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EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION ON THE BASIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS
PERFORMANCE AT GREAT NEWS ACADEMY, MALINDI SUB-COUNTY, KILIFI
COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of communication on the performance of basic education schools in Kenya, focusing on Great News Academy, Malindi. The study adopted a correlational survey design to establish the relationship between managerial communication and school performance. The target population comprised 551 individuals, including administrators, teachers, and support staff, from which a sample of 232 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness across categories. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, which provided quantitative insights into the effectiveness of communication practices. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis, to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between communication and school performance. The findings revealed a positive and statistically significant correlation between effective communication and school performance, indicating that open, timely, and clear communication among school managers, teachers, and stakeholders enhances organizational coordination and student outcomes. The study recommended that school management strengthen internal communication channels, promote participatory dialogue, and implement feedback mechanisms to ensure transparency and collaboration. Such measures would foster shared understanding, improve decision-making efficiency, and ultimately enhance overall school performance in basic education institutions.

Keywords: *Communication, Performance, Basic Education Schools, Management*

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication is a cornerstone of organizational success and a key determinant of performance in both corporate and educational institutions. Globally, studies have shown that communication facilitates the coordination of tasks, alignment of goals, and dissemination of information necessary for effective management (America by Mahmoud Arar (2021). In the education sector, effective communication has been identified as a vital managerial function that enhances collaboration among teachers, administrators, students, and parents (Bush & Coleman, 2019). According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2021), open communication channels enable school leaders to motivate staff,

resolve conflicts, and promote shared decision-making, all of which contribute to school improvement. Conversely, institutions characterized by weak communication structures often experience low morale, inefficiencies, and reduced academic achievement (Oduro, 2019). These findings highlight that communication is not merely a support activity but a strategic managerial tool essential for achieving institutional effectiveness.

In the context of education, communication serves as the medium through which leadership intentions and policies are translated into actionable goals. Effective communication enhances the quality of relationships within schools, promotes trust, and ensures that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities (Wambua, 2022). It also strengthens the implementation of educational programs by facilitating timely feedback and collective problem-solving (Njoroge & Wanyoike, 2021). When communication between school leaders and teachers is transparent and two-way, it promotes a sense of belonging and shared purpose, thereby improving job satisfaction and student outcomes (Kariuki, 2020). Poor communication, on the other hand, can result in conflicts, misinformation, and a breakdown in teamwork, which ultimately hinders school performance (Mutiso & Iravo, 2018).

This study seeks to examine the effect of communication on the performance of basic education schools in Kenya, with a specific focus on Great News Academy, Malindi. It aims to establish how managerial communication practices influence staff coordination, motivation, and institutional efficiency. By analyzing the relationship between communication and school performance, the study intends to provide empirical evidence that can guide school leaders in adopting effective communication strategies. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to enhancing managerial practices and improving performance outcomes in Kenya's basic education schools.

Effect of Communication on the Basic Education Schools Performance

At Great News Academy, Malindi, communication remains a critical managerial approach influencing the school's performance. However, several challenges hinder its effectiveness. Studies indicate that many schools experience limited feedback channels between administrators and teachers, lack of structured information flow, and inadequate use of modern communication technologies (Ng'ang'a, Mwangi & Kimani (2024). Misinterpretation of directives and delayed information sharing often lead to low morale, poor coordination, and reduced efficiency in implementing school programs (Njoroge & Wanyoike, 2021). Such communication breakdowns weaken teamwork, diminish trust, and contribute to poor instructional quality, thereby affecting overall school performance (Mutiso & Iravo, 2018).

To actualize effective communication, school management must establish clear communication protocols that promote openness, transparency, and feedback. According to Bush and Coleman (2019), regular staff meetings, digital platforms, and professional

development programs on interpersonal skills enhance communication flow in schools. The use of newsletters, suggestion boxes, and internal bulletins can further improve inclusivity and encourage feedback (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Successful implementation requires the involvement of all stakeholders, administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the Board of Management, who should understand their roles in the communication process (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2021). By fostering two-way communication and ensuring all parties are informed and engaged, Great News Academy can strengthen collaboration, trust, and accountability. Ultimately, effective communication as a managerial approach enhances decision-making, teacher motivation, and school performance (Kariuki, 2020).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Basic Education School performance remains a major concern for education managers in Kenya, despite continuous policy reforms and significant investment in teacher training and school infrastructure. According to the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC, 2023), more than 45% of learners in both public and private primary schools scored below the national mean in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) between 2019 and 2023. This trend suggests persistent weaknesses in management practices that affect teaching quality, coordination, and institutional effectiveness. The Ministry of Education (2022) further reported that communication breakdowns between school leadership, teachers, and parents often contribute to misunderstandings, low morale, and poor curriculum implementation. Ineffective communication limits the transmission of goals, expectations, and feedback necessary for aligning stakeholders toward shared performance objectives.

