

**OPERATIONS AND CHANGE COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS: A CASE
STUDY OF UNILEVER TEA KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of degree in any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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Dr. Wambui Kiai

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DEDICATION

My study is dedicated to my loving friends for their prayers and patience during the entire period. For their encouragement and support towards successful completion of this course. Finally, I pay glowing appreciation to my family for understanding, challenging and giving me direction during the entire period.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICT----- Information Communications Technology

MH----- Mechanical Harvesting

UTK----- Unilever Tea Kenya

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate effective change communication in the workplace by studying the activities of Unilever Tea Kenya (UTK) when cascading change to its employees. The target population for this study consisted of UTK employees and members of management. Simple random sampling was used to draw respondents from the population, where 55 respondents were drawn. The researcher also used primary sources to collect data. This consisted of questionnaires comprising of both open-ended and close-ended questions, and interviews were used to gauge the effectiveness of change communication in the workplace. The results from the study yield a framework for evaluating effective change communication on individual (i.e. behavior, trait, and knowledge) and organizational (i.e. accuracy, clarity, and availability) levels. Also, the data was divided between males and females, communication sources, and the perceptions of effective supervisory communication. The study's practical implications, addition to goal setting theory, limitations, and future research are noted. The results of the study revealed that some strategies were more effective than others. The employees feel that they were provided with adequate information about this change on machines. Their concerns around the technology were also addressed satisfactorily. In the analysis, it was clear that the most effective strategy was word of mouth followed through the supervisors. At the individual level, this framework is significant because change communication distributor (supervisors) will be aware of how their effectiveness will be evaluated. As for the organizational level, information can be evaluated based on accuracy, (is all information true?), availability (is information accessible and in what venues?), and clarity (is the message delivered in an appropriate style in regard to employee comprehension levels?).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1:1 Background

The business environment today presents marketers with an increasingly complex set of circumstances -global competition, impact of new technologies, and constant rapid change, forcing them to reinvent themselves and their corporate behavior to become flexible, more innovative and more responsive to the marketplace. Thus an organization's long term survival is best measured by its ability to manage change rather than buy its financial position.

For any organization to record any significant growth, structural and operational changes are inevitable. Communication becomes central to the success of any change that an organization must undertake in its success journey. However, these changes must then be communicated to employees effectively if it should create desired impact. One challenge that modern organizations grapple with whenever such changes occur, is the way they pass the change info to its employees and achieving maximum positive effect. The problem with modern organizations is that change is not always communicated effectively (Burke, 2008; Cummings & Worley, 2009). In such cases, information cascaded to employees is met with resistance, rumours and exaggeration, so that the implementation of planned innovation that would otherwise steer growth creates a gate for negative growth as well as have a negative influence on corporate culture (Keyton 2005). Communication influences all aspects of change ranging from, the vision behind any such change, new job duties, change of management and technological advancements an organization may be adopting.

There are several conceptual frameworks that have been advanced to assess the effectiveness of communication strategies adopted to drive home the message of change. Robertson, Roberts. & Porras (1993) argue that effective change communication occur when employees successfully adopt the proposed change or changes. On the other hand, Elving (2005) evaluates effective change communication as the level of readiness employees feel regarding the change.

Unilever Tea Kenya (UTK) focuses is one of the leading tea producing companies in Kenya. Over the past, like other counterparts in the tea, UTK has been focusing on replacing the orthodox Hand Plucking (HP) of tea, with Mechanized Harvesting (MH) technology. This is in response to changing conditions of the economy, technology, and the behavior of competitors. UTK has thus focused on reinforcing the adoption of MH by creating adequate information around it.

With a mission to strike a balance between enhancing their employees' social and economic well-being whilst continuously expanding their market, and by aligning their change with industry best-practice benchmarks, through effective communication, UTK has devised various channels of communication to cascade information to its workforce. This study sought to explore change communication as a key aspect of the general well being of organizations. The findings from will inform organizations on possible instruments they may employ to evaluate communication when change is occurring. This will help ease pressure managers may face in a bid to balance between introducing change effectively to employees and scarcity of resources.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Workers at all levels of the organization be they CEOs Middle management, or entry level staff, recognize that change is inevitable. However, the successful implementation of organizational change is a challenge top leaders grapple with. Regardless of how far seeing and meticulously planned change maybe, it will not be effectively implemented unless it is communicated to employees in a way that resistance is overcome fears assuaged, confusion is minimized and all affected individuals secured.

