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## THE ROLE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN ACHIEVING ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

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### ***Abstract***

*This research was a survey which elicited opinions of staff of selected manufacturing company in Anambra State, Nigeria. The simple random sampling method was used to obtain the sample units. The study selected at random 350 employees from 15 selected manufacturing companies in Anambra State. The convenience sampling method was applied in selecting the companies for ease in accessing them. The simple random sampling method was then used to obtain the sample units. The primary source of data which was sourced using questionnaire and divided into two sections was employed in the study. Questions on the effect influence of internal communication on crises management, customers satisfaction and employees productivity were asked. The Spearman's rank correlation was used in testing the required hypotheses at 5% level of significance. The results of the hypotheses have been presented in previous section. The results revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between internal communication and crises management. The result also found a significant positive relationship between internal communication and customers' satisfaction. It was also found that there is significant positive relationship between internal communication and employees' productivity. The study therefore concludes that there is a significant relationship between internal communication and achievement of organizational goals. As internal communication improves, crises in the organization are better managed (reduced). Similarly, as internal communication improves, customers' satisfaction increases and vice versa. This suggests that as communication improves, employees' productivity*

*increases also. This study recommends that better and effective communication strategies be put in place in organizations in order to achieve set goals in organizations. As effective and efficient communication helps transmit clear and understandable targets to the employees and other stakeholders in the organization. This leads to improved productivity and efficiency in the performance of task and achievement of set goals.*

**Keywords:** *communication, crises management, productivity, customer satisfaction*

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication refers to the transfer and the understanding of meaning while internal business communication refers to communication between entities in an organization. It includes information sharing activities among entities in an organization. Internal communication takes place at all levels of the organization as it aids functioning of the organization (Stevanoviæ & Gmitroviæ, 2015).

Internal Communication plays important roles in management, emotional sharing, persuasion, feedback and information exchange (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Communication could be formal or informal. Formal communication is one established by an organization to transmit information to its members. Informal communication is a communication channel created spontaneously depending on individual preferences. In terms of direction, communication can be downward or upward (Robbins & Judge, 2017).

Stevanoviæ & Gmitroviæ (2015) posit that formal communication is performed within the organizational hierarchy from higher to lower levels, or lower to higher levels or just in one level. They also differentiate vertical and horizontal communications from downward and upward, arguing that vertical communication occurs between people that are in unequal position while horizontal communication involves people on the same organizational level and equal influence on decision making. The authors further argue that while vertical communication is limited due to the nature of relations of dominance and subordination of workers as well as different status positions the employed in the organization do not have the same access to information, which can lead to inaccurate and

incomplete information. Such information could affect the occurrence of certain inefficiencies in the work of employees. Other forms of communication in the organization also depend on good downward communication. Horizontal communications are very important since they are improving coordination between groups, departments and services. Because it enables individuals to communicate with their peers, horizontal communication increases employees satisfaction. Communication has crucial impacts among entities in an organization as it is a channel of flow of information, resources, and even policies. "Organizational communication can be broadly defined as communication with one another in the context of an organization (Shonubi & Akintaro, 2016).

Aka & Eke (2018) argue that the level of communication in any organization is a critical factor of employees' performance and that employees are going to be affected negatively or positively by the communication processes. Effective communication is seen as a prerequisite for organizational stability and success as communication not only integrates different units and functions in an organization, but also affects the ability of managers to engage employees in a manner that leads to better performance. Effective internal communication therefore helps to ensure that entities in organization work collaboratively towards a common goal. Communication helps to develop a unified organizational objectives and empowers members of staff to make the right decisions towards achieving organizational goals which in turn leads to improved productivity and customer service. Organizational objectives play a large part in developing organizational policies and determining the allocation of organizational resources and help with the achievement of objectives helps an organization reach its overall strategic goals.

