

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS STUDIES

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL
COMMUNICATION ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE,
CASE STUDY OF NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd COMPANY**

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for the Bachelor of Business Studies Honours Degree in Human Resources
Management**

RELEASE FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised, read and recommended to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance of the research project entitled:

An assessment of the effectiveness of internal communication on organisational performance, case study of NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd Company

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DECLARATION

I, **Norman Huswu**, declare this research project herein as my own work and has not been copied or lifted from any source without the acknowledgement of the source.

.....

Signed

...../...../...../

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my single mother, Mrs. I. M. Huswu, for being my inspiration in motivating me to be more industrious and hardworking. I also want to dedicate this work to the rest of my family members for standing firm on their ground to make sure that I accomplished my goals.

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God who helped me to endure in every hardship encountered. Not forgetting to thank all the people who assisted me with the necessary resources to carry out this research project. Had it not been of their knowledge and expertise, this project could have been a failure.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mr. Mangwende, for his guidance and tireless effort in supervising me throughout the research. He greatly encouraged and enlightened me on key research principles which helped in my accomplishment of this dissertation, may the Lord our saviour lift him up high.

To all my family members, brothers and sisters, I thank you for your unwavering moral support. 'LOVE YOU ALL'.

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ABBREVIATIONS

NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd	National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd
HR	Human resources
IDR	Industrial Development Report
CBA	Collective Bargaining Analysis
CM	Company Manual

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the effect of poor communication on performance of workers in an organisation.

The research design was a case study in which 40 respondents were selected using stratified random sampling from a population of 100 people. Data was collected from respondents using 35 questionnaires and 5 interviews and desktop research as research instruments.

The research findings revealed that respondents were aware of the existence of ineffective communication and identified poor working relationships as a key symptom. Furthermore, the results indicated that perceptions, disengagement in decision making and the poor employment relationships were key contributors of ineffective communication.

The study highlights the key effects of ineffective communication as increase in negative attitudes and decrease in job satisfaction.

Moreover, the study also recommends that targeted holding of educative workshops and implementation of effective communication strategies is needed to reduce communication inefficiencies or influx.

In addition, further research is also recommended to establish the depth of the relationship between workplace communication and performance.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an introduction of research is provided. The chapter begins with a background concerning the research area which also shows the importance of the study. The researcher is going to give an account of the problem statement and the problem source as a guide to the author's motivation in carrying out this research. The author is also going to give an account of the research questions as well as scope, significance, delimitations, objectives and definitions of some key terms as used in the chapter.

1.1 Background of the study

Following a case study on a Malaysian oil company conducted by Rogers and Fletcher (2003-2005), Destiny Oil Consortium, is one of the major fuel procurement companies in Malaysia. The company has faced high levels of staff turnover since 2007 due ineffective communication policy implementation which has led to decline in revenue generation. In this study, the company's operations have been influenced by improper communication processes ranging from high levels of work stress, poorly defined organizational structure and incompetent management.

The aim of the study was to highlight the contribution of communication to the firm's performance as well as worker collaboration. The research was intended to test whether communication contributes to an organization's downfall or not. The design approach on the company's communications was analyzed using a population sample of 40 out of 100 employees and it was spread across 5 Departments comprising of top management personnel and representatives spread across all departments. Information was gathered using company official records and other performance reports. The objectives were achieved by analyzing information published by internal participants and referring to opinions by relevant parties through the use of secondary reports.

The researchers concluded that ineffective communication results in decay of discipline which in-turn affects group cohesion and individual behaviors. This creates workplace tension and stress which may culminate into absenteeism and staff turnover. They also concluded that corporate communication forms the immediate environment necessary for implementation of change upon desired performance and its enhancement improves the greater part of the firm's development. The researchers argued that companies have the potential to improve their performance and develop if internal communication is effectively administered.

In order to find out the importance of internal communication within the organisation, the researcher decided to carry out a formal assessment of the effectiveness of internal communication within National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) (Pvt) Ltd since no other study has been conducted concerning this area.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Many companies have been experiencing problems such as high labour turnover, poor management and employee relations coupled with high cases of theft and fraud, climate of mistrust and deadlocks in the collective bargaining analysis (CBA) and low commitment. The research therefore sought to assess and establish the effect of internal communication on organisational performance.

Effective communication in an organization leads to greater involvement by employees. When communication is poor, participation and innovation decreases. Major competitors of NOCZIM Pvt Ltd such as BP Shell and Caltex companies, according to the (IDR) Industrial Development Report (2008-9) have been doing well in terms of competition and growth owing to effective communication both internal and external, as well as good decision making, innovation and policy implementation. This research was based on the internal review of policy procedures and strategies which ranked NOCZIM Pvt Ltd way below average. It is behind this background that the researcher has decided to carry out a formal study so as to determine the effectiveness of internal communication within NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd company.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To assess the effect of internal communication on organisational performance.
2. To assess strategies used in vertical and horizontal communication and their effectiveness
3. To identify the causes of ineffective communication
4. To determine strategies which can be used to solve problems of ineffective communication

1.4 Main Research Question

‘What is the effect of poor internal communication on organizational performance?’

1.4.1 Sub- Questions

1. What is the effect of internal communication on organisational performance?
 - a) How does internal communication affect organisational performance?
2. What strategies are used in upward and downward communication?
 - b) How effective are these strategies?
3. What are the causes of ineffective internal communications?
4. What strategies can be used to solve the problems of ineffective internal communication

1.5 Significance of the study

The results of the study are going to have many contributions to key stakeholders. In this regard, the researcher carried out a formal investigation on the effect of internal communication which is of professional benefit to:

- **NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd Company staff and Management** - the research report produced shall be used as a tool for internal communication improvement, decision making and basis for interaction with external parties (creditors, suppliers among others).

- **Bindura University staff and management** - This research shall bring to light the loopholes on the internal communication systems and how best they can be improved for efficiency purposes.
- **The Researcher** - The researcher is going to acquire an in-depth understanding of how internal communication systems work in an organisation.

1.6 Assumptions

- The researcher is going to get all the facts through administration of questionnaires
- Performance varies with communication
- All responses provided are not biased
- The sample taken in the process was representative of the whole population

1.7 Scope / Delimitations of the study

The research was primarily based on internal communication within the confinement of the NOCZIM's boundary (internal section). The research covers the period 2007 to 2009 and has been confined to the head office branch only at 100 Leopold Takawira Street in the city of Harare. Reference was made on performance and internal journals of the host organization and various companies used for comparison. The research only focused on management and employees and did not extend to clients and other stakeholders and the target population comprised of departmental managers and employees under the main departments. The total number was 100 and was represented using a sample of 40% to give a total of 40 individuals.

1.8 Limitations

In conducting the research the following are some of the problems that were encountered by the researcher;-

- While conducting this research, the researcher was taking notes and this might have led to omissions, distortions, errors and bias where the researcher's own perceptions may have acted as the filters on data received.

- The student had little capacity in terms of resources to carry out the research to cover all the branches countrywide.
- The researcher faced difficulties due to lack of experience.
- Due to the level of political influence present in the organization, the researcher gathered low quality information due to high confidentiality levels.

1.9 Definition of terms

The following definitions shall apply for the purposes of this research.

Communication; Refers to the activity whereby an individual or group conveys facts, feelings or ideas, consciously or unconsciously, to another and where necessary receives a response. Moonman (1995)

Communication channel; According to Mawonera and Lee (2004) it refers to the medium within which messages are designated to pass through

Group communication; refers to the supplying of information which pertains to one group of employees and the response of the group to the supplied information.

Group cohesiveness; Refers to the extent to which members of a group interact, cooperate and work together effectively. Mullins (2005:528)

Productivity; refers to the net production rate for unit volume.

(www.wikipedia.answers, accessed, 28 -09-2009)

1.10 Structure of the study

This study is structured as follows: -

Chapter 1

This Chapter has given the background of the study, the statement of the problem, justifying the undertaking of this research and the broad objective that has prompted the undertaking of this research project.

Chapter 2

The second chapter is going to review the literature related to the effect of internal communication organizational performance. The chapter is going to examine the conceptual framework concerned with the variables under study.

Chapter 3

This chapter seeks to highlight the undertaking of the actual research process, by providing details of the research design, research instruments and their strengths and weaknesses in their capacity to meet the desired research objectives.

Chapter 4

The fourth chapter is going to give an analysis, presentation and interpretation of the actual findings drawn from various research instruments adopted by the researcher and is going to be characterized by graphical presentation of responses.