Communication plays key role in organizational development as long as it remains faithful to the public imperatives. However, organizations have had sharp criticism for biased framing of information so as to disclose only what is good for the ears and avoiding controversies. This is largely contributed by the commercially inspired players in the market whose profit motives overshadow the need for overall prosperity. These players often introduce change plans disguised to reflect only the positive sides and hence winning the very audiences. Communication leads in terms of effective passing on of sensitization and awareness messages and information for development.

The Unilever Tea Kenya has seen a major transformation in its operations since it was established in the Kenya highlands - the introduction of mechanical harvesting as opposed to the orthodox hand plucking of tea. This technology is meant to raise output while minimizing the cost of production. Indeed, more tea is harvested within a short time at minimum cost. However, this would then translate to reduced man powers.

To inform the employees on the change, UTK adopted existing communication structure to disseminate the information. This includes engaging Middle level management and supervisors to reach the over 15,000 workers that work in the plantations. Messages are then put at the notice boards which are fitted at the offices and residential areas for further reference. Monthly meetings for all these workers are also in handy to offering platforms for people to air any views and concerns around the topic. From here management and supervisors are able to evaluate the impact of their communicating as well as be able to answer any question regarding changes. This study thus aims at establishing ways in which change communication can be effectively used at the workplace to promote growth in organizations.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objectives

The general objective of the study is to assess whether the communication of change in UTK is effective.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The Specific objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the effectiveness of communication in the workplace.
2. To establish how communication works in times of change in the organization.
3. To suggest recommendations on ways in which communication can be enhanced to leverage impact change creates in organizations.

1.4 Research questions

The research will seek to answer three questions:

1. How does Unilever communicate change to its employees?
2. What challenges does the company face as it cascades change information to employees?
3. What are the most practical ways of communicating change?

1.5 Significance of the Study

UTK has been in existence since 1999. Within the years of existence, the company's stakeholders have worked hard to see it grow to what it is today. Its vision being to be prosperous in terms of quality products and general wellbeing of its employees, the company has engaged in various activities to perform better. However, role of communication in this endeavour cannot be over looked. This research highlights the role of communication in organizational change as an overlooked player and thus provide recommendations that can be used to reinforce its effectiveness in organizational transformations

It will focuses on the nature of communication at the tea estates whenever new developments are introduced. These strategies will only be successful if there is need for evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies so as to come up with recommendations that may help the company improve their already existing strategies or come up with better ones. The research will from whence further contribute to filling in the knowledge gaps brought about by limited researches that have been conducted around this topic. The findings will be useful to policy makers to steer appropriate communication strategies to be used when passing on new information.

1.6 Limitations during the study

1.6.1 Time constraint

Time was a major limitation to the study. The time allocated was quite short hence hindering data collection procedure.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Essentially, organizational communication has to do with how people look at the relationship between organizing and communication. Organizations use to create and shape events as well as the direction that it takes. Myers and Myers (1982) define organizational communication as the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organized behavior.

Communication process on the other hand consists of a message being sent and received these message maybe verbal or non-verbal. Schiffer (1999) defines the communication process as the passage of consequential information from interactor to interactor, culminating in a receiver's response. Organizational communication is highly diverse and fragmented, as evidenced by the Harvard Business Review's (1993) compilation of its communication articles, *The Articulate Executive*. In addition to its fragmented nature, organizational communication, perhaps more than any other aspect of organizational theory and practice, has been subject to dramatic change. In earlier times, communication in small organizations was largely informal. As organizations increased in size, formal top-down communication became the main concern of organizational managers.

