make communication more effective.

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