

Assessing the Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a Tool for Organizational Communication

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Abstract

This study examines the role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a critical enabler of organizational communication, with a focus on its implementation within a commercial bank in Nigeria. ICT encompasses a wide range of technologies used for the processing and dissemination of information, and its integration has profoundly influenced communication practices, organizational structures, and managerial operations across various sectors. Within organizational contexts, ICT tools such as computers, telephones, email, databases, video conferencing, and search engines have significantly enhanced internal and external communication efficiency. This study aims to assess the extent to which ICT facilitates organizational communication and supports collaboration, information dissemination, and employee engagement. A structured questionnaire was randomly distributed among employees of the selected bank, and the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and percentages, with the aid of SPSS software. The results indicate a positive perception of ICT's role in enhancing communication processes, boosting employee morale, supporting

collaboration, and contributing to the achievement of organizational goals. These findings underscore the strategic importance of ICT in modern organizational communication and highlight the need for continued investment in technological infrastructure to improve communication effectiveness and overall organizational performance.

Keywords: ICT; Organizational Communication; Information Systems; Commercial Bank; Communication Technology

INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology in today's world refers to those technologies that determine the efficiency and effectiveness with which we communicate and the devices that allow us to handle information. ICT has also enhanced all organizational Performance measures such as; profit, efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and quality which allows organizations to enjoy the benefits of ICT (Dumitru, Glavan, Dumitru & Glavan, 2010). Vertino (2014), ascertain that Communication is an integral part of life; without it, we would not survive. Verbal and non-verbal communication begins at birth and ends at death. We need communication not only to transmit information and knowledge to one another, but more importantly, to relate to one another as human beings around the world in the context of relationships, families, organizations, and nations. The importance of communication for managers cannot be overemphasized for one specific reason: everything a manager does, involves communicating. The efficiency of an organization has direct relationship to the standard of its communication system and its operation. Communication is viewed as a process of encoding messages or information by the sender (encoder) and decoding messages or information by the receiver (decoder). Durowoju (2010) asserted that communication is the process by which information is transmitted and understood between/among two or more people.

Today, ICT is the cornerstone to maintain links and correspondence with many different departments of an organization. There is negligence in the way organizations use Information Technology in their communication systems, even though some organizations use computers and other ICT facilities to process and store data, but these devices, in most cases, are not linked to facilitate information sharing (Choo & Shahryar, 2013). As a result of this, the importance attached to information technology is not fully appreciated which

leads to ineffective communication. This causes delay in delivering organizational functions which in turn causes organizational inefficiency.

Challenges of ICT Adoption in Some Organizations

Apulu and Ige (2011) amongst others have identified one or more factors that affect the adoption of ICT in various organizational sectors, these factors include: lack of infrastructural facilities, lack of funds, lack of awareness, lack of appropriate government policies, lack of skills and training, cultural factors, electricity constraints, corruption low levels of education, illiteracy, lack of access to information and so on.

Ihua (2009) state the following as some of the factors affecting the adoption of ICT in any given organization:

- a) **Cost:** the cost of using ICT may cause a number of problems for organizations. A lot of ICT hardware and software is expensive, both to purchase and to maintain. An ICT system usually requires specialist staff to run it and there is also the challenge of keeping up with ever-changing technology. These extra costs should be offset by the positive effects of using ICT, but if an organization gets its cost-benefit analysis wrong it may lose money.
- b) **Competition:** this is usually thought of as being a good thing, but for some organizations being exposed to greater competition can be a problem. If the organization is competing for customers, donations, or other means of funding nationally or even internationally, they may lose out to other organizations that can offer the same service for less money.
- c) **Security:** this is always a problem for any organization that uses ICT. Data must be kept secure, Internet connections must be protected from attack, new viruses and other forms of malware are released nearly every day. Organizations will usually have legal obligations to protect data such as customer information. Even if the organization does not have to comply with a specific data protection law it will usually be in the organization's interest to protect data from rivals.

METHODS

This research uses simple random sampling in the selection of respondent for investigation. Using this Yamane (1967), formula:

Where: n = sample size

N = total population

e = error margin at 5%

Random samples of 47 staff were used from a commercial Bank, and a questionnaire was administered to collect meaningful data.

Arithmetic Mean was used to analyze the data using five points Likert scale, with tables and percentages were also used in reporting and presenting the results obtained after the analysis.

Formula for Working out the Mean is

Where: \bar{x} = Mean

Σ = Summation

N = Nominal Value

N_r = Number of Respondents

Therefore: $\bar{x} = 3.0$

Any response from 3.0 and above is accepted whether positive or negative. While any other response below 3 is rejected. The mean score for each item is computed by multiplying the frequency of each response made with appropriate nominal value obtained under each item with the number of respondent to an item.

Thus

Where: \bar{x} = Mean

Σ = Summation

N = Nominal Value for an item

f = Frequency or response under each mode

N_r = Number of respondents to an item.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I: Analysis of administered questionnaires.