2.2 Organizational change

Change, whether intentional or unintentional, can be simply described as “the differences between two (or more) successive conditions, states or moments of time” (Ford & Ford, 1995). As Ford and Ford further outline, organizational change requires a change agent to bring in an intended state or result that previously did not exist.

Organizational communication in today’s organizations has not only become far more complex and varied but more important to overall organizational functioning and success. While research used to focus on understanding how organizational communication varied by organizational type and structure, the emphasis has increasingly turned to understanding how new communication technologies and capabilities can help bring about new and more effective organizational forms and processes (Tucker et al. 1996; Desanctis and Fulk 1999).

It has been argued that the success of any organization depends on its ability to plan as well as execute its communication strategy especially in time of change. The evolution of technology is bringing unimaginable change in how organization communicates with its stakeholders. In adopting new technologies such as the social media, organizations must be deliberate and strategic since any change can destabilize it (Dawson, 2003).

Change can be a painful, uncomfortable, and messy process since people find it hard to let go of the long held behaviors. To overcome the challenges associated with organizational change, it calls for involvement of all the people working for the organization. Clampitt and Berk (1991) note that people prefer to be told exactly what to do arguing that thinking is a hard work that

most would not want to go through. In addition, the leadership must know what the organization intends to achieve at the end of the process. This will help them initiate a tactical and systematic communication approach leading to desired results.

2.2.1 The context of organizational change

There are a number of reasons why organizations may perceive the need to change including new technology, increased competition, changes in the nature of their business, globalisation and changes in the legislative framework within which they operate. Changes in technology have resulted in changes to the way organizations are structured, their processes, and their ways of communicating with their staff. Employees no longer need to be based in the same building, city or country, as a result of communication technologies such as the internet, computers and mobile phones. Increased globalisation has also prompted organizational change (Burnes, 2004; Cheney et al., 2004).

Organizations need to be able to respond to changes in the requirements of their customers and the actions of their competitors (Quirke, 1995). Associated with globalisation and technological changes is the changing nature of workforces. Whereas once workforces were relatively homogenous (Preskill & Torres, 1999), the modern workforce is increasingly diverse, creating the necessity to adapt to their needs. Quirke (1995) agrees, also suggesting that changes in employee values and in the roles of employees and managers are encouraging change. Hammer (1996) suggests that the factors above have forced organizations to change radically, and to re-engineer their business completely or face failure. These multiple imperatives for change have resulted in most organizations continually undertaking varying degrees of change.

There are several dimension associated with change communication. First, the difference that occurs between two or more points, then the normative nature of change the different orders in regards to importance and context and lastly the triggers of change (Salem 1999).

The internal triggers of change include; internal technology, people and administrative structures. While external triggers include; state rules, global markets, and the internationalization of business, political and social events, and advances in technology, organizational growth and expansion and fluctuations in the business cycles (Dawson, 2003).

This coincides with Klein's (1996) correlation between adjusting an organization's communication methods and media to correspond with the change model lifecycle the organization is in. The change cycle model Klein talks about is the Kurt Lewinian change model of unfreezing, changing or moving, and refreezing. As the organization moves through these three primary phases of change, the organizational communication must be adjusted to remain effective. The concept of changing organizational communication styles during the organizational development. Pitman (1994) highlights the critical components to organizational change as:

a) visible management support and commitment, b) proper preparation for a successful change, c)user/client participation, d) a strong business-related need for change, e) a reward system that supports necessary changes, and f) a high degree of communication

2.2.2 Types and degrees of change

Organizational change can take many forms and requires different levels of response. Lewis et al. (2001) differentiate between various types of planned changes including Introduction of technologies, programmes, new policies, alterations of organizations' physical characteristics, changes in staff and role assignments, and introduction of new processes. They suggest that each of these types of change may require different degrees of response from organizations. Cheney et al.(2004) suggest that there are differing degrees of change, and the degree of change often affects the organization's requirement to change.

2.3 Communication within the change process

2.3.1 The significance of communication in change management

Communication as a factor to be considered in the change management process, but it is seldom a primary consideration. Paton and Mc Calman (2000), for example, mention communication merely as a tool for managers. However, some management theorists do see it as important, exemplified by the fact that Kotter (1999) has communication as one of his steps to transforming an organization.

