

Internal Communication as a Catalyst for Employee Engagement and Performance in Paramilitary Organisations

Abdullahi Aliyu Maiwada¹, Barth Oshionebo²

^{1,2}Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, University of Abuja, Nigeria

Abstract

In today's global landscape, organisations have shifted from conventional communication approaches to comprehensive strategies that are focused on engaging and motivating their employees. This change highlights the critical function of strategic internal communication, which is still emerging but increasingly important field of study and practice in business and private sectors. The modern workplace has seen a change in employees' roles, with workers taking on more duties previously related to public relations. This paper examines internal communication as a catalyst for employee engagement and performance in paramilitary organisations. The paper is based on the conceptual framework, which allowed for the evaluation of the existing knowledge for the purpose of relevance, consistency, replication, and refutation. This paper accepts the theoretical assumptions of the Two-Way Symmetrical Theory of Public Relations, which is based on a dual exchange of ideas. The paper argues that paramilitary organisations, like the Nigeria Customs Service, have internal communication procedures that are different from traditional corporate organisational structures. This discrepancy is distinctively noticeable given the agency's diverse responsibilities in revenue generation, trade facilitation, and the suppression of smuggling. The paper concludes that employee participation and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between internal communication and employees' job performance.

Keywords

Two-Way Symmetrical Communication, Effective Staff Performance, Employee Relations, Nigeria Customs Service and Paramilitary Organisation



I. Introduction

In the modern globalised business and work environment, organisations have shifted from traditional methods of communication toward comprehensive strategies that focus on employee engagement and motivation. This shift is driven by the need to align communication practices with organisational objectives and foster a more engaged workforce. According to Argenti (2007), this transformation marks a departure from conventional communication models, emphasising the integration of employees into the communication process to enhance motivation and performance. Kreps (1990) also highlights that organisational communication has evolved from being merely transactional to becoming a key strategic tool in achieving corporate goals, particularly in dynamic and complex environments like paramilitary organisations.

The concept of strategic internal communication plays a pivotal role in this shift. Welch (2011) describes it as a growing field of study that leverages purposeful and targeted communication to motivate employees and align their efforts with shared organisational values. Jiang and Men (2017) further assert that authentic and transparent internal

communication fosters an engaged workforce, which is essential for driving performance. Similarly, Clampitt (2013) explains that effective internal communication is a managerial tool that can influence employee behaviour, enhance organisational effectiveness, and ultimately contribute to better performance outcomes. These insights are critical for understanding how internal communication serves as a catalyst for employee engagement and performance, especially in paramilitary organisations where discipline and alignment with core objectives are paramount.

Organisational internal communication tools can be roughly classified into classic and current approaches (Falkheimer et al., 2017). Conventional methods include notice boards, phones, and different types of meetings, like workshops and seminars. On the other hand, contemporary technologies consist of chat programs, digital signage, email, intranet platforms, and social media. Employees can now easily share information and communicate seamlessly in their work settings. This is due to the widespread and adoption of digital communication techniques within enterprises as a result of the rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICT) globally (Owens-Ibie & Aondover, 2024).

Bekmeier-Feuerhahn et al. (2017) point out that people's preferences for obtaining information from organisations varies. As a result, there are numerous internal employee communication choices that are now available on a global scale. The shift in internal communication techniques can be partly ascribed to the increased acknowledgement of employees as the best point of the communication assets to the overall success of the establishment in an increasingly digitalised, transparent, and networked environment rather than just as members of the workforce (Aondover et al., 2022). Employees are considered reliable sources of information for external audiences since they are internal stakeholders.

In paramilitary organisations like the Nigeria Customs Service, internal communication plays a crucial role in maintaining order, discipline, and efficiency while aligning personnel with the organisation's core objectives. Unlike in corporate settings, where flexibility may be more prominent, the hierarchical structure of paramilitary organisations demands a more structured and directive form of communication (Welch, 2011). Strategic internal communication in this context is essential for fostering employee engagement, ensuring that all personnel are aligned with organisational goals, and promoting shared values such as duty and service (Jiang & Men, 2017). Moreover, Kreps (1990) emphasises that clear and consistent communication helps in mitigating the complexities of such organisations by facilitating smoother operations and improving overall performance. Effective internal communication also serves as a catalyst for motivation and engagement, particularly within rigid structures, by creating channels for feedback and enhancing transparency between different ranks (Clampitt, 2013). This strategic approach is vital for the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), where effective communication can directly influence operational success and organisational cohesion.

