

Review of Effective Communication Strategies and Employee's Performance at Workplace Lahore, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT: Efficient communication is pivotal for creating and promoting a productive culture for a harmonious work atmosphere within organizations while encouraging employees for optimal performance. This research aims to review the effective communication strategies at organizational workplaces and their effects on employee performance in the local Pakistani context. This review paper was developed, using both primary and secondary data. The secondary data was extracted from varied databases and repositories, such as JSTOR, Academia, Google Scholars, and Research Gate, considering the accessibility. Addressing the review objective, key search terms were developed and 36 articles were selected. Further, secondary data was complemented with primary data, where a sample of four relevant organizations in district Lahore (Pakistan) was taken to visit and conduct face-to-face in-depth interviews with the concerned officials. A total of 08 in-depth interviews were conducted, followed by transcription. Review data was synthesized and thematic analysis was performed. It concludes that a clear and consistent flow of information between employers/managers and employees substantially enhances organizational effectiveness. The review acknowledges the prerequisite of two-way communication between employers/managers and employees to enhance efficiency at both ends. It fosters trust, reduces misunderstandings, and mitigates counterproductive work behaviors. This research highlights the importance of balancing modern communication technologies with traditional methods to enhance organizational performance and employee engagement. A hybrid communication approach can offer a more effective strategy for non-profit and public sector organizations, improving collaboration, clarity, and overall productivity.

KEYWORDS: Effective Communication, Employees' Productivity, Workplace Efficiency, Lahore, Pakistan

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Introduction

Communication is the most important aspect of interpersonal interactions, playing a pivotal role in how individuals connect, share ideas, and transmit information. In an organizational setting, where people regularly interact while executing their jobs, effective communication becomes indispensable for achieving

organizational goals. It is not merely a tool for exchanging information but a fundamental component of human civilization, permeating social, political, religious, and cultural domains (Stevens, & Ogunji, [2011](#)).

In today's globalized market, effective communication within and across teams is essential for organizations to remain competitive. A strategic communication approach not only keeps employees motivated but also ensures clear and consistent messaging, ultimately enhancing organizational productivity (Musheke & Phiri, [2021](#)). Conversely, poor communication can lead to a decline in trust and hinder organizations' ability to function effectively (Bücker et al., [2014](#)). Employees lacking effective communication strategies often struggle to perform as effectively as those with strong communication framework (Campbell et al., [2020](#)).

In Pakistan, Organizational culture is often influenced by traditional values, resulting in hierarchal structures where communication primarily flows top-down from managers to subordinates (Amber et al., [2019](#)). This rigid structure often discourages open communication and limits employee engagement (Kiptulon et al., [2024](#)).

On the other hand, organizations with horizontal communication foster better teamwork and decision-making especially at lower levels, strengthening relationships among employees and managers across departments (Hee et al., [2019](#)). One-way communication, lacking interaction and feedback, can diminish employee satisfaction and weaken organizational cohesion (Musheke & Phiri, [2021](#)).

Regular feedback mechanisms in organizations serve as motivational tools, providing regular insights that encourage employees to track and improve their performance (Haider et al., 2019). However, ineffective feedback loops can lead to employees feeling disconnected from the organization's objectives, resulting in decreased motivation and performance. (Afshan et al., [1995](#)).

Moreover, structured team meetings that encouraged participatory communication significantly enhance engagement, inhibiting counterproductive behaviors, and promoting citizenship behavior (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., [2013](#)). On the contrary, poorly managed meetings can lead to wasted resources, employee stress, and job dissatisfaction (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., [2018](#)). Further, modern communication tools (e.g., emails, instant messaging, and video conferencing) also enhance employee productivity, feedback, and efficiency (Shair et al., [2022](#); Vidhani & Mishra, [2024](#)). However, there is a difference in organizational practices across the world, particularly in developing countries, like Pakistan. Multiple organizations in the country are still struggling to adopt two-way communication and digital tools, due to traditional values, which results in suboptimal outcomes for both employees and employers (Hee et al., [2019](#); Bücker et al., [2014](#)).

