

Communication and Civil Service Delivery in Benue and Kwara States, Nigeria

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Abstract

Communication is important to a country's political, social and economic development. Communication as an environmental factor developed with the evolution of man, and this was achieved through simple signs and gestures. Technological development brought about improvement in communication over time. The issue of concern is poor communication in the Nigeria's civil service. This has been enhanced by barriers like ambiguous memoranda, wrong timing of information, overloading of messages, complexity of organisational structure, state of physical environment, unresolved conflicts among staff, and conflict between staff and management. Therefore, this study becomes imperative because previous studies explore communication at the federal level without recourse to what operates in the Benue and Kwara States civil services. The main purpose of the study was to examine the effect of communication on civil service delivery in Benue and Kwara States, Nigeria. The study was anchored on the communication theory. The methodology adopted by the study was the survey research design. The sampling technique that was adopted for the study is the stratified random technique. The study's population consisted of 1,439 individuals. The sample size for the study was 313 participants. The study revealed that communication had a significant influence on service delivery $F(1,304) = 81.320, p < 0.05$. The study concluded that communication in organisations had a significant and positive effect on service delivery in the Benue and Kwara States of Nigeria. The study recommends that communication in Benue and Kwara States civil services should be improved upon in order to make for a virile and dynamic civil service in the concerned states.

1. Introduction

The importance of communication in the development of both developed and developing countries in the 21st century cannot be overemphasised. Communication serves as an important element of any organisation. This is in the sense that without communication, an establishment or organisation would just exist as an assembly of men, materials, and processes that are operative (Bhasin, 1994). In corroborating this view, Sesay (2023) asserted that poor communication results in uncertainty, confusion, conflict and lack of development in the organisation.

As Gajjar (2021) observed, communication came into existence with the evolution of man, and this commenced with the use of simple signs and gestures, and over time, sophisticated equipment and tools were introduced. This, in essence, implies that a tremendous change in communication technology has contributed to

the transformation of communication to the modern system with the use of e-mails, cell phones, the internet, and even text messaging.

In Nigeria, traditional societies employed a variety of means of communication to spread information prior to the advent of science and technology and lately, Information Communication Technology (ICT). These included the use of town criers, symbols, fire, and drumbeats in order to spread information and even resolve conflict (Enang, 2022). The introduction of Western education in Nigeria as a means of promoting Christianity in the southern part of Nigeria helped to enhance communication through writing. Some indigenes' proficiency in writing eventually paved the way for their appointments in the colonial civil service. The importance of communication in building a virile civil service in present-day Nigeria cannot be overemphasised. However, due to inadequate communication skills and gadgets, efficiency in civil service delivery has been adversely affected in the civil services of Benue and Kwara States.

This study intends to contribute to knowledge by examining the linkage between communication and the delivery of service in the civil service, especially in Benue and Kwara States, Nigeria. This becomes imperative because previous studies explore communication at the federal level without recourse to what operates in the Benue and Kwara States civil services. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by exploring communication in the civil services of Benue and Kwara States, Nigeria. Hopefully, at the end of this exercise, the civil services, especially in Benue and Kwara States, will experience a positive turnaround and enhanced political, social, and economic development of the country as a whole.

The importance of communication in the civil service cannot be overemphasised. This is more so in a developing country like Nigeria. Communication and management of organisations like the civil service are complimentary. Communication makes interactions between members of a working team possible. It is the responsibility of an administration to utilise effective communication to establish bridges between the members of an organisation (Bucata and Rizescu, 2017). Effective communication makes it possible for workers to be aware of the organisational goals, rules and regulations (Sreeja, 2021). This, in turn, can influence service delivery in a positive manner in the civil service in Nigeria.

