

The Influence of Communication in the Implementation of the Organizational Structure in the Aviation Industry: A Case Study of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority

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Abstract:- Organizational structure is typically hierarchical arrangement of lines of authority, communications and duties of an organization. Organizational structure determines how the roles, power and responsibilities are assigned, controlled, and coordinated, and how information flows between the different levels of management. In the aviation industry, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) recommends internationally accepted State organization structure in line with the observance of the Chicago Convention in International Civil Aviation. Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) is among the leading countries in Africa concerning the implementation of the organizational structure. However it has achieved up to 62% of the expected 100%; an indication that there are some influences hindering KCAA from achieving fully implementation of the organizational structure. The purpose of this study aimed at establishing the influence of communication in the implementation of the organizational structure at KCAA. Mckinsey 7-S and Contingency theories were used in this study and descriptive research design method was used. The targeted population comprised of 81 employees from five departments. Stratified random sampling was used with a sample size of 48 respondents. Questionnaires were the main data collection instrument. The data was generated using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The correlation of communication showed a strong positive relationship in the implementation of the organizational structure. Findings indicated lack of communication policy and right channel of communication in place. Based on findings the study recommends the need to develop communication policy and the right channels of communication ought to be put in place at KCAA.

Key Words: *Organizational Structure, Communication Channel, Communication elements, Organizational Communication*

I. INTRODUCTION

Organizational structure is typically hierarchical arrangement of lines of authority, communications, rights and duties of an organization. It determines how the roles, power and responsibilities are assigned, controlled, and coordinated, and how information flows between the different levels of management (Rodrigues 2012). No matter what kind of changes an organization may want to effect, the organizational structure will be required to support it for its successful implementation through effective communication. It is therefore important to infer that for an organization to succeed in any change it intends to implement, it must ensure that the change is incorporated into its organizational structure. Changes in existing organizational structure must be clearly communicated to employees to enable them understand, develop trust and accept the process. It is important to clearly explain to the employees the effect of their job security and remuneration among others with the change in the structure to ensure their buy in and successful implementation. Clear communication is necessary as under normal conditions, employees will relate change of organizational structure as a retrenchment exercise which is likely to create a negative attitude towards the change in organizational structure making the organizations have a difficult time in implementing the required organizational structure and achieve their goals, (Cohen & Bailey, 2007).

The first element that affects the structure of an organization is work specialization. It is about how tasks are subdivided into separate jobs- whether the job is completed by an individual, or is it broken down into separate steps and completed by several individuals. The more a job is broken down into small tasks, the more specialization is required by each individual worker. High specialization results in high efficiency, but can lead to boredom by workers who are required to perform the same repetitive task over and over. The next element of organizational structure is departmentalization, which establishes how jobs are grouped together. Jobs can be grouped in many ways, including by job function, product line, or territory. Every organization has a chain of command, which provides a line of authority that reaches from the top of the organization to the bottom and spells out who reports to who in the organization, (Harsh, 2012). These two elements can be achieved in the organization through effective communication.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the aviation industry, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) recommends internationally accepted State organizational structure in line with the observance of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation. The aviation business depends heavily on the organizational structure in place for its safety and growth. The external forces such as economic and political instability in most African countries, have hindered the implementation level of recommended global organizational structure. Statistics indicate that in East African Countries, Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) is ahead in the implementation of the recommended organizational structure. This is largely attributed by its favorable external forces like stable political environment, good legal framework and availability of funds for the exercise (Munyi, 2010). However, it has only implemented up to 62% of the required organizational structure (KCAA, 2014). According to Odhiambo (2011), KCAA had allocated funds to facilitate the restructuring process of up to the tune of Ksh.15 million which has not been fully utilized. (Kitao,2013) noted that KCAA had hired the service of the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) to do employees skills audit as one way of implementing the organizational structure and the report was concluded and given to KCAA over a year ago but up to date, the report has neither been released nor implemented. He points out the failure to release DPM restructuring report as a result of lacking the right channel of communication. Studies done on Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) have not exhaustively tackled the influence of communication in the implementation of the organizational structure (Munyi 2010; Odhiambo, 2011 & Kitao, 2013). The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of communication in the implementation of the organizational structure at Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). It focused on the influence of channels and elements of communication on realization to the implementation of the organizational structure at KCAA.

1.1 Research objectives

This study was guided by both a general and specific objective. The main objective of this study was to establish the influence of communication in the implementation of organizational structure at Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). It specifically was to assess the extent to which communication influence the implementation of the organizational structure at KCAA.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study used two relevant theories namely Mckinsey seven theory and contingency theory. The McKinsey 7-S model involves seven interdependent factors which are categorized as either hard or soft elements: The hard elements include Strategy, Structure and Systems; these elements are easier to define or identify and management can directly influence them: These are strategy statements; organization charts and reporting lines; and formal processes and Information Technology systems in order to facilitate effective communication. While the soft elements include Shared Values, Skills, Styles and Staff, these elements, on the other hand, can be more difficult to describe, and are less tangible and more influenced by culture. However, these soft elements are as important as the hard elements and need to be communicated well if the organization is going to be successful, (Hayes, 2014).