At Great News Academy, Malindi, internal assessment reports (2024) have revealed that weak communication structures such as delayed feedback, inadequate staff briefings, and limited channels for parent-teacher engagement undermine collaboration and accountability. These communication gaps reduce teachers' clarity of roles, hinder timely decision-making, and ultimately affect student learning outcomes. Effective communication is therefore critical as a managerial approach that ensures transparency, motivation, and coordination across all levels of the institution. When properly implemented, it enhances trust, promotes discipline, and facilitates collective problem-solving that directly influences academic achievement and school reputation.

Empirically, existing studies have demonstrated that communication plays a central role in improving organizational performance (Nguyen & Brown, 2020; Mwaura & Okello, 2022). However, most of these studies have concentrated on public secondary schools, leaving limited evidence on how internal communication dynamics affect performance in private basic education schools such as Great News Academy. Furthermore, few studies have explored how structured communication strategies encompassing vertical, horizontal, and external communication can be institutionalized to enhance performance. This study therefore seeks to address this gap by examining the effect of communication

as a managerial approach on the performance of Great News Academy, Malindi, and by extension, other basic education schools in Kenya.

OBJECTIVE

To examine the effect of Communication on the Basic Education Schools' performance at Great News Academy, Malindi Sub County, Kilifi County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

This research was anchored on the systems theory of management which was developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, (1968). The theory is appropriate for a study examining the impact of managerial approaches to communication, decision-making, motivation, and conflict management on basic education school performance.

Systems Theory of Management

The Systems Theory of Management, developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1950), views an organization as an integrated system composed of interdependent parts working together to achieve common goals. In a school context, this means that departments, teachers, students, and administrators function as interconnected subsystems whose success depends on coordination and effective communication (Bush & Coleman, 2019). The theory emphasizes interdependence, feedback, input-process-output relationships, and equilibrium. Effective communication acts as the connective mechanism that ensures information flows smoothly across these subsystems (Robbins & Judge, 2020).

When communication channels are open, feedback is timely, and messages are clearly understood, the system operates efficiently and maintains balance. In basic education schools, communication aligns goals between administrators and teachers, coordinates curriculum delivery, and enhances responsiveness to challenges (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2021). At Great News Academy, Malindi, adopting a systems perspective enables leaders to treat communication as a dynamic process that connects planning, teaching, and evaluation. Effective communication under Systems Theory ensures that information circulates freely, promoting collaboration and shared understanding (Wambua, 2022). This fosters cohesion, reduces conflicts, and enhances basic education school performance. Conversely, communication breakdowns create disconnections among subsystems, weakening institutional efficiency.

Empirical Literature Review

Effective Communication as a practice in a variety of basic education schools was the subject of an empirical literature review, which looked at the results of empirical studies that guided the study research framework and offered additional insights beyond those found in the theoretical literature review.

Effect of Communication on the Basic Education School Performance

Effective communication as a managerial approach is a vital driver of basic education school performance because it promotes shared understanding, coordinates action, and builds trust among stakeholders. Through communication, schools are able to translate policies, administrative intentions, and leadership visions into improved teaching and learning outcomes. Communication entails the transmission of messages, expectations, feedback, and values among school heads, teachers, students, and other education stakeholders. In this study, communication is examined as a managerial approach that significantly influences school performance by fostering trust, motivation, discipline, and a shared vision—factors that are critical to academic achievement and institutional effectiveness (Bush & Glover, 2021).

Globally, studies have confirmed the influence of managerial communication on school performance. For instance, Nguyen and Brown (2020) investigated *Managerial Communication and School Effectiveness in Public High Schools in Australia* using a mixed-methods design. Their study revealed that regular and transparent communication enhanced collaboration, teacher coordination, and instructional alignment. They recommended continuous communication training for school leaders. However, their study focused solely on communication, overlooking other managerial factors such as decision-making, motivation, and conflict management. This research expands the scope by integrating these four managerial approaches to assess their combined influence on basic education school performance. Regionally, Mwaura and Okello (2022) examined *The Effect of Principal–Teacher Communication on School Performance in Ugandan Secondary Schools* using a descriptive survey design. Their findings indicated that consistent communication improved task clarity and curriculum delivery, and they recommended structured communication schedules. Nonetheless, the study excluded the perspectives of students, parents, and non-teaching staff voices the present study includes to provide a multi-stakeholder view.

