

# Communication and Work Effectiveness in Public Organisations: A Study of Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, Rivers State, Nigeria

Asiegbu, Victor Iheanyichukwu, Ph.D

Kpun Faithful Dengiyefa

Easterday Domotimi

Rufus, Piologalam Matthew

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

**Abstract:** As organisation strive to maintain competitive advantage over others, the role of communication cannot be overemphasized. Effective communication plays a crucial role in facilitating the efficient operation of any given institution. This study is driven by two research inquiries, namely: what are the purposes of efficient communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State, and what are the barriers to effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State? The study used primary data collected via questionnaires and secondary data obtained from journals, textbooks, and internet sources. The research style employed was survey research design, and the sampling technique employed was simple random sampling. The main data collected were organised in statistical tables and examined using a four-point Likert rating scale, with criterion mean standard of 2.50. The cybernetics theory served as a conceptual foundation for analysis. The study findings amongst others prove that; communication improves organisational productivity and serves as a channel for generating feedback. Also, the study amongst others recommends that management should train and equip staff with modern communication apparatus and also introduce modern channels of communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori as this will enhance productivity.

**Key words:** Communication, work effectiveness, cybernetics, productivity

## Introduction

Communication is a technical tool which when properly used within any organisation, gives such organisation an edge over others. It is one channel that could drive the success or failure of any organisation. Communication like breathing, takes place all the time, whether we intend to or not. The words we choose, the tone of our voice, our facial expressions, all put together subconsciously relay different messages in our day-to-day activities, which knowingly or unknowingly determines the organisation's corporate image. When there is communication break down or failure within any organisation, it could lead to waste of time and efforts, all of which could affect the productivity level of such organisation. Supporting the above narrative, Stephen (2011) opines that for any organisation to be successful, it must have the ability to steer and mobilize her workforce toward the achievement of organisational objectives and this process is dependent on its ability to communicate effectively with its employees. It is through communication that staff members are given instructions and this is one important role which communication play in every organisation, whether public or private.

As organisation strive to maintain competitive advantage over others, the role of communication cannot be over looked; as it helps in the formation of strategic goals and objectives for any organisation. The above is in line with Bacal (2004, p.2) who is of the opinion that a well-defined strategy is one that engages employees and aligns with the organisation's business goals. Hence, there is a connection between business, performance, productivity and communication in every organisation as they all work in synergy to help the organisation achieve success.

According to Elvin and Hansma (2008), communication is widely acknowledged as an essential component within organisations, serving as a vital means for the dissemination of information among employees. This is achieved through the exchange of ideas, facilitating the development of effective plans and proposals, reaching

agreements, making decisions, issuing and executing orders, as well as conducting sales activities. The cessation of effective communication practices has been noted to result in the cessation of effective and efficient organisational or human activities. Effective communication plays a crucial role in enhancing efficiency at the Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State, akin to the vital function of the bloodstream in the human body. The absence of effective communication between management and personnel within an institution may lead to disarray, diminished productivity, and overall organisational failure. The efficacy of any vision or goal, regardless of its magnitude, remains inconsequential until it is effectively conveyed and comprehended by others via the process of communication.

More so, it is through effective communication that instructions, policies, regulations, and the ethics of the organisation are passed down to subordinates, and it is also through communication that the organisation's feedback system is kept in working order (Amah, 2016). As a consequence, effective communication always contributes to the formation of the forward and backward links that are required for the attainment of organisational goals. The reason for this is that communication serves as the primary channel via which managers get information for decision-making processes that impact the company.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Most public organisations in Nigeria are faced with different conflict experiences and this is link to poor communication. The incidence of poor communication in various organisations is influenced by environmental and technological variables. All of these factors need careful consideration, since they have the potential to impact staff efficiency either favourably or adversely. Therefore, despite the significant impact of communication on enhancing job efficiency, it is regrettable to see that several public organisations continue to neglect the need of maintaining efficient communication within their operations. It is said that having communication skills is one thing, but the capacity to manage good communication in order to achieve maximum organisational performance is even more important.

