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## EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION STYLES ON EMPLOYEES JOB PERFORMANCE IN OGUN-OSUN RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (OORBDA), OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

Organizations cannot exist without effective communication because the changing in social and economic atmosphere bring changes in the work settings of any organization. The study determined impact of organizational communication on job performance in Ogun-Osun River Basin Development Authority (OORBDA) Ogun State, Nigeria. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 114 respondents which represented 35% of the total population. The study showed that majority (53.3%) of employees were male, 60.9% of the employees fall within the age categories of 20-40 years, majority (77.2%) were married, more than half (58.7%) had higher degrees. Also, the mean age of the respondents was 38.5 years. The findings also revealed that the most preferred communication channel was Face to face ( $x=3.46$ ), Memo ( $x=3.42$ ) and Letter ( $x=3.30$ ), while the least preferred communication channels were, Facebook ( $x=2.42$ ), WhatsApp ( $x=2.27$ ) and Intranet ( $x=2.0$ ). Furthermore, the study revealed that majority of the respondents (75.2%) indicated that leaders at OORBDA deployed the use of Assertive/dominant communication styles while very few (8.3%) indicated that aggressive communication style in the organization. The inferential statistics show that significant relationship existed between marital status ( $\chi^2=12.795$ ,  $p<0.00$ ), education ( $\chi^2=11.762$ ,  $p<0.00$ ) and employee's job performance. Study's analysis showed that organization communication styles do not have significant effect on job performance. The study concluded that the employees who are better educated perform well on their job also, majority of leader at OORBDA deployed the use of assertive/dominant communication style in the organization. Management of the organization should ensure motivation incentives such as access to training and promotion as at when due to deserving employees are ensured to boost employees' job performance.

**Keywords:** Communication styles, job performance, employees, and Ogun-Osun River Basin

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the concepts defined in many ways in literature. Hoben *et*

*al.* (2007) consider communication as a whole concept comprising of speech and verbal symbols thereby constituting an

exchange process. Barnlund (2008) explains that communication is the exchange process in which the parties send and receive messages simultaneously while Wehrich and Koontz (1998) explained communication as transfer of information from sender to receiver under the condition that the receiver understands the message. Despite these different definitions, the main point in communication lies in the fact that communication involves sharing. Communication is therefore the process of sharing emotions, thoughts and information between two or more parties and thus, uncovering common meanings (Karakütük, 2011). Communication has been identified as an important component of science and information technology.

Science and information technology have become advanced now, the human element of communication cannot be ignored, because communication within the organization is preferred for any business. Communication could also be seen as a pervasive activity through which people become able to know each other and combine their efforts. Many authors have identified different types of communication styles one of such was Mikoluk (2013) who identified three different types of organizational communication style and stated that the personality and communication styles individual managers exhibit. The types of communication styles identified include;

#### **Assertive/Dominant**

Assertive communication straddles a fine line between domineering and dominant. This is the communication style most commonly associated with leaders and other high self-esteem individuals – confident, clear and concise. An assertive communicator doesn't hesitate to speak his mind, yet is

empathetic enough not to hurt others' feelings.

Assertive communication is usually associated with high self-worth. Such individuals tend to be confident, emotionally expressive, and secure in their abilities. They actively protect their own rights, but are mindful of not trampling on the rights of others. They are ambitious, but not pathologically so. They tend to be highly charismatic and trustworthy, making them prime candidates for leadership roles. Assertive communication is usually associated with high self-worth. Such individuals tend to be confident, emotionally expressive, and secure in their abilities. They actively protect their own rights, but are mindful of not trampling on the rights of others. They are ambitious, but not pathologically so. They tend to be highly charismatic and trustworthy, making them prime candidates for leadership roles

**Communication Style:** Assertive communication is marked by clear, confident verbal/non-verbal gestures and signals. An assertive communicator would be precise and polite, but firm in his/her requests. Their body language, voice and language can be seen as follows:

- **Body Language:** Open, confident postures with expressive hand movements and strong eye contact. They give the impression of always being in control, which can often be a source of inspiration to others.
- **Voice:** Even, medium-pitched voice with a pleasant tonality.
- **Language:** Use full, complete sentences with an emphasis on polite manners. Prefix their requests with 'Please', and end with 'Thank You'. They will apologize (but not pro-

fusely) when they are wrong and prefer to use professional over colloquial terms. Their language is often inclusive and emphasizes teamwork and community ("let **us** do it", "we should discuss this" etc.)