Since protecting an organisation's goodwill and reputation is the primary goal of public relations, it is clear that efficient internal communication creates a welcoming atmosphere where friendliness and constructive interactions are the norm. According to Falkheimer et al., (2017) internal communication consists of six main activities that align with an organisation's goals regarding its workforce. These include meeting legal requirements for communicating with staff members, endorsing major organisational changes, fostering teamwork and a feeling of community at work, motivating staff members to act as the organisation's advocates, keeping valuable staff members, and making sure staff members are aware of their responsibilities and know how to carry them out. This paper intends to evaluate the Nigeria Customs Service's employee relations

management and internal communication methods in the light of these changes and insights (Aondover et al., 2023). This evaluation aims to improve employee performance and, consequently, the organisation's overall efficacy.

Communication challenges in paramilitary organisations, such as the Nigeria Customs Service, effective internal communication is crucial for ensuring smooth operations, unity of purpose, and employee engagement. However, these organisations often face challenges in creating an environment where internal communication can flourish due to hierarchical structures, rigid communication protocols, and bureaucratic constraints. This has reduced employee engagement, low morale, and suboptimal performance (Hile et al., 2023). The absence of strategic communication mechanisms often hinders employees from fully understanding organisational goals, affecting their job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity. Given the dynamic and evolving nature of these organisations, there is a need to shift towards more strategic, inclusive, and responsive internal communication methods (Idris & Msughter, 2022). This shift can bridge the gap between management and employees, thereby promoting engagement, enhancing performance, and creating a more motivated workforce. Since paramilitary organisations are critical to national security and economic operations, improving their internal communication processes can significantly impact their operational effectiveness.

It is therefore important to examine the various media and strategies employed for internal communication within paramilitary organisations to identify which tools are most effective in fostering information flow and engagement. In essence to interrogate the relationship between internal communication and organisational culture, exploring how communication practices influence, shape, and are shaped by the unique hierarchical and bureaucratic structures characterising paramilitary organisations is fundamental to the functionality of the organisation. It is then pertinent to investigate the link between internal communication and employee performance, analysing how improved communication strategies can enhance employee engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction in the organisation (Kurfi et al., 2021). By addressing these objectives, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how internal communication serves as a catalyst for better performance and a more cohesive organisational culture in NCS.

II. Review of Literatures

2.1 Theoretical Underpinning for Understanding Internal Communication in NCS

This study accepts the theoretical presumptions of the Two-Way Symmetrical Theory of Public Relations, which was propounded by James Grunig and Todd Hunt in 1984 and is based on actual model of a two-way communication (Newstron, 2009). It is not a one-sided pastime; it involves mutual participation. The approach focuses on respect and understanding between parties to achieve the predetermined goals of generating favourable media hype (Newstron, 2009). Two-way symmetrical public relations necessitate negotiation and a readiness to adapt. It is important to note that public relations is necessary for organisations to make significant changes to meet the public's needs.

James Grunigin 1992 proposed that all businesses with effective communication systems have adopted a two-way symmetric approach to public relations in the preliminary reports of the IABC Excellence Study, which were published in 1992 as Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management. He argues that communication management is a standard two-word definition. Of course, the term public-organization communication describes it. There are, nevertheless, some problems connected to it. Public relations is not the only component of communication. The relationship between corporate

communication, public relations, marketing and public relations must be explained (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024a).

The link between public relations and social emerging media serves as an anchor for communication and information distribution, according to the relationship between the theory and the study (Adetipe, 2020). Most scholarly literatures have predominantly focused on utilising the two-way symmetrical communication model to investigate the capacity of social media to foster positive interactions between businesses and their audiences. For example, the Customs gathers feedback from social media users on public issues, service quality, or new idea. Of course, public relations researchers and practitioners have strongly supported using organisational social media or new media platforms to facilitate two-way communication between organisations and their publics, citing the nature of interest or websites as a special opportunity for PR practitioners to engage in dialogue with their publics. For instance, the PR team sends out surveys or polls to gather opinions from their publics on the sustainability of their services.

Many critics have also asserted that the idea is audience-oriented, nevertheless. For example, the primary audience includes importers, exporters, logistics companies, and clearing agents who frequently interact with the NCS. Their concerns often revolve around delays in clearing goods, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and corruption within the system. In that sense, it presents a case for the publics of public relations by suggesting two-way communication instead of one-way flow. Nevertheless, the theory did not consider audience diversity since different audiences have different needs and ways of responding. While two-way communication is beneficial, internal social media platforms and other communication channels that enable feedback mechanisms can also serve as valuable tools for internal communication (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024b). The theory's assertions did not consider these exceptions. Nevertheless, the theory is still applicable to this study despite this criticism.

