Effective Internal Communication Flow as Panacea for Staff Productivity in Organizations

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effectiveness of internal communication flow as a panacea for staff productivity in organizations. It is scholarly agreed that effective internal communication is a powerful weapons that could generates productivity and equally reach consensus that sound internal communication flow plays a vital roles in productivity of the employees. It is also argued that most of the organizations whose productivity output is low are those organisation with poor internal communication networks and possibly the workers lack the appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for achieving the organizational goals and objective (Alimi, B.G. 2013). It is however noted that success of organization depends on efficiency and effectiveness of communication. Communication according to Olaleye (2006) is intended for suggestions, feeling, opinions and facts correctly and accurately from one person to another (In Alimi B.G. 2013. P3). A descriptive survey and comparative design methods were used to collect accurate information and investigated the phenomena surrounding internal communication flow and staff productivity. Several empirical studies and related relevant literatures on the subject were thoroughly examined and found relevant primary and secondary method of data collection was utilized to comprehend the work. A structured questionnaire was distributed and interviews conducted successfully, while observations examination and scoring of respondents were equally conducted for forty selected respondents of various specialisations and hierarchies. The target populations of this paper were the staff of both public and private organisations, while the total populations of both was eight hundred (800) manpower strength, made up of four hundred per sector that constitute the sample frame of this study. A stratified and systematic random sampling were incorporated to draw out sample respondents and select the respondents from the list in each stratum without bias and discrimination as regards to the variable the study adopted as criteria. A closed ended questionnaire form was designed to assess the selected forty (40) staff. In accordance to 5 point Likert scale. Both the public and the private shared twenty (20) each out of the forty adopted. The data collected analysed based upon the research questions and hypotheses. A statistical technique of simple frequency distributing and percentages was used to calculate the data obtained, while mean, and standard deviation was equally used to answer the research questions. Other statistical method incorporated is Person's Product Movement Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was also used to test the single null hypotheses advanced to determine the relationship between the effective internal communication flow and staff productivity in both public and private organizations. The hypotheses was tested at 0.05 level of significant at one tailed t-test and the result was strongly repeated and maintained that there are no relationship, thus,

effective internal communication is the by-product of staff productivity in organizations. (Field Survey, 2014).

Keywords: *Effective, Internal Communication, Panacea Staff, Productivity, Organization.*

INTRODUCTION
The usefulness of effective internal communication cannot be over-emphasized in our contemporary organizations. Many scholars equate communication to lifeblood of an organisation, without effective internal communication among different parties, the pattern of relationship that functions to establish the organizations may be boring and meaningless. Bovere and Thrill (2000. P7) describe internal communication as the exchange of information and ideas within an organisation. Argenti, (2003), Ojo and Nneka, (2008) are of the opinion that as the larger the organisation, the greater the complexities, this often becomes more difficult hence, the need for an effective internal communication and staff productivity. Therefore, internal communication is an integral part of the organisational process as the flow of communication both up and down, has it effect on efficiency, decision making, and morale boosting of an organisation.

There has been a lot of researches conducted by Social Science Scholars and managers to demonstrate dwindling proliferation of modern day communication technology and other related inhibitory factors as well as inappropriate utilisation of the communication system by an organisation's staff, making it difficult to achieve effective and efficient internal communication flow and staff productivity in organisation (see, Miller, 1999). However, it is believed that the modern day social media changes confronting organisation have made an organisational internal communication increasingly important to overall organisational functioning (Baker, 2011). In view of that, Greiner and Mates, *et al.,* (1992) describe organisational communication as the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organisational behaviors. As a result, it is assumed that internal organisational communication flow becomes necessary and essential for improving staff productivity and organisation's output. In the same vein, Alao (2005) communication involves two persons, the sender and the receiver; communication does not take place unless the receiver interprets exactly the information being transmitted. It is what the receiver understands not what the sender says.