Chapter 5

This chapter is going to give an account of the major conclusions and recommendations to the company under study as well as the summary of the research findings

1.11 Summary

This chapter sought to give an overview of the background of the subject the researcher undertook, the assumptions he based his study on, the significance, scope and delimitations of the study as well as the limitations the researcher encountered. This chapter also provided an insight into the chapters that shall be following hereafter. In order to have a broader and guided picture on issues relating to communication models, processes and channels, there is need to review related literature in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

According to Hart (2001), a literature review is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge and or methodological approaches on a particular topic. This chapter is going to discuss and review the conceptual framework concerned with the effectiveness of internal communication on organisational performance. The section seeks to incorporate previous research materials with current prevailing circumstances and also seek to expose gaps in the available literature, in order to justify the undertaking of this study.

The chapter seeks to give direction to the research by providing authoritative points of research, by reviewing concepts that explain on the contribution of communication processes on effective worker commitment and organizational development. It also seeks to give the major reasons why literature review has been done. In this chapter, the factors affecting communication flow and various strategies of communication were examined.

2.1 Importance of literature review

The review of literature has been done to ensure that the researcher develops a thorough understanding and insight into previous work. Furthermore it has also been done to give a comprehensive conceptual framework of the study accompanied by an in-depth logical sense on the definition of the research problem. Moreover it has also been carried out to look for new approaches for example, research possibilities that have been overlooked and new viewpoints since little research has been done concerning the effect of internal communication.

2.2 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 The effect of internal communication on organisational performance

According to Moonman (1995), communication is the activity whereby an individual or group conveys information, consciously or unconsciously, to another and where necessary, evokes a discriminating response. The information may be facts, feelings or ideas.

According to Sprott (1998) whether you are concerned with the institution of government or industry, with the organisation of services or the church, nothing can possibly be done in a coordinated way without communication. Someone has to say something to someone else, face to face or through an instrument, or else has to write something to someone else and communicate an order for transmission. This means that internal communication plays a major role in ensuring that the organisation achieves group cohesiveness necessary for its desired performance.

According to Fischer (2005), the more an individual serves an organisation the more he or she is familiarized with the communication processes practiced and this concurs with Rousseau (1995), who postulates that the longer a relationship the more parties become fostering feelings of trust, loyalty and mutual support that is between employers and employees therefore the greater the mutual understanding and interaction between the two.

According to Hall (1991), where people come from different backgrounds especially in organisations, communication is bound to become ineffective due differing perceptions. He also concurs with Sprott (1998) who postulated that ineffective communication may create workplace tension which builds poor relationships between management and employees. This entails that poor communication has a negative impact on organisational effectiveness due to decreased levels of morale which may also culminate into poor participation and collaboration.

Effective internal communication promotes participation through improved morale which encourages effective consultation between management and sub-ordinates.

This fosters the elements of discipline and responsibility which are key essentials for overall performance. (www.wikianswers.com)

2.2.2 Employee involvement in decision making

Fletcher and Rogers (2005) postulated that organisations need to consider internal communication as a key and pivotal driver of commitment, productivity and performance of both individuals and the enterprise. He further propounded that effective communication therefore serves to ensure valuation of employees and creates employee loyalty as well as clarity of the vision and mission of the organisation.

Vaughn (1983) defines decision making as the process of strategy formulation. He argues that active involvement of sub-ordinates in organisational strategy formulation involves the commitment of management and workers in various spectrums such as;

- Performance (contribution in terms of target fulfilment)
- Wage negotiations (works council)
- Decision Making
- Idea generation and innovation
- Group meetings

He propounds that participation of employees in decision making make them feel part and parcel of the organisation hence enabling them to perform competitively. Rosenberg (2004) argues that involving employees in decision making enhances consultative relations with managers thus intensifying commitment which is essential for organisational productivity.

Hall (1991) also gave reference to organisational performance as a collective system of joint effort between human resources managers, line managers and employees and further echoes that to achieve effective organizational participation, consultative decision-making and teamwork are necessary supported by quality employee development programs. According to Kent (1994) communication fosters management and employee relations thus soliciting commitment which enables them to perform highly and thereby enhancing organisational performance.

2.2.3 Management Styles and employee satisfaction

This could be best described by the theory of management on “good communication” by Armstrong (2002). The theory assumes that the aims of both management and employees are the same in the long run. Armstrong suggested that managers and employees’ ideas and objectives can all be fitted to form a single conceptual framework. The theory regarded different opinions between management and employees as due to misunderstandings which would have arisen due to ineffective communication. This theory concluded that ultimate objectives of management and workers are necessarily not identical. The theory implied that a company can develop loyalty by keeping people informed and treating them well.

According to Wager (1993), management style refers to the criterion used by managers in leading and determining strategies or actions that should be followed towards goal orientation. He argues that management’s culture of doing things has an effect on the employees below him. According to Wager the flexibility of management enables cooperation and teamwork which promotes employee satisfaction.

According to Hage and Chatsworth (2000) in an organisation where management systems are bureaucratic, the chances of freeness in contribution on the part of workers are minimized and this creates unfavorable relations between management and sub-ordinates. This results in ineffective reporting standards thus amounting to poor internal communication.

2.2.4 Flexibility of feedback and effect on the internal communication process

According to Hall (1991) organisational structures, with their varying sizes, technological sophistication and degrees of complexity and formalization are designed into information handling systems hence creating the need for a two way communication process. He argued that power, leadership and decision making rely upon feedback in order to reinforce achievement of objectives and relationships between work teams.

Barnard (1938) cited by Sprott (1998) argues that in an exhaustive theory of organisation, if communication feedback does not occupy a central place in the organisation its extensiveness and scope becomes entirely weak. His words strived to put feedback in a position of command at the heart of the organization.

Katz and Kahn cited by Hall (1991) argued that communication being the exchange of information and the transmission of meaning. When communication is one sided the process becomes incomplete and disturbs the very essence of organisational performance. These analysts also concur to Barnard's conclusions that feedback in the internal communication process has to be complete in order to maintain effective organisational performance.

Internal communication functions to maintain morale, sustain discipline and to give information about change. Some writers argue that communication creates an organisation's climate thus amounting to the corporate culture. When culture is present it manifests discipline within employees which may allow for better coordination and efficiency.

2.2.5 Models of communication and communication channels

Baik (1992) argues that the bedrock of the effective implementation of any quality initiative within an organization involves the redefinition of traditional boundaries and importantly the redefinition of the communication channels that exist within an organization. Morris, Meister and Hunt (1994), in a study of why organizations fail, the researchers indicated that many initiatives no matter what the desired goal should not be undertaken unless an objective internal communication audit is first conducted. These analysts concluded their researches highlighting that communication flaws or inefficiency may lead to poor organisational performance and downfalls in future.

Various theories have been studied on communication models for analysing the effect of feedback between management and individuals. However communication within organizations takes three main forms; oral, written and visual communications. These forms influence the channels used in organisational transmission of information or the overall internal communication process in terms of feedback.

2.2.6 The Interactive Process Model (Feedback analysis)

According to Mawonera and Lee (2004), this is a model that was developed by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver in 1949 and was called the Shannon Weaver model. This theory formulated the general feedback model of communication.

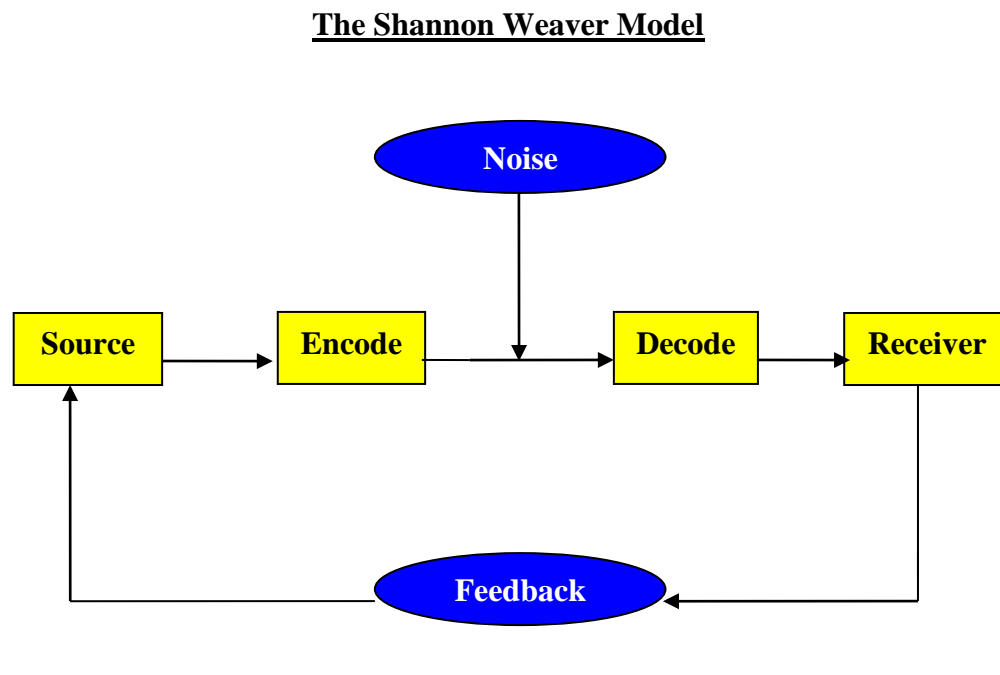


Figure 2.1: Interactive Process Model

Source: Zimbabwe Open University (2004)

The theory aimed to explain communication from the source to its destination and feedback from the destination center back to the source. The main weakness of this model was that it regarded communication as an ending process after the provision of feedback thus was concluded to be ineffective in terms of flexibility.