The contingency approach implies that organization theory should not seek to suggest one best way to structure or manage organizations but should provide insights into the situational and contextual factors which influence management decisions. Organizational structure is a valuable tool in achieving coordination, as it specifies reporting relationships of who reports to whom, delineates formal communication channels, and describes how separate actions of individuals are linked together (Pace & Faules, 2004).

2.1 Conceptual Framework

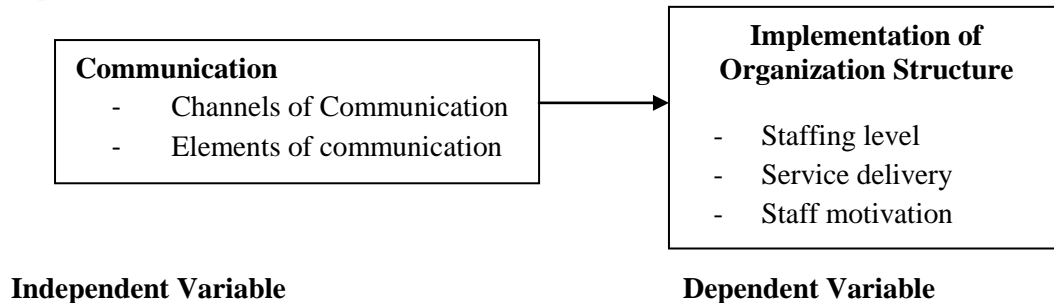


Figure 1

Organizational communication can be defined as the display and interpretation of message among communicating units that are part of a particular organization, organized in hierarchical relation to each other and functioning in an environment (Pace & Faules, 2004). According to Torrington & Weightman, (2004), organizational communication is a product of deliberate attempts by management to communicate, or enable specific communications within organizational structure and to the outside environment. The authors further state that the organizational structure or the formal arrangement of working relationships is itself a communication as it tells organization members important things about their place such as how distant they are from the center and what their official status is. The organizational structure is a prime communication medium as there is an assumption that information will travel up and down as it enshrined in doctrines of responsibility, accountability, reporting, and grievance and disciplinary procedures, and its lateral and vertical connections provide communication relation to coordination, mutual support and advice. The seven elements of communication which are source, message, encoding, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback and context which are very key for effective communication.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research method was used in the targeted population of 81 employees of KCAA from five departments namely human recourse, Finance, Procurement, Air Navigation Services and Communication based in headquarters. This method was appropriate for this study as it provides a quantitative description of attitudes, experience and opinions of the sample population. The population sample size of 48 respondents was used. Stratified simple random sampling was used to select individuals from the targeted population to represent the characteristics found in the entire group. Data was collected using questionnaires with both open and closed questions. Pilot testing of 15% of the sample size was done. The communication variable was identified and measured using a five-point scale ranging from 1(strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The respondent's demographic information such as: age, gender, education level, departments and work experience were also captured. The internal consistency technique of validity was used where the internal consistency of data was determined from scores obtained from a single test administered by the researcher to a sample of subjects. The scores obtained in one item was correlated with scores obtained from other items in the instrument. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was then computed to determine how items correlated among themselves. A regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of communication with respect to its contribution in the implementation of the organizational structure in KCAA. A confidence level of 95% was used in the study.

1. Research Findings

The data was then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical measures as follows:

4.1 Demographic profile of the sample (n=42)

Table 1: Age Bracket

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
Under 25 years	4	10
26 to 35 years	10	24
36 to 45 years	17	40
Over 46	11	26
Total	42	100

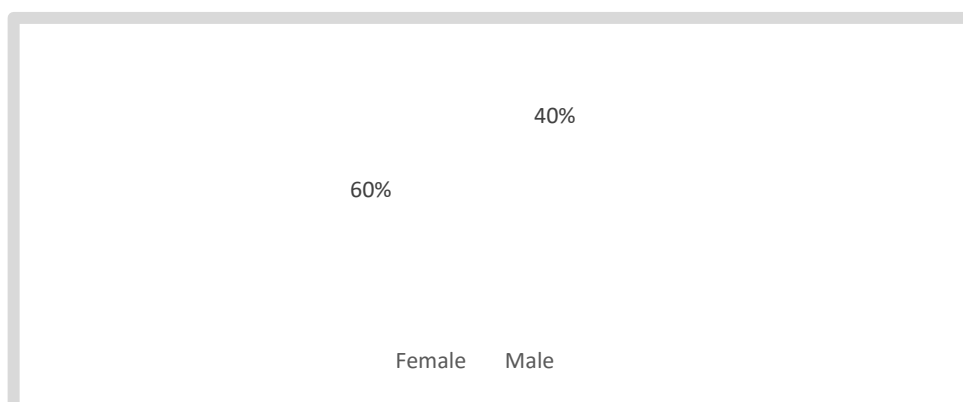


Figure. 2 : Gender

Table 2: Education Level

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Secondary school	2	5
Tertiary	14	33
Degree	17	40
Masters	9	21