However, poor communication in Nigeria's civil service has been enhanced by barriers like ambiguous memoranda, wrong timing of information, overloading of messages, complexity of organisational structure, state of physical environment, unresolved conflicts among staff, and conflict between staff and management. These have negative effects on service delivery with implications for the socio-political and economic development of Nigeria.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of communication as an internal environmental factor on service delivery in the civil service in Benue and Kwara States. The specific objectives are to attempt a conceptual review of communication and service delivery, examine the nature of workplace communication in Nigeria, explore communication in labour-management relations in the civil service, and examine how communication influences service delivery in civil services in Benue and Kwara States, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Communication

The word "communication" comes from the Latin word "communicare," which means to share or participate (Ahmad, 2020). Communication, therefore, is the sending and receiving or transmitting information from one participant to another (Ahmad, 2020). Where communication exists, information or ideas are shared between at least two people; one is the sender, and the other is the receiver. Sen in Sabbah, Wallbich, and Hussein (2020) noted communication as the process that involves transferring messages as well as feedback. Communication thus comprises a sender, a message, a medium, and a receiver. In addition, communication, as opined by Tsbee (2024), is the process by which ideas are exchanged between two parties. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal in nature. Ezeh (2020) posited that communication is an indispensable management tool that entails transferring ideas from the sender to the receiver using voice or technology in the process. Thus, within the realm of organisation, communication is the process by which information is passed between individuals and their establishment by means of previously agreed symbols that are recognised and accepted by other people (Sesay, 2023). Communication is of different forms. These are vertical communication, upward communication, downward communication, and horizontal communication (Kalogiannidis, 2020; Matunga, 2022). The form of communication used in an organisation depends on the circumstances and time.

2.1.2 Services Delivery

Fox and Mayor in Arugu and Nnaa (2020) defined public service delivery as the provision of tangible and intangible services that cannot be produced by the private sector. These are both visible and invisible services like

sanitation service, provision of pipe-borne water, and activities of the respective government's ministries, departments, and agencies. There is a need to realize that, for effective and efficient service delivery, the government must come to terms with the needs of the people. Public service delivery, in essence, means the citizenry performs some responsibilities for the state and receives compensation for these duties or responsibilities.

Service delivery is "concerned with the where, when, and how a service product is delivered to the customer and whether this is fair or unfair in nature" (Martins and Ladimo, 2015). As observed, "in the public sector, service components are of processes, people, skills and materials that must be appropriately integrated to result in the planned or 'designed' service" (Martins and Ladimo, 2015). Service delivery in the public service, therefore, focuses on the quality of the service being provided with a view to ensuring that the electorates (voters) are satisfied with the services rendered. The delivery of services in the public sector is most of the time not physical but instead a combination of processes (Arugu & Nnaa, 2020)

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the communication theory. The communication theory was proposed by S. F. Scudder in 1980. The theory opined that human beings communicate in different ways with the use of sound and movement, environmental message gestures, postures, appearance, body movement, and expression of feelings and thoughts (Sesay, 2022).

Karl Deutsch can be perceived as one of the advocates of communication theory in political science, and this is reflected in his book, *The Nerves of Government* (Ray, 2011). As opined by Deutsch, the political system is a network of communication channels (Mahajan, 2014). The communication theory sees the government as a decision-making system. The decisions taken by the government are based on certain information flows. As Deutsch observed, information can be measured and counted, and the performance of communication channels in transmitting or distorting information can be evaluated in quantitative terms (Mahajan, 2014). It is important to note that the concept of feedback is central to Karl Deutsch's idea. Feedback implies the communication network that produces action in response to an input of information (Ray, 2011). The feedback can be positive or negative in nature.

The close relationship between communication in organisation and communication theory can be seen in the fact that an organisation is also concerned with information and how it is sent, processed, received, and decoded with feedback to the decision-making apparatus. It is imperative to note that all organisations have feedback mechanisms that may allow them to change in response to information. In any situation where information is transferred from one person to another, its effects on service delivery become paramount.

2.3 Workplace Communication in Nigeria

The importance of communication in both the private and public sectors cannot be overemphasized. Since communication is an important aspect of an organisation, it has a process. This is enunciated by Adu-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang (2014), who opined that the two common elements in every communication exchange are the sender and the receiver of information or messages. The interactions between these two parties occur through what is known as the communication process, as illustrated in Fig. 1.