Given the context above, this review paper is aimed to explore the impact of two-way communication strategies on employee performance, and organizational productivity. Particularly, it focused on the role of various organizational communication strategies, such as feedback mechanisms, regular meetings, and the use of technology. This review is an attempt to bridge the gap in existing literature, highlighting local practices and providing insights to concerned stakeholders to promote more effective communication practices for enhancing a productive workplace environment.

Theoretical Framework

This review has sought guidance from the Social Exchange Theory to understand how the quality and frequency of communication enable employees to perform within organizations efficiently. Effective

communication is considered significant to engage with the team, both at higher and lower levels to share regular feedback, inspire their commitment, and achieve desired outcomes.

Homans, (1958) proposed the social exchange theory, positing that social interactions are based on cost-benefit analysis, where individuals seek to maximize rewards or benefits while minimizing costs in their interactions. In organizational settings, this theory postulates how communication strategies influence social interaction and relationships between employees and employers. It emphasized that organizational behavior is built on a series of mutual and reciprocal exchanges of information among individuals, who evaluate the reward (e.g., friendship, support, companionship) against the cost (e.g., time, effort, compromise) associated with interacting with others.

In terms of organizations, employees are motivated to invest their time, knowledge, skills, and efforts in order to maximize their rewards, compensation, and job satisfaction (Blau, 1964). Here the role of communication is critical between employees and employers to facilitate trustworthiness, respectability, and collaboration, thus improving commitment and performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). That's how, it emphasized the significance of two-way communication for feedback and information exchange for improving employee commitment towards employer and overall efficiency.

The same notion is supported by recent research work (Soid et al., 2025), highlighting the association between effective two-way communication strategies and employee performance, while promoting organizational citizenship behaviors and reducing counterproductive work behavior. The implementation of two-way communication strengthens collaboration between employees and employers, minimizing misunderstanding and delays, and encouraging organizational goals (Soid et al., 2025), thus creating an enabling environment at the workplace and leading to organizational success (Ify, 2024). In addition to this, modern technologies and communication means have advanced the measures of engagement, transparent communication, reciprocal exchanges, and mutual collaboration (Shair et al., 2022), leading to improved organizational citizenship behavior and organizational success.

Methods

This review paper used a mix of secondary and primary data sources to address the research objective and highlight the role of communication strategies on employee performance. A comprehensive review of 36 relevant articles was conducted, focusing on key aspects of effective communication strategies. These included two-way communication, feedback mechanisms, regular meetings, and the use of technology, and their impact on employee performance, task performance, citizenship behavior, and counterproductive behavior at the workplace. Search terms such as "impact of effective communication strategies on the workforce," "employee productivity," "two-way communication," "feedback mechanism," "task performance," and "counterproductive or citizenship behavior" were used across various databases, including Google Scholar, Research Gate, and JSTOR.

In addition to the above, this review combined a comprehensive literature review with in-depth interviews. (IDIs) across four purposively selected organizations all based in Lahore Pakistan. These organizations were selected to provide diverse perspectives on communication strategies and their impact. Based on the

literature review, a semi-structured interview guide was developed to conduct IDIs with managers and employees from the selected organizations, who are directly involved in communication practices.

Key informant participants for IDIs were informed of the study's purpose and their right to confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection, ensuring they understood their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without consequence.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected during the month of June (2024). The transcribed interviews were subjected to thematic analysis, where themes and patterns were identified, categorized, and aligned with the research questions. The collected data both from primary and secondary sources were analyzed to identify similarities and commonalities in the themes generated, which were then organized into a matrix (Annex-A). These themes were carefully examined and compared with the primary data to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the utilization of communication strategies impacts employee performance and contributes to organizational success. The synthesized data were then interpreted to draw meaningful conclusions about the role of effective communication strategies in enhancing employee performance.

Key Findings and Discussions

Change and development span various organizational levels—individual, group, and broader community—forming a hierarchical system where each level impacts the others (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). As organizations evolve, they often start with a singular focus or goal but gradually expand their objectives and complexity (Greiner, 1989). Initially, effective communication phenomena might seem straightforward, however, as organizations grow in complexity, the effectiveness of communication can diminish if not properly adapted to the changing needs and structures. Effective communication must evolve in tandem with organizational development to maintain its impact and support overall performance.