2.2.7 The Transactional Process Model

The Transactional Process Model was developed on the grounds of providing a more complete and detailed sense of the communication process. Theorists such as Osgood and Schramm, cited by Mawonera and Lee (2004) developed a model that is known as the “Circular” model which regards communication as a continuous process.

The Transactional Process Model (combined)

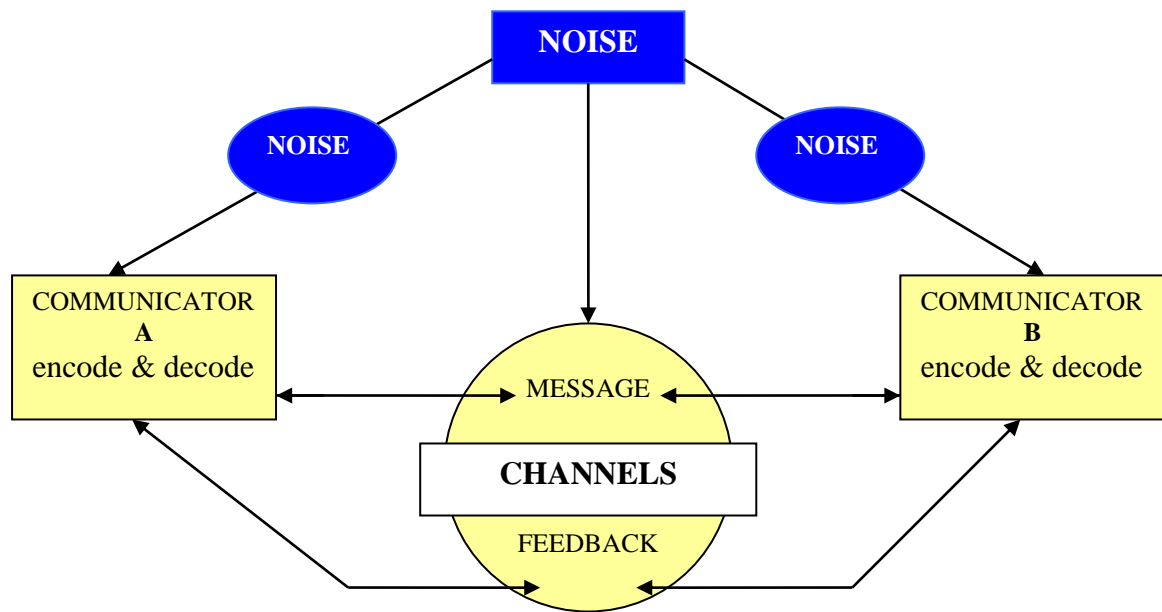


Figure 2.2: Transactional Process Model

Source: Zimbabwe Open University (2004)

The sender of a message in this case sends/ encodes and receives synonymously in relation to the responsiveness of the receiver/ decoder. The message passes through a linkage between communicator A and B. This linkage is the channel which acts as a vehicle that carries the message to complete the two way communication process.

This model was designed to acknowledge the importance and flexibility of feedback between management and employees in an organization. The channel may be in the form of telephone, fax, and reports to mention a few. If these channels are not used effectively they may affect people's attitudes and perceptions thus creating negative job behavior. Noise is defined as any factor that leads to communication breakdown for example perceptions, jargon technical defects among others.

These models have enabled the researcher to have a thorough understanding of the concepts and development of proper communication processes.

2.2.8 Who is responsible for ineffective internal communication?

In a study carried out by Kanter (1977) cited by Hall (1991) on managers, she found out that they spent an overwhelming proportion of time in communications. The study was focused on face to face interactions with sub-ordinates, superiors, peers and customers. She later concluded that the general business of the managers was communications. These studies were conducted based on 15 firms in Germany and Ukraine.

Other analysts, Klaus and Bass (1982) concur with Kanter's studies and also estimated that 80 percent of the time of managers is spent on interpersonal communication with employees. They also advocated that time devoted to communication decreases as one moves away from the apex of organizations. Studies by these analysts tried to reveal that management lies with the responsibility to foster effective or ineffective communication.

According to Decenzo and Robbins (2002) the human resources management team is at the helm of communication within the organisation. They argued that when there are effective human resources communication programs employees are well informed of organisational events and have the knowledge of policies affecting them. They also suggested that human resources have the ability to bring about many positive changes in the communication system of the organisation.

According to Torrington and Hall (1995), communication is a discrete personnel task and appears to be confined to the traditional textbooks and is not considered a key issue in the more recent publications. Human resources managers play a vital role in internal communications and some research articles argue that the human resource function needs to be actively involved in the construction, delivery and receipt of communication processes within the organization.

Recent authors such as Legge (1998) argue that human resources managers act as the bridge between communications of key information to sub-ordinates in order to earn their participation through team spirit and motivation. These authors argue that the human resources manager lies with the overall responsibility and accountability over communication failure or ineffectiveness.

According to Simpson and Richard cited by Legge (1998), every person in an organization shares equal responsibility for communicating and further explains that not only managers should transmit messages, but everybody should act as both originator and receiver of information for effectiveness.

2.2.9 Causes or Factors affecting internal communications

According to Hall (1991), there are various factors which contribute to the impossibility of effective communications within organizations. In his studies he pinpointed factors such as omissions, distortions and information overload as the main organizational / internal communication barriers. He also argues that perceptions play a vital role in communication.

2.2.10 Omissions

According to Hall (1991), omissions involve deletion of some aspects of messages and this may be caused by information overload. They may also be intentional when certain classes of information are prevented from passing through particular segments and this is mostly evident in upward communication.

However he concluded that omissions at times, occur simply as a removal of details with the heart of the message still transmitted upwards. This is the essence, but is not usually achieved since crucial messages are also omitted intentionally or unintentionally. A high degree of message omissions may also lead incomplete information which creates ineffective communication.

2.2.11 Distortions

These refer to altered meanings of information as it passes through the organization. This creates inaccurate information which may affect future decision making hence affecting some sections of the organization's objectives, vision and mission. However analysts such as Katz and Kahn cited by Hall (1991) argued that distortions are inevitable and prominent in all communication systems thus leading to ineffective communication.

2.2.12 Information Overload

Legge (1998), refer to overload as a situation where messages contain excess detail. This consumes time needed for processing to reach the actual meaning which in the past encouraged development of some technological methods. Overload was described by Hall (1991) as the determinant of omission and cause of information distortion due to summarisation at various levels.

The following factors also lead to ineffective organizational communications:-

- Lack of sound organizational objectives
- Faulty organization, for example, lack of proper definition of responsibilities
- Too long Chain of commands
- Use of technical jargon in specialist fields
- Status differences

2.2.13 Hierarchy and its effects on flow of communication

There are two structures that are mostly used in organizations that are the tall and wide structures. The long organizational structures are characterized by long chains of command whilst the wide structures are characterized by wide spans of control. This influences the degree of vertical or horizontal communication within an organization.

Other traditional theorists, Blau and Scott (1962) cited by Klaus and Bass (1982), point out some weaknesses of hierarchy on the organization's communication process. Citing experimental and field evidence, they noted that people at the same status level interact more with one another than with those at different levels whilst people in lower status positions look for direct friendships, for example relationships towards higher status positions. Their studies were based on 10 United Kingdom firms.

The researchers found out that in organizations with highly trained personnel, the tall or deep hierarchy was associated with effectiveness whilst the opposite was true for wide structured hierarchies. The following diagram shows a tall structure and the two flows of communication.