Locally, Mutua and Wanjohi (2021) explored *School Communication Strategies and Performance of Institutions in Machakos County, Kenya*, finding that open communication channels enhanced discipline and academic results. Collectively, these studies affirm that transparent and structured communication fosters collaboration, clarity, and discipline, thereby improving curriculum implementation and overall basic education school performance.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Within this framework, the independent variable represents the factor that is thought to affect or influence the dependent variable. The independent variable establishes the foundation for the inquiry, steering the exploration toward a more profound comprehension of the elements that could influence change. The dependent variable, conversely, serves as the central element or result that one aims to elucidate or forecast. The endpoint on the map is influenced by or reacts to variations in the independent

variable. By examining these relationships within a conceptual framework, one gains insight into potential causations, aiding in the explanation of complex interactions within the field of study.

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

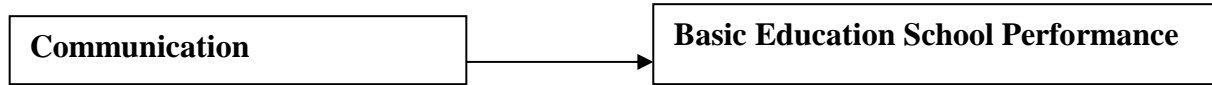


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A research design provides the overall plan or structure for conducting a study by outlining how data are to be collected, measured, and analyzed to answer the research questions (Kothari, 2014). According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), an effective research design ensures logical alignment between research objectives, data collection methods, and analytical procedures while reducing bias and enhancing reliability. This study adopted a correlational survey design to determine the relationship between communication and school performance in basic education institutions. The design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables communication as an independent variable and school performance as dependent variable. Correlational designs are particularly suitable for educational management studies where variables naturally interact within organizational contexts. In this study, the design facilitated the assessment of how communication practices such as feedback mechanisms, clarity of information, and stakeholder engagement influence outcomes like teacher performance, discipline, and student achievement. Empirical evidence supports this choice; Di Liberto (2023) found that effective communication correlates with improved performance in public primary schools. Therefore, the correlational survey design was selected as the most suitable framework to quantify and interpret the effect of communication on the performance of basic education schools.

Target Population

This study targeted Great News Academy in Malindi Sub-County, Kilifi County. The total population for the study was 551 respondents, comprising one head teacher, 40 teachers, 10 support staff, and 500 learners. This population was appropriate because it included all the key stakeholders directly involved in the school's managerial and performance processes. The head teacher and teaching staff were particularly relevant for providing insights into managerial approaches such as communication, decision-making, motivation, and conflict management. The support staff contributed

perspectives on school operations beyond classroom instruction, while the learners offered valuable information on how these managerial practices influenced their academic achievement, discipline, and participation.

The study specifically included Grade 5, 6, and 7 learners since these classes fall under the upper primary and lower junior school levels where managerial approaches directly influence transition, academic performance, and discipline. These grades were considered mature enough to understand and respond meaningfully to research instruments, having experienced school managerial approaches over several academic years. Learners below Grade 5 were excluded because they might lack the cognitive and communication abilities to comprehend and accurately respond to the questionnaire items. Similarly, Grade 8 learners were excluded because the school where the study was conducted was up to grade seven (7). The inclusion and exclusion criteria thus ensured that only participants capable of providing reliable and informed responses were engaged, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study findings.

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Male	Female	Total Population
Head teacher	1	0	1
Teachers	15	25	40
Support Staff	4	6	10
Students	230	270	500
Total	250	301	551

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative portion of a population to draw conclusions about the entire group with acceptable accuracy (Kothari, 2014). This study used stratified random sampling to ensure that all key subgroups teachers, non-teaching staff, and students were proportionately represented due to the school's heterogeneous composition (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The head teacher was included through a census because of the unique managerial role.