Table 3: Department Distribution

Name of Department	Frequency	Percentage
Human Resource	14	33
Finance	11	26
Procurement	6	14
Air Navigation Services	8	19
Corporate Communication	3	7
Total	42	100

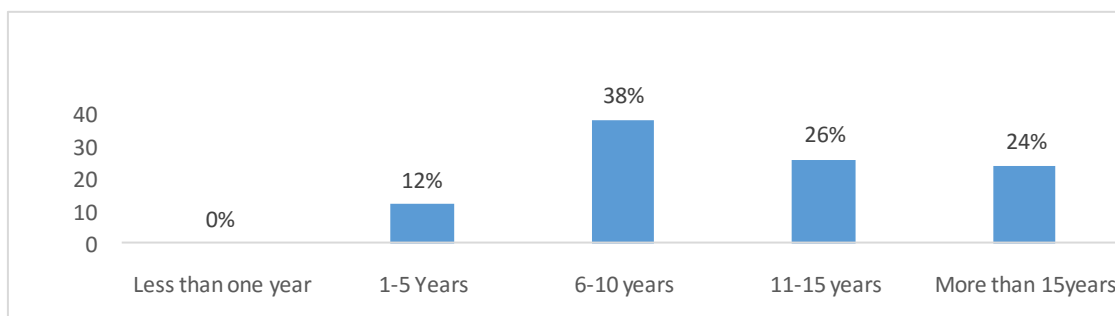


Figure .3: Work experience

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4: Influence of communication on the implementation of organizational structure

Statement	Response (%)					Mean	Std. D
	S	A	N	D	SD		
KCAA has communication policy in place	2.4	9.5	19.0	38.1	31.0	2.14	1.049
Effective communication at KCAA influences the implementation of the organizational structure	7.1	23.8	28.6	26.2	14.3	2.83	1.167
The Authority has clear lines of communication	7.1	9.5	28.6	35.7	19.0	2.5	1.132
KCAA use the right channel to communicate to the employees on organizational structure matters	7.1	11.9	26.2	23.8	31.0	2.4	1.251
KCAA employees' views and ideals are being sort and valued in organizational structure process	4.8	14.3	26.2	40.5	14.3	2.55	1.064
Feedback is often received from the management on employees' concerns in the organization	7.1	11.9	16.7	40.5	23.8	2.38	1.188
Are there structures in place to ensure that all communication meant for employees have reached them all in a right format to understand and at the right time.	9.5	11.9	26.2	33.3	19.0	2.6	1.211
Updates concerning the implementation of organizational structure are regularly communicated to all staff.	4.8	11.9	21.4	33.3	28.6	2.31	1.158
<i>n = 42</i>							

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was done to calculate Karl Pearson and Spearman's Correlation Coefficients between implementation of organizational structure and communication as independent variable. Significance values of less than 0.01 were considered sufficient for a relation to exist. The results were computed at 95% confidence level and summarized as presented in table 5.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficients

Independent variable	Karl Pearson coefficient	Significance (2 - tailed)	Spearman Rank Coefficient	Significance (2 - tailed)
Communication	0.771	0.001	0.770	0.000

The coefficient of correlation of 0.771 (Karl Pearson) and 0.770 (Spearman) showed a strong relationship between communication and the implementation of the organizational structure. The two detailed significance values of the correlation analysis for both Karl Pearson and Spearmans' Communication recorded a high significance with the significance value of 0.000. A related trend was realised with Spearman correlation analysis where communication had more significant of 0.001.

4.3 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis for communication in relation to achieving the set organizational structure depicted a strong relationship between communication and the implementation of the organizational structure. The results were computed at 95% confidence level and are summarized and presented in table 3 below

Table 6: Communication in relation to achieving sufficient staffing level

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.544 ^a	.296	.288	.231
a. Predictors: (Constant), Channels, Elements of communication				
b. Dependent Variable: Sufficient staffing level				

The coefficient of determination was found to be .296. This means 29.6% variability of communication is attributed to staffing level in Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). The other variation of 70.4% is explained by variation of other factors.