### **Aggressive**

Aggressive communication style is assertive communication stretched to its pathological extreme. Aggressive communicators care about winning at all costs. This style is characterized by bombast, often hostile rhetoric, which, while effective, can alienate a lot of people and affect a team's morale.

The following traits are most commonly associated with aggressive communication style: Aggressive communicators tend to be extremely ambitious, belligerent and demanding. Their working style is characterized by bullying and intimidation. They seek to win arguments by volume rather than rational debate. They are often extroverted and enjoy being the center of attention. This communication style is rarely suited for most industries and can negatively affect the work place atmosphere.

**Communication Style:** This style prioritizes style over substance. Their body language, rhetoric and voice are marked by brash loudness, as given below:

**Body Language:** Open, hostile body language with fast, jerky movements.

They have a habit of intruding the listener's space and have aggressive facial expressions.

**Voice:** Loud, booming voice that emphasizes 'bigness'. Aggressive communicators often use their voice as a tool to intimidate other people into submission.

**Language:** Aggressive communicators are fixated on the 'I'. They frequently use themselves as reference points in any conversation

("So I said", "Watch how I do it", etc.). They use sarcasm and name-calling to cow others. Often, such communicators have a lot of superficial charm and a way with words, which often helps them win over people initially.

### **Passive Style**

The passive communication style is fixated on avoiding conflict and responsibilities. Passive communicators are willing to take orders and rarely speak up in social settings. Their participation in workplace activities is usually unwilling. They may often be aggressive, but in a passive manner. Below, we take a look at the traits most commonly associated with passive communication style: Passive communicators are hesitant to express their true feelings, prefer indirect communication methods and are usually apologetic of their own behaviour. They may have very high intelligence but poor social skills or self-esteem. They are frequently indecisive and capitulate to most demands, especially from aggressive colleagues and superiors. They usually channel their aggression passively instead of confronting others directly. Frequently, passive communicators have a lot of empathy and high Emotional Intelligence (EQ), what is this? which, unfortunately, gets masked by their passivity.

**Communication Style:** The passive communication style can be summed up in one word "Don't". Such communicators will make it a point not to speak up, participate and become involved. This affects the way they speak, their voice, as well as body language, as we'll see below:

**Body Language:** Passive communicators have a body language that points inwards, not outwards. Their posture is generally closed and their gestures limited and modest. They keep to their own space and display submissive body language, especially in con-

frontations.

•Voice: Low volume, soft voice and high pitch – these are the three features of passive voice.

•Language: Passive communicators frequently pass on the agency to the listener (“Let’s do what you like”, “I’m fine with whatever you choose”, etc.). Despite above average writing skills, they remain poor communicators because of their imprecision and verbosity. They often use filler words when they speak (“like”, “oh”, “umm”) and apologize profusely for any faults. As posited by Mikoluk (2013) the assertive communication style is most suited for any workplace. It fosters clarity and precision with an emphasis on politeness and professionalism. Every worker should strive to cultivate a habit of assertive communication.

#### **Job Performance**

Dar (2011) posited that job performance can be viewed as an activity in which an individual is able to accomplish the task assigned to him/her successfully, subject to the normal constraints of reasonable utilization of the available resources.

Halis (2000) concludes that job performance increases when superiors establish a courteous and continuous communication with subordinates; receive feedback according to the nature of the work performed, and when the participation of the employees to achieve organizational goals are maintained. The communication flow may also be influenced by the relationship between the sender and the receiver, such as status differences, a staff-line relationship, or a learner-teacher relationship. The communication style has a great influence on the success of an organization and may greatly influence the performance of employees in an organization.