Benefits of effective internal communication cannot be over emphasized. Both the organization and the employees reap full benefits of effective internal communication if put in place. Internal communication ensures employees' engagement- in decisions making, opinions survey. It ensures knowledge sharing and makes employees feel valued, boost productivity, improves morale, and creates a better work environment. It builds cohesive organizational culture and defines goals. Internal

communications are the key to managing any organizational crisis. It also enhances transparency and increase productivity. Above all internal communication ensures customer satisfaction as consumers expect consistent communication. The thrust of this study therefore is to ascertain the role of internal communication in achieving organizational objectives.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to ascertain the role of internal communication on achieving organizational objectives. The specific objectives include:

1. To ascertain the relationship between internal communication and crises management within an organization.
2. Find out the influence of internal communication on customer satisfaction
3. To determine the relationship between internal communication and employees productivity.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The following alternative hypotheses are formulated for this study:

1. Ha: there is significant relationship between internal communication and crises management.
2. Ha: internal communication has significant influence on customer satisfaction
3. Ha: there is significant relationship between internal communication and employees' productivity.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study is hinged on theory of scientific management by Taylor (1913). The principle posits that "under scientific management, arbitrary power, arbitrary dictation ceases, and every single subject becomes question for scientific investigation. Taylor believed that any job could be performed better if it was done scientifically. Taylor created time and motion studies that resulted in organizational efficiency. One key factor in Taylor's scientific method is the style of communication. Taylor did not feel the need to build rapport among workers. Rather, he felt that managers needed to

communicate in a clear-cut and candid manner. Further, employees do not need to provide input, they just need to know how to execute their jobs. Hunt and Ebeling (1983) found a significant relationship between communication and improved employee attitudes and that the implementation of a structured communication program resulted in a positive change in the workforce and that internal communication coming from management, affects employees' job satisfaction.

Rogala (2015) analyzed tasks of internal communication and its impact on different aspects of company functioning with special attention to issues concerned with corporate image building, internal brand and manager-employee communication. The study found that internal communication contributes to high performance and competitive advantage. The study also found that internal communication helps build loyalty and identification with corporation and moulds its unique culture. The study concludes that appropriately given information raises discipline in organization, creates work atmosphere that leads to increasing employees' effectiveness, motivation and creativity.

Chitraoa (2014) employed the method of survey in studying retail organizations' internal communication systems for motivating employees and ensuring customer satisfaction. The study focused on whether employees have access to accurate and relevant information necessary for performing their job roles effectively. The study revealed that employees prefer face-to-face interaction and that interpersonal and dialogic communication remains important at levels in an organization.

DeMaria (2016) evaluated internal communications in companies deemed "Best Places to Work" by the Triangle Business Journal and its influence on corporate culture. The study made use of interviews with five professionals from the "Best Places to Work". The findings of the study revealed a close connection between internal communications and corporate culture. The study found that providing an environment where open communication and feedback are encouraged reflects the corporate culture and aids in its development.

Nwata, Umoh & Amah (2016) used descriptive and inferential statistics methods to empirically investigate the association between internal organizational communication and employees' performance in selected

banks in Port Harcourt. It examined the effect of internal organizational communication through downward and upward communication on employee performance using data from a sample of 315 respondents through personally administered questionnaire. The results of the study revealed a significant effect of downward and upward communication on employee efficiency and employees effectiveness. The study concluded that internal organizational communication was strongly associated with employees performance and recommended that organizations incorporate adequate measures in ensuring that communication within the organization is consistent, clear and follows well recognized and formally instituted channels for the purpose of avoiding ambiguities.

Neto, *et al* (2014) developed a model to identify the influence of communication, organizational identification and trust on the organizations' performance and proposition of model. The study used descriptive and quantitative methods applied to a soft drink Industry and applied a questionnaire for 310 employees. The results showed that the higher the organizational identification, the greater will be the trust in the manager and the performance. The study also confirmed that there is a lower influence of the Internal Communication on Performance.

Okuneye, *et al* (2014) studied internal communication strategies adopted by organization which increase performance of the organization using data collected from managers from different companies, thus this study confirmed a strong positive relation between internal communication strategy and organizational performance using multivariate correlation analysis. The results of the study revealed that effective business communication is emphasized to a reasonable extent in the selected companies and that the extent of practices of effective business communication were related to the size and category of business -service and manufacturing.