Thus, beyond its one-sided interaction, the Two-Way Symmetrical Theory highlights the significance of mutual interaction in communication. This paper aligns with the theory's principles since it uses a two-way communication perspective to investigate internal communication channels and strategies within the NCS as this allows for a deeper understanding of how communication flows between the organisation and its employees, fostering mutual understanding and respect. For instance, according to the Two-Way Symmetrical Theory, in order to conform to public expectations, organisations should be prepared to negotiate and make adjustments. This is used to examine how the internal communication methods of the NCS organisation are tailored to fulfil the needs of its workforce. Improving worker happiness and engagement may entail negotiating and making modifications.

In essence, the two-way communication ideas of the theory are still relevant in the current environment of digital media platforms. The study thus, examines how the NCS uses digital media to facilitate the two-way communication with its staff and how successful it is at fostering positive connections. Even though the Two-Way Symmetrical Theory encourages two-way communication, audience differences must be considered. Consequently, the study examines how the NCS adjusts its internal communication strategies to accommodate different staff demographics and tastes. It also evaluates how internal social media and other feedback mechanisms alleviate these disparities to improve its communication channels.

2.2 Concept of Internal Communication

Internal communication is a norm that fosters contact within the organisation (Newstrom, 2009). Two types of events can create these interactions, like organizing regular workshops and training sessions aimed at building the capacity of customs officers in various areas, such as new technologies, compliance with international trade regulations, and anti-corruption practices. Task events are the typical production process activities that are typically assumed to be occurrences. This conversation can be described as formal. The other event is human interaction; as members of society, businesses host people who have different attitudes, convictions, ideas, and values (Aondover et al., 2022a). This leads to the appearance of unclear or difficult-to-understand information and this kind of pt of informal communication.

According to Adetipe (2020) internal communication refers to the exchange of ideas and information between collaborators and internal groups within an organisation. This can happen either orally or in writing. Internal communication is sharing information across any group or individual whose actions directly impact the company's goal. Providing information is not simply necessary for a corporation to make the right strategic decisions. It represents the connections and points of convergence among the company's several business units, and the central organization of individuals inside each unit is responsible for disseminating information and expertise to all partners (Maikaba & Msughter, 2019). Because the various departments are interdependent and rely on one another to provide or receive data and information necessary for the business to run, it is a vital tool for day-to-day operations. Understanding the two forms of communication within a business is essential to preventing high levels of inefficiency and employee demotivation.

Downward Communication: Information is communicated from upper to lower levels of the workplace through downward communication flows, which have dominated organisational communication processes (Newstrom, 2009). Information that moves down from the top of various organisational levels or systems is called "downward communication." (Stevanović&Gmitrović, 2015, p. 11). By the time the communications reach the employees who need them the most, their accuracy will have decreased. Consequently, citing the obstacles that downward communication is linked to, it is not considered the ideal method for strategic internal communication within the company. The primary obstacles influencing downward communication include:

- a) When managers do not know what kind of communication to give staff members;
- b) When they do not know how much information to offer; and
- c) When they send unnecessary information.

Upward Communication: According to Neck et al. (2019), upward communication is the communication process that moves from the lower level to the upper level of an organizational hierarchy. Some companies use this kind of communication to get employee input, which gives workers a voice and allows them to offer suggestions for improvements to managers' decisions.

According to Walden and Westerman (2018), managers can foster a positive working relationship with their staff by asking for and receiving feedback from workers on initiatives or decisions made by management and by reporting progress on work-related information. Five information-sharing categories that are advantageous for any organisation have been identified by scholars:

- a. Issues and exceptions: Senior managers are informed of workplace developments by being made aware of the issues that employees face with the organisation, which may pose challenges to achieving goals. For instance, the system's software must be fixed because it is not working properly (Walden & Westerman, 2018).

- b. Improvement suggestions: In this case, staff members have the freedom to recommend ways to boost productivity by improving task-related processes. One instance is a brief poll that managers distributed to every employee regarding a new project (Walden & Westerman, 2018).
- c. Performance reports: The supervisors receive these communications along with reports detailing the teams' advancement on assigned tasks within the company. As an illustration, "The compliance team has finished the Jackson and Smith Inc. audit report." (Walden & Westerman, 2018).
- d. Disputations and grievances: These are private grievances that staff members have that may impede the completion of their job. Managers get complaints and problems so they may resolve them. One example of how working long hours might impact work-life balance is (Wang et al., 2009).
- e. Financial and accounting data: This data includes the expenses, revenues, and budgets associated with a specific project for the company. For instance, the media budget allocated to a customer of an advertising agency for their advertising campaigns (Wang et al., 2009).

In 2004, the concept of internal social media was initially introduced during a conference. According to Chong (2007), business social media are simple, cost-free venues for engagement and communication. According to Wang et al. (2009), it is critical to recognise the distinction between the two kinds of online social networks that may be utilised in the workplace. The first category consists of popular social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn that anybody may register for. The second category consists of business social networking sites, such as IBM, which are exclusive to a specific company's employees and are, therefore, internal to the business (Chong, 2007). In order to enhance an organisation's business processes, enterprise 2.0, also known as internal social networking, combines three key components: technology, social interaction, and content development/management. Enterprise 2.0 comprises of five competency areas: communication, collaboration, community, construction, and search (Wang et al., 2009).