Hierarchy and Flow of Communication

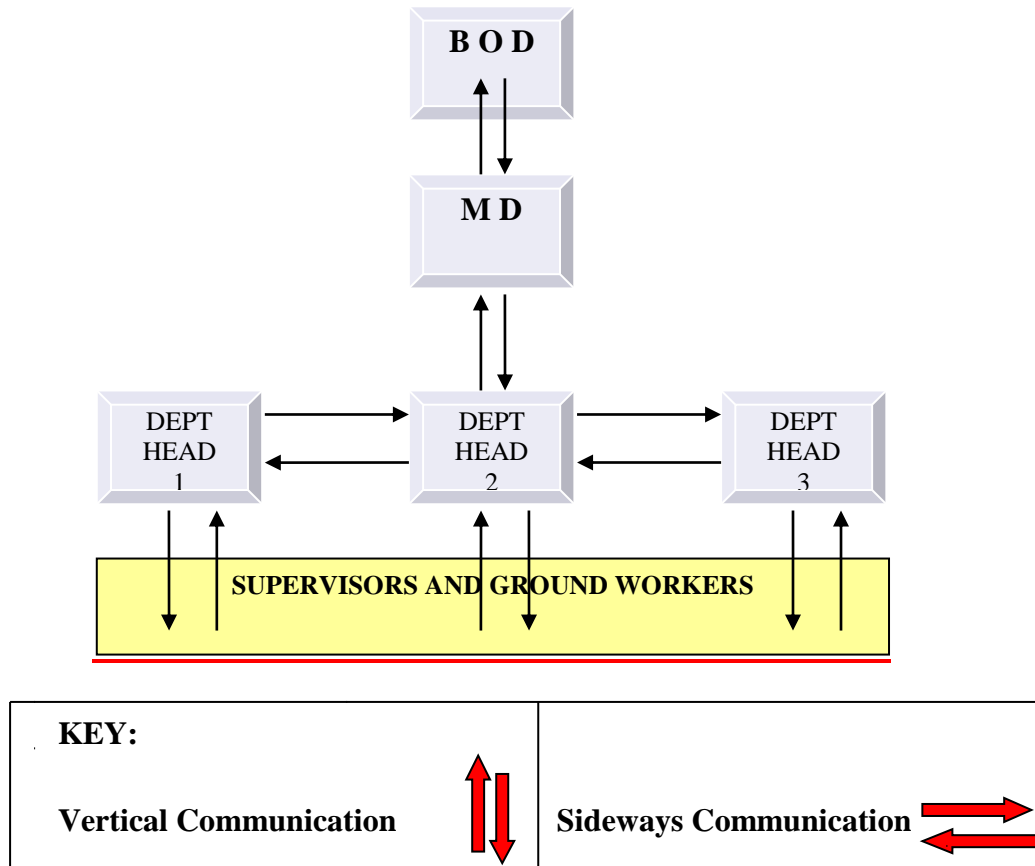


Figure 2.3: Hierarchy and Flow of Communication

Source: G. Cannon, Corporate communications (1988)

According to the studies of O'Reilly and Roberts (2003) trust between superiors and sub-ordinates is lost due to the perceptual impact of relationships and hierarchy also determines the flow of communication to be either vertical or horizontal and also contributes to extent of communication effectiveness

2.2.14 Vertical Communication

Vertical communication is the upward and downward flow of communication as illustrated by the up and down arrows on figure 3 (above). Downward communication refers to dissemination of information from the strategic apex levels to the general ground floor along the formal chain of command. According to Hall (1991),

information passed in downward communication is detailed, specific and serve to initiate action thus resulting in attitudes, negative perceptions and unfavourable feelings amongst employees.

Upward communication refers to the provision of feedback from the shop floor workers up to the top levels by means of reports, recommendations, suggestions and comments. This form of communication is flexible as it allows different opinions ranging from the lowest ranked personnel to the highest ranked positions. It however, fails to ascertain direct feedback as main data undergoes surfing, selection and editing as it passes through various management departments. This may involve information omissions and distortions thus creating an incomplete circuit of communication thus amounting to poor communication.

2.2.15 Horizontal communication

This is the flow of communication that is characterized by inter-departmental interaction. It is regarded necessary in aiding coordination and plays a significant role in relation to motivation. According to Kent (1994), sideways communication enables people in organizations to find their work meaningful by understanding where they fit in the whole process. Raymond argues that status and authority considerations are absent in horizontal communications as it usually involves people at the same levels.

However some major drawbacks with this form of communication involve rivalry between departmental heads, exaggerated pride in one's specialist background and absence of precision of definition in the organisational structure, for example, failing to specify who does what and who is concerned with what.

2.2.16 Strategies on communication development

According to Marchington (1995) an organisation which creates and communicates clearly with its employees instills commitment and unity of purpose in employees therefore resulting in high levels of worker loyalty and minimal rates of absenteeism.

According to White and Harrison (1998), it is not both easy and possible to completely eradicate communication barriers but it is only possible to reduce the

effects or to improve the system. Improvements in communication can be made by adopting the following strategies:-

- Ensuring that employees are educated on the importance and or value of communication and problems associated through feedback reports.
- Setting up appropriate network machinery to boost upwards, downwards and sideways communication.
- Training employees in relevant techniques of communication

Some particular communication development mechanisms which have been widely adopted include the following;

2.2.17 Downward Communication strategies

- Briefing groups (where team leaders brief their immediate staff about events).
- Staff meetings, where all staff from one side are brought together
- Bulletins, notices and Circulars

2.2.18 Upward Communication strategies

- Joint consultation committees (where management and staff meet to consult about issues)
- Suggestion Schemes
- Via negotiation Committees
- Grievance Procedures

2.2.19 Horizontal Communication strategies

- Inter-departmental and Coordinating committees
- Special Project groups

Vertical and horizontal communications refer to the general flow and movement of communication within the organization. In functional terms, the area of communications in organizations have specifically investigated the processes of upward, downward and sideways communication and they concluded that an organisation has to develop its culture first to achieve effective communication maturity. (Marchington, 1995).

2.2.20 Summary

This chapter highlighted the importance of literature review and focused on different conceptual and theoretical development and importance of communication. It outlined the objectives stated in chapter one as well as reasons for undertaking literature. Empirical evidence was also discussed and it showed where the particular problem being discussed has occurred in previous researches. From the literature review, it can be concluded that the area of communication should be thought of in advance and conducted in a systematic manner. The firm should take full advantage of the academic works laid down by different researchers so as to come up with proper procedures of managing information movement and worker participation hence soliciting commitment and direction. The next chapter is research methodology, which is going to be looking at the research instruments used in gathering data by the researcher.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide methods used to investigate the problem under study. The methodological aspects being referred to in this case are ways that were used by the researcher in undertaking the research project's focal point of discussion. The research instruments, the sample and sampling technique, target population, sample population, reliability and validity of instruments employed in the research were also highlighted.

3.1 Approach

The descriptive approach was used. Basically there are three types of research designs namely the explanatory, descriptive and casual research design. The descriptive approach employs a variety of techniques and procedures to establish the phenomena under investigation under its natural setting according to Nachmias and Nachmias (1996).

3.2 Research Design

Bell (2000:54) defined research design as 'a systematic step to accomplish purpose of study'. A research design is also defined as all those procedures that are selected by a researcher for studying a particular set of questions or hypothesis. For this study a case study was selected as the most appropriate model. Bell (1998) defines the case study as the method used when the study focuses on a set of issues in a single organisation, and an in depth study of the organization or a single department within it. The case study was very qualitative in nature as noted by the greater proportion of open ended questions in the questionnaire.

3.2.1 The advantages of a case study are:

- They deal with specific issues within the context of National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd and limit costs associated with the study and reduce time required.
- Flexible thereby allowing the use of a variety of data collection techniques and they offer an intensive investigation into specific aspects in an endeavor to gain deeper insights.

However the major drawback of the case study approach is that they are limited design requirements / framework for comparison.

The explanatory research design was also proper in that it could be applied where there was need to establish a relationship between two variables, which in this case was internal communication efficiency and organisational performance. Its weaknesses of being a qualitative rather than quantitative research design were dealt with by the case study.

3.3 Population

A population according to Duplossy (1997:47) is defined as ‘any group of individuals, organization, social interactions and events’. The population is divided into two categories namely the target population and the accessible population. The target population is that from which the research findings were to be generalized. In this case the accessible populations were the people comprised of 100 people.

3.3.1 Sample Population and size

Cooper and Schindler (2000; 188) define a sampling frame as a list of elements from which the sample is actually drawn from. The research constituted managerial and non-managerial staff at National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd and was designed to give employees from all levels in the organization a chance to participate in the research.

Cooper and Schindler (2000) defined a sample as part of the large population, such as that the researcher selected to represent the target population. In this study a sample size of 40 individuals was used. This was facilitated by the use of questionnaires to be

posted to various departments of the company. The researcher used the simple random sampling technique to select samples from the various user departments.

N- (The sample size) =40

N- represents people.

The researcher had a target population of 100 employees and out of them he calculated his sample as 40% of the target population and the sample became 40 employees after conducting random sampling and stratified sampling.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

There are two broad groups of sampling methods that are probability and non-probability sampling technique. Probability sampling technique is whereby members have a known chance of being selected into sample. Probability sampling can be in the form of random sampling and stratified sampling. Non-probability sampling is whereby we do not know the chance of being selected to be the members of the sample.

Stratified sampling techniques were used in determining the sample size in this research. The population was firstly grouped using stratified technique. Stratified technique involved dividing the population into homogeneous sub groups and these are called strata. In this case the individuals were divided into sub groups based on their nature of operation. There were six strata formed that are a, b, c, d, e and f.

Sampling units were then selected from each stratum using judgmental sampling technique. This is where the researcher used his judgment to select sample elements with the intent that the sample so selected would be a good representation of the population under study. Judgmental sampling was used due to cost and time constraints on the researcher's part. The researcher used these sampling techniques because they were also used in the previous research examined

3.3.3 Target Respondents

The target respondents of the interviews and questionnaires were the Human Resources manager, Officer and 2 Directors, Production manager, The Provincial manager, Accounting manager, Marketing manager, Two Corporate Secretaries and thirty individuals equally drawn from various departments. The researcher drew a representative sample in all user departments.

Table 3.1: Position and distribution of the sample population

N=40

Position/ Field respondents	Number of
Executive Management	2
Senior and Middle Management	6
Corporate Secretaries	2
Other	
Dispatch Department employees	5
Production Supervisor and Co-workers	5
Marketing	5
Human Resources Trainees and Co-workers	5
Clientele Assistants	5
Information Systems Technicians	5
TOTAL	40

3.4 Research Instruments and justification

An instrument is any measuring device adopted for the purpose of data collection. The researcher employed three data collection tools namely the questionnaire, desktop research and personal interviews. Cover letters were also used to accompany the questionnaires. This investigation attempted to use multi-measure instruments that are triangulation methods to establish convergent validity and reduce uncertainty of

interpretation. Cohen and Manion (1999) defined triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection.

3.4.1 Personal Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Human Resources Officer, Maintenance, Accounting and Dispatch managers respectively and the Public Relations director.

Interviews are an ideal technique when collecting data. Interviewing is the act of acquiring information from a group of people through conversation with the respondents. A series of questions were asked.

The interview method was the most appropriate method for senior people since the researcher did not have a clear background about each and every respondent. Interviews were flexible and practical and respondents could give reasons for their answers. Structured interviews tended to produce uniform data time after time by different interviewers.

Semi-structured or open-ended interviews was a technique in which the investigator asked a list of questions but was free to vary them and even to probe further with raising of new questions on interesting topics of importance in the course of the interview.

3.4.1.1 Advantages

- It had the advantage of establishing rapport and building confidence.
- It provided a unique flexibility in that the interviewer pursued an elaboration or redefinition of the responses when they appeared incomplete or ambiguous.
- It gave room for adaptability as well as processes and mechanisms called into play by the situation that is, the researcher probed for more information.
- The researcher observed gestures and facial expressions during the interview, this enabled him to see what the respondents liked or disliked.

3.4.1.2 Disadvantages

- The people interviewed did not reflect real behaviour; they did not answer honestly or seriously for a variety of reasons. They might have feared that the information would be used against them.
- The interview was time consuming limiting the number of subjects from whom the researcher expected to get the data.
- Use of this method allowed useful information to slip into cracks.

3.4.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a list of questions that are given to the respondent so that they may answer in written form and send back the questionnaire to the researcher. (Best 2002:124)

The questionnaire comprised of a bulk of closed ended questions and a few open – ended questions. A bulk of close-ended questions were used because they are easier to administer and faster for data tabulation.

3.4.2.1 Advantages of a Questionnaire

The researcher took the following into consideration in choosing the questionnaire as his research tool.

- It enabled the researcher to gather data beyond the physical reach of the observer
- It was easier on the part of the researcher to administer and tabulate
- It was convenient since most executives did not have time to attend to long hours of interview discussions
- The limiting factor of time was saved greatly on the part of the researcher as the questionnaire was sent out to different people simultaneously.
- The questionnaire provided a basis for comparison and measurement since each person responded to the same questions irrespective of positional differences.

3.4.2.1.1 Disadvantages of a Questionnaire

The limiting elements of questionnaires while undertaking this research study were as follows;

- There may have been no room in the questionnaire for further explaining of certain answers given
- Some respondents would just ignore the questions or answer them at their own time which may be inconvenient for the researcher
- Generally, people are more able to express themselves orally than in writing therefore some details may be omitted due to this.

3.4.3 Desktop Research

This involved paying attention to newspaper articles, the internet, the National Oil Company's Manual (CM) and the library. This had the advantage of probing into published records on similar matters.

3.4.3.1 Advantages of Desktop Research

The research took into account the following merits in using desktop research as one of the research tools

- The limiting factor of financial resources was minimized as there were little movements associated in gathering information
- The researcher could see a phenomenon about a situation, which those people involved in it, may take for granted.
- Time was saved, as there were no efforts in trying to make appointments.

3.4.3.2 Disadvantages of desktop research

The desktop research posed the following disadvantages to the researcher.

- Data used was limited to the duration of the event and history was difficult to be obtained
- It was time consuming especially in trying to search for relevant data.
- Some sections of the company records were strictly confidential and inaccessible.

3.5 Types of Data

The researcher in a bid to get to some accurate conclusions to his study collected both primary and secondary data.

3.5.1 Secondary Data

According to Kotler and Stoner (2000:78) secondary data refers to that data already available for some other purposes rather than the current project. The researcher took an extensive search of secondary data both published and unpublished information relating to an appropriate communication system. The main sources were textbooks, company manual handout and the internet as well as the company's annual reports. The company's annual reports however focused more on technical aspects than non technical issues such as communication.

3.5.2 Primary Data

Kotler (2000:65) defined primary data as the data that the researcher collects in this field especially for the project at hand. This data was collected through the use of structured questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected in the project.

3.6 Data collection procedures

3.6.1 Quantitative data

Data was collected through the use of pre-coded questions. The bulk of the data collected through in the field was quantitative, the main reason being to increase the ease with which the results would be analyzed.

3.6.2 Qualitative data

Data was collected through the use of a few open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

The instrument used in this research was effective in gathering quality data that enabled measurement of the responses. In other words, validity is concerned with the soundness and effectiveness of measuring instrument. This required the instruments used in gathering data to be tested and tried through a pilot test of the questionnaire so that weaknesses could be identified and corrected. This brought up some deficiencies that needed to be resolved in advance such as pacing, how long to wait for responses, what to do when compiling responses. The pilot test enabled the study to increase ultimate reliability of questionnaires and feedback from the pilot study resulted in rephrasing and modification of ambiguous questions.

3.7.1 The questions asked

The questions were valid and reliable for the purpose of obtaining information directed to the effectiveness of internal communication because the questionnaire provided no undue influence on the part of the respondent while answering the questions. The questionnaire also provided greater uniformity across measurement situations because each respondent responded to exactly the same questions.

3.7.2 Desktop Research

This tool was valid and reliable because it brought information of what is happening on the ground in terms of an appropriate communication system and structure especially from the company manual, reports and textbooks.

3.8 Limitations of Methodology

Time was perhaps the major constraint on the part of the targeted respondents since a number of people involved in the sample maintained ranks which needed total commitment, for example managers and corporate officers/ secretaries.

In view of the need to portray good image of the organization most informants tend to be biased towards the organization and would withhold negative information about it.

The Company's confidentiality also affected some responses since people wanted to maintain their security.

3.9 Data analysis procedures

The data obtained was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using descriptive and tabular forms. The quantitative analysis complimented the qualitative analysis, as, well, as learning of people's attitudes towards the communication processes. It also explained the critical patterns, trends and relationship in the study sample during the analysis.

3.10 Data presentation

Tables, graphs, pie charts, diagrams were used in the presentation of data. Analytical tools used included percentiles.

3.11 Ethical considerations

The research shall be used for academic purposes only. As according to Neumann (1997; 64) the following ethical considerations were also taken into account in the study; informed consent for carrying out the study and high respect for the respondents and respect for the organisational authority were considered. The respect on privacy and confidentiality both of the organization and the individuals were considered as well.

3.12 Summary

The aim of this chapter was to describe the research methodology that was used in this study . The chapter described the research design , the research instruments and their justification as well as the sampling method used in the study. The data collection plan and the data presentation and analysis procedures were also highlighted so as to make an evaluation and presentation of this data in the following chapter .The following chapter is going to deal with data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

The section will focus on presentation and analysis of data. The data will be presented in figures and tables as well as in a descriptive manner. Out of a sample of 40 people, 30 non managerial and 5 managerial staff filled in questionnaires and 3 managerial staff and 2 non-managerial staff were interviewed which is 100% of the sample. All the departments of the organization were evenly represented.

4.1 Interviews

Table 4.1: Summary of Interviews Conducted

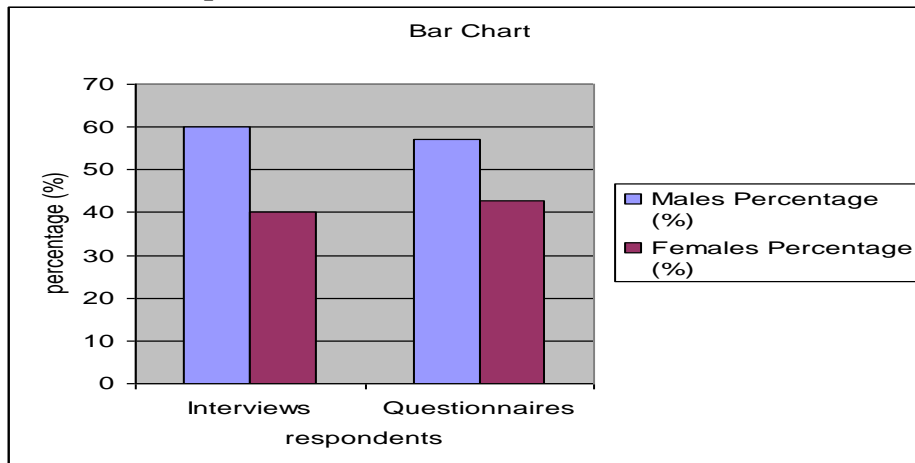
Category of respondents	Number of respondents		Response Rate
	Target	Actual	%
Executive Management	2	2	100
Senior Management	1	1	100
Non-Managerial	2	2	100

Face-face interviews were conducted with 2 Executive managers, 1 senior manager and 2 non-managerial staff. All sample participants responded, constituting 3 males and 2 females. Five interviews were scheduled and all of them were conducted. As shown by Table 2, the response rate for the interviews was 100%.

Table 4.2: Sex of respondents (Interviews and Questionnaires)

	Male		Females	
	respondents	Percentage	respondents	Percentage
Interviews	3	60	2	40
Questionnaires	20	57	15	43

Figure 4.1: Sex of respondents (Interviews and Questionnaires)



The distribution above shows that the majority (60%) and (57%) of the respondents were men in both interviews and questionnaires respectively.

4.2 Questionnaire response rate

Table 4.3: Questionnaire response rate and sample distribution

N=35

	Respondents	Sample	Percentage
Top management			
Human Resources Director	1	1	100%
Middle management			
Operations manager	1	1	100%
Marketing manager	1	1	100%
Finance manager	1	1	100%
Low-level management			
Shift manager	1	1	100%
Non-managerial employees			
Administration staff	15	15	100%
Information Systems staff	5	5	100%
Other	10	10	100%
Total Staff Compliments	35	35	100%

A total of 35 questionnaires were distributed to both managerial and non-managerial staff at NOCZIM. Hundred percent of the total questionnaires returned (100% of managerial and 100% of non-managerial staff).

Personal Information

Table 4.4: Period of service for employees

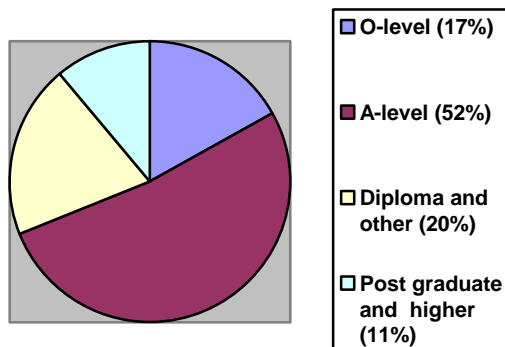
N=35

Period served	Frequency	%
Below 5 years	16	46
6 - 10 years	10	29
11-15 years	6	17
Above 15 years	3	8
Total	35	100

The majority of staff (46%) served the company below 5 years whilst a few (25%) have served above 10years.

Analysis of Academic and Professional qualifications

Figure 4.2: Academic and Professional analysis qualifications



The majority of respondents (69%) had at least ‘O’ and ‘A’ Level certificate whilst only (11%) had post graduate degrees and higher.

4.2.3 Distribution of the respondents by age

Table 4.5 % Age analysis of respondents

N=35

Age Range	Number of employees	%
> 20years	0	0
(21-30)	10	29
(31-40)	17	49
(41-50)	6	17
(50+)	2	5

The largest number of respondents was within the age range of 31-40years and constituted 49% whilst only 5% were in the range of 50years and above.

4.2.4 The effect of internal communication on organizational performance

Table 4.6: % Analysis of responses to the effectiveness of internal communication

N=35

Assertion	A		SA		N		D		SD		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1)The relationship between management and staff is cordial	2	6	3	9	2	6	8	23	20	57	35	100
2)The internal communication process is supportive to my performance	5	14	2	6	0	0	15	43	13	37	35	100
3)Employees are involved in decision making process	6	17	4	11	3	9	12	34	10	28	35	100
4)Are you satisfied with the management styles in your organisation	2	6	1	3	2	6	12	34	18	51	35	100
	15		10		7		47		61		140	100

**Key: A-agree SA-strongly agree D-disagree SA-strongly disagree
N-neutral**

Is the relationship between management and employees cordial?

The majority of the respondents (70%) did not agree and reiterated that the working relationship is poor between management and employees.

Does the current internal communication environment provide a supportive role to your performance and skills development?

Most of the respondents (80 %) did not agree that the communication environment was supportive to their performance and skills development.

Are employees involved in the decision making process?

The majority (62%) did not agree and showed indication that they did not take any participative role in the decision making process of the organisation.

Are you satisfied with the management styles of initiating action?

The table above shows that the majority of respondents 75% were not satisfied by their management’s style of leadership. Most of them indicated that the management style present does not allow free expression of opinions and ideas.

How flexible is your internal communication in terms of feedback?

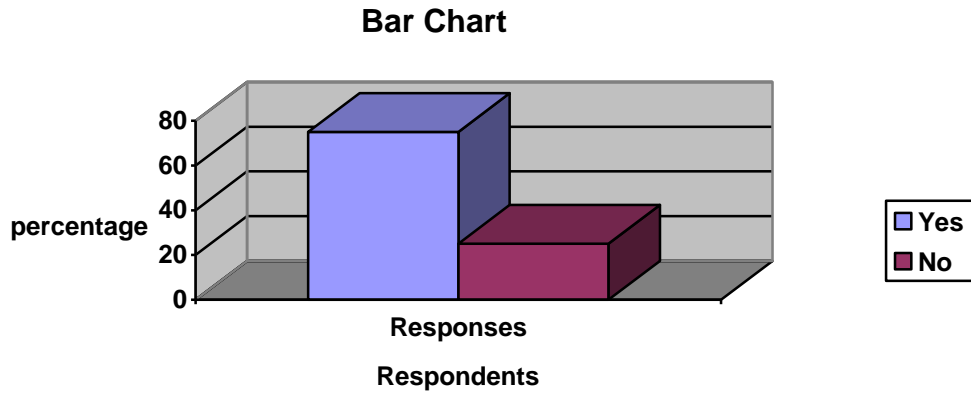
Table 4.7: % Analysis of responses on flexibility

Rating	Respondents	%
Good	5	14
Very good	2	6
Excellent	0	0
Very poor	10	29
Poor	18	52
Total	35	100

A large number of respondents (81%) indicated that the internal communication was not flexible and not conducive for effective feedback.

Are you aware of the organisation’s internal communication problems?

Figure 4.3 % Analysis of awareness on internal communication problems



As shown by Fig 4.3 above 75% of the respondents to the questionnaire signaled that they were aware of communication inefficiency putting across the reason of lack of group cohesion for unity of purpose in the organisation.

4.3 What strategies are used in vertical and horizontal communication?

Table 2.6: % Analysis of the responses on strategies used in internal communication

Assertion	N=35										Total	
	A		SA		N		D		S D			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1) Briefing groups and staff meetings are held regularly	4	11	0	0	2	6	13	37	16	46	35	100
2) The use of Bulletins, notices and circulars is effective	2	6	2	6	20	57	5	14	6	17	35	100
3) Inter-departmental and coordinating committees are conducted	10	28	2	6	6	17	15	43	2	6	35	100
	16	45	4	12	28	80	33	94	24	69	105	100

Key: A-agree SA-strongly agree N-neutral
D-disagree SA-strongly disagree

Briefing groups and staff meetings are held regularly

Out of all respondents, (83%) of them showed that they did not agree to the regular holding of briefing groups and staff meetings in the organisation.