This study therefore investigated the effects

of organizational communication styles on job performance of employees in Ogun-Osun River Basin Development Authority. The research unveiled the importance of effective communication in an organization and how it would help employees to improve on their job performance.

Based on aforementioned background the study addressed the following objectives and hypotheses;

describe the personal characteristics of respondents;

identify the communication styles most preferred by the respondents; and

determine the level of job performance of the respondents.

Hypotheses of the study were stated in null form as follow;

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between respondents’ personal characteristics and respondents’ job performance; and

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the respondents’ preferred communication styles and job performance.

#### **Methodology**

The study was conducted at Ogun-Oshun River Basin Development Authority (OORBDA). In Odeda local government area of Ogun state, Nigeria. Ogun-Oshun River Basin Development Authority (OORBDA) is one of the twelve River Basin Development Authorities established by the Federal Government of Nigeria under decrees number 25 of 1976 and 31 of 1977. Since 1976, there have been amendments to the original operational functions of the Authorities. The Authority was formally launched on July 4, 1977.

As at today, the OORBDA is operating under decree No.35 of 1987 and Privatization and Commercialization Decree No. 25 of 1988. It is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources.

The scope of operation of the Authority

over the year has been the development and management of water resources for domestic, industrial, agricultural and flood control purposes. Emphasis on these purposes has varied over the years depending on the policy focus of the Federal Government and the supervising Ministry.

The Headquarters of the Authority is located on a 236ha estate along Alabata Road, off Ibadan – Abeokuta highway, Abeokuta in Ogun State. It has three Area Offices located at Osogbo (Osun State), Ibadan (Oyo State) and Ikeja (Lagos State) as well as a Liaison Office at Gwarinpa in Abuja.

The population of the study was employees of Ogun-Oshun River Basin Authority (OORBDA) Abeokuta. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 114 respondents which represented 35% of the total population.

Primary data was collected through the use of well-structured questionnaire. The variables measured in the study include employee's personal characteristics such as age, sex, marital status, educational qualification, religion, years of experience, income and rank. Job Performance was measured on 4-point Likert type rating scale of Never (1 point), seldom (2 points), occasionally (3 points), and often (4 points). Some of the job performance statements include; I finish the work assigned to me by my superior as at when due even when I have challenges, I get to my working place early before resumption time, I am always eager to come to my place of work, I perform my job well to expectation of the organization and I consult with supervisors and co-workers as necessary.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Personal Characteristics of Respondents**

#### **Respondents' Sex**

Table 1 shows that majority (53.3%) of employees were male. This could be attributed to the laborious nature of the job in the organization, coupled with the fact that women usually prefer jobs that are less tasking.

#### **Respondents' Age**

Table 1 revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 38.5 years while the age range of majority (60.9%) of the employees fall within the age categories of 20-40 years while few (37.0%) fall within age categories 41-60 years and very few (2.2%) were below 20 years. This means that most of the employees were within the active age limit which is supported by the findings of Ali & Haider (2012) that people who fall between the age limit are economically productive.

#### **Respondents' Marital Status**

Table 1 indicates that majority (77.2%) of the respondents were married while 22.8% were single. This is because of the influence of tradition that encourages matured people to get married in this part of the world. As posited by Okereke and Nnenna (2011), this may translate into good physiological well-being for the respondents and hence greater efficiency.

#### **Respondents' Educational Status**

Finding in Table 1 revealed that many (58.7%) had Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)/Higher Diploma Degree (HND), few (33.7%) had Ordinary National Diploma/Nigerian Certificate in Education (OND/NCE), very few (5.4%) had Masters in Science (M.Sc.), while 2.2% had Senior Secondary Certificate Examination. This implies that B.Sc./HND is the dominant educational qualification in the sampled organizations' employee; this is supported by Adenipebi (2014) who indicated that employees of the

organization had basic knowledge needed in order to perform their duties towards the achievement of the goals of the organization.

### **Respondents' Religion Affiliation**

Table 1 reveal that majority of respondents (73.9%) profess to be Christians while the remaining (26.1%) are Muslims. This agrees to Peter and Bryan (2012) that in most South Western part of Africa, Christians are the dominating workers compared to the Northern region of Africa.