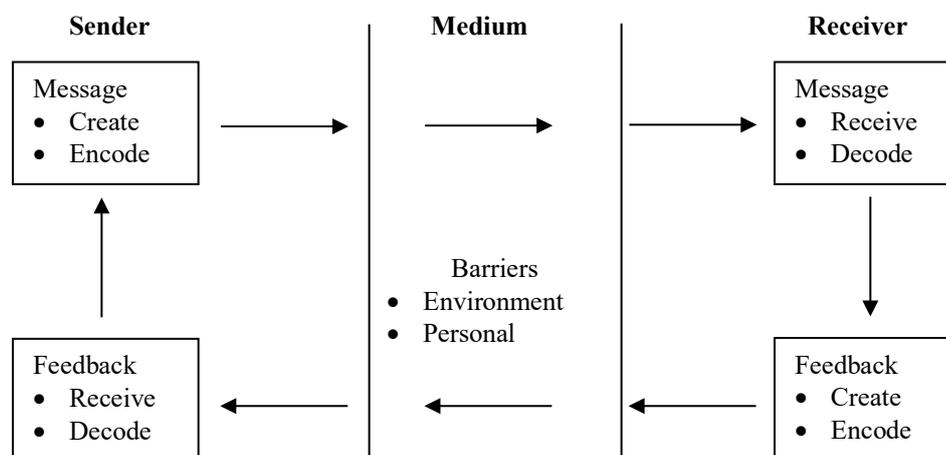


Fig. 1 *The communication process* (Adu-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang, 2014)

From Fig. 1, it can be seen that with the communication process, messages are created and sent out by the sender through a medium. Once the receiver gets the message, he or she proceeds to decode it for proper understanding. Subsequently, there is feedback created by the receiver to the sender. Barriers, however, can hinder communication through the environment or personal barriers; there is feedback received by the sender, and this would be decoded. Specifically in the public service in Nigeria, communication exists as a management function by which messages in the form of instructions or orders, methods of operations, information, and policies are transferred from political office holders to government employees, and there is feedback in the form of complaints, protests, obedience, sent by the subordinates to the political leadership (Arugu & Nnaa, 2020).

Scholars have also emphasised the importance of effective communication in an organisation in the 21st century. As posited by Ezeh (2020), effective communication provides people with the needed information so as to become educated and enlightened. In addition, communication is a vital tool that helps organisation to accomplish set goals (Curado, Henriques, Jeronimo & Azvedo, 2022). Communication also enhances the effectiveness of an organisation. A more comprehensive view of communication was, however, provided by Zambas (2019), who asserted that effective communication helps in improving team building by creating a strong team for the organisation. This would serve as a morale booster for the employees since they would feel useful in the organisation.

Communication enhances creativity and innovation in an organisation: Innovation enhances creativity and performance in an organisation (Rumanti, Rizana & Achamad, 2023). With the constant transmission of information, individuals become creative.

Communication increases productivity: This implies an increase in overall productivity, as asserted by Musheke and Phiri (2021). It is based on the premise that the manager or chief executive can understand his employees' talents and skills, giving a clear perception of those best suited for the job.

Communication resolves challenges: Challenges are bound to come up when people interact with one another (Zambas, 2019).

Lastly, effective communication can also help to reveal hidden skills. The organisation, be it private or public, can tap into these skills in order to enable them to enjoy the benefits of effective communication that have to be surmounted by organisations like the civil service.

Goodwin (2018) discussed six barriers to effective communication. These are: In the first place, dissatisfaction or disinterest with one's job. In this situation, one is unhappy or has lost interest in his or her job; as such, one is less likely to communicate effectively.

Secondly, there is an issue of inability to listen to others. That is, an employee cannot engage with someone that he is not listening to, because of the tendency to make assumptions about such people's needs.

Thirdly, as further posited by Goodwin (2018), there is a barrier to a lack of transparency and trust. When there is a lack of trust, it is difficult for the individual to communicate meaningfully and effectively. For instance, according to him, when staff believes the management of the public institution is holding something back, they will be anxious, there will be speculation, and any attempt to communicate meaningfully can be rebuffed.

Fourthly, communication style can also serve as a barrier to effective communication. This, as observed by Goodwin (2018), is because communication styles differ from one person to another. Some people can provide detailed explanations, while others just generalize.

Fifthly, conflicts in the workplace, as Goodwin (2018) opined, can come up in an establishment at any point in time. When such conflict lingers, people will start taking sides, and this will not promote effective communication within the establishment.

Lastly, there is the issue of cultural differences and languages. This, as posited by Goodwin (2018), can impede effective communication in the workplace. This is in the sense that the way people who belong to a particular culture will interpret an issue may be different from the way people of another culture will interpret the same issue or event. For instance, in Nigeria, there is African time syndrome, which permits lateness to programme. This language is not recognized in other countries, especially developed ones where time is highly valued. In a related development, Tsebee (2024) opined that communication barriers often observed in organisations are a lack of feedback mechanisms, differences in communication styles among employees, lack of clear communication channels and protocols, resistance to change, the poor organisational culture around communication, language barriers and lack of cross-departmental communication.