To Amah (2016) communication is essential for the growth of any institution, as well as for the transfer of organisational objectives to personnel. Besides that, communication is required for the purposes of recruitment and selection as well as development and appraisal, direction, and motivation within any organisation. However, it seems that staff and management at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State are yet to fully tap into the opportunities provided by effective communication as this can be seen in the poor service delivery, delays in conveying information in an appropriate manner amongst members of staff part of which has further limited the efficiency of the workers thereby hampering institutional productivity. Edwinah and Weje (2018, p.239) posits that employees of any organisation who are subjected to unnecessarily long delays in accessing information have a tendency to limit their performance, resulting in maladministration and a disconnect in the coordination of the organisation's performance. Moreso, Robbins (2003) states that the inability to map out the basic communication skills required to carry out good communication has resulted in an overall low performance. This can be seen in some public institutions where there is poor attitude of staff in proffering feedback to management in areas where attention and managerial action is needed within the organisation. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study examines the role of effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

- i. What are the purposes of efficient communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State?
- ii. What are the barriers to effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State?

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To examine the purposes of effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State.
- iii. To identify the barriers to effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study focused on the purposes of effective communication and the possible barriers militating against it at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State. The time frame for this study is 2015- 2022

---

while the geographical area of the study is Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State. The study gathered the needed data from students and lecturers in the institution to achieve its purpose.

## Conceptual Review

### Communication

According to Randall (1984, p.156), communication may be defined as the purposeful exchange of information between individuals or groups. In this context, effective communication is contingent upon the transmission of information from one individual to another, who assumes the role of the recipient. To Cushway and Lodge (1999, p.189), the act of communication occurs when an individual effectively transmits their thoughts and intents to another person, meaning that for communication to occur, there must be exchange of ideas between two parties.

On the other hand, Obisi (2003, p.218) defines communication as the process of conveying information via spoken or written language. It is important to acknowledge that communication extends beyond just verbal exchanges, including both explicit and implicit forms of expression, whether they are sent unintentionally or deliberately. These forms include spoken words, attitudes, emotions, behaviours, nonverbal cues, and vocal inflections. Communication is not only critical to the internal operation of an organisation, but it is also critical to the organisation's information exchange with its external environment (Dominion, 2020).

### Work Effectiveness

The measure of effectiveness has significant importance within the realm of most organisations, since it offers a comprehensive assessment of the organisation's ability to successfully accomplish its objectives. In a broad sense, effectiveness may be seen as the extent to which preset objectives are attained or ascertained by comparison with actual outcomes. According to Mahaputra and Saputra (2022), the concept of effectiveness primarily pertains to the outcomes derived from the assessment of a given process, which subsequently yields discernible outputs.

Work effectiveness refers to the ability to successfully complete tasks within a given timeframe. In this context, the evaluation of task implementation is determined by its effectiveness, efficiency, and cost relative to the task's inherent requirements. The assessment of whether the implementation is deemed satisfactory or unsatisfactory depends on factors such as the execution process, duration, and financial implications. Effectiveness is a quantifiable metric that assesses the degree to which a certain objective, such as quality, quantity, or time, has been successfully attained. The degree of efficacy increases in direct proportion to the magnitude of the aim accomplished. Effectiveness is therefore a measure that signifies the degree of accomplishment attained via the execution of tasks.

### The practical importance of effective communication and organisational performance

The success and productivity level of any organisation is largely dependent on how well communication flows within such organisation. This is because a poor communication system affects organisational productivity, hence, organisations can attain high performance via effective communication. The above is in line with Neves *et al.* (2012) who opines that good communication is essential for the attainment of organisational objectives, which may include higher level of quality, enhanced efficiency, more responsiveness, and greater creativity. Communication controls, integrates, educates, motivates, and provides a platform for emotional expression and expression of feelings.

It has been proven that efficiency is most times increased as a result of proper communication since it allows both administrators and staff to be aware of contemporary technologies that they may employ in their organisations. Technological advancement comes with different conventional platforms such as ICT, local wireless network systems, telephones and others, all of which, aid the growth and advancement of every organization, when properly utilized. Furthermore, Roseline (2017) is of the opinion that effective communication within any organisation helps top managers and administrators to identify work place challenges through feedback mechanisms so as to correct identified lapses. Through proper feedback,

organisations take cognizance of the need for staff training and appraisal within the organisation. Where there is need for training and development programmes, workers are sent to acquire new skills and ideas about their job description so as to effectively execute their assignments.