Questionnaires	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Administered questionnaire	47	100
Questionnaires returned	41	87
Questionnaires not returned	6	13
Total	47	100

In Table 1, the analysis of the administered questionnaires reveals a high response rate, with 87% (41 out of 47) of the questionnaires returned. This level of participation is considered very good, as response rates above 70% are generally deemed acceptable for survey research. Such a high response rate enhances the reliability and validity of the study's findings, minimizing the potential for nonresponse bias and ensuring that the results are representative of the target population. Consequently, the data collected is suitable for comprehensive analysis and interpretation.

Table 2: Use ICT in of aiding organizational communication.

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM	SA	A	N	D	S D	ΣN F	MEAN	REMARK
1	ICT enables managements and employees from different location to meet both in sound and vision.	23 50 %	11 24 %	7 15 %	4 9 %	1 2 %	46	4.11	ACCEPT
2	Increasing online services makes critical information more accessible and transparent to employees.	13 29 %	26 57 %	0 0%	3 7 %	3 7 %	45	3.93	ACCEPT
3	The use of ICT increases the overall amount of communication in an organization	31 67 %	6 13 %	2 4%	4 9 %	3 7 %	46	4.26	ACCEPT
4	ICT facilitates collaboration between functions divisions and subsidiaries.	25 57 %	18 41 %	1 2%	0 0 %	0 0 %	44	3.79	ACCEPT
GRAND MEAN								4.02	

Table 3: Importance of ICT as a means of communication in achieving organizational goals.

S/ N	QUESTIONNAI RE ITEM	SA	A	N	D	S D	Σ N F	MEA N	REMAR K
1	The use of ICT as a means of communication boosts the morale of workers.	33 72 %	6 13 %	3 7%	2 4%	2 4 %	46	4.43	ACCEPT
2	Passing of information through ICTs is a factor for the achievement of organizational goal.	28 61 %	11 24 %	5 11 %	1 2%	1 2 %	46	4.39	ACCEPT
3	ICT enhances the timeliness and quality of organizational intelligence and decision-making.	11 26 %	24 52 %	3 7%	7 15 %	0 0 %	45	3.80	ACCEPT
4	ICT has positive influence on organization's financial performance, such as return on investment.	15 37 %	20 49 %	0 0%	5 12 %	1 2 %	41	4.02	ACCEPT
5	ICT is used to establish better relationships with customers, suppliers and partners.	35 76 %	6 13 %	4 9%	1 2%	0 0 %	46	4.43	ACCEPT
GRAND MEAN								4.21	

The data presented in Tables 2 and 3 underscores the significant role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in enhancing organizational communication and achieving business objectives.

Table 2 focuses on the utilization of ICT to aid organizational communication. A substantial majority (50%) strongly agree that ICT enables management and employees from different locations to meet both in sound and vision, with a mean score of 4.11, indicating acceptance. Furthermore, 67% of respondents strongly agree that the use of ICT increases the overall amount of communication within an organization, achieving the highest mean score of 4.26 in this section. The facilitation of collaboration between functional divisions and subsidiaries through ICT is also acknowledged, with 57% strongly agreeing and a mean score of 3.79. The grand mean of 4.02 across these items reflects a

general agreement on the effectiveness of ICT in enhancing organizational communication. Table 3 reveals the importance of ICT as a communication tool in achieving organizational goals. Notably, 72% of respondents strongly agree that the use of ICT boosts the morale of workers, and 76% strongly agree that ICT is instrumental in establishing better relationships with customers, suppliers, and partners, both items receiving a mean score of 4.43. Additionally, 61% strongly agree that passing information through ICTs is a critical factor for achieving organizational goals, with a mean score of 4.39. The enhancement of timeliness and quality in organizational intelligence and decision-making through ICT is also recognized, with 52% agreeing and a mean score of 3.80. The grand mean of 4.21 in this section indicates a strong consensus on the pivotal role of ICT in attaining organizational objectives.

CONCLUSION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in enhancing organizational communication and achieving business objectives. The study conducted within a Nigerian commercial bank demonstrates that ICT facilitates effective communication among management and employees across different locations, increases the overall amount of communication within the organization, and fosters collaboration between various functional divisions. These capabilities are instrumental in boosting employee morale, enhancing decision-making processes, and improving relationships with customers, suppliers, and partners.

However, the successful integration of ICT into organizational communication strategies depends on several factors. Investment in appropriate hardware and software, as well as the provision of adequate training for personnel, are essential to maximize the benefits of ICT. Moreover, organizations must address challenges such as infrastructural limitations, security concerns, and resistance to change to fully leverage the advantages of ICT.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that organizations prioritize the strategic implementation of ICT by investing in necessary technological infrastructure and fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation. By doing so, they can enhance their communication processes, improve operational efficiency, and achieve sustained competitive advantage in an increasingly digital business environment.

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