Kapur (2018), in her discussion of the barriers to effective communication, opined that barriers can be classified as follows: (i) environmental and physical barriers, and this can be further classified into (a) time, (b) space, (c) place, (d) medium; (ii) semantic barriers; (iii) cultural barriers; (iv) psychological barriers; and (v) perception of reality. This is a wide mode or broad mode of classification, and it gives another perspective on communication. In order to ensure effective communication, Campbell, Campbell-Phillips, and Phillips (2020) posited that pre-arranged meetings should be held between management and staff to talk things out, secure an intermediary for amicable solutions, listen to co-workers, and remain open to another perspective.

Afinotan (2009) observed in a similar way to Kapur (2018) that the basic impediments to effective communication in the civil service can be classified into two broad categories. These broad categories are personal

and institution of service. That is, they are personal and institutional in nature. As Afinotan (2009) noted, personal barriers can further be classified into psychological, physical, and semantic. The institutional barrier concerns the barriers created by the service, like rules and regulations, and oath of secrecy, which is highly revered in the Nigerian civil service. There is also the issue of civil servants' anonymity, which implies that civil servants can be seen but must not be heard.

Aiwuyo, Omoregie, and Jimoh (2020), in their study, came up with what they perceived as barriers to effective communication in Nigerian universities. Some of these barriers are ambiguous memoranda, vague information about staff and students, physical barriers, that is, the separation between subordinates and superiors leading to delays in delivering a message, the complexity of organisational structure, and overloading. Overloading is a situation where too many messages are sent, leading to a loss of messages by the receiver.

In spite of the barriers noticed in workplace communication in Nigeria's civil service, there are channels provided for the enhancement of effective communication. These are written and oral channels. Some of the written channels noticeable in Nigerian civil service are Minutes, Memoranda, Press Releases, Reports, Executive Orders, Gazettes, Letters, and Press Conferences (Afinotan, 2009). Oral communication, otherwise known as face-to-face communication between concerned persons, seems to be the most effective communication in the sense that reactions are seen by the participants, like gestures (Afinotan, 2009).

Aside from the written channels of communication itemized by Afinotan (2009), there are some other written channels. These are Briefs, Drafts, and Circulars. Circulars are, for instance, given to people concerned with information, and it is a communication from top management down to the sub-ordinate (Sesay, 2023). Effective workplace communication is crucial in the development of civil service. This is because it makes the service activities meaningful, while also fostering a sense of belonging and teamwork.

2.4 Previous Studies of Similar Context

Labour-management relations, another form of communication channel in the workplace, can be seen as the interacting relations between labour (employees) and management (employers). Management and labour are the organisations representing workers and the employers (Igbokwe, 2021). They exist as part of the work's internal environment. The workers are the civil servants who are involved in policy implementation. The management in a ministry can be seen as a commissioner, permanent secretary, and director who engages in policy formulation and implementation. Labour management relations focus on ways and necessary procedures by which an organization can foster a healthy, cooperative, and satisfactory relationship between the employees or their representatives on the one hand and the management on the other (Ugoani, 2019). This implies that the essence of good labour-management relations is to foster cooperation between the workers and management to achieve the organisational objective(s), which in the civil service case is effective service delivery. Establishments that are able to manage labour-management relations will have a competitive edge over others, as the human resources personnel are able to create a harmonious atmosphere inside the organisation, and this helps in achieving organisational goals (Wickham, 2021).

Dunlop provided a broader definition of labor-management relations by asserting that it is not limited to the relationship between the employer and the worker but exists as a framework for macro-analysis. Dunlop further stated the necessity of an academic approach to labour-management relations by which other disciplines like sociology, law, management, and political science would be involved (Manual on Labour-Management Relations, 2014).

Labour-management relations can also be seen as a type of relationship that exists in an institution between the workers and the management team who represents the owners (employers) of the organisation or institutions and the government/society (Igbokwe, 2021). The labour unions in government establishments in Nigeria often comprise two or three, or even more associations with each trying to promote the interest of its members. Organisations strive to maintain good labour-management relations in order to enhance productivity (Sanjana, 2023).