### **Respondents' Working Experience**

The result in Table 1 revealed that respondents' year of experience ranges from 1-40 years. The result showed that the respondents' year of experience modal class was 1-10 years of experience representing 67.4%, followed by respondents with 11-20 years, 21-30 years, and 31-40 years which had percentages of 19.6%, 5.4%, 7.6% respectively. This may suggest that many of the respondents are still young with very strong inclination towards the use of ICTs as communication tools within the organization. This implies that OORBDA may need to ensure these facilities are provided for enhanced job performance.

### **Respondents' Monthly Income**

The result shows that half of the respondents (50%) earned less than ₦100,000 per month, while another (47.8%) earned between ₦100,000- ₦500,000 per month. Few (2.2%) of the respondents earned ₦500,000 and above per month with average monthly income being ₦185, 000. This implies that the average monthly income was moderately high which would have a positive influence on respondents' job performance.

### **Organizational communication styles at OORDA**

The result in Figure 1 shows the various communication styles being exhibited by the leadership of OORDA in Ogun state based on the employee perception. The respondents indicated that the communication styles being used by the organization leadership include; passive, aggressive and assertive/dominant communication styles. The result shows that majority of the respondents asserted that the most prominent communication style being used by the organizational leadership in the organization is the assertive/dominant communication style (76.1%), followed by the passive communication style (15.2%) while the remaining few (8.7%) of the leadership made use of aggressive communication style. The respondents were of the opinion that poor results were usually achieved by those employees attached to leaders deploying the use of aggressive communication style in the organization.

### **Preferred Communication Tools/ Channels**

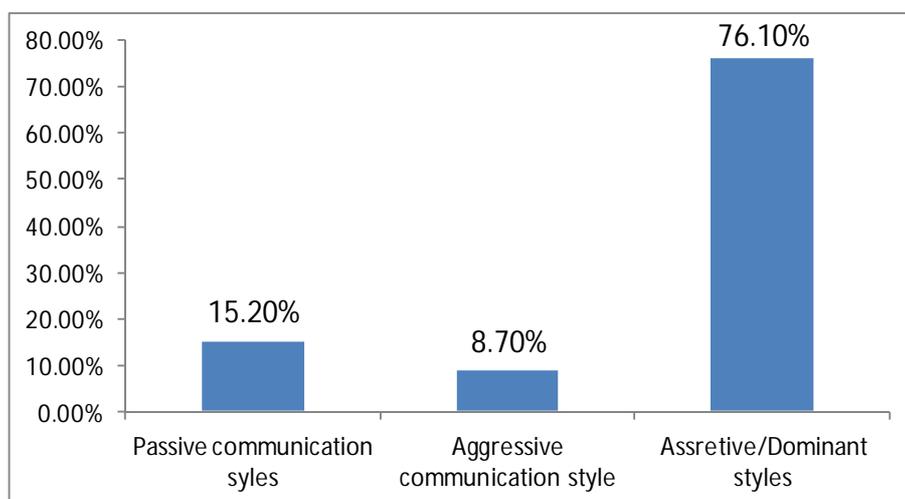
Table 2 showed that the most preferred means of communication in the organization were face to face verbal instruction ( $x=3.46$ ), this is in agreement with the finding of Arthurs (2013) that majority of respondents feel that information transferred through face to face can be received faster and more efficiently. In addition, memo ( $x=3.42$ ) and letters ( $x=3.30$ ) were preferred next to face to face communication tool. The least preferred communication tools were Facebook ( $x=2.42$ ), WhatsApp ( $x=2.27$ ) and intranet ( $x=2.0$ ). This result shows that media requiring internet connection (Facebook, WhatsApp, Intranet, and Internet) were least preferred. This might be due to low availability of internet connection, inadequate knowledge on how to use the media and inade-

quate supply of electricity. This implies that the employees' preference may be affected by the organization situation/environment. This suggests that if the management provides enabling environment and media requiring internet connection, job performance will be positively enhanced.