Like Alao, Olaleye (2006) express the view that success of an organisation depends on efficiency and effectiveness of the communication. He said communication is intended for conveying information, instructions, advice, suggestions, feeling, opinions and facts correctly and accurately from one person to another. Ayepekun, *et al.,* (2004) are of the opinion that communication climate occupies a vital part of managerial function; and unless we communicate with each other, we cannot execute nor implement decisions. It is believed that organisational activities can take place where an effective communication flows among staff is practicable and the structure of the organisation must be clearly spelt out. Roles and tasks for each members on what, why and how each task be executed to achieve success. In related development, Mintberg (1979) says all functions in organisation depends on communication, for it unifies group behaviour and provides basis for group cooperation. All the key functions of an organisation such as

planning, directing, controlling, coordinating and organizing are dependent on effective communication for proper execution (Ojo, 2008).

Over the years, organizations have experienced a lot of changes in terms of policies, management communicating system, as well as structural protocol and administrative styles. Basically, every organisation comprises different calibre of people with different socio-economic, political, cultural and educational backgrounds and skills of doing jobs and experience as well as values, attributes, habits and level of understanding which subsequently may establish barriers in organisation and makes administration ineffective and inefficient. However, when members of the staff do not understand the reasons for policies or actions, they often react with hostility, fear and distrust that establish doubt and suspicions which may likely to strike actions where necessary. For examples, the incessant disagreement between staff unions and management of organisations as well as Federal Government, States and Local Governments and their respective staff labour unions arguments and disagreements to agreements over their long standing entitlements or pending demands were attributed to lack of effective internal communication flows between employers and employees of various organizations. It is also proven that the higher the organisation expansion, the greater the communication problem intensified.

Most organisations in Nigeria are not exception from the communication related problems. The internal communication becomes critical in modern day organisations due to the challenges the organisations faces daily coupled with intense political interference, financial and time pressure with competing managerial demands and priority with complexity of the organisational structure due to tall hierarchical structure pyramids and lack of sufficient modern day skilled administrative manpower as well as ineffective communication facilities are some of the factors that establishes a delay in flow of information among different categories of workers in an organisation. It is a fact that most of the communication flows in any organisation are conversational and paper written protocol in nature to facilitate their managerial activities that requires sound interpersonal relationship between the employer and employees as well as the co-workers. Failure to understand and interpret messages correctly always serves as a potential threat to effective internal communication flows. Therefore, there is need for urgent provision of effective communication protocol and facilities while calling for effective inter-disciplinary internal communication for administrative upbringing and performance (Mayers, 2003; Ijaduola, 2007).

This study would look into the problems and patterns of internal communication in organisations and how do staff communicates. To what extent does internal communication influences staff performance. Identifying these issues and answering the questions advanced is the concern of this study.

OBJECTIVES
 i.   To examine the effects of internal communication flow on staff productivity.
 ii.   To determine the relationship between internal communication flow and staff productivity in organisation.
 iii. To identify the factors influencing effective internal communication flow in organisations.

Hypotheses

That there is no relationship between internal communication flow and staff productivity in institution/organisations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey and comparative design method were used to collect accurate information and investigated the phenomena surrounding internal communication flow and staff productivity in organisations (Private and Public Organisations). The choice of these research designs were considered appropriate due to the fact that the study requires thorough investigation and public opinion of people to describe prevailing circumstances. According to Kerlinger (1973) and Best (1971) survey research is a useful scientific tool to employ when investigation is made into the opinion of representative sample of the target population so as to have thorough perception and thought of the entire population. Several relevant empirical studies and literatures on the subject understudy were thoroughly examined and found relevant. Primary and secondary method of data collection was used to comprehend the work. A structured questionnaire was distributed and interviews conducted successfully, while observations examination and scoring of respondents were equally conducted for (forty) selected respondents of various specialisation, levels and hierarchies on the subject under study.

The secondary data were obtained through related records, organisations' manuals, libraries, the internet, textbooks, and related journals and conference papers. The target populations of this paper were the staff of public and private organisations. Staff of various categories were considered and the total population of both the private and public organisations was (800) eight hundred manpower strength, made up of four hundred per sector that constitute the sample frame of this study. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to draw out sampled respondents. A total number of staff of both organizations was divided into different strata on characteristics assumed to be closely related with the phenomena under study. Systematic random sampling technique was incorporated to select the respondents from the list in each stratum. To get the sample fraction from each stratum in both organisations (private and public) at least ten percent (10%) and above of the study population group in each stratum were randomly selected without bias and discrimination as regards to the variables the study adopted as criteria. These sub-samples from all the strata in both the public and private organisations constitute the sample size.