The present study aimed to review the effective communication strategies at the organizational workplace and their effects on employee performance in the local Pakistani context, by conducting interviews with employers/managers and employees from four selected organizations. The following highlights key findings related to communication practices and their impact on employee performance.

Two-Way Communication and Task Efficiency:

Two-way communication refers to a process through which employees and employers exchange information with each other, creating inclusivity, a sense of belonging in the workplace, and overall productivity and efficiency of the organizations. Generally, organizations with the implementation of two-way communication strategies experience efficient task performance and higher employee satisfaction (Rajhans, 2012; Heyden et al., 2017; Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). Communication channels have a direct and positive effect on individuals and their relationships.

Hierarchical communication structures within traditional organizational setups prefer formal means, like memos, letters, and in-person meetings. While these traditional communication means provide clarity and control of information flow, they may restrict the speed and agility needed to address issues promptly.

Reliance on such traditional means may overwhelm employees and reduce task prioritization (Eppler & Mengis, 2008; Khan et al., 2011), which violates reciprocity needed for engagement and commitment. In contrast, modern organizations prefer technologies advanced communication means and tools, like emails and instant messaging platforms for productive exchanges. These systems enable transparent two-way interactions that reduce misunderstandings, address conflicts efficiently, and promote task completion with clarity (Nebo et al., 2015; Musheke & Phiri, 2021). Above all, such practices also enhance trust and collaboration within internal and external organizational structures, as well as deepen reciprocal organizational relationships. However, excessive communication through modern communication means may present challenges related to information overload, which impedes an employee's ability to prioritize and execute tasks efficiently (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

Feedback Mechanisms and Employee Development

Feedback mechanisms at the organizational level are critical to supporting employee development, adhering to organizational policies, and improving organizational performance in the marketplace. Here continuous and effective feedback serves as a platform between employee and employer, building mutual trust and reinforcing positive behaviors (Blau, 1964). At the organizational level, feedback is crucial to oversee progress, address any potential issues, and maintain performance standards, thus promoting individual development (Kauffeld & Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012).

Feedback in traditional settings usually involves periodic appraisals or one-on-one discussions with management or supervisors, providing comprehensive and detailed feedback, including dealing with complex issues as well as providing accurate assessments. Relying solely on such traditional feedback mechanisms may lead to delays when urgent matters arise, especially where issues of urgency require quick resolution. As Kumar, (2012) highlighted, technological solutions can offer faster, more responsive alternatives to these conventional practices, improving timeliness and relevance of feedback. Modern feedback systems employ both traditional and real-time methods for feedback delivery, providing ongoing dialogue as well as immediate responses. This multidimensional approach aligns with the notion that ongoing, reciprocal exchanges between employees and management build trust, foster collaboration, and boost overall performance (Homans, 1958). As an example, instant feedback delivered through digital channels, such as WhatsApp, provides employees with timely insights that improve their ability to adapt quickly and perform at high levels.

Feedback systems also promote a collaborative environment by quickly responding to concerns raised, thus reducing costs associated with miscommunication and misrepresentation (Blau, 1964). Further, face-to-face communication remains at the core of organizational communication, playing a crucial role in supporting teamwork and problem-solving. These direct exchanges create stronger interpersonal relationships and enhance more effective communication (Kozlowski, & Ilgen, 2006). Regular meetings, a fundamental aspect of face-to-face communication, help build team cohesion and coordinate efforts across departments to improve organizational dynamics and performance (Asrar-ul-Haq, & Iqbal, 2017). In the context of Pakistan, the culture places great value on community involvement and interactions between members. Such interactions serve to foster trust and collaboration – which are two components essential to meeting the organizational goals (Lehmann-Willenbrock & Hung, 2023).

