

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AS CORRELATES OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A
PERSPECTIVE OF UGANDA POLICE KAMPALA DISTRICT, UGANDA**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the organizational characteristics as correlates of employee performance: A perspective of Uganda Police Kampala District. The distinct objective that guided the study was: to assess the relationship between organizational communication and employee performance in Uganda Police. A descriptive correlative investigation research design was assumed by means of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study targeted 252 respondents. Simple random sampling and purposive techniques were used to select the participants. Data analysis involved frequencies, means and inferential statistics such as correlations and the coefficient of determination. The study findings revealed a positive relationship between organizational communication and employee performance at Uganda Police Force. It was therefore concluded that organizational communication positively influenced the employee performance of Uganda Police Force. The study therefore, recommends that the top leadership of Uganda Police Force management to create opportunities for employees to interact with the officers of the police in order to improve on the communication.

Key words: Organizational characteristic, employee performance, communication, management and Uganda Police Force

Introduction

Communication is considered an important part of the work setting of an organization. Organizational communication is a way to develop a strong culture within an organization to achieve set goals and objectives. In this respect (Moses et al., 2022) defines organizational communication as an approach in which everyone should participate in order to create an effective culture within the organization. According to (Mark & Jacob, 2023), the performance of employees increases if there is communication within the organization and, among other things, communication within the organization helps employees to perform their tasks well, to have information about the duties they have to perform and the goals of the organization (Christopher, Muhindo, et al., 2022). He claims that the existence of communication within an organization leads to effective decision-making. Furthermore, Palazzolo (2008) defines communication as a transaction. They argue that employees who are well informed about organizational activities such as goals and objectives, new developments, and achievements can enable organizational members to develop such characteristics that differentiate it from other organizations, thereby improving employee performance (Ntirandekura, Ainebyoona, et al., 2022). He also found that communication climate is an important variable in the relationship between organizational communication and employee performance; and where communication is lacking, decision making is difficult. According to him (Palazzolo 2008), the prime responsibility of the manager is to pay serious attention to the internal communication climate by giving each employee the opportunity to speak, engage and listen and guide them to achieve goals (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023a).

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Furthermore, (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, & Komunda, 2022) found that there is a positive and strong relationship between communication, job satisfaction and organizational identification. They talk about discrimination among employees, where they found that those employees who were treated unequally led to negative results; whereas those employees who were treated equally were more satisfied and committed to their organization (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, & Muhammad, 2022). They investigated the positive relationship between communication and work attitudes and outcomes, and their study showed that communication is the best way to learn about employee attitudes (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022). They explain that interpersonal communication is essential for all organizations because when public relations are good, there is an increase in productivity, job satisfaction, positive attitude of employees towards their organization and also organizational identification (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, & Nturanabo, 2022).

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. This was because people's views and opinions were sought and described accordingly and established how organizational characteristics influenced performance of employees. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted because they supplement each other. The qualitative approach was mainly used to describe subjective assessments, analyses and interpretation of attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of the respondents as expressed verbatim from interviews and focus group discussions (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The quantitative methods helped in generating numerical data, which was statistically manipulated to meet required objectives through descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics, which tested hypotheses using correlations and coefficients of determination (Amin, 2005). This was because there was need to outlay some information statistically in order to bring out the statistical aspects of the study clearly. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data allows triangulation by ensuring that the limitations of one type of data are balanced by the strengths of another. A sample size of 252 respondents was determined using statistical tables of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), as cited by Amin (2005) and both purposive and simple random sampling methods were to select respondents for the study. In particular, purposive sampling was used as a strategy that could add credibility to a sample when the potential purposeful sample is smaller than one could handle where by it uses small sample sizes, thus the goal is credibility, not representativeness or the ability to generalize (Patton, 2001). The researcher also chose simple random sampling technique such that each member in the targeted population would have an equal chance of being included in the sample. The researcher did both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. It involved uncovering structures, extracting important variables, detecting any irregularity and testing any assumptions (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Triangulation method of analysis was used to enable the researcher come up with appropriate conclusions and recommendations. The quantitative data analysis consisted of numerical values from which descriptions such as mean and standard deviations were made (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Data collected was checked to ensure regularity and accuracy; this was useful in ensuring that the objectives of the study were being addressed. Analysis was done according to the objectives of the study, data generated by questionnaires was cleaned, edited and coded before analysis was done; then analyzed using the

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program (Nelson et al., 2022). Summary statistics in form of qualitative and quantitative measures, frequencies and percentages were run and interpretations were made.