Ford and Ford (1995) present a constructionist perspective suggesting that communication is not just a tool to be used within the change process, and that "change is a phenomenon that occurs within communication". Change is seen as a subset of communication and that "producing intentional change is a matter of deliberately bringing into existence, through communication, a new reality or set of social structures". Thus, they theorise that rather than change merely

producing and being supported by communication, communication constructs the change, a contention supported by other scholars in the field (Cheney et al., 2004; Lewis & Seibold, 1998). It is therefore useful to examine the role and importance of internal communication within organizations during the process of change.

2.3.2 Internal communication and change

Organizational change often requires employees to change the way they do things, thus a significant aspect of trying to manage the change process is internal communication with employees, who are ‘crucial’ to organizations (Daly, Teague & Kitchen, 2003). Internal communication within organizations is much more than the classic transmission model of communication – where a message is sent by the sender and received by the receiver. Internal communication in this context can be defined as communication within an organization, between different groups and individuals at different levels and with different specializations that is designed to organize day-to-day activities (Dolphin, 2005). As such, it is complex and multi-faceted form of communication. Cheney et al. (2004) agree, emphasizing that organizational communication is very complex in nature, as it includes a variety of different aspects including symbols such as logos or artefacts, and structures such as policies and procedures. This complexity may result in internal communication efforts being unsuccessful, owing to a lack of recognition of the breadth that the change communication must cover.

Dolphin (2005) argues that internal communication is strategically very important to organizations, particularly in times of stress and change. Internal communication is particularly important as it facilitates corporate identification, where employees identify with their

organization, and leads to better informed employees who understand the corporate goals and philosophy. This improved understanding in turn enhances employee commitment to the organization (Goodman & Truss, 2004) and makes them more receptive to change (Tourish & Hargie, 1998). Corporate identification and commitment is likely to improve the chances of successful implementation of change.

2.4 Models for Communicating Change

There are models that focus more on the communication of change, rather than trying to model all parts of the change process. Larkin and Larkin (1994) present a very simple model for change communication in large companies, with three major recommendations. Firstly, they suggest that change managers should target front line supervisors, as they are the source of most change communication for employees. Secondly, that communication should be face to face where possible. This is because employees have an opportunity to provide feedback hence this medium is rich. Finally, they suggest that organizations should focus on communicating relative performances of work areas, as most employees do not care as much about the organisation as they do about their own area.

2.5 Roles of management during change

The involvement of management throughout the change process, particularly in the communication of the change, is seen as being very important in ensuring its success. The first role of management in the change process is their part in the launch, and in the initial communication of the vision for change. Grossman's (2000) examination of a major change initiative in the BBC emphasised the importance of the Chief Executive Officer both leading and

effectively communicating the change. Grossman and Smith (2003) outline the importance of senior management in maintaining the impetus of change once the initial announcement of change has occurred. O'Rourke (2001) contends that often the sender of the message is of equal importance to the message itself.

2.6 Employee involvement in the change process

Involvement of employees in the actual change process is another theme that emerges in both the management and communication literature. Involvement of stakeholders, particularly employees, throughout the change process is seen by many as vitally important to the success of the change initiative. Mabin et al. (2001) in comparing two managerial styles in the same change initiative found where employees were involved in the process there was less resistance to change and more co-operation in implementing the change whereas those less involved were resistant and unhappy about the change.

2.7 Communication channels

It is very important that everyone in an organization has access to communication about any change. It is also important that the right communication channels are utilised and that they are effective in getting the right messages out to the organization, and also allow feedback from the organization.

2.8 Evaluation of change communication

An important part of the change process is assessing whether it was a success or not. This evaluation is often neglected (Ford & Ford, 1995; Preskill & Torres, 1999) resulting in the

organization not learning from the process, with the potential of making the same mistakes in the future. Barrett (2002), however, suggests a model targeted specifically on evaluating employee communication with her Strategic Employee Communication Model which provides an analytical tool to assess and improve employee communications.