According to Chong (2007), internal social media is a networking site run by an organisation to which only members of the organisation have access. It provides members of the organisation with the opportunity to create personal profiles and establish connections with other members of the organisation. These websites could have the following features: user profiles, blogs, microblogs, activity feeds, wikis, forums, social networks, tagging, tag clouds, photo and file repositories, discussion threads, and more (Aonover & Pate, 2021).

Internal social media can aid innovation management. For instance, according to Duthler and Dhanesh (2018), a business using internal social media technology was able to improve a process by giving staff members a single, easily accessible template. This has often helped to solve the issue of staff members having to search for various, elusive templates for various business units or technology innovation areas. For instance, Bosch Connect, an internal social media toolbox, is employed at Robert Bosch Company (Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). This toolbox includes forums, wikis, blogs, files, ideation blogs, bookmarks, and activities. Users can follow content that has been posted, follow other users' profiles, like and share content, network with other workers, and tag other users.

The benefits of internal social media networking for organisations were emphasized by Duthler and Dhanesh (2018). For instance, employees may readily and efficiently share resources and information and stay focused on the company's goals. Effective communication of problems, ideas, and solutions empowers employees and encourages

creativity. Internal social media networking facilitates decision-making by giving senior management direct access to posted suggestions (Aondover, 2019). Management can easily find and combine staff skill sets that meet a particular project requirement. Research conducted by IBM scientists on Beehive has shown that social networking tools improve employees' social capital by creating new social networks, fortifying current relationships, and improving employees' sense of belonging to the company.

However, there are potential risks connected to using internal social media, such as publishing unfavourable remarks about other employees or the firm, losing productivity time due to staff updating their profiles, spam and malware attacks, data and identity theft, and more. Notwithstanding these dangers, according to Elving (2005), social media technologies allow businesses to enhance organisational performance by fostering internal collaboration and teamwork in response to opportunities for sales and marketing, customer service, and innovation. It is crucial to keep researching the effects internal social media platforms have on the companies where they are used, given the growing adoption of these platforms and the potential benefits they offer.

Although strategic social media communications are now emerging in different military formation, non-military companies have embraced it for the past 20 years. Many publications on the market now mention "strategic communication." (Elving (2005, p. 6). Botan (2018) states that strategic communication is becoming increasingly important. Sweden was among the first nations to convert some of its university-level marketing and public relations courses into strategic communication courses. According to Kalla (2005), targeted communication procedures used by organisations in public relations, marketing, and organisational communication are examples of strategic communication in modern society. They see a direct connection between corporate communication and strategic communication.

Worlu et al. (2015) examined employee relations strategies—specifically promotion, equity, recognition, and mentoring—within a university setting, finding that these positively influence job performance. However, the study noted that organisational policies had a negative and insignificant impact on performance. While this research provides valuable insight into employee relations as a performance driver, it is limited by its focus on a university environment, which differs significantly from the paramilitary context, where hierarchical and rigid organisational structures prevail. The emphasis on employee relations strategies leaves internal communication, particularly the flow of information between different levels of an organisation, underexplored. The findings on organisational policies also suggest the need for further investigation into how policy communication can be improved to positively influence job performance in structured organisations like paramilitary bodies.

Adetipe (2020) explored how internal communication motivates employees in the banking sector, finding that employees highly value feedback and a healthy work environment as motivating factors. This study adds to the understanding of the role of internal communication in employee motivation. However, it is limited by its sectoral focus, which does not account for the unique challenges in paramilitary organisations. Moreover, while it suggests that communication fosters motivation, it does not deeply examine the nature of communication strategies or media. In highly structured organisations like the Nigeria Customs Service, communication barriers and hierarchical norms may substantially influence how internal communication impacts employee motivation and performance.

Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of internal communication in enhancing employee engagement and performance, but they are limited in their application

to paramilitary organisations. They often overlook the unique structural and cultural dynamics in such settings, such as command chains and bureaucratic constraints, which may affect communication differently than in corporate or academic environments (Mojaye & Aondover, 2022). This gap creates an opportunity for further research into how tailored communication strategies within the paramilitary context can effectively enhance both engagement and performance.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 Internal Communication and Organizational Culture in NCS

"All formal and informal communication taking place internally at all levels of an organisation" is a broad definition of internal communication as part of organisational activities (Kalla, 2005). Internal communication, by its very nature is multidisciplinary, and can be placed in between public relations, HR, and (internal) marketing. However, in reality, those who work in public relations and strategic communication are the ones who understand internal stakeholders the best.