Talnx (2020) observed that there exist five top challenges in the relationship of employees with employers. These are in the form of (i) conflict management, which has been seen as something that happens everywhere and is inevitable, but efforts should be made to avoid it. Disputes, as posited by Talnx (2020), can be avoided or minimised through open communication in the workplace and the provision of a channel through which the employees can express their concerns in an anonymous way and provide their constructive suggestions as a way of improving the working environment, (ii) Hours and wages issues: Employees are often concerned with their remuneration which can be informed of overtime payments and holiday pay. In view of this, the employer must keep adequate records and make them available when necessary (iii) adequate safety at work - This is in the form of provision of adequate safety tips by the employer. (iv) Annual leave is another area of dispute. Different establishments have different policies concerning leaves. (v) attendance at work. In corroborating this perspective of Talnx (2020), Ngbatogu, Jike, and Ogege (2023) posited that most conflicts in organisations are caused by a lack of effective communication between labour and management. In view of this, effective communication serves

as a gateway to harmonious labour-management relations. That is, communication is an important avenue for peace to exist between labour and management.

Mignault (2017), in line with the position of Talenx (2020), put together four problems that are usually noticeable in employee relations. These are (i) Hours worked and attendance – This is because employees often raise questions concerning the number of hours worked, (ii) Pay rates – The employees often complain about their pay, (iii) workplace safety - This has to do with the safety of employees and prevention of injury. It is the duty of an employer to safeguard the health and safety of the workers at the workplace. (iv) General conflict management in employee relations - This has to do with disputes between workers and management. This would be in line with the provision of the Factories Act and Labour Law. The employees must provide proper ventilation, lighting, and conveniences (Wage Indicator, 2021). Suffice it to say that this problem can be resolved when there is effective communication among workers and their employees. There is a need for information by the employees on these issues.

Ogar (2019) also observed that there are obstacles to harmonious labour-management relations in situations where the following exist: (i) the exercise of punitive measures such as harsh transfers, deployments, posting or downgrading a worker as a result of legitimate union activities or union membership (ii) inability to convene periodic management/staff meetings to discuss the state of the organisation, (iii) inability to communicate or dialogue with workers and their unions on important work issues, (iv) depriving workers of their rights or demonstrating non-chalant attitude towards workers welfare.

2.4 Hypotheses Development and Conceptual

H1: Organisation's communication has an effect on service delivery in Kwara and Benue States.

H0: Organisation's communication has no effect on service delivery in Kwara and Benue States.

Some of the studies that have been carried out and indicated the relationship between communication and service delivery are that of Ezeh (2020), Armie (2019), Mutunga (2020), Musheke and Phiri (2020), Curado, Henriques, Jeronimo and Azevedo (2022). The study by Ezeh (2020) examined the importance of effective information dissemination to teachers by principals of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria, with a population of the principals as 286 in 23 local government areas of the state. The teacher population was 8,452,549 (comprising 167 principals and 382 teachers) took part in the study. The study revealed that there was a need for effective information dissemination so that information could flow from the top to the bottom. The study also revealed that the principals and teachers could communicate effectively through effective management of teachers during staff meetings. In the qualitative study of Arimie (2019) on employer-employee relations and engagement in a university in Benin-City Edo State, Nigeria. It was realised from the responses of those interviewed in the study that the university was operating an open-door system, allowing staff members to express their views without fear of being harassed or intimidated. In a study carried out by Mutunga (2022) in Kenya, pertaining to the effect of communication on quality service delivery in mission hospitals located in Meru County in Kenya, the study sample size was 128 respondents, comprising different strata of staff in the hospital. The study found that there existed a positive relationship between communication and quality service delivery and that effective communication promotes understanding between managers, employees, and clients.