Barrett outlined five main components that contribute to the success of employee communications. First, management must be supportive of the change and must model the communication behaviours they expect of their employees. Secondly, staff who are communicating the change need to be well positioned within the organization, preferably at senior management level. Then the messages and the channels used must be tailored to the various audiences within the organization. There should be ongoing assessment of the success of the communication to enable corrective action to take place if messages are not getting through. Finally, the organization must ensure that there are effective media and forums available to be utilized in the communication efforts, from traditional media to less traditional forums where employees can critically evaluate the change and have an input into moulding the change initiatives.

Schmisseur & Stephens (2006) explain how in a successful organizational change implementation, the emphasis on organizational communication needs to encompass the entire organization from the very beginning in a strategic fashion. They suggest gathering organizational change insights from the regular members by creating questionnaires or surveys to gather data.

2.9 Theoretical framework

2.9.1 Goal Setting Theory

A goal is the object or aim of action. For example, to attain a specified standard of proficiency, usually within a specified time limit. The purpose of goal setting theory is to predict, explain, and manipulate performance on organizational tasks (Locke & Latham, 2002). An important factor of goal setting theory that makes it useful to this particular study is the propagation of this theory as an open theory, or one “that new elements are added as new discoveries are made” (Locke & Latham, 2006). This is important because of a gap in the research this study focusing on organizations in times of change is hoping to fill. Consistent with the work of Locke and his colleagues (Locke & Latham, 2002; Locke & Latham, 2006) that examined goals and goal setting in organizational settings, this project proposes to explore how communication is used to support the goal of organizational change. Thus, this study seeks to extend our understanding of goals and goal setting to wider organizational outcomes.

2.9.2 Framing theory

Framing involves communication that leads others to accept one meaning over another. It is the process by which a people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue (Chong, D and Druckman, J 2007). Because issues are often complicated, and require the processing of a great deal of information from a variety of perspectives, frames provide a shorthand understanding of a situation, by focusing only on those features deemed important by an individual. Thus, they aid us in making the difficult task of processing complex and often cumbersome information about our social world much simpler, by focusing our attention only on certain features that we feel are important.

In public discourses, frames are often used to promote individuals and groups having an interest in advancing certain ways of seeing the social world rather than others (William Gamson 1989)

Organizations may frame information by emphasizing specific values, facts, and other considerations, and endowing them with greater apparent applicability for making related judgments. As a result, they promote particular definitions, interpretations, evaluations and recommendations thereby influencing the response they get from the audience targeted. This theory helps us evaluate how information targeting employees is packaged to create desired meaning.

2.9.3 Participatory communication

The definition of participation varies depending on the perspective applied. Some define participation as the mobilization of people to eliminate unjust hierarchies of knowledge, power, an economic distribution. Others define it as the reach and inclusion of inputs by relevant groups in the design and implementation of a development project. These examples represent two of the main approaches to participation: a social movement perspective and a project-based or institutional perspective. These perspectives share a common understanding of participation as the involvement of ordinary people in a development process leading to change. Their scope and methods, however, can differ.

Participation can be used a tool to achieve a pre-established goal defined by someone external to the community involved. For the social movement mentioned above, participation itself can be a goal as an empowering process. There is, however, growing consensus for active participation in the early stages of a development project or program, both in research and design of

interventions. Such participatory goal setting does not secure a continued role for participation in the following stages of project implementation. It only indicates that with ownership in setting goals a sustained process with relevant outcomes and impact will be possible.

Furthermore, the fundamental aim of empowering people to handle challenges and influence the direction of their own lives is inherent in participation. In Narayan (2006) definition of empowerment, participation becomes a turning point: “Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives. Effective participatory communication brings about, feelings of ownership of a problem and a commitment to do something about it, Improvement of competencies and capacities required to engage with the defined development problem and actual influence on institutions that can affect an individual or community.