Regular Meetings in Team Cohesion and Coordination

Review findings highlighted the significance of periodic meetings at workplaces to ensure inters-departmental collaboration, increase employee engagement, and strengthen organizational cohesion (Haq & Faizan, [2023](#)). These meetings facilitate two-way communication between management and staff, enabling knowledge transfer, clarification of priorities, and reinforcement of organizational values. Conferences are held at regular intervals (monthly or quarterly) or in response to significant project deadlines. This structured approach ensures issues are addressed consistently while maintaining flexibility. However, rigid adherence to traditional communication methods, such as formal memos and letters, may hinder responsiveness and adaptability (Eisenhardt, & Sull, [2001](#)).

Many organizations prioritize regular meetings to monitor progress, address issues, and align employees with organizational goals. These meetings, whether in-person or online, enhance communication, conflict resolution, and employee engagement, leading to better organizational performance (Kauffeld & Lehmann-Willenbrock, [2012](#)). However, excessive meetings can be counterproductive. Too many meetings may diminish employee well-being, as they take time away from core tasks, causing stress and decreased job satisfaction (Luong & Rogelberg, [2005](#)). Inefficient or unnecessary meetings may frustrate employees, negatively affecting morale and productivity (Rogelberg et al., [2006](#)). In-person meetings are particularly valuable for strengthening teamwork, fostering rapport, and facilitating problem-solving and decision-making (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., [2018](#)). Regular face-to-face interactions enhance communication and team dynamics, improving team efficiency, especially in complex work environments (Kozlowski & Ilgen, [2020](#)).

Mitigating Counterproductive Behavior through effective Communication strategy

Setting clear expectations for employees, providing regular feedback, and addressing issues before they escalate is crucial for organizational effectiveness (Nyoike, & Karimi, [2023](#); Men & Yue, [2019](#)). Open communication enhances employee performance by enabling timely issue resolution and improving overall organizational dynamics. When employees have access to top management, it fosters a sense of being heard, reducing the likelihood of work delays and frustration. This open communication also improves performance, minimizes misunderstandings, and fosters a more cohesive work environment. According to Social Exchange Theory, open communication enhances the mutual exchange between employees and management by fostering trust and reducing uncertainty. When employees feel heard and valued, this reciprocal relationship strengthens organizational commitment, reduces misunderstandings, and promotes a more cohesive work environment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, [2005](#)). By enabling timely issue resolution, the organization responds to employee needs, which in turn boosts performance and engagement (Sypniewska, [2020](#)). In centralized cultures, where communication tends to be more formal and less responsive, the lack of reciprocal problem-solving opportunities may slow progress and increase frustration. However, a focus on capacity building and training programs highlights the organization's commitment to employee development, enhancing the mutual benefits of the employee-employer relationship and contributing to broader organizational success.

Communication Strategies and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Effective communication—such as procedural communication, team meetings, proactive communication, and conflict management—plays a crucial role in enhancing performance and commitment (Lehmann-Willenbrock

et al., [2013](#); Men & Yue, 2019; Musheke & Phiri, [2021](#)). Research interviews indicate that operational communication significantly improves performance by enabling timely issue resolution and fostering a healthier organizational environment. Regular meetings, feedback mechanisms, and open communication strategies are recommended to reduce counterproductive behaviors and enhance OCB by promoting trust and collaboration.

Social Exchange Theory posits that employees reciprocate the treatment and information they receive from their organization through their performance and perceptions. When employees feel valued and see their organization engaging in socially responsible actions, they respond with positive attitudes and extra-role behaviors (Liaquat & Mehmood, 2017). Employee participation in decision-making further strengthens these relationships, fostering fairness and reducing misunderstandings, thereby improving organizational cohesion (Men & Yue, [2019](#)).

Technology-Driven Communication and Its Influence on Efficiency

Achieving effective communication in modern workplaces requires balancing traditional methods and technological tools to enhance clarity and foster collaboration. Face-to-face communication remains essential for task completion and relationship building, which directly impacts performance. Email, while preferred for formal operations, has been noted for occasional operational lapses (Ean, [2010](#)). Interview findings further revealed that technology-driven communication positively influences employee performance by streamlining roles and improving efficiency. Clear communication tools enhance task clarity, leading to better organizational performance.