The instrument used in this study is a closed ended questionnaire on the subject. A form was designed by the researchers to assess the selected forty staffs (40). The questionnaire comprises of two sections. Section "A" comprising of (7) seven items seeking demographic data of respondents. Sections "B'1" and "B'2" consist of (19) nineteen items which sought to collect information on internal communication flow and staff productivity in organizations. In sub-section (B$_2$), the researchers was able to design a rating scale questionnaires form that contains (17) seventeen items to measure the level of relationship between internal communication flow and staff productivity in private and public organisations. The form was designed in accordance to 5 point Likert scale.

The questionnaires were administered by the researchers. Out of the forty questionnaires, digested in the assessment, both the public and the private organizations shared twenty each. A total score on all questions under each dimension was added so as to establish reliability and validity of the instruments. The results was however taken for socio-metrics experts for further assessment and revalidation, hence it ascertaining the level of relationship between the internal communication flow and staff productivity in organisations.

Data collected from the survey were analysed based upon the research questions and hypotheses. A statistical technique of simple frequency distribution and percentages was used to calculate the data obtained from the respondents. Mean and standard deviation was equally used to answer the research questions in relation to finding the "mean" of the phenomena under study in both public and private organizations. Pearson's Product Movement Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was also used to test the single null hypotheses advanced to determine the relationship between the internal communication flow and staff productivity in both public and private organisations. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significant at one tailed test and the result was strongly rejected the hypotheses earlier advanced and maintained that there are no relationships.

DISCUSSION
Based on the objectives, research questions and hypotheses of the study, the findings showed that most of the tables in this study revealed that there were relationships between effective internal communication flow and staff performance in organizations. Therefore, the findings were a strong reflection that effective internal communication whether or not is an essential tool for dissemination of information and enhancing staff performance. These findings were supported by various scholars in the field of sociology and social science. It is scholarly agreed that internal communication flow in an organisation is a powerful weapon in determining individual and organisational success, if properly coordinated and controlled. Equally, another submission reported that effective internal communication plays a vital role in the productivity of employees so as to maintain sound coordination of the top down activities and interactions between the managements and its staff with a view to ensure mutual understanding and avoid communication barriers (Frank, 1989). Every organisation can only achieve its objectives where there is a well-designed and effective internal communication atmosphere (Lucas, 1996). Communication therefore, is a central to any organisation, since is intended for conveying information, inform, command, instruct, advice, sought for feelings, opinions, facts, assessment, and influence as well as persuasion of other people (Laslie and Byars, 2003).

Therefore, it is against this background that effective internal communication and staff performance and productivity in organisations largely depend on the effectiveness of internal communication flow amongst the staff of an organisation (Drucker, 1979). The study suggest for organisations managers to ensure that basic management tasks or functions such as planning, coordinating, directing, motivating, controlling and organizing are performed with due reference to good communication networks (Alimi & Ifah, 2012: 65). According to Nordin *et al.,* (2011) effective communication leads to staff satisfaction and improve good human relations and in return to successful achievement

of organisational goals and objectives (Ojo, 2008; Watson, 1999). The findings of the research revealed that achieving effective internal communication flow and appreciable staff productivity requires effective adequate modern day communication devices and appropriate form of communication sources and protocol of conveying memos and related messages. All with a view to establish smooth understanding members of the staff and thereby enhance productivity (Rubin, 2005). Other areas the researchers reported that demand attention were; communication delivery system; staff trainings; accessibility and good listening; needs for proper coordination and control of top-down communication of organisation structures (Bottom and Hierarchy) (Field Study, 2015).