On the other hand, is the participatory model based on Freire’s liberating pedagogy from the 1960s, renewed in more recent debates about development, takes globalization, transnational networking, new media and governance into account. These issues help to determine the strategic communication objectives. Rather than communicating the correct or relevant information to specific audiences, it is about articulating processes of collective action and reflection by relevant stakeholders. The center of attention is the empowerment of citizens by their active involvement in the identification of problems, development of solutions and implementation of strategies. The participatory model is a dialogic and horizontal approach to communication and development where access to spaces of communication and dialogue is crucial.

This theory forms a basis from which to evaluate the extent to which UTK involves its employees in the implementation of the change process.

2.10 Operations at Unilever Tea Kenya- UTK

UTK main activity is planting of tea on its Lipton Gardens with the ultimate product being the harvested leaf by removing of the tender, growing shoots from the surface of the tea bush. For a long time in UTK, tea harvesting has been carried out by hand. In recent years however, So far, tea leaves are harvested by MH without causing mechanical injury and manufactured under optimum conditions in order to maintain quality (Owuor et al., 1987). Due to the sharp rise in labor costs and the ever increasing cost of production the tea industries are becoming almost non profitable. Thus with this changing economic scenario, organizations are keen on enhancing profitability.

The increase in total harvested quantity is per day trickles from top down where output from the company has improved as well as that of individual MH operators. The use of machines increases the plucking average with a net decrease in cost of production compared to hand plucking. This implies that the MH operators are able to harvest more tea within limited time. The cost of operating the machines is also minimal. An economic analysis carried out in this study proved that mechanized harvesting of tea is viable for adoption in most Kenyan plantations. This information is however not sweet music to the ears of many plantation workers as it goes a long way into reducing the number of employees employed by the tea companies hence job losses. This then could create a hostile environment between plantation workers and the tea companies.

The communication of such changes therefore requires adequate strategy development before cascading to employees. Otherwise could be act as a source of conflict in the event that employees efforts to meet their needs is met by obstacle.

2.11 Communication structures in UTK,

The communication structure in UTK is segmented so that all audiences are reached via different means. The mode of communication for management staff is mainly via email, while notice boards and supervisory cascades are utilized for plantation workers. The other external stakeholders on the other hand are reached via the company website. However, when there is need UTK may adopt a blend of channels such as use of posters to give targeted communication. To be able to receive feedback, UTK has fitted suggestion boxes in designated points of the business, besides holding monthly meeting for it employees.

2.12 The role of communication as a tool for community change

Communication has always been perceived as a potential tool for community change and transformation with the idea behind the establishment of the modern day community radios being the passion and change. Thus, through appropriate news framing and agenda setting, communication can bring about the change desired.

Despite the harshness of the reality, effective communication always gives desired results Emergent trends in the world of communication technologies have not only widened the context of communication, but also significantly altered the conduct of conflict, warfare, and conflict resolution. People in the present age are able to know much more and much sooner about major

developments in international scenes via global news networks from all over the world thanks to internet enabled platforms. Through effective gate keeping while guaranteeing the employees of their rights to information, organizations can strike a balance by getting into the heart of the matter and demystifying cauldrons without infusing own biases.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the procedures that were used to conduct the study, focusing on research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, and data collection and analysis. The research method used was both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. As Miles and Huberman agreed that the two methods complement each other more than they do supplement (Banjade 2007).

3.2 Research Design

This study will use a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (OrodhoJ.A, 2002). Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) on the other hand gives the purpose of descriptive research as determining and reporting the way things are. Borg &Gall (1989) noted that descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators. The study fits within the provisions of descriptive survey research design because the researcher will collect data and report the way things are without manipulating any variables.

3.3 Study Location

The study was carried out in Unilever Tea Kenya –plantations.

3.4 Target Population

Target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research study (Borg & Gall, 1989). In the study, the target population encompassed top management and lower level employees of Unilever Tea Kenya. The company is one of the leading tea producing companies in Kenya. It faces internal change in the advent of mechanized operations. Its employees have varied demographic respects ranging from, age, gender, education and length of service.

The study assessed respondents that were accessible and knowledgeable about the topic.