Welch and Jackson (2007) define internal communication as "the strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders within organisations" and list several interconnected dimensions, such as internal line manager communication, internal team peer communication, internal project peer communication, and internal corporate communication, after taking a stakeholder approach to communication. From the standpoint of public relations, this concept of internal communication is among the earliest. Additionally, in line with the contemporary definition of public relations, this concept places internal communication as a strategic management function that goes beyond information exchange and recognises the critical role that managing "relationships" plays in the process.

Internal communication and organizational culture in NCS are critical elements that shape its effectiveness and overall performance. The Nigeria Customs Service, being a paramilitary organization, relies heavily on structured communication systems and a well-defined organizational culture to ensure compliance, discipline, and efficiency. In the NCS, communication is traditionally top-down due to its paramilitary nature. Senior officers convey decisions, policies, and commands to subordinates, which maintain order and discipline. The NCS primarily uses formal communication methods, including official memos, circulars, emails, and reports. This ensures clarity and accountability but may hinder quick response in dynamic situations. Therefore, internal communication and organizational culture are interdependent in the Nigeria Customs Service. While its paramilitary structure necessitates a disciplined and hierarchical approach, there are efforts to improve two-way communication to foster transparency, and adapt to modern practices (Adetipe, 2020).

Internal communication is a public relations speciality and a management role. It is strategic and seeks to accomplish particular internal communication objectives that support the organisation's efficacy. Therefore, it would be more acceptable to rename internal communication as "strategic internal communication" instead of organisational communication, a similar but more confusing term. Organisational communication is a well-established field focusing on organisations' functions, context, and communication processes. It studies all organisational communication phenomena, including people and their motivations or characteristics, organisations, structures, teams, networks, discursive resources, discourse, interpretation, representation, and meaning construction (Deetz, 2001).

In reality, there are several components to internal communication: corporate internal communication, which is communication started by the communication department; hierarchical communication, which is communication between leaders at different levels; and horizontal/peer communication, which is communication among employees as communicators, opinion leaders, or message recipients. Effective internal communication necessitates a deep comprehension of communication processes. This means being aware of the parties involved in communication, such as communicators and message senders, the communication process (e.g., communication strategies, tactics, channels; how meanings are encoded/decoded, how messages are transmitted, and the feedback loop) and internal audiences/message receivers, as well as the organisation, the leader, or employees; and the context of internal communication (e.g., culture, climate, structure, leadership, etc.) (Keyton, 2011). Effective internal communication, as a strategic public relations function, necessitates an understanding of how management and organisations operate and the ability to see how internal communication fits into organisational strategy and contributes to the achievement of organisational goals and effectiveness.

Employee commitment is employees' willingness to accept the organisation's goals and values and work towards achieving them. Similarly, organisational culture refers to the values, beliefs, and behaviour patterns that shape employees' behaviour and form the organisation's core identity. Mullins (2005) asserts that one element that strategically interacts to form an organisation is its culture. In order to maximise the value of human capital for organisational performance, he emphasised that an organisation's culture, much like the culture of its people, may be a motivating element.

Harrison and Stokes (1992) distinguished four elements of organisational culture: power, role, achievement, and support. The power dimension characterises the organisational culture predicated on unequal access to redemption. The primary focus of the role dimension is on specialisation and job description. The task culture that entails concentrating on achieving organisational goals is referred to as the achievement dimension. The support dimension characterises an environment within the organisation that is built on impartial trust between people and the organisation. Other scholarly works, like Meyer and Allen's (1991), have identified various aspects of organisational culture, including communication, training and development, rewards and recognition, effective decision-making, taking risks for creativity and innovation, proactive learning, teamwork, and fairness and consistency in most practices. According to Lau and Idris (2001), the four factors impacting employees' behaviour or commitment are teamwork, communication, training, and rewards or recognitions. This research has chosen to hold this perspective since it supports the importance of the work.

3.2 The Usage and Effectiveness of Internal Communication in NCS

The potential of internal communication and employee relations for effective staff performance in the Nigeria Customs Service is fundamental. However, the context of internal communication practices within paramilitary agencies, such as the Nigeria Customs Service, diverges from conventional corporate organisational models. This divergence is particularly pronounced given the agency's multifaceted role in revenue generation, the suppression of smuggling, trade facilitation, and other functions. Consequently, a substantial gap exists in the literature regarding internal communication and employee relations management within the Nigeria Customs Service. Prior studies have inadequately addressed this fundamental issue, leading to a significant knowledge gap that necessitates the initiation of this study. To bridge this gap, this paper examines media

strategies of internal communication; it interrogates internal communication and organisational culture and explores internal communication and employee performance (Usman et al., 2022).