Another practical benefit of effective communication to any public organisation is that it assists management in the performance of its tasks, which include planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting (POSCORB), amongst others. The effectiveness of this task has the potential to improve the efficiency and quality of the organisation. Effective communication within an organisation contributes to the improvement of employee performance as well as the improvement of overall organisational performance. To Prince (2020) effective communication has the capacity to allow workers become aware of the importance of staff quality and efficiency in their work environments. This is because it enables workers to communicate with management about difficulties that are relevant to their jobs in order to obtain high quality service delivery in the organisation.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Cybernetic Theory**

The theory of Cybernetics was formulated by Ross Ashby and Norbert Wiener in the year 1960 (Shannon & Weaver, 2000). The theory primarily centers on the mathematical principles governing communication and control systems, particularly in relation to regulatory feedback mechanisms. The theory states that feedback may have either a positive or negative connotation depending upon the specific mode of communication used. Therefore, the idea posits that feedback is used to assess the efficacy of a certain message or circumstance within an organisation. Once again, it is widely posited that the activities undertaken inside a communication system engender alterations in the system's surroundings, subsequently leading to modifications across the whole of the system.

When applied to this study, it is believed that effective communication could lead to improved institutional performance at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State. There are different academic faculties in the Polytechnic made up of both academic and non-academic staff. Hence, effective communication between management and staff members has the capacity to improve the operations and activities of the institution. When management employ both conventional and non-conventional means of communication which include but not limited to sending text messages, calling for meeting both online and offline, and writing memos and circulars, it will help entrench harmony and work place understanding and as well give staff members a sense of commitment which will further help them participate effectively in issues that concern them. To Berlo in Shannon and Weaver (2000), there is a visible relationship between the source of communication and the receiver within every organisation. It is therefore useful for any organisation to employ effective communication as this can enhance employee performance and productivity.

### **Research setting**

#### **Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State**

Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, formerly known as Rivers State Polytechnic, is an institution of higher education that is owned by the State Government. It is situated in Bori, which is located in the state of Rivers in Nigeria. The establishment of the Polytechnic may be attributed to the Rivers State Government in the year 1988. On May 13, 1988, Colonel Anthony Ukpo, who was serving as the Military Governor at the time, officially established the temporary Council. On March 25, 1989, Group Captain Ernest O. Adeleye, the former Military Governor of Rivers State, issued the Edict that officially established the Polytechnic. Furthermore, he conducted the official inauguration of the establishment on May 19, 1990. On Wednesday, 29th July, 2015, the Rivers State Polytechnic (RIVPOLY), Bori, underwent an official renaming to become the Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic. This change was made in recognition of the environmental rights activism of Kenule "Ken" Beeson Saro-Wiwa. The renaming was initiated through an executive bill presented by the State Governor, Barr. Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, and subsequently approved by the Rivers State House of Assembly on the same day.

Currently, the Polytechnic has staff strength of nine hundred and thirty (930) workers with five hundred and sixty (560) non-academic staff representing 60.3% and three hundred and seventy (370) academic staff representing 39.7% of the staff strength (Office of the Bursar, 2022). The Polytechnic is currently comprised of four faculties, namely the School of Applied Science, the School of Engineering, the School of Environmental Technology, and the School of Management Science. The School of Applied Science offers programmes in Computer Science, Science Laboratory Technology, and Statistics. The School of Engineering offers programmes in Civil Engineering, Electrical/Electronic Engineering, Telecommunication, Electronics Power & Machine, Mechanical Engineering, and Manufacturing Power plant. The School of Environmental Technology offers a programme in Estate Management. Lastly, the School of Management Science offers programmes in Accountancy, Banking and Finance, Business Administration & Management, Marketing, Office Technology and Management, Insurance, and Mass Communication. The total student population across these faculties and programmes is six hundred and thirty-five (635).

### Methodology

The research study adopted survey research design and utilized the simple random sampling technique. Survey design plays a crucial role in the acquisition of information via the use of a questionnaire. Additionally, it enables researchers to effectively include a substantial population within the scope of their study. The sample for this research consisted of the 930 staff members and 635 students from the Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, Rivers State. These individuals were selected from the various faculties and departments within the the institution. The sample size was selected in a random manner from a pool of individuals consisting of both staff and students. This pool included five distinct departments, specifically: Statistics, Mass Communication, Accountancy, Computer Science, and Science Laboratory Technology. The study's aims were accomplished via the collection of both primary and secondary data all bothering communication and work effectiveness at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, located in Rivers State.