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. Any statements made about the sample should also be true of the population (Orodho, 2002). It is however agreed that the larger the sample the smaller the sampling error (Gay L.R, 1992). The study will use non-probability sampling to obtain the sample. A total of 55 respondents; 12 managers and 43 were selected across the unit. Purposive sampling was then be used to get respondents with a representation of both gender and age groups.

3.6 Research Instruments

The main tools of data collection for this study were questionnaires and interview schedules.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire was used for data collection since it offers considerable advantages in the administration. It also presents an even stimulus potentially to large numbers of people simultaneously and provides the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and also to make suggestions. It is also anonymous. Anonymity helps to produce more candid answers than is possible in an interview. The questionnaires were also used to collect data from members of management.

3.6.2 Interview Schedules

Interview schedules were used to guide interviews conducted with the plantation employees. The interview guides contained items covering all the objectives of the study.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introduction letter from the University of Nairobi School of Journalism and Mass communication to be able to collect data from the field. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the Company's management and the workers. The respondents were assured that strict confidentiality would be maintained in dealing with the responses. The researcher was also provided with available literature at the company Library to obtain secondary data.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

After all data was collected, the researcher conducted data cleaning, which involved identification of incomplete or inaccurate responses, from whence they were corrected to improve the quality of the responses. Data was then coded and entered in the computer for analysis before presentation.

3.9 Limitations of this Study

There are several limitations to this study. The period covered for study was short, forcing the researcher to use data from only two groups of respondents, the plantation workers and management leaving out other stakeholders like the contractors could add to the diversity of findings. The data collected and analyzed was in relation to communication of change regarding the adoption of one Technology as opposed to the numerous other adoptions the company has done

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data gathered through questionnaires and interviews in UTK is presented and analyzed. The chapter discusses the results of the questionnaires and interviews responded by 43 Plantation workers and 12 members of management. Prior to the initiation of the survey process, the purpose, the significance and objectives of the study were relayed to the participants. They were also assured that all the information they had provided are solely for the purpose of the study while their identities would remain confidential. All questions asked in the interview and structured questionnaires pertain only to the respondents' insights on the effectiveness of change communication in UTK.

The results of the study could assist managers in understanding the modern employee conceptualization of effective change communication, shed light to the relationship between supervisory communication and effective change communication and clarify the differences between men and women in regards to effective change communication. These results are also beneficial to organizations by providing clear tools that assist in providing employees effective communication regarding change.

4.2. Individual level analysis of Employee understanding of effective change communication.

This sought to assess employee understanding of effective change communication. This formed two bases of analysis; Individual level and organizational level of analysis. On the individual level, respondents conceptualized effective communication as a behavior that depicts a level of knowledge. Consistent with the work of Pavit nad Haight(1986), a behavior was conceptualized as what a person was doing while a trait as a knowledge focused individual.

During the interview, the following were the responses obtained on the traits of an effective communicator as well as an ineffective communicator

4.2.1 Behaviours of a communicator

Figure1.

| Effective Communicator | Ineffective communicator |
|--|--|
| He/ she is, already known to employees | New with little or no understanding of employees |
| Uses audible and clear words that can be understood easily | Uses unclear words that could be confusing |
| Listens carefully to the questions raised | Doesn't have time to listen |
| Takes time to answer questions raised | Cuts short audiences before they finish asking questions |
| Uses a language that is understood by all employee | Uses a language that is not understood by all |

4.2.2 The traits of an effective communicator

On this, good sense of humour, easy to talk to, confident, factual, good listener, one that makes everyone feel valued. On the other hand, traits of an ineffective communicator include: one that is irrational, very professional demeanor all the time, one that doesn't make members of the audience comfortable enough and is not a good listener.