Shonubi & Akintaro (2016) explored the impact of effective communication on organizational Performance based on series of empirical studies of communication and organizational performance. The research findings validated the relationship between communication approach and efficient organizational performance. The study therefore recommended more clarity of ideas before attempting to communicate;

Better understanding of the physical and human environment when communicating; and a thorough analysis of the purpose of communication among other things.

Rukmana, Sopiah & Elfia Nora (2018) studied the Impact of Organization Communication on Employee Performance through Employee's Work Motivation using a sample of 72 respondents and path analysis. The study found that there is a positive effect of organizational communication on the performance of employees through employee motivation. The study recommended increase organizational communication by organizing joint activities outside working hours and also employees are expected to willingly improve feedback when communicating with the superiors.

Jain & Trehan (2015) explored the impact of internal corporate communication satisfaction on job performance using random convenience sampling and data from employees of public and private telecom sector in Indore India. The Independent sample t-test and linear regression were employed in the study. The perspective of organizations towards Internal Corporate Communication was found to have changed slowly over the years and its importance has not been evaluated sufficiently in terms of affecting the job performance even today. Higher levels of job performances were reported in public telecom sector organizations as compared to private sector telecom organization. The study concluded that organizational integration and organizational perspective have emerged as two very important dimensions influencing the job performance.

Kibe (2014) empirically evaluated four communication strategies that could have impacted organizational performance namely; group effort, open door policy, formal channels of communication and organization structure using descriptive research design and sample size of 132 employees. The study found that extent of influence by the organizational structure is low. The main conclusion drawn from the research was communication strategies play a central role in high-performance.

Aka & Eke (2018) investigated the effect of communication processes on employees' performance in Bayelsa State of Nigeria using a survey research design on a sample of 290 respondents from five civil service ministries in Bayelsa State. The Multiple linear regressions analysis and parametric statistical techniques were also applied in the study. Findings

in the study reveals that messages received, message medium, messages sent and feedback mechanism were significant predictors of employees' performance. The study recommended enhancing employees' performance in civil service ministries by installing effective communication processes that ensures harmonization across the messages, medium and feedback mechanism.

Bhatia & Balani (2015) investigated the relationship between internal communication and employee performance in public sector organizations in Bangalore city, Karnataka, India. The study used data collected with the aid of questionnaire from a sample of 40 respondents. The findings in the study show that a significant relationship exists between internal communication and employee performance. The study concluded that effective internal communication plays a significant role in improving the performance of employees.

Kulachai, *et al* (2018) examined the relationship between internal communication, job satisfaction, employee participation and employee performance using a sample of 489 state officials from 10 city municipalities in Chonburi, Thailand. The study employed questionnaire as an instrument of data collection and data were analyzed using structural equation modeling technique. The results of the study revealed that internal communication had positive influence on employee participation and job satisfaction and employee participation had positive influence on job satisfaction. Employee participation and job satisfaction were found to play mediating role in the relationship between internal communication and job performance of the employees.

Marchalina & Ahmad (2017) examined the influence of internal communication on employees' commitment to change. The study used survey with structured questionnaire on a sample of five-hundred fifty employees in Malaysian large companies. The significant relationship has been found between internal communication and employees' commitment to change through multivariate regression analysis. Moreover, the implications to practice and theory are discussed.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research was a survey which elicited opinions of staff of selected manufacturing company in Anambra State, Nigeria. The simple random

sampling method was used to obtain the sample units. The study selected at random 350 employees from 15 selected manufacturing companies in Anambra State. The convenience sampling method was applied in selecting the companies for ease in accessing them. The simple random sampling method was then used to obtain the sample units. The primary source of data which was sourced using questionnaire and divided into two sections was employed in the study. Questions on the effect influence of internal communication on crises management, customers satisfaction and employees productivity were asked. The Spearman's rank correlation was used in testing the required hypotheses at 5% level of significance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of the test of hypotheses are presented and discussed in this section. 338 valid questionnaires were returned and subsequently used in the analysis. The Spearman's correlation coefficient and associated tests was employed in testing the desired hypotheses at 5% level of significance.