In contrast, organizations relying on traditional communication methods—such as official letters, memos, and face-to-face meetings—may experience delays in response times compared to technology-supported methods. However, tools like CAD drawings, faxes, phone calls, and WhatsApp offer quicker, clearer communication (Dwumah et al., [2015](#)). While these technological advances improve efficiency, they also present challenges such as coordination difficulties and increased workload, which can impact employee performance (Timmermann et al., [2022](#)). Technology-supported communication mediums like email, Zoom, and WhatsApp are now essential in modern organizations. These tools facilitate the exchange of information and promote cooperation. Communication technology enhances employee focus and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved performance. However, over-reliance on technology may reduce face-to-face interaction, potentially negatively affecting teamwork and the collaborative environment. Social Exchange Theory suggests that the communication process in organizations is grounded in reciprocal relationships. When employees feel that their communication needs are met and that their organization values their input, they reciprocate with enhanced performance and engagement, which promotes organizational citizenship behaviors and contributes to improved organizational effectiveness.

Communication approaches in public and non-profit organizations varied significantly. Public organizations typically adhere to traditional communication structures with formal channels being prioritized, while non-profit organizations often adopt modern technology as a means for efficiency and flexibility, showing greater technological agility than their public counterparts. This distinction revealed a gap in communication practices, where public organizations held fast to traditional values, whereas non-profits

thrived on technological responsiveness. In order to bridge this divide, there is a requirement for an equilibrium between traditional and modern communication practices that suits both sectors equally well.

Limitations

One of the major limitations of this review paper is its limited sample size, focusing solely on organizations in Lahore. Therefore, its results may not fully represent communication practices in other geographical settings. Future studies may benefit from including organizations from across various geographic locations to make results more generalized.

Conclusion

This research explored how effective communication strategies impact employee productivity at work. The results indicate a wide contrast between fully digital communication technologies embraced by organizations and those who still lean towards traditional methods, such as official letters, memos, and meetings for clear documentation and a controlled flow of information. Organizations that adopted the latest tools such as WhatsApp and emails for quick and efficient intra- and inter-departmental communication demonstrate significantly improved communication quality, improved team collaboration, and higher employee engagement. Conversely, the organizations that primarily utilized traditional methods, such as formal channels for information dissemination, acknowledged the value of these approaches in maintaining formality and ensuring clear documentation, emphasizing that these channels remain important for preserving a formal and well-documented communication process.

However from a research standpoint, even though modern communication technology provides several benefits, the importance of using traditional methods is still there at least for formally documented clarity. These two approaches—modern and traditional can provide balanced practices for effectively maintain formal communication. This new wave of hybrid communication combining modern technology with old-school word-of-mouth tactics could be the key to boosting organizational performance and increasing employee engagement in non-profit organizations.

Further research is needed to understand communication-related practices more widely throughout Pakistan and across sectors. This will broaden the scope of the study, helping organizations better navigate the challenges of adopting their initial attitude and developing a more flexible and efficient communication strategy at work.

Future Research Recommendations

Conducting cross-sectorial analyses to compare communication practices and their impact within the corporate sector can provide valuable insight. These practices perform differently in various organizational setups, influenced by factors such as Pakistan's cultural diversity including regional and linguistic differences. The impact of this variation on communication practices and employee engagement across organizations would further enhance our understanding. Further research could be beneficial by increasing the sample size by including a large variety of organizations in different sectors, such as both non-profit and for-profit entities, would allow for a more generalizable understanding of effectiveness of communication strategies'. Moreover, future research could investigate the efficacy of integrating traditional communication methods with modern

technologies, particularly through case studies focusing on organizations that employ mix approaches in order to provide some insight into the benefits and challenges.

Lastly, examining the impact of communication strategies on employee perceptions, satisfaction, retention, and overall organizational culture, especially regarding their engagement in decision-making processes, would provide valuable insights. By addressing these areas, future research can offer deeper insights into the complexities of communication in organizations, leading to the development of more effective strategies tailored to the unique needs and challenges of different organizational contexts.

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