The research distributed a total of 450 questionnaires, with 90 questionnaires allocated to each of the five chosen departments and faculties. However, for the purpose of the study, only 400 questionnaires were collected and used. The study raised 10 questionnaire questions which was used to investigate the relationship between communication and successful workplace performance. Furthermore, the data obtained from each questionnaire item was subjected to analysis using descriptive statistics and the simple percentage approach. Additionally, the four-point Likert scale was used as a tool for analysis, where SA represented a score of 4, A represented a score of 3, D represented a score of 2, and SD represented a score of 1. The analysis of the score outcome is used to derive a research conclusion. The findings of the analysis were used to ascertain agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items included in the research. The determination of a criterion mean in the four-point Likert scale of analysis is as follows:

$$\text{Hence; criterion mean} = \frac{\text{Weighted total}}{\text{Sample size}}$$

And;

$$\text{This } \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$$

Therefore, the average of the scores divided by the entire number of possibilities, resulting in a value of 2.50, is established as the criterion mean. In this study, questionnaire items are categorized as negative if their mean score is below 2.50, indicating disagreement. Conversely, items with a mean score of 2.50 and above are considered positive, indicating agreement.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

**Table 1: Questionnaire distribution and discussion of findings**

Department/ Programmes	Number of Questionnaires Distributed.	Number of Questionnaires Retrieved without errors and used for the study	Percentage (%) Returned
Statistics	90	85	21.25
Mass Communication	90	79	19.75
Accountancy	90	89	22.25
Computer Science	90	86	21.5
Science Laboratory Technology	90	61	15.25
Total	<b>450</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

*Field Work, 2023*

From the table 1 above, it is clear that the study selected 5 departments/programmes from the different faculties in the institution. They are Statistics, Mass Communication, Accountancy, Computer Science and Science Laboratory Technology. 90 questionnaires were administered to each of them totaling 450 copies of questionnaires for the purpose of the study. Out of the 450 copies of questionnaires administered, the study retrieved 85 copies from Statistics; 79 copies from Mass Communication; 89 from Accountancy; 86 from Computer science and 61 from Science Laboratory Technology totaling 400 copies which was used for the study while 21 copies of questionnaires were not returned and 29 marked with errors and not used.

**Research Question 1:** What are the purposes of effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State?

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics on the purposes of effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State.**

S/N	Purposes of effective communication	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	Communication improves organisational productivity	125 (500)	211 (633)	52 (104)	12 (12)	400 (1249)	3.12	Accepted
2	Enhance the use of contemporary technologies	213 (852)	111 (333)	51 (102)	25 (25)	400 (1312)	3.28	Accepted
3	Communication has no positive effect on organisational growth	12 (48)	19 (57)	211 (422)	158 (158)	400 (685)	1.71	Rejected
4	Serves as a channel for generating feedback	212 (848)	101 (303)	63 (126)	24 (24)	400 (1301)	3.25	Accepted

5	Helps in the improvement of employee performance	104 (416)	196 (588)	31 (62)	61 (61)	400 (1127)	2.81	Accepted
---	--------------------------------------------------	--------------	--------------	------------	------------	---------------	------	----------

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 2 above reveals respondent’s responses to the functions of effective communication in Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State.

Data proves that respondents accepted research questionnaire items 1, 2, 4 and 5 respectively with mean frequencies of 3.12, 3.28, 3.25 and 2.81 all of which are above the criterion mean standard of 2.50 but rejected questionnaire item 3 which has a mean score of 1.71 which is below the mean criterion mean of 2.50. What this means is that respondent agreed that communication enhances organisational performance and the use of modern technologies and as well helps in generating feedback within the organisation. To Roseline (2017) effective communication within any organisation helps top managers to identify work place challenges through feedback mechanisms so as to correct such challenges and at same time improve employee performance. More so, with respondents rejecting questionnaire item 3 with a mean frequency of 1.71 it confirms that communication has positive effects on every organisation such as work place harmony, efficiency and transparency.

**Research Question 2:** What are the barriers of effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State?

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics on the barriers militating against effective communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State?**

S/N	Barriers militating against effective communication	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
6	Poor communication skills within the organisation	124 (496)	111 (333)	57 (114)	108 (108)	400 (1051)	2.62	Accepted
7	Using the wrong channel to communicate	156 (624)	181 (543)	24 (48)	39 (39)	400 (1354)	3.38	Accepted
8	Poor listening and evaluation skills	118 (472)	182 (546)	25 (50)	75 (75)	400 (1143)	2.85	Accepted
9	Delay in sending of memo and mails	149 (596)	110 (330)	40 (80)	101 (101)	400 (1107)	2.76	Accepted
10	There are no factors affecting communication	36 (144)	20 (60)	185 (370)	159 (159)	400 (733)	1.83	Rejected

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 3 above depicts respondent’s responses on how citizens react to factors militating against effective communication. Data collected from respondents shows that respondents agreed on research questionnaire items’ numbers 6, 7, 8, and 9 with mean frequencies of 2.62, 3.38, 2.85, and 2.76 all of which are above the 2.50 criterion mean standard and therefore stands accepted. The respondents’ responses as seen above, proves that poor communication skills, the use of wrong communication channels, and delays in sending of memo and mails hinders communication process in Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State. On the other hand, respondents rejected item number 10 meaning that truly, there are different barriers affecting communication process at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State.