4:3 Summary of responses coded for knowledge

Figure 2

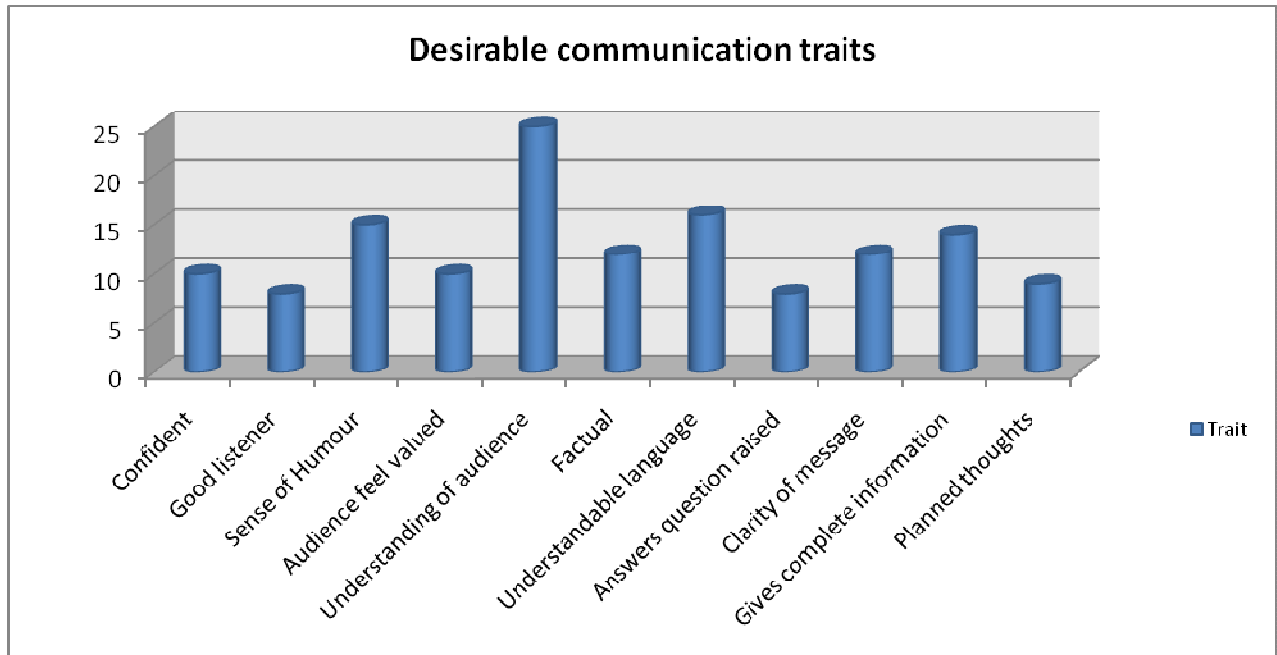
| Effective communicator | Ineffective communicator |
|--|--|
| They are sure of what they say. They must have thought well about it | They have questions more than answers |
| Give complete information. Nothing is left hanging | Give incomplete information |
| Can answer any questions raised there and then | Not sure of what to answer and can even ask for more time to give the answer |
| They know the people they are talking to even by name | Have little knowledge of the people they are talking to |
| Information oozes out in a planned manner | Haphazard flow of information creating more confusion |

4.4 Organizational Level of analysis

On this, respondents conceptualized effective communication in terms of accuracy, availability and clarity. Accuracy dealt with information that was factual. Availability dealt with information

that was readily accessible. Clarity on the other hand focused on information presented in an understandable manner. The summary below show the responses given

Figure 2, Interview data count



From the analysis, 45% of the respondents agreed that effective communication from the organization could be assessed by mainly the ability of the audience to understand the message. Also, for effective communication of change, the organization should ensure that information is encoded in a language they understand. Other desirable traits highlighted as a criterion of evaluating effectiveness of communication at organizational level included, level of confidence the person passing information is, listenership, humour, value of audience, factuality, clarity of message, completeness of information and how well planned the thoughts are flowing.

4.5 Situations that communication can work poorly

Respondents enumerated a number of situations when communication can work poorly. These are situation where; information given is ambiguous, inconsistent, incomplete, inaccurate ill timed and complex considering the educational levels of the employees who are mainly employed to undertake manual jobs.

4.6 Introduction of MH machines in UTK

75 % of the audiences were already working with UTK during the introduction of mechanical harvesting machines. Out of these, they gave an account of how the introduction of MH machines was passed on to the employees.

4.6.1 Introduction of the machines to employees