**Table 1: Frequency distribution showing the Personal characteristics of the respondents (n = 92)**

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)	Mean (x)
Sex			
Male	49	53.3	
Female	43	46.7	
Age(Years)			
Less than 20	2	2.2	
20-40	56	60.8	38.5 years
41-60	34	37.0	
Marital Status			
Single	21	22.8	
Married	71	77.2	
Educational Qualification			
SSCE	2	2.2	
NCE/OND	31	33.7	
HND/BSC	54	58.7	
MSC	5	5.4	
Religion			
Christianity	68	73.9	
Islam	24	26.1	
Working Experience			
1-10	62	67.4	
11-20	18	19.6	19 years
21-30	5	5.4	
31-40	7	7.6	
Monthly Income			
< #100000	46	50.0	
100000-500000	44	47.8	185,000 naira
>#500000	2	2.2	

Source: Field Survey, (2015)



**Figure 1:** Bar chart showing types of communication styles at OORBDA

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents according to their Preferred Communication Tools

Communication tools	High	Medium	Low	Not at all	MEAN	RANK
Face to face/ verbal instruction	53(57.6)	31(33.7)	5(5.4)	3(3.3)	3.46	1
Memo	55(59.8)	24(26.1)	10(10.9)	3(3.3)	3.42	2
Letters	47(51.1)	31(33.7)	9(9.4)	5(5.5)	3.30	3
Telephone	49(53.3)	27(29.3)	5(5.4)	11(12.0)	3.24	4
Email	29(31.5)	22(23.9)	28(30.4)	13(14.1)	2.73	5
Text message	30(32.6)	21(22.8)	22(23.9)	19(20.7)	2.67	6
Internet	31(33.7)	17(18.5)	27(29.3)	17(18.5)	2.67	6
Facebook	21(22.8)	17(18.5)	34(37.0)	20(21.8)	2.42	8
WhatsApp	21(22.8)	15(16.3)	24(26.1)	32(34.8)	2.27	9
Intranet	16(17.4)	14(15.2)	16(17.4)	46(50.0)	2.0	10

Source: Field Survey, 2015

### Job Performance

Table 4 revealed the job performance level of the respondents. Respondents' reactions to performance statements in the study revealed that statements such as I finished the work assigned to me by my superior as at when due even when I have challenges (x=3.21), I get to my working place early before resumption time (x=3.20), I am al-

ways eager to come to my place of work ( x=3.16) and I perform my job well to expectation of the organization (x=3.20) had the highest mean scores while statements such as I have been rewarded by the organization for a job well done( x=2.41) I get information late so it delays my work (x=2.32), I don't do extra time to finish assignment given to me ( x=1.97).

**Table 4: Distribution of OORBDA employees according to job performance n = (92)**

Performance Statements	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Mean
I finish the work assigned to me by my superior as at when due even when I have challenges	3(3.3)	26(28.3)	12(13.0)	51(55.4)	3.21
I get to my working place early before resumption time	2(2.2)	25(27.2)	17(18.5)	48(52.2)	3.20
I am always eager to come to my place of work	4(4.3)	23(25.0)	19(20.7)	46(50.0)	3.16
I perform my job well to expectation of the organization	3(3.3)	24(26.1)	20(21.7)	45(48.9)	3.16
I consult with supervisors and co-workers as necessary	3(3.3)	23(25.0)	23(25.0)	43(46.7)	3.14
I set appropriate priorities for task	3(3.3)	26(28.3)	21(22.8)	42(45.7)	3.11
I deal effectively and professionally with employee in other areas	3(3.3)	24(26.1)	33(35.9)	32(34.8)	3.02
It is the duty of my management team to ensure the goals of the organization are met	2(2.2)	32(34.8)	21(22.8)	37(40.2)	3.01
I take appropriate actions on problems as necessary	3(3.3)	30(32.6)	22(23.9)	36(39.1)	2.97
I feel my work is boring	38(41.3)	14(15.2)	23(25.0)	17(18.5)	2.75
I usually spend my meagre salary on self-development	14(15.2)	25(27.2)	26(28.3)	21(22.8)	2.72
I attend trainings funded personally to be better doing my work	12(13.0)	30(32.6)	29(31.5)	21(22.8)	2.64
I find it difficult to meet up with deadliness	28(30.4)	20(21.7)	24(26.1)	20(21.7)	2.61
I believe my work challenge supersedes my income	23(25.0)	22(23.9)	19(20.7)	28(30.4)	2.43
I have been rewarded by the organization for a job well done	26(28.3)	23(25.0)	22(23.9)	21(22.8)	2.41
I get information late so it delays my work	12(13.0)	26(28.3)	33(35.9)	21(22.8)	2.32
I don't do extra time to finish assignment given to me	3(3.3)	23(25.0)	34(37.0)	32(34.8)	1.97