---

### Conclusion

Effective communication contributes to the reduction and elimination of stress in public institution and therefore plays critical role in the growth and performance of any organisation. It therefore becomes imperative that both management and staff at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State employs good communication mechanisms as well as maximize the benefits that comes with it. This is because lack of communication poses a challenge for improved performance level in any organisation. In contemporary public organisations, it has become a necessity that proper communication links and channels be established so as to enable organisations plan, organize and communicate their vision and mission to both staff and the public, so as to maintain competitive advantage over others.

In the context of Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, Rivers State, effective communication could enhance job effectiveness and efficiency among personnel. This may be accomplished when the workforce or workers are actively engaged in the communication process and initiatives.

### Recommendations

Arising from our study finding, the following recommendations are made:

- ✓ There is need for management to train and equip staff with modern communication apparatus so as to enhance effective communication. Staff within the institution should be trained to be in tune with the new channels of communication such as the use of Zoom, Whatsapp, Twitter and Google classroom, among others, all of which serve as effective channels for communication.
- ✓ The creation and diversification of the different channels of communication at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori, will improve communication process and help management to get the targeted audience within and outside the institution.
- ✓ Management of the institution and other organisations should ensure that memos and mails are properly and effectively passed to staff members who are the receivers of the information so as to enable them execute instruction efficiently.
- ✓ The management at Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic Bori can create a conducive and harmonious work space when they take communication dissemination effectively. This is because proper communication and decoding of messages promotes industrial harmony while averting rancor within any organisation.

### REFERENCES

- Amah, E. (2016). *Human resource management*. Amethyst & Colleagues Publishers.
- Armstrong, M. (2008). *How to be in Even Better Manager*. Kogan Page.
- Bacal, R. (2004). *How communication works*. University of Illinois press.
- Bloom, N. (2004). *Management process*. Baron's Educational series.
- Desfiandi, A., Yusendra, M. A. E., Paramitasari, N., & Ali, H. (2019). Supply chain strategy development for business and technological institution in developing start-up based on creative economy. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 2(34),4-24
- Dominion, B.E. (2021). *Fundamentals of communication: A practical approach*. Horizon Concept.
- Elmi, F., Setyadi, A., Regiana, L., & Ali, H. (2016). Effect of leadership style, organisational culture and emotional intelligence to learning organisation. *International Journal of Economic Research*, 1(10),5-34
- Elving, W., & Hansma, L. (2008). Leading organisational change: On the role of top management and

---

supervisors in communicating organisation change. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Montreal, Quebec.*

- Eneanya, A. N. (2009). *Principles and practice of public personnel administration in Nigeria*. Concept Publications.
- Larasati, I., Havidz, H., Aima, M. H., Ali, H., & Iqbal, M. K. (2018). Intention to adopt WeChat mobile payment innovation toward Indonesia citizenship based in China. *International Journal of Application, Innovation in Engineering & Management*, 7(6),6-13.
- Mahaputra, M. R., & Saputra, F. (2021). Application of business ethics and business law on economic democracy that impacts business sustainability. *Journal of Law Politic and Humanities*, 1(3),115–125.
- Mahaputra, M. R., & Saputra, F. (2022). Determination of public purchasing power and brand image of cooking oil scarcity and price increases of essential commodities. *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary*, 1(1), 36–46.
- Maida, M. T., Riyanto, S., & Ali, H. (2017). Effect of job satisfaction and leadership style towards employee productivity at PT. Asuransi Umum Bumiputera Muda 1967. *Saudi Journal of Business*. 2(3), 157–168.
- Obisi, C. (2003). *Organisationalbehaviour: Concept and application*. Malthouse Press Limited.
- Peters L. (2015). *Effective business communication*. McGraw Hill.
- Prince, E.O. (2020). *Management and communication organisations*. Joen Printing.
- Randcil, D. (1984). *Organisationalbehaviour*. Richard Irwin Inc.
- Robbins, S.P. (2003). *Organisationalbehaviuor*. Prentice Hall Inc.
- Roseline, O. (2017). *Communication skills for information systems*. Pitman Publishing Coy.
- Shannon, C.E., & Weaver, W. (2000). *The mathematical theory of communication*. University of Illinois Press