In a study carried out by Musheke and Phiri (2021) in Lusaka, Zambia, on the effects of effective communication on organisational performance, while utilising the systems theory with the aid of a questionnaire; the study comprised three human resource consultancy companies. The study found that effective communication has a positive effect on organisational performance. Lastly, Curado, Henriques, Jeronimo, and Azevedo (2022) carried out a study on 163 employees operating in the services sector in Portugal. The result revealed that there were several paths to employees' satisfaction, and this required the existence of three levels of communication.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The sampling technique that was adopted for the study was the stratified random technique, which was a result of the different departments existing in the ministries from which the respondents were drawn. The sample size was selected based on Solvin's formula that was adopted by Taro Yamane (1967). The application of the formula was to determine the sample size for the study. The population of the study was 1,439, while the sample size was 313. The population was drawn from the headquarters of Benue and Kwara States Ministries of Health and Education. The questionnaire was used so as to reach a large number of respondents in Benue and Kwara States Ministries of Health and Education. Out of the 313 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 305 were retrieved and analysed. Questionnaire responses were based on a Likert scale coded with numerical values for easy analysis. The values assigned to the Likert scale were 1 = Undecided, 2 Strongly disagree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The average means scores of the respondents were interpreted as follows: 4.4 to 5.0 was interpreted as Strongly Agree (SA); any item with a mean falling between

3.5 to 4.49 was interpreted as Agree (A). Also, any item with a mean between 2.5 and 3.49 was perceived as disagree (D), while an item with a mean of 1.5 to 2.49 was regarded as Strongly Disagree (SD); an item with a mean from 0.5 to 1.49 was interpreted as Undecided (UD). A standard deviation of > 1 means a significant variance showing non-consensus in the responses, while a standard deviation of < 1 showed there was no significant variance, hence consensus in response.

In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, that is a questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted in the Ministry of Health Osun State, Nigeria. The result of the pilot study demonstrated that the instrument was reliable since it had a Cronbach's Alpha reliability score of 0.930. Informed consent of the respondents was obtained by the researcher after an explanation of the purpose of the study had been duly passed to them. Face validity of the research instrument was ensured through the expert opinion of senior colleagues of the researcher and seasoned administrators.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents' section were on the respondents' information according to their age, gender, educational qualification, and level of employment.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1's descriptive result reflects the opinion of the civil servants in Benue and Kwara States on communication as it relates to their service delivery. The table revealed that 21.0% and 51.8% majority of the civil servants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that their place of work provides channels of communication like minutes and reports that promote efficiency in the organisation, while 14.4%, 3.9%, and 8.9% of them respectively disagreed, strongly disagreed and undecided. Also, the statement that face-to-face communication promotes good interaction and work performance among staff in their organisation was supported by 25.9% and 49.5% majority of the civil servants who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively. However, 12.1%, 2.6% and 9.8% of them responded contrarily. In addition, 17.4% and 42.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that the oath of secrecy has not in any way affected communication in their organisation in such a way that workers perform below expectation, while 20.3%, 4.3%, and 16.1% of them contrarily responded.

Moreover, the civil servants, which constitute a minority of 16.1% and 28.2%, strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that traditional upward-downward communication (from supervisor to subordinates) affects work performance in their establishment negatively, while 39.3%, 12.2%, and 16.1% of them seemed to reason differently. Also, 24.6% and 41.6% majority of the civil servants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that management staff has a good relationship with them impacts their efficiency on the job positively. Contrarily, 15.4%, 4.6%, and 13.8% minority of the civil servants did not agree. Similarly, 19.3% and 43.0% of the civil servants respectively strongly agreed and agreed that there is effective communication between workers' unions and management from time to time with positive results that help to ensure efficiency in service delivery, but 14.8%, 7.5% and 15.4% of the civil servants disagreed. Again, the majority of the civil servants which constitutes 23.8% and 41%, strongly agreed and agreed respectively that there are frequent management/staff meetings in order to discuss the state of the organisation with a view to promoting workers' efficiency on the job, but 17.4%, 4.9% and 18.4% of them responded otherwise. The responses of the civil servants to whether postings, transfers, and deployments are done on a neutral basis in order to ensure the efficiency of staff on the job were supported by 18.3% and 37.4%, the majority of them who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively. But 19.3%, 6.6%, and 18.3% of the minority disagreed, strongly disagreed, and were undecided about it. The cumulative mean of the results, as shown in Table 1 (mean = 3.53), revealed that communication influences the civil servants in the delivery of several services in Benue and Kwara States.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics on communication in Benue and Kwara states