This paper is conceptual and exploratory because it uses the descriptive research method, which involves consulting and analysing pertinent literature, documents, and records in light of the body of knowledge on employee relations management and internal communication for efficient staff performance in the Nigeria Customs Service. Most of the information in the article was obtained from secondary sources used to supplement the qualitative data. These sources included official publications, pertinent texts, journals, historical documents, and the Internet. These sources provided concrete context for the thematic area analysis. To analyse the data, a content analysis of secondary data was conducted. This made it possible to assess the body of knowledge in order to determine its applicability, consistency, replication, and rebuttal.

In the study by Eugene and Henry (2016), the focus was on staff perception of the intranet's role in enhancing communication within the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS). Their findings revealed that while the intranet was perceived as an effective tool for disseminating organisational news, postings, and circulars, a significant portion of the staff were unaware of its existence and usage. Despite high levels of computer literacy and internet usage among the staff, 92.5% of the respondents were ignorant of the NCS intranet facility. This study highlights a gap between the potential of digital communication tools and their actual adoption in paramilitary organisations. While it effectively captures internal communication challenges—such as fear, speculation, and misinformation—it is limited in its scope, focusing on the technological tool (intranet) without addressing how organizational culture, leadership, and employee relations impact communication effectiveness. Furthermore, the study does not provide insight into how these communication issues directly affect employee engagement and performance, creating a gap in understanding the broader implications of internal communication.

3.3 Internal Communication and Employee Performance in NCS

The processes of interactions and relationships between organisational members are the main emphasis of internal communication. When functioning as a system, internal communication helps employees within a business to communicate and create meaning. According to McPhee and Zuug (2001), internal communication is the foundation for organisational processes. A system of internal communication is used by successful organisations to inform all members of the organisation about its goals and to foster collaboration. Because it is consistent with the research goal of comprehending how manager-subordinate communication influences the subordinates developing strategic cognition, affect, and behaviours within an organisational context, this thesis emphasises manager-subordinate communication as the primary component of internal communication. Workers anticipate information from their employers to help them do their jobs effectively.

Internal manager-subordinate communication, according to Mcphee and Zaug (2001), aids staff members in comprehending organisational strategy and how their job fits into the larger objectives of the company. Internal manager-subordinate communication is essential for empowering staff members to actively seek for, analyse, and disseminate knowledge on resources critical to the company's operation. According to Mazzei (2014), internal manager-subordinate communication has a purpose beyond only directing messages; it also fosters employee knowledge and proactive communication practices essential to the company's success.

Welch and Jackson (2007) state that effective internal manager-subordinate communication helps staff members comprehend the company's strategic direction. Employees who are unable to understand the organisation's direction are unlikely to be devoted to it, and worse, they may even start to doubt it since they cannot relate to and understand the organisation's mission. Effective internal communication is defined by Mishra et al. (2014) as regular, sincere, and transparent communication that fosters a sense of community and shared purpose between the employer and employees. Employee trust and dedication to their jobs are increased through internal manager-subordinate communication, which raises employee engagement levels inside the organisation. The employees will comprehend how their work links to the organisation's vision if manager-subordinate communication is offered in a way that meets their needs and is clear in its substance.

Communication can be defined as the sharing, transmission, or exchange of information to persuade and influence. In communication, the development and transmission of a message reaches the receiver; the process seems extremely linear and foreseeable. Communication may seem straightforward, but as most people know, perceptions might differ from those spoken. Additionally, for a business to succeed, efficient communication is essential to achieving the targeted result for the sender.

The efficiency of the business and the need for each person to comprehend, feel safe in, and be driven to complete their duty are the two most essential social phenomena that occur between employees and supervisors within the organisation. Furthermore, technological advancements have created a more intricate business environment where a greater amount of information is accessible through various communication platforms (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017). There are various ways for staff members to exchange information regarding internal communication.

Bishop (2010) states that meeting if not exceeding, goals and standards and empowering individuals to do their jobs to the best of their abilities constitute employee performance. Establishing a culture of shared and individual accountability for enhancing company procedures and fostering the development of individual talents and contributions are essential for achieving successful employee performance. Corporations typically view employee performance as company performance, which is tracked via the business appraisal. As defined by Bishop (2010), employee performance is a planned and integrated approach to enhancing the success of companies by enhancing individual contributors' performance and developing teams' and individuals' capacities.

It is the growth of capable and dedicated individuals working in an organisation that supports and fosters their accomplishments to accomplish common, worthwhile goals. Duthler and Dhanesh (2018) consider employee performance an important aspect of human resource management. Production, storage, manufacturing, transportation, marketing, purchasing, distribution, business promotion, finance and accounting, human resources, research, and public relations are among the primary responsibilities of employees. These tasks are necessary to meet goals and, when carried out well, significantly impact the organisation's overall output, sales, profit, advancement, and competitive position.