The R value of .544 shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between communication and the implementation of the organizational structure in relation to staffing level at KCAA.

Table 7: Communication in relation to service delivery

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.787 ^a	.619	.602	.201
a. Predictors: (Constant), Channels, Elements of communication				
b. Dependent Variable: Service delivery				

The coefficient of determination value was found to be .619. This indicated 61.9% variability of communication is attributed to service delivery in Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). The other variation of 39.1% is explained by variation of other factors.

The coefficient of correlation .787 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between communication and the implementation of the organizational structure in relation to service delivery at KCAA.

Table 8: Communication in relation to achieving staff motivation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.594 ^a	.353	.298	.132

a. Predictors: (Constant), Channels, Elements of communication
b. Dependent Variable: Staff motivation

R. Square value was found to be .353. This shows that 35.3% variability of communication is attributed to staff motivation in Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). The other variation of 64.7% is explained by variation of other factors.

The R value of .594 shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between communication and the implementation of the organizational structure in relation to staff motivation at KCAA.

Table 11: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					
	(Constant)	3.504	1.780	1.968	.001
	Communication	.653	.159	.654	.087

The above regression analysis shows the results between implementation of organizational structure and communication. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) regression analysis is a type of analysis used when a researcher is interested in finding out whether an independent variable predicts a given dependent variable. It has many practical uses including prediction of the effect of a particular independent variable against the dependent variable. Its analysis can be applied to quantify the strength of the relationship between y and the X_i , to assess which X_i may have no relationship with y at all, and to identify which subsections of the X_i contain redundant information about y. A regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of each of communication with respect to its contribution to full implementation of the organizational structure in KCAA. A precision of 0.05 was used. The regression equation is: - $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$

Where:-

Y – Implementation of organizational structure,

X_1 –Communication

β_0 – Constant term

ϵ - Error term

β_1 - coefficients of independent variables

The regression model above indicates that communication has a very high contribution to the implementation of the organizational structure at Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA).

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Communication and Organizational Structure

According to the findings, Communication has a strong influence in the implementation of the organizational structure at KCAA. No matter how good systems and structures may be, if the employees have no clear communication of what is expected of them and why, they will not deliver as expected. The findings established either lack of communication policy at KCAA or non-functional one. Three quarters of the respondents do not seem to be aware of the policy and they acknowledged that there is no effective communication as there are no clear lines of communication in the organization. Most respondents asserted that there are no right channels of communication and employees' views and ideas are not sort in the implementation of the new organizational structure process. It was learned that there is no feedback from the management on employees' concerns and there is no mechanism in place to ensure that the intended communication has been passed to the right group of employees and in the right format and time as intended. It was also realised that updates concerning the implementation of the organizational structure are not regularly communicated to all employees. This was sighted by the discriminatory way of disseminating information, lack of

employee involvement and participation, and top management secrecy in sharing information as well as lack of regular updates on serious issues.

The study agrees with Torrington and Hall (2001) who emphasizes the need to be downward and upward communication. Effective downward communication allows decisions taken by the management of the organization to be converted into action by employees, also boosts teamwork, trust, better relations, and productivity and minimise grapevine as well as miscommunication. Furthermore, it allows for a consistency of action, and it may stimulate a greater commitment on the part of employees. Upward communication helps managers to understand both organizational and personal issues that affect employees. In addition, creative suggestions from employees help management in decision making and improvement of the organization to achieve its intended goals like the implementation of the organizational structure at Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA).

The study concurs with Zikmund and Babin (2009), it is important for the senior management to directly communicated with employees, so that employees understand the organization's business goals, policies and why thing are done the way the being done. For instance, they will understand better the importance of implementing of the organizational structure both to the organization and at the individual level. Transparency in communication at workplace, trust and respect between employees and top management as well as the use of appropriate communication channels to facilitate up-down and down-up communication in the organization and openness to employees' voice are some of the critical factors that can either contribute to or weaken from within, effective internal organizational operations like the implementation of the organizational structure. This indicates communication contribute immensely to the implementation of the organizational structure if it is done in the right way and the right time.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that communication has a great influence to the implementation of the organizational structure in in Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). The implementation of the organizational structure has not reached the required global aviation level set by International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO). Also the study revealed that there was no communication policy in place, and no employee's involvement in matters concerning the implementation of the organizational structure.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the need to have communication policy in place which will act as a guidance on appropriate channels and elements of communication. Consequently, this will ensure the seamless flow of information regarding the implementation of the organizational structure. The study also recommends that KCAA ought to encourage employee involvement in matters concerning the implementation of the organizational structure. These will lead to reduced resistance on the process of implementing the organizational structure which will expedite the full implementation of the organizational structure at KCAA.

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