Table 2: Sample Distribution

Category	Population	Sample
Teaching Staff	40	17
Non-Teaching Staff	10	4
Students	500	211
Total	550	232

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments to enhance validity and depth of findings. Structured questionnaires were distributed to teachers, non-teaching staff, and students to collect standardized data efficiently from a large sample (Kothari, 2004). The questionnaires contained closed-ended items measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to capture perceptions on communication practices and their influence on school performance. Open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide additional insights. A semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from the head teacher and departmental heads, offering deeper understanding of communication processes and challenges (Patton, 2015). Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with selected students to gather collective views on how school communication affects their engagement and academic outcomes (Krueger & Casey, 2015). All participants provided informed consent, were assured of confidentiality, and were free to withdraw at any time. Data were securely stored in password-protected and locked systems in line with ethical research guidelines (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data were systematically coded and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods to address the first objective, examining **the** effect of communication on basic education school performance. Quantitative data from questionnaires were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis, while qualitative data from interviews were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize demographic data and describe participants' responses (Kothari, 2014). To determine the relationship between communication and school performance, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to measure the strength and direction of association between the two continuous variables (Field, 2018). This method was appropriate because it identifies the degree of linear relationship between communication practices and performance outcomes. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to capture insights from participants regarding communication flow, feedback mechanisms, and their effects on academic achievement. Thematic analysis enabled the identification of key patterns and meanings that complemented quantitative findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

The study aimed to assess the impact of communication strategies on school performance. Participants were requested to express their level of agreement with four statements concerning communication, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Disagree (3), Strongly Disagree (2), and Neutral (1). Results are presented in Table 5.

Table 3: Communication on basic education School Performance (n = 206)

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std Dev
There is clarity of communication	87	80	25	11	3	3.19	0.85
Communication given has timelines	85	80	28	11	2	3.17	0.86
The medium of communication used is suitable	86	75	30	10	5	3.16	0.86
Mechanism for feedback is available	80	82	29	12	3	3.12	0.87

The study findings revealed that communication plays an important role in enhancing basic education school performance by ensuring that information is delivered clearly, on time, and through appropriate channels, with opportunities for feedback. This aligns with Bush and Glover (2019), who emphasized that effective communication is central to instructional leadership and improves coordination, decision-making, and performance in schools. Furthermore, research has shown that timely and transparent communication fosters collaboration and accountability among teachers, which translates into better school performance (Day et al., 2016). Therefore, the present study supports the argument in the literature that communication, when clear, timely, and interactive, contributes significantly to improved basic education school performance.

INFERENCE ANALYSIS

Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Between Communication and Basic Education School Performance

Variables	N	Pearson's r	Sig. (p-value)	Interpretation
Communication and Basic Education School Performance	206	r = 0.693	p < 0.01	Significant strong positive correlation

The results of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation show a strong positive and statistically significant **relationship** between communication **and** basic education school performance ($r = 0.693$, $p < 0.01$). This means that as communication effectiveness increases particularly in clarity, timeliness, suitability of medium, and feedback mechanisms, school performance also improves.

Regression Analysis for Communication on Basic Education School Performance

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of communication on basic education school performance. The results indicated that communication significantly predicted school performance, $F(1, 204) = 154.10$, $p < .001$, with an $R^2 = .480$. This means that approximately 48.0% of the variance in school performance could be explained by communication practices. The regression coefficient for communication was $\beta = 0.693$, $t = 12.41$, $p < .001$, showing that effective

communication positively and significantly contributes to improved basic education school performance.

Summary of findings

The study found that communication had a strong positive and significant relationship with school performance ($r = .693$, $p < .01$). Regression analysis revealed that communication had the greatest effect ($\beta = .376$, $p < .001$), showing that clarity, timeliness, and effective feedback significantly improved coordination and efficiency in teaching. Open and consistent communication fostered teamwork, trust, and alignment with institutional goals, supporting Systems Theory, which emphasizes information flow for organizational success. Conversely, poor communication caused misunderstandings and low motivation. Two-way communication channels like staff meetings and feedback sessions enhanced inclusivity, discipline, and overall school performance.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that communication played a crucial role in the performance of basic education at Great News Academy. Effective and prompt communication that encourages participation bolstered collaboration, trust, and teacher involvement, subsequently improving instructional delivery and student results. Consequently, communication transcended its role as merely an administrative tool, emerging as a strategic catalyst for enhancing school effectiveness. Institutions that fostered reciprocal communication demonstrated a greater capacity to engage staff dedication and fulfill their goals. It is essential to prioritize effective communication in the management of basic education schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that school Boards and headteachers enhance performance through effective two-way communication, including regular meetings, feedback systems, and open forums. The Ministry should issue communication guidelines annually, while teachers should freely share ideas to promote participatory, transparent communication and alignment with institutional goals. This shall enhance good performance in the basic education schools.

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