Management must know that employee performance is important and make a real effort to address it. According to Duthler and Dhanesh (2018), a company can dominate its industry by using its skilled and committed workforce to give it an advantage over rivals. Because employees must perform several job responsibilities in close collaboration for the unit to succeed, their contribution on the job is the most significant aspect of business development and excellence.

Employees' conduct while performing a duty or assignment can be defined as their performance. It is the result or product that the organisation's personnel produced. Employee performance is defined as an individual's accomplishments by the company's policies, standards, and directives. The performance of employees can be determined by their skill set, level of effort, and perspective on the work. In the context of an organisation, employee performance is the extent to which a member contributes to achieving the organisation's goals.

IV. Conclusion

This paper examines internal communication as a catalyst for employee engagement and performance in paramilitary organisation. The paper argues that internal communication plays a pivotal role in driving employee engagement and enhancing performance in paramilitary organizations. In such environments, where discipline, hierarchy, and order are paramount, effective communication ensures that employees (officers and men) are well-informed, motivated, and aligned with organizational objectives. Thus, transforming the communication strategy of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) will require a comprehensive, modernized approach that aligns with global best practices while addressing the unique challenges and needs of Nigeria. The NCS needs a fully optimise, user-friendly Internal Communication tools that provides real-time updates and engagement with employees. Active internal social media platforms will enhance internal engagement. For the offline channels, there must be concerted effort to institutionalise activities that will trigger cohesion, unity of purpose among employees. This would translate into positive conducts of employees in and outside the organisation. This will increase public trust, make the NCS more effective and consequently build a strong partnership with all stakeholders. Thus, the paper concludes that employee participation and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between internal communication and employees' job performance.

References

- Aondover, E. M., Maradun, L. U., & Yar'Adua, S. M. (2022). Mediatization of the net and internetization of the print media in Northern Nigeria. *Unisia*, 40(2), 335-356.
- Aondover, E. M., Oyeleye, S. A., & Aliyu, M. A. (2023). New World Information and Communication Order and its changing role in Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Kano. *Unisia*, 41(1), 17-38. <https://doi.org/10.20885/unisia.vol41.iss1.art2>
- Argenti, P. A. (2007). *Corporate communication*. McGraw-Hill.
- Bekmeier-Feuerhahn, S., Bögel, P. M., & Koch, C. (2017). Investigating internal CSR communication: building a theoretical framework. *Handbook of integrated CSR communication*, 89-107.
- Bishop, D. V. M. (2010). Which neurodevelopmental disorders get researched and why? *PLoS ONE*, 5(11). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0015112>
- Botan, C. H. (2018). *Strategic communication theory and practice: the cocreational model*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Chong, M. (2007). The Role of Internal Communication and Training in Infusing Corporate Values and Delivering Brand Promise: Singapore Airlines' Experience. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3), 201-212. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1550051>
- Clampitt, P. G. (2013). *Communicating for managerial effectiveness*. SAGE Publications.

- Deetz, S. A. (2001). Conceptual Foundations. . In F. M. Jablin& L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication*. Thousand Oaks. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Duthler, G., & Dhanesh, G. S. (2018). The role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and internal CSR communication in predicting employee engagement: Perspectives from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Public Relations Review*, 44(4), 453–462. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2018.04.001>
- Elving, W. J. L. (2005). The role of communication in organisational change. *Corporate Communications*, 10(2), 129–138. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280510596943>
- Eugene, O. S., & Henry, A. G. (2016). Workers perception of intranet in enhancing organizational communication in Nigeria Custom Service. In *International Journal of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development* (Vol. 3, Issue 9). www.internationalscholarsjournals.org
- Falkheimer, J., & Heide, M. (2014). Strategic communication in participatory culture: from one-and two-way communication to participatory communication through social media. . In D. R. Holtzhausen& A. A. Zerfass (Eds.), *Routledge handbooks of Strategic Communication* (First). Taylor and Francis.
- Harrison, R., & Stokes, H. (1992). *Diagnosing organizational culture*. . Pfeiffer & Company.
- Hile, M. M., Msughter, A. E., & Aliyu, M. A. (2023). Secularism and Ethical Issues in Media Practice as a Bane for National Development. *SIASAT*, 8(3), 166-177
- Idris, M. K., & Msughter, A. E. (2022). Sources of Information on National Issues among Border Communities in Yobe State, Nigeria. *ASEAN Journal of Community Engagement*, 6(1), 22-47.
- Jiang, H., & Men, L. R. (2017). Creating an engaged workforce: The impact of authentic leadership, transparent organizational communication, and work-life enrichment. *Public Relations Review*, 43(4), 627–637. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.07.008>
- Kalla, H. K. (2005). Integrated internal communications: A multidisciplinary perspective. *Corporate Communications*, 10(4), 302–314. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280510630106>
- Keyton, J. (2011). *Communication and organizational culture: A key to understanding work experience*. . Sage Inc.
- Kreps, G. L. (1990). *Organizational communication: Theory and practice*. Longman.
- Kurfi, M. Y, Aondover, E. M. & Mohammed. I. (2021). Digital Images on Social Media and Proliferation of Fake News on Covid-19 in Kano, Nigeria. *Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies*, 1(1), 103-124. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.46539/gmd.v3i1.111>.
- Lau, H. C., & Idris, M. A. (2001). Research and concepts: The soft foundation of the critical success factors on TQM implementation in Malaysia. *The TQM Magazine*, 13(1), 51–60.
- Maikaba, B., & Msughter, A. E. (2019). Digital Media and Cultural Globalisation: The Fate of African Value System. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 214-220.
- Maiwada, A. A. & Oshionebo, B. (2024). Internal communication and employee relations management for effective staff performance in Nigeria Customs Service. *Economit Journal*, 3(4), 230-242.
- Mazzei, A., Kim, J. N., & Dell’Oro, C. (2012). Strategic Value of Employee Relationships and Communicative Actions: Overcoming Corporate Crisis with Quality Internal

- Communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 6(1), 31–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2011.634869>
- Mcphee, R. D., & Zaug, P. (2001). Organizational Theory, Organizational Communication, Organizational Knowledge, and Problematic Integration. In *Journal of Communication*.
- Men, R. L., & Bowen, S. A. (2016). *Excellence in Internal Communication Management*. Business Expert Press.
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resources Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89.
- Mishra, K., Boynton, L., & Mishra, A. (2014). Driving Employee Engagement. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 51(2), 183–202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488414525399>
- Mojaye, E. M. & Aondover, E. M. (2022). Theoretical perspectives in world information systems: A propositional appraisal of new media-communication imperatives. *Journal of Communication and Media Research*, 14(1), 100-106.
- Mullins, L. J. (2005). *Management and organisational behaviour* (Seventh). Pearson Education Limited. www.booksites.net/mullins
- Neck, C. P., Houghton, J. P., & Murray, E. L. (2019). *Organizational Behaviour: A skill-building approach* (Third). Sage Publication, Inc.
- Onyejelem, T. E., & Aondover, E. M. (2024a). Digital Generative Multimedia Tool Theory (DGMTT): A Theoretical Postulation in the Era of Artificial Intelligence. *Adv Mach Lear Art Inte*, 5(2), 01-09.
- Onyejelem, T. E., & Aondover, E. M. (2024b). Digital Generative Multimedia Tool Theory (DGMTT): A Theoretical Postulation. *Journalism*, 14(3), 189-204.
- Owens-Ibie, N., & Aondover, E. M. (2024). Hate postings on social media and peace imperatives in Nigeria. *Legal challenges and political strategies in the post-truth era*, Labcom Comunicacao & Artes, 121.
- Ruben, B. D., & Gigliotti, R. A. (2017). Communication: Sine Qua Non of Organizational Leadership Theory and Practice. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 54(1), 12–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488416675447>
- Stevanović, M. I., & Gmitrović, A. M. (2015). Importance and Role of Internal Communication in Organizations. *Applied Mechanics and Materials*, 806, 302–307. <https://doi.org/10.4028/www.scientific.net/amm.806.302>
- Usman, B., Eric Msughter, A., & Olaitan Ridwanullah, A. (2022). Social media literacy: fake news consumption and perception of COVID-19 in Nigeria. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 9(1), 2138011.
- Walden, J. A., & Kingsley Westerman, C. Y. (2018). Strengthening the Tie: Creating Exchange Relationships That Encourage Employee Advocacy as an Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 32(4), 593–611. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318918783612>
- Wang, H. C. (2022). Firm-specific knowledge resources and competitive advantage: The roles of economic-and relationship-based employee governance mechanisms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 30(12), 1265–1285. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.787>
- Wang, H. C., He, J., & Mahoney, J. T. (2009). Firm-specific knowledge resources and competitive advantage: The roles of economic-and relationship-based employee governance mechanisms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 30(12), 1265–1285. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.787>

- Welch, M. (2011). The evolution of the employee engagement concept: Communication implications. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 16(4), 328-346. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563281111186968>
- Welch, M., & Jackson, P. R. (2007). Rethinking internal communication: A stakeholder approach. *Corporate Communications*, 12(2), 177–198. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280710744847>
- Yue, C. A., Men, L. R., & Ferguson, M. A. (2021). Examining the Effects of Internal Communication and Emotional Culture on Employees' Organizational Identification. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 58(2), 169–195. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488420914066>