Albert (1991) equally admitted that excessive overload through centralisation could encourage delay and inefficiency. Though decentralisation and division of labour is everything to enhance good management and productivity. (Field Study, 2015). In related development, George (1999) argued that effective communication is the common tools of binding workers together and accelerate their commitment and productivity. Supporting the George's (1999) opinion, Ijo Aduala (2006) reported that good communication goes a long way to stimulate enthusiasm, raise the motivation of those whom they directed. Fitts (2006) further concluded effective internal communication and productivity are reciprocal interwoven. Another favourable evidence from Drucker (1979) posits that effective communication leads to good human relations and in turn, yields a successful achievement of organisational goals and objectives. Jablin (1982) in his study, socialisation and assimilation approach advocates the importance of preliminary knowledge on organisation and its activities before recruited. Thus, directed at socializing organisational members focuses on articulating and reinforcing organisational values and aligning individual goals with organisational goals. According to Jablin, this could determine a success in every organisation.

The findings of this work also coincide with the opinion of Megginson *et al.,* (1983) that all evidence clearly shows that written and oral communication skills are critical not only in obtaining a job, but also in performing effectively on the job. This was supported by Benson (1994) that written and oral communication skills were the two most important factors in obtaining employment and ginger employees to perform effectively. Similarly, Reilly and Pondy (1989) observed that the bulk of the research evidence suggests that oral communication is more effective than written communication and is preferred by most employees because it allows the sender to obtain some feedback instantly from the receiver. In contrast, Rue and Bakers (1996) backed up a written communication as much less expensive especially as regards to time, lengthy, future reference and details information than oral communication. Therefore, according to them written communication is seen effective than oral communication.

On the other hand, Massie and Douglas (1977) in Nwachukwu (1988) reported that too much communication bogs down the entire system. However, he suggested a judicious selection of information helps to avoid dogging the entire system with relevant information. These findings are in concordance with the position of Weick (1969) theory of organizing. According to Weick, organising activities and interaction using proper enactment, selection and retention could reduce uncertain in overload communication and interactions between boss and subordinates in organisations. This

is evident in the work of Xie and John (2007) that too much down ward communication from superiors might create feeling of dependency that employees may resist situations and provoke a negative reaction and establishes communication problems among employees that contribute to poor productivity in organisation. Similarly, development, Fisher, (2006) also reflected the findings of the study that poor communication and communication breakdown often prevent the sender and receiver from achieving mutual understanding of meaning necessary for effective productivity. Though, Bruce (1974) noted that both upward and downward chains of communication are vital channels of communication for facilitating a valuable climate for the free flow of ideas and information. But, Bruce argued that downward communication are usually better than other channels and frequently more accurate than those at higher levels want them to be filtration and intimidation is minimum than upward communication.

Other problems the study found as a hindrance to smooth flow of information communications were coincided with the opinions of Lewis, (2001), Drucker, (1979), and Luther, (1989) that inadequate preparation, managerial silence on follow up memos and inadequate listening are some of the principal causes of ineffective and inefficient communication in complex organization. Other barriers, according to them include, information overloads, noise and time pressures and also be unfavourable for effective management. Weick (1969) noted that effective communication and organised activities would fulfil the functions of minimising the uncertainty of information spreads or communicated in organisation. In order to improve the organisation communication effectiveness and enhance productivity, according Pelz (1952) supervisor should be given obsolete power to supervise and coordinate workers assigned under his/her team, so as to influence the employee's perceptions to trust the supervisor and feed him/her with accurate information. Similarly, Popoola (2004) observed that organization communication and productivity can be effective, only when the staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge necessary to communicative effectively.

In addition, Pugh (1989) opined that employees are requires to undergoing intensive formal industrial training for certain period in order to learn the roles, technicality and practice involves in the job before assign to engage in every tasks and assignments. Supporting the Popoola (2004) and Pugh (1989) opinions, McCosky and Richmond (1979) suggests that training is also required to fight communication apprehension, famous as "stage fight". It is therefore important to note that for any organisation to have a conducive atmosphere of internal communication flow and productivity, the management of an organisation are expected to fully implement the Fayol, H. (1949) principles of administrative managements and Weber, M. (1947) Basic Bureaucratic characteristics for effective managements. According to them organisational productivity and successes depends on the effectiveness of the internal communication flow and equally applications of bureaucratic traits (Weberian ideal type) and Fayolian fourteen principles of administrative order.