Source: Field survey, 2015

### Hypotheses Testing Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between respondents' socio economic characteristics and job performance. Hypothesis one was tested using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

The result of findings in Table 6 showed that marital status ( $\chi^2=12.795$ ,  $p<0.00$ ) and

educational status ( $\chi^2=11.762$ ,  $p<0.00$ ) have significant relationship with job performance. This implies that they are major factors that affect job performance while sex, age, religion, income, number of children and years of working experience have no relationship with job performance of the respondents.

Educational level and marital status have a

positive relationship with job performance. This implies that the higher their education level, the higher their job performance, this agrees to the findings of Gede and Lawson (2011) that a more knowledgeable and widely trained person performs better than less knowledgeable and less trained person. Likewise marital status signified that mar-

ried employees perform better in their job than the single employees; this may be due to the sense of responsibilities that comes with marriage. This is in accordance with Madjar. *et. al.* (2002) that stated that married employees exhibited higher creativity than those who were unmarried.

**Table 5: Relationship between personal characteristics and job performance**

Variable	$\chi^2$	Df	P value	Decision
Sex	2.671	1	0.77	NS
Age	2.751	2	0.253	NS
Marital status	12.795	1	0.000	S
Education level	11.762	3	0.008	S
Religion	0.011	1	0.554	NS
Income	6.875	2	0.32	NS

**Survey: Field Survey 2015**

**Key;**  $\chi^2$ = Chi-square, DF= Degree of Freedom, P-value = Probability level  
NS = Not Significant, S = Significant

**Table 6: Relationship between socio- economic characteristics and job performance**

Variables	R	P	D
Number of children	-0.114	0.336	NS
Working experience	0.83	0.431	NS

**Survey: Field Survey 2015**

**Key;** r = Correlation, P-Value= Probability level, NS = Not Significant, S = Significant

**Table 7: Hypothesis testing of relationship between respondents' perception of their organizational communication and job performance**

Variable	R	P- Value	Decision
Organizational communication styles / Job Performance	0.133	0.025	S

**Survey: Field Survey 2015**

**Key;** r= Correlation, N= Number of respondents, P-Value = Probability level, NS = Not Significant, S = Significant

**Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between organizational communication styles being utilized and job performance. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The result in the Table 8 showed a significant relationship between the organization communication styles being utilized and job performance. This implies that the types of communication styles being utilized by the organization leaders would significantly affect the respondents job performance, therefore management needs to educate those at the managerial level to deploy use of communication styles that support enhanced job performance of employees and organizational goals attainment.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that organization communication styles had significant effect on job performance of respondents; the study further concluded that educational level of respondents had significant relationship on respondents' job performance. It also shows that the higher the rank of the employees, the more they perform well in the organization. The study also shows that marital status had significant effect on employee job performance this may be due to the sense of responsibilities that comes with marriage.

Based on the findings of the study the following were recommended.

Organization should be interested in employees' development in terms of creating opportunity for advancement in educational level. Employees should be promoted as at when due, so as to motivate them to perform better. In addition, organization

should give more attention to ICT (internet) to improve communication within and outside the organization; management should organize training on good communication style for staffs at the managerial cadre. Finally, proper communication system should be created so as to engender effective and timely dissemination of information.

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