S/N	STATEMENT	SA(5) F(%)	A(4) F(%)	D(3) F(%)	SD(2) F(%)	UD(1) F(%)	M	SD
1	My place of work has provided channels of communication like minutes, reports, that promote efficiency in the organisation.	64 (21.0)	158 (51.8)	44 (14.4)	12 (3.9)	27 (8.9)	3.71	1.073
2	Face-to-face communication promotes good interaction and work performance among staff in my organisation.	79 (25.9)	151 (49.5)	37 (12.1)	8 (2.6)	30 (9.8)	3.84	1.028
3	The oath of secrecy has not in any way affected communication in my organisation in such a way that workers perform below expectation.	53 (17.4)	128 (42.0)	62 (20.3)	13 (4.3)	49 (16.1)	3.48	1.124

4	Traditional upward-downward communication (from supervisor to subordinates) affects work performance in my establishment negatively	49 (16.1)	86 (28.2)	90 (39.2)	31 (12.2)	49 (16.1)	3.10	1.273
5	Management staff have good relationship with me and they are equally friendly which impact my efficiency on the job positively.	75 (24.6)	127 (41.6)	47 (15.4)	14 (4.6)	42 (13.8)	3.66	1.142
6	There is effective communication between workers' union and management from time to time with positive results that help to ensure efficiency in service delivery.	59 (19.3)	131 (43.0)	45 (14.8)	23 (7.5)	47 (15.4)	3.53	1.207
7	There are frequent management/staff meetings in order to discuss the state of the organisation with a view to promote my efficiency on the job.	59 (23.8)	125 (41.0)	53 (17.4)	15 (4.9)	56 (18.4)	3.50	1.124
8	Postings, transfers and deployments are done on neutral basis thereby ensuring efficiency of staff on the job.	56 (18.3)	114 (37.4)	59 (19.3)	20 (6.6)	56 (18.3)	3.42	1.187

Communication (Mean =3.53)

Source: Field survey, 2022

Decision Rule: 0.5-1.49 = Undecided; 1.5-2.49 = strongly disagree; 2.5-3.49 = disagree; 3.5-4.49 = Agree; 4.5-5.0 = Strongly Agree. The cut-Off mean is 3.0

Table 2 displays the opinion of the civil servants on service delivery in Benue and Kwara States. The table revealed that while 13.4% and 33.8% of the civil servants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that it has been difficult for them to curb wastage on the job, 25.2%, 9.8%, and 17.7% disagreed, strongly disagreed, and undecidedly responded to it. Also, the notion that the workplace of the employees is conducive to their health and productivity was affirmatively supported by 19% and 41.6% majority of the civil servants, who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, but 17%, 7.9%, and 14.4% of them responded contrarily. Moreover, 17.4% and 45.6% of the civil servants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that they are able to meet set targets at the appropriate time, but 16.7%, 6.9%, and 13.1% of civil servants responded otherwise. In addition, 14.1% and 17.7% of the civil servants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that their performance on the job is below the expectations of the organisation. However, 39.3%, 18.4%, and 10.5%, respectively, disagreed, strongly disagreed, and were undecided. Moreover, the notion that the reduction of staff in the employees' establishment does not affect productivity was supported by 10.4% and 16.1% minority of the civil servants who strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, while 41.3%, 21.0%, and 10.8% of them did not support it. With a mean of 3.07, Table 5.9 summarily revealed that the civil servants in Kwara and Benue agreed that they moderately deliver their services in their organisations.

Table 2 Descriptive result on service delivery of civil servants in Benue and Kwara states

S/N	STATEMENT	SA(5) F(%)	A(4) F(%)	D(3) F(%)	SD(2) F(%)	UD(1) F(%)	M	SD
1	It has been difficult for me to curb wastage on the job	41 (13.4)	103 (33.8)	77 (25.2)	30 (9.8)	54 (17.7)	3.16	1.225
2	The workplace is conducive for my health and productivity as an employee.	58 (19.0)	127 (41.6)	52 (17.0)	24 (7.9)	44 (14.4)	3.47	1.203
3	I am able to meet up with set targets at the appropriate time.	53 (17.4)	139 (45.6)	51 (16.7)	22 (6.9)	40 (13.1)	3.49	1.170
4	My performance on the job is below expectation of the organisation.	43 (14.1)	54 (17.7)	120 (39.3)	56 (18.4)	32 (10.5)	2.70	1.336

5	Reduction of staff in an establishment does not affect productivity.	33 (10.8)	49 (16.1)	126 (41.3)	64 (21.0)	33 (10.8)	2.54	1.282
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Service delivery (Mean =3.07)