### Hypothesis 1:

H<sub>0</sub>: there is no significant relationship between internal communication and crises management.

Versus

H<sub>a</sub>: there exist significant relationship between internal communication and crises management.

Hypothesis 1 was tested at 5% level of significance. The decision rule is to reject the null hypothesis, if the P-value associated with the test statistics is less than 0.05 (5%) level of significance. The result of the hypothesis 1 is presented in table 1

		internal communication	crises management
<b>Spearman's rho</b>	internal communication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.511**
		N	.000
			338
			338

	crises management	Correlation Coefficient	-.511**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	338	338
<b>** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</b>				

**Decision:** since the p-value of the hypothesis is less than the level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected and conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between internal communication and crises management. A negative correlation was observed between internal communication and crises management. This suggests that as internal communication improves, crises in the organization are better managed (reduced). Crisis refers to any situation that threatens an organization and can lead to damage and requiring quick response (Heide & Simonsson, 2014). Internal communication is very vital in any organization. The art of communicating during crises should be done in such a manner to avoid misguidance or miscommunication. Moden (2008) argues that communication in the midst of a crisis is more difficult than everyday communication and that organization can keep a tight grip on communications only if the right expertise, procedures and roles are in place before the crises. Everyone in the organization should have great communication skills to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

**Hypothesis 2:**

H0: internal communication does not have significant influence on customer satisfaction

Ha: internal communication has significant influence on customer satisfaction

Hypothesis 2 was tested at 5% level of significance and the result is presented in table 2.

**Table 1: Internal Communication and Customer Satisfaction**

		Internal Communication	customer satisfaction
<b>Spearman's rho</b>	Internal Communication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.623**
			.000

		N	338	338
	customer satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.623**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	338	338
		<b>** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</b>		

**Decision:** since the p-value of the associated correlation test is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected and thus the conclusion that there is significant positive relationship between internal communication and customers satisfaction. A positive relationship was found to exist between internal communication and customers' satisfaction. This means that as internal communication improves, customers' satisfaction increases and vice visa.

### Hypotheses 3

Ha: there is no significant relationship between internal communication and employees' productivity.

Ha: there exist significant relationship between internal communication and employees' productivity.

**Table 1: Internal Communication and Employees' Productivity.**

			Internal Communication	Employees' Productivity
<b>Spearman's rho</b>	Internal Communication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.488**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	338	338
	Employees' Productivity	Correlation Coefficient	.488**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	338	338
<b>** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</b>				

**Decision:** since the p-value of the test hypothesis is less than the level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected and thus the conclusion that there is significant relationship between internal communication and

employees' productivity. A positive relationship was found to exist between internal communication and employees' productivity. This suggests that as communication improves, employees productivity increases also. Modern organizations depend on internal business communication channels to provide structure toward productive outcomes. These interactions give room for building authentic relationships and alternative methods to achieving set goals in the organization. The importance of internal communication goes far beyond effective communication skills to addressing the communication needs faced by organizations. Zaremba (2003) further argued that communication is a central component of organizational effectiveness.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The results of the hypotheses have been presented in previous section. The results revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between internal communication and crises management. The result also found a significant positive relationship between internal communication and customers' satisfaction. It was also found that there is significant positive relationship between internal communication and employees' productivity. The study therefore concludes that there is a significant relationship between internal communication and achievement of organizational goals. As internal communication improves, crises in the organization are better managed (reduced). Similarly, as internal communication improves, customers' satisfaction increases and vice versa. This suggests that as communication improves, employees' productivity increases also. This study recommends that better and effective communication strategies be put in place in organizations in order to achieve set goals in organizations. As effective and efficient communication helps transmit clear and understandable targets to the employees and other stakeholders in the organization. This leads to improved productivity and efficiency in the performance of task and achievement of set goals.

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