The use of Bulletins, notices and circulars is effective

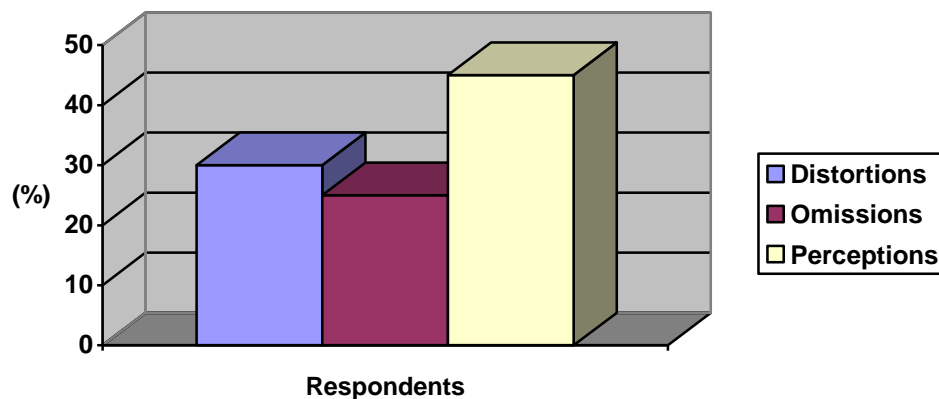
Most of the respondents (57%) remained neutral on the effectiveness of using bulletins, notices and circulars citing them as the most common communication mediums used in the organisation.

Inter-departmental and coordinating committees are conducted

The research results indicates that a larger number (49%) of respondents were not familiar with the conduction of horizontal inter-departmental and coordinating committees.

4.4 What are the causes of ineffective communication?

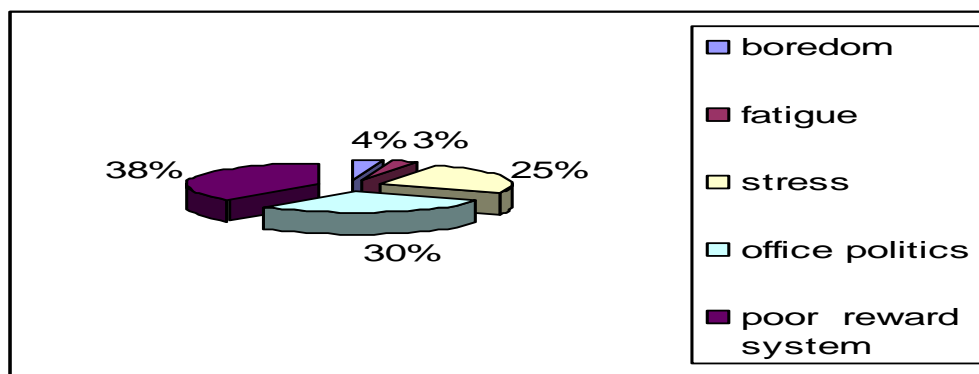
Figure 4.4: % Analysis of causes of poor internal communication



Most of the respondents (45%) indicated that perceptions are strong causes of ineffective communication. All the respondents agreed that distortions, omissions and perceptions all contribute to poor internal communication in an organisation.

4.5 Other causes of ineffective internal communication

Figure 4.5: % Analysis of other causes of poor internal communication at work?



As indicated by Figure 4.5 above, most of the respondents (38%) indicated that poor reward system is the other major cause of poor internal communication.

4.6 Organisational culture is a major cause of ineffective communication

A		SA		N		D		SD		Total	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	n	%
18	52	4	11	2	6	6	17	5	14	35	100

The majority of the respondents (63%) agreed that the communication culture was not clearly defined and cited role conflict and personality as the major contributors.

4.7 Effect of hierarchical structure on communication

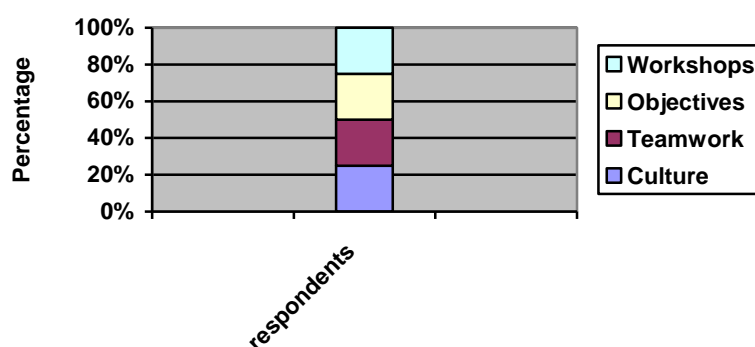
N=35

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Positive	10	28
Negative	25	72

A large number of respondents 72 % gave a negative response to this question and most of their opinions suggested that the size of hierarchy is too long and comprises of a large number of assistants.

4.8 Possible solutions to achieve effective internal communication?

Figure 4.6: % Analysis of solutions to achieve effective internal communication



From Fig 4.6, all respondents (100%) equally acknowledged that the above solutions were essential in creating a friendly working environment but admitted that they are not being practically implemented.

What do you suggest management should do to achieve effective communication at work?

Most of the respondents (80%) reiterated that management needs to have proper delegation skills and coordinating skills so as to encourage group work and unity.

4.9 Analysis of Interview responses

Understanding of ineffective communication and accountability

The majority of the interviewees (60%) were not able to describe ineffective communication in detail signaling lack of awareness on the part of management. The interviewees remained skeptical or neutral on the issue of accountability and indicated that the company itself was responsible for its own unclarified objectives.

4.10 Strength of management and employee relationship

Table 4.8: % rating of relationships

	Rating	Percentage
Cordial	1	20
Tense	4	80
Neutral	0	0

N=5

The majority of interviewees (80%) highlighted that the employment relationship is tense and unfavourable therefore hindering promotion of group work and unity. Employees were of the notion that the management style was not conducive for effective worker loyalty

The extent of involving employees in decision making

The interviewees (75%) indicated that employees are only involved in decision making concerning minor issues whilst managerial staff makes all key strategic decisions.

What are the current communication strategies and procedures in your company?

Most of the interviewees indicated that electronic and written notices were the major forms of communication procedures being used by the company whilst a few (20%) chose to be unanimous on the question. However when the researcher probed further on poor communication some of the respondents considered its control as complex and time consuming.

What are the causes of ineffective communication in your company?

A large number of interviewees (80%) highlighted status differences and ill-defined objectives as the major causes of ineffective communication. Management (60%) indicated role conflict as another driving factor of the poor communication within the company whilst (20%) highlighted the company's culture as ineffective.

What strategies do you think can be put in place to develop your company's internal communication?

A large number of interviewees (80%) indicated the need to develop proper communication models which are flexible in providing feedback and allowing sharing of ideas between individuals.

4.11 Discussion of Findings

The majority of the employees served the company for less than 5 years whilst most of the managers have worked for the company for period between 6years -15 years.

According to Fischer (2005), the more an individual serves an organisation the more he or she is familiarized with the communication processes practiced. According to Rousseau (1995) the longer a relationship the more parties become fostering feelings of trust, loyalty and mutual support that is between employer and employees therefore the greater the interaction between the two.

The researcher established from the research findings that most of the respondents and interviewees (90%) were aware of poor communication at the workplace. This implies that internal communication within NOCZIM Pvt Ltd was ineffective and prominent in the organisation. As argued by Hall (1991) when human beings come from different backgrounds communication is bound to be ineffective due to differing perceptual differences.

The study revealed that most of the employees (100%) and managers (70%) believed that poor communication in an organisation did not allow the relationship between management and employees to be cordial which impacts negatively on performance of employees as stressed by Kent (1994) who also postulates that effective communication fosters management and employee relations thus soliciting commitment which enables them to perform highly and thereby enhancing organisational performance.

The study also revealed that most of the employees (above 60%) also believed that they were not getting enough ground to participate in decision making. Management and employees both agreed that a management based decision making policy affects teamwork and collaboration of employees thus amounting to de-moralisation and de-motivation. The study results also indicate the need to consider all internal stakeholders in decision making as put forward by Rosenberg (2004) who propounded that involving employees in decision making enhances consultative relations with managers thus intensifying commitment which is essential for organisational productivity.

All the managers and employees revealed that the strategies used in the internal communicating of goals and objectives were not being fully utilized at NOCZIM (Pvt) Ltd Company and rendered them ineffective. They reiterated that some of the

employees have improperly defined roles and their target objectives are ambiguous and vague. These findings concur with Marchington (1995) who echoed that a management which creates and communicates objectives clearly with its employees instills commitment and unity of purpose in employees therefore resulting in high levels of worker loyalty and minimal rates of absenteeism.

The researcher also found out that most of the respondents (70%) indicated that management was doing little to create an effective communication environment and most of them attacked the human resources personnel as ineffective in addressing those things employees should know about their jobs. The main reason for this response was that management failed to show commitment in ensuring that information flowed effectively throughout the company. However this is in contrast with Simpson and Richard (1969), who were of the opinion that every person in an organization shares equal responsibility for communication effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

All the respondents (100%) indicated that elements such as distortions, omissions and perceptions were some of the major causes of ineffective communications in the organisation and as propounded by Hall (1991) these elements are unavoidable but can be minimized to avoid ineffective internal communication. The respondents (72%) also indicated that hierarchy is another major cause of ineffective communication that is if its size and roles are improperly defined such as those present at NOCZIM Procurement Company. This concurs to the studies of O'Reilly and Roberts (2003) who postulates that trust between superiors and sub-ordinates is lost due to the perceptual impact of hierarchy.

The majority of employees (90%) indicated that they were not satisfied with the internal communication strategies in the organisation. This was a true indication that the standards of communication in the organisation were below standard and did not motivate employees to exert their maximum efforts to foster high performance in their job areas. This confirms to the findings of Fletcher and Rogers (2005) who postulated that organisations need to consider internal communication as a key and pivotal driver of commitment, productivity and performance of both individuals and the enterprise. He further propounded that effective communication therefore serves to ensure

valuation of employees and creates employee loyalty as well as clarity of the vision and mission of the organisation.

4.12 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher analysed and discussed the research results clearly interpreting data which was relevant to the research questions. Tables, graphs and pie charts were used to summarize the data collected and the researcher then discussed research findings with reference to the conceptual and studies highlighted in literature review on the effectiveness of internal communication to organisational performance. The next chapter focused on the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter dealt with the summary, conclusions and possible recommendations to the study based on the data collected .

5.1 Summary

The research was aimed at assessing the effectiveness of internal communication on performance of National Oil Company of Zimbabwe Pvt ltd. Chapter one introduced the research project. The research objectives, assumptions and delimitations were also stated in chapter one.

Chapter two looked at literature reviews from different authors in the area of communication and its effect on organisational performance.

Chapter three looked at the methods employed in data collection and the research design was a case study. The design was explained and it involved questionnaires and interviews as instruments for data collection. The sample size was 40 respondents and data sources were primary and secondary. The validity and reliability of instruments were also highlighted.

Chapter four dealt with analysis, presentation and interpretation of research findings. The major findings of the research were that NOCZIM's managerial and non-managerial employees were aware of the ineffective internal communication within the company and agreed that it affected their levels of commitment, productivity and performance of the organisation. The research also found out that relationships between management and employees also tend to affect the effectiveness of communication if there is little consensus.

Another major finding was that perceptual differences also contribute immensely towards divisionism which is not ideal in achieving unity of purpose. Moreover

managerial style also contributes to poor communication if it does not give employees the flexibility to participate. The overall research indicated that management especially the Human Resources personnel were not doing enough to ensure that a communication free and conducive environment was created.

5.2 Conclusions

Various conclusions were drawn from the data in chapter 4:

Ineffective communication- eventually leads to reduced employee commitment thus leading to reduced work performance and also results in attitudes which create tension, frustration and selfishness. Negative attitudes may result in stressful relations between individuals thus impacting overally on the performance of the organisation.

Decision making-It is important for employee's interests to be taken into account when important decisions are taken; if they are treated with respect and consulted about change they are more likely to be satisfied with their job. Managers cannot guarantee that employees will accept all outcomes but they can put in place procedures that will make acceptance of the results more likely.

Developing effective communication is not only good for management but essential for the development of group cohesiveness and team spirit which promotes goal orientation.

Communications: Feedback plays a pivotal role in ensuring that flexibility is achieved in idea sharing and teamwork. This makes it possible for managers to rely on 'joint regulation' in order to communicate with employees and secure their co-operation. An effective two-way dialogue between employer and employees is a necessary means of giving expression to employee 'voice'.

Management style: The style adopted by managers plays a critical role in determining the nature of relationships between employers and employees. Managers can no longer control communication processes due to the 'top down' approach so

they have to adopt a more 'bottom up' style to obtain crucial feedback about performance flows from front-line employees.

Responsibility: Employees feel that it is management's responsibility to deliver sound communication conditions and develop commitment through the provision of training programs workshops for the low level employees. It can be concluded that management has failed to provide adequate awareness on the importance of workplace communication to the employees organisation wide and this has lead to profound negative effects on job satisfaction and commitment.

Perception: As an employee enters an organization they will have a perceived image and expectations. If the organization has a communication climate that promotes these expectations employees may show positive behaviour. However if the organizational communication climate does not promote the satisfaction of these expectations it then becomes disastrous as employees may subordinate the organisational objectives at the expense of their personal interests.

5.3 Recommendations

1. The organization should train its employees through workshops on the importance of communication at the workplace to create a recognized corporate communication culture.
2. Management should improve their communication skills and ensure communication flow from top to bottom. The importance of keeping employees informed about general matters affecting their work role is that it contributes to increased understanding of management's actions, reduced misunderstandings arising from day-day activities, and improved trust between employers and employees (Cole 1997).
3. Management should try to utilize management style that allows freedom of expression so that employees are encouraged to work collectively.
4. There is need to put in place effective communication channels for dissemination of key information.

5. Management should give employees reasonable ground to participate in decisions affecting their jobs.
6. There is also need to develop an audit of the effectiveness of the communication tools such as notices and feedback reports for management to rectify areas of weakness.
7. Management can put in place strategies to find the causes and remedies for ineffective communication at the workplace.
8. Liberalise the communication channels and share information.
People should be given a platform to express their opinions without fear of victimisation. Information on the group business should be made available to everyone and it should not be preserved for a few.

5.4 Suggestion for future research

In order to generalize the findings of this case study, the research study recommends that there is also need to carry out further research at a wider scale.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Cover Letter

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



The Department of Business Studies

To Whom It May Concern:

The bearer, Norman Huswu registration number B0621 413 is a 3rd year student at Bindura University of Science Education. He is currently undertaking a research on the **assessment of the effectiveness of internal communication on organisational performance at your company.**

This is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Business Studies (Honors) Degree in Human Resources Management.

Your assistance in his administration of questionnaire and/or interviews in your organization pertaining to the aforementioned topic will be appreciated. The research may require the use of some of your sectional operations reports. The information sought will be treated as confidential. Should you require further confirmation please do not hesitate to contact the department.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

(Chairperson).....

Appendix B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Briefly describe your job description
2. How old are you?
3. For how long have you been in the leadership position in your company?
4. What do you understand by ineffective communication and who is accountable for its existence in your company?
5. How strong is the management and employee relationship?
Cordial [] Tense [] Neutral []
6. What are your current communication strategies and procedures in your company?
7. What do you think are the causes of ineffective communication in your company?
8. What strategies do you think can be put in place to develop your company's internal communication?

Appendix C: QUESTIONNAIRES

Research Instrument

- Fill in your responses in the spaces provided below each question.
- Tick where applicable

Key: A-agree SA-strongly agree N-neutral SA-strongly agree
D-disagree

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. Gender: Male [] Female []

2. Age range: (>20) (21-30) (31-40) (41-50) (51+)
 [] [] [] []

3. For how long have you been employed at NOCZIM Pvt Ltd?

Years of service 0-2 years []
 2-5 years []
 5-7 years []
 7-10years []
 10-15years []
 Above 15yrs []

4. What is your level position?

Executive Management	
Senior Management	
Middle management	
Non-managerial	

SECTION B: Effect of communication on organisational performance

1. What do you understand by ineffective communication?

.....

.....

.....

2. Does poor internal communication affect your performance?

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

3. Do you think management contributes to the effectiveness of communication?

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

4) The relationship between management and staff is cordial

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

6) Employees are involved in decision making process

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

7) Are you satisfied with the management styles in your organisation?

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

SECTION C: Strategies used in Vertical and Horizontal Communication

1. What do you understand by vertical and horizontal communication?

.....
.....
.....

3. Does management often conduct regular briefing groups and staff meetings?

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

4. Are channels such as Bulletins, Notices and Circulars being used in your company?

SA [] A [] N [] D [] SD []

5. Does management hold joint consultation committees and suggestion schemes for feedback purposes?

Yes	No
[]	[]

SECTION D: Causes of Poor internal communication

1. What do you think are the causes of ineffective communication?

Distortions	Omissions	Perceptions
[]	[]	[]