Source: Field survey, 2022

5. Regression Analysis Results

Table 3 showed the outcome of the regression analysis on the effect of organisation's communication on service delivery in Benue and Kwara States. The Table showed a moderate positive relationship between organisation's communication and service delivery in Benue and Kwara States ($R=0.460$). Also, the table revealed that organisation's communication had a significant effect on service delivery ($R^2 = 0.212$; $F(1, 304) = 81.320$, $p<0.05$). The R^2 value was 0.212, which is significant at p value 0.000. This indicates that the percentage of variation in service delivery explained by the explanatory variables is 21.2%. Based on this result, since the coefficient of the measure of work ethics is not equal to zero and the p-value is not higher than 0.05, the study rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that organisation's communication had a significant effect on service delivery in Benue and Kwara States.

Table 3 Regression result on the effect of organisation communication on service delivery

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	0.460 ^a	0.212		0.209	3.632	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1072.426	1	1072.426	81.320	.000 ^b
	Residual	3995.901	303	13.188		
	Total	5068.328	304			
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Communication						
Model	Coefficient			T	Sig.	
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	5.427	1.121		4.842	0.000	
Communication	0.352	0.039	0.460	9.018	0.000	
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery						

6. Discussion of Findings

Objective one examined the nature of communication in the workplace in Nigeria, and the study realised that communication, especially in the civil service, has various dimensions, which can be upward, downward, horizontal, or vertical, and it is also a process. It was also realised that there were challenges impacting effective communication with its attendant effect on service delivery in Nigeria. As observed by Arugu and Nnaa (2020) and in line with the findings of the study, communication is a process in Nigeria that involves transferring of messages in the form of orders, instructions, and policies from political office holders to government employees and feedback comes in the form of protest, complaints, and obedience. Communication, as asserted by Kalogiannidis (2020) and Matunga (2022), exists in different forms, namely upward communication, downward communication, and horizontal and vertical communication, with regard to challenges impeding effective communication in the civil service in Nigeria. Afintan (2009) noted that apart from personal barriers, there are institutional barriers like rules and regulations and oath of secrecy in the service, exerting their negative impact on service delivery.

Objective two sought to explore communication in labour-management relations, and the study found that there exist barriers between labour and management that impede effective service delivery. In line with this

finding, Mgbetugu, Jike, and Ogege (2023), asserted that most conflicts in organisations are caused by a lack of effective communication between labour and management due to such factors as authoritarian management style, personal conflict and poor physical environment of the workplace.

Objective three examined how communication influences service delivery in the civil services in Benue and Kwara State. The study realised that organisation's communication had a significant effect on service delivery in Benue and Kwara States. In line with the finding of the hypothesis, Curado, Henriques, Jeronimo, and Azevedo (2022) opined that communication is a vital tool that assists an organisation in accomplishing set goals. Zambas (2019) perceived communication as a factor that increases innovation, and innovation, in turn, enhances creativity in an organisation; communication also helps to resolve challenges and reveals hidden skills, thus enhancing effectiveness and efficiency in the establishment.

7. Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that communication in the civil service exists in different forms, and effective communication in the civil service is beset with challenges. It is also concluded that barriers manifest in labour-management relations in the workplace. From the hypothesis's findings, it is concluded that communication had a significant effect on service delivery in civil services in Benue and Kwara states.

Electronic governance (e-governance) should be introduced with vigour in the state ministries, departments, and agencies in Nigeria, particularly Benue and Kwara States. This involves the use of computers, emails, and some other communication gadgets. This will help workers to communicate at a fast rate and ensure efficient and effective service delivery. Training and workshops should be organised by the governments of Benue and Kwara States for the civil servants on communication skills and workplace human relations. This will help the workers in disseminating information clearly and unambiguously. While workers are passing information, verbal or written, in their ministries, departments, and agencies, appropriate channels should be maintained, and information or messages must be clearly stated and passed. This will help to enhance efficiency and effectiveness on the job. Appropriate means of communication can be enhanced by superior officers, starting with the Permanent Secretary in the ministry.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

*The author confirms contribution to the paper as follows: **study conception and design:** Awotunde Taiye Adewale; **data collection:** Awotunde Taiye Adewale; **analysis and interpretation of results:** Awotunde Taiye Adewale; **draft manuscript preparation:** Awotunde Taiye Adewale.*

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