RESULTS

Table 1: Shows results of how Organizational Communication influences employee performance

Items	M	D	N	A	SA
I get timely communication about the decisions of the different organs in this UPF	2.95	28 (34%)	12(15%)	28(34%)	6 (7.3%)
There is open communication in this UPF	3.00	27 (33%)	13(16%)	29(35%)	6 (7.3%)
My immediate supervisor often asks for opinions / suggestions on important issues relating to this UPF	2.68	28(34%)	17(21%)	16(20%)	7 (9%)
My immediate supervisor often gives me information/suggestions or feedback on important issues relating to this UPF	2.68	27(33%)	17(21%)	19(23%)	5 (6.1%)
This UPF has good cross unit communication	2.99	25(31%)	8 (10%)	22(27%)	14(17%)
We frequently meet as a department to receive communication from staff representatives of my department to the different organs of this UPF	2.82	24(29%)	29(35%)	13(16%)	7 (9%)
I can communicate job frustrations to my supervisor	3.13	27(33%)	11(13%)	14(17%)	21(26%)
Management keeps employees up-to-date on recent developments that relate to the UPF's welfare	2.87	27(33%)	23(28%)	12(15%)	11(13%)
The UPF's communication motivates and stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting its goals	2.93	29(35%)	13(16%)	21(26%)	10(12%)
The UPF's communication makes me identify with it or feel a vital part of it	2.99	22(27%)	19(23%)	25(31%)	7 (9%)
Written directives and reports are always clear and concise	2.76	30(37%)	20(24%)	18(22%)	5 (6.1%)

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All UPF meetings are always well organized	2.57	28(34%)	12(15%)	19(23%)	5 (6.1%)
Conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels	2.91	30(37%)	16(20%)	25(31%)	5 (6.1%)
Average Mean	2.87				

The results of Table 1 indicate that organizational communication at UPF is moderately positive, with an aggregate mean of 2.87. However, there is a significant range of responses, with 38% to 56% of employees opposing the current communication strategy, 10% to 35% unsure, and 23% to 42.3% concurring (Musaibah et al., 2023). This suggests that the majority of employees have some concerns about the current communication strategy, but they are not sure how to improve it. Organizational communication at UPF is moderately good ($M = 2.87$) and timely ($M = 2.95$), according to the results in Table 1. This statement highlights the dual advantages that the organization gains through open communication: it enables employees to work effectively and with confidence, while also enhancing the company's potential for growth (Kucuol, 2023).

The respondents of the study corroborated the existence of open communication at UPF, as indicated by their agreement with the statement (mean = 3.00). This implies a strong presence of open communication within UPF. The statement is further supported by a key informant who emphasized that; “open communication is typically achieved through platforms like group internet and public memos” (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023b). The presence of open communication is instrumental in improving employee performance by cultivating trust and cultivating positive relationships. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to cooperate, take responsibility for their work, and be productive.

The study found that supervisors at UPF moderately agree that they often ask for employees' opinions and suggestions on important issues. This consultation increases employees' sense of worth and motivation, which results in improved performance (Winny et al., 2023). Additionally, the respondents agreed that their supervisors frequently provide them with feedback on their work.

Supervisors at UPF give employees feedback on important issues, as evidenced by the study finding that supervisors moderately agree that they often ask for employees' opinions and suggestions (mean = 2.68). Effective feedback enhances employee performance by helping employees understand their progress towards their goals and identify areas for improvement.

As per the findings from the survey respondents, it was observed that employees at UPF have the ability to effectively express their work-related frustrations to their supervisors (mean = 3.13). This open and efficient communication channel plays a pivotal role in diminishing conflicts and counterproductive work behavior, ultimately resulting in enhanced employee performance.