CONCLUSION

It is a consensus opinion that effective internal communication flow is a powerful weapon that could generate productivity in organisations. It is also believed that sound internal communication flow plays a vital role in the productivity of the employees, so as to ensure effective and efficient coordination of the top-down activities and

interactions between the management and members of the staff with a view to translate mutual understanding and foster conducive relationship atmosphere without communication barriers. The problems and factors that undermining the smooth flow of communication in organisation and flaws staff productivity has become a serious threat to the survival and success of an organisation that require urgent attention as to what measures to be taken to overcome the challenges of communication related phenomena. The findings of this study coupled with scholars opinions had further concluded that no organisation can be meaningful and achieve its managerial goals and objectives without the function of effective internal communication flow amongst various hierarchies in the organisation. It is therefore significant to prioritize the maximum existing of practical internal communication flow and thereby induce the employee's productivity. These vindicates that there are strong relationship between internal communication flow and staff productivity in organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of this paper, the following recommendations are made to improve internal communication flows and staff productivity in organisation.

1. In order to have effective and efficient internal communication flow that increases staff productivity in every organisation. The managers or heads of organisations should clearly inform their staff at all levels of what they hope to achieve and how they plan to go about achieving them. The managers or heads of organisations should adequately be committed to programmes of effective internal communication flow, using a set of policies and procedures that best encourage trust and mutual understanding amongst members of the staff as well as coordination and organisation of communication acts throughout the organisations, while guiding the communication activities of the organisations towards fulfilling internal communication and managerial objectives and enhances staff productivity.

2. The study suggests a provision of standard modern day administrative effective and efficient communication delivery system that are appropriate to the organisation culture and climate that embrace internal communication flow and staff productivity with particular reference to organizations where the systems protocol were insufficient and some of the staff are not aware of the existence of the system protocol.

3. The researchers recommends that all managers and heads of organisation should intensify efforts to train their staff at all levels perfectly on the skills of how to handle communication activities and knowledge of facilitating effective internal communication flow that could be beneficial to administrative success. The study equally recommends a more open door policy for heads of organizations to encourage subordinates to bridge communication gap to avoid putting them on defensives to achieve internal communication flow perspective. In order to ensure speedy transactions of internal communication flow within the organisation. The researchers recommend a careful selection of communication channels, systems and sources suitable and consistent to the organisations objectives with view to achieve set goals.

4. That the managers and other heads of organisations should provide a control mechanism for smooth flow of information within the hierarchical structure of organisations so as to regulate information going up and coming down between

management and staff without fear or favour in order to create an enabling ground for effective internal communication flow. Equally, the researchers recommends the use of policy decentralisation of responsibilities or tasks, division of labour and job professionalism as critical to excessive work overload that delay information and makes heads of organisations become busy and confused. The researchers also recommends that managements of an organisation should always be fully prepared in all its communication and embrace the custom of following up a message communicated or forwarded through a telephone call or other effective and efficient medium with a view to achieve the objectives of effective internal communication flow and staff productivity.

5. In order to minimize ambiguity in communication and unwarranted conclusion as well as contradictory statement and degree of status disparity interference in communication within the organisations. It is fact that people do not understand what is being communicated, when the information given is vague to establish meaning to achieve internal objectives of communication. Therefore, administrators or managements of various organisations should use simple and unambiguous language in all their memos. This is because, communication can be easier to understand and appropriate to situations and events so as to facilitate effective internal communication flow in organisations. It is also recommended that the senior staff of an organisation should demonstrate a quality of modesty in their interactions with fellow staff without regards to cadre or levels.

   Another recommendation the researchers made is on the influence of informal communication characteristics that organisations managements should carefully coordinate the rumbling waves of communication across the organisations through the grapevine and enact a policy that reduce the negative side of the communication in order to substantiate facts and accuracy of the information communicated.

6. The researcherss recommends that for efficient and effective internal communication flow to achieve managerial objectives of organisations, the managements are expected to use multiple patterns of communications in carrying out administrative activities. It is also suggested that managements of organisations should endeavour to secure a right supervisor and head of departments or units who is versatile with vast communication and human relations skills to oversee the activities of its staff so as to achieve success in its administrative management. It is however suggest that managers and heads of organisations should strictly observed the administrative protocol in passing memos and messages, so as to ensure legitimate bureaucratic order and efficiency in an organisation.

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