The study respondents agreed that Employees at UPF are motivated and enthusiastic about meeting goals because the organization's communication is clear and effective (mean = 2.93). Additionally, the organization's conflict management process is effective, which improves working relationships and creates a conducive work environment, leading to improved employee performance (mean = 2.91) (Isaac et al., 2023).

Table 2: Regression analysis showing the influence of organizational communication on employee performance

R square=0.096, P=0.005		
	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
	Beta	
Organizational Communication	0.310	0.005

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 exhibits a notable link between organizational communication and employee performance at UPF ($r = .310$), signifying that organizational communication serves as a crucial predictor of employee performance. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = .096$) further underlines that organizational communication has an influence of 9.6% on the variance of employee performance at UPF. Notably, a test of significance ($p = .005$) validates the statistical significance of the association between organizational communication and employee performance, thereby confirming its positive and significant impact on employee performance at UPF. In other words, it implies that better organizational communication leads to better employee performance at UPF (Ntirandekura, Friday, et al., 2022).

Discussion of findings

This study provides evidence that organizational communication plays an important role in employee performance at UPF. The likely reason for this association is that communication at UPF is characterized by timely dissemination of information, open dialogue, active participation, and provision of feedback. Communication is critical to the success of any organisation. It enables employees to comprehend and align with the aims of the organisation, collaborate effectively, and settle issues. Effective communication also helps to create a positive work environment where employees feel valued and respected. Leaders can improve organizational communication by fostering open and honest communication between employees and supervisors, providing timely and accurate information, and encouraging feedback. Improving organizational communication can lead to a number of positive work outcomes, including improved employee performance, engagement, and satisfaction (Avolio et al, 1992 and Rowe, 2001), as cited by Femi (2014).

Improved supervisor-subordinate communication can help organizations manage diversity and promote equality and integration in the workplace. Effective communication is essential for building trust and creating a positive work environment where all employees feel valued and respected. When employees feel supported by their supervisors and believe that their contributions are appreciated, they are more likely to be engaged and productive (Neves and Eisenberger, 2012). Leadership plays a critical role in fostering effective supervisor-subordinate communication.

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Credible leaders who are able to initiate and respond to change effectively can create a culture of open and honest communication. This, in turn, can help to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Research has shown that there is a positive association between employee satisfaction and job performance. This suggests that the leader-employee relationship is an important contributor to employee engagement. Organizations that invest in improving supervisor-subordinate communication can reap the benefits of a more diverse, inclusive, and engaged workforce.

Halis (2000) and Pettit et al. (1997) agree that organizational communication has a significant impact on job satisfaction, with open and positive communication leading to higher satisfaction. According to Chen et al. (2006), maintaining a continuous and open line of communication within an organization is linked to increased levels of work engagement. Furthermore, Leiter and Maslach (2008) discovered that employees with similar levels of work engagement tend to establish communication networks amongst themselves. Conversely, negative relationships between supervisors and subordinates can significantly diminish work engagement. These findings suggest that organizations can improve employee performance by enhancing organizational communication. This may involve fostering open and positive communication between employees and supervisors, providing continuous and transparent communication about company goals and objectives, and encouraging employees to form communication networks with their colleagues.

Conclusion

This study revealed a significant and positive correlation between organizational communication and employee performance at UPF. The employees benefit from timely communication regarding decisions made by various departments, and there is a culture of open communication within the organization. Employees can express their job grievances to their bosses, which inspires and drives them to accomplish the company's goals. Furthermore, effective communication inside the UPF helps employees identify with the company and feel like a key part of it, which can assist dispute resolution.

Recommendations

Informal interaction between employees and managers is important. Employees are often hesitant to interrupt their busy bosses with small questions or requests. However, managers who make time for casual conversation help employees feel valued and appreciated.

A Communications Committee could be established to manage communication at UPF. This committee could organize regular meetings between management and employees at all levels, as well as other communication initiatives, such as employee surveys and town hall meetings. Regular communication from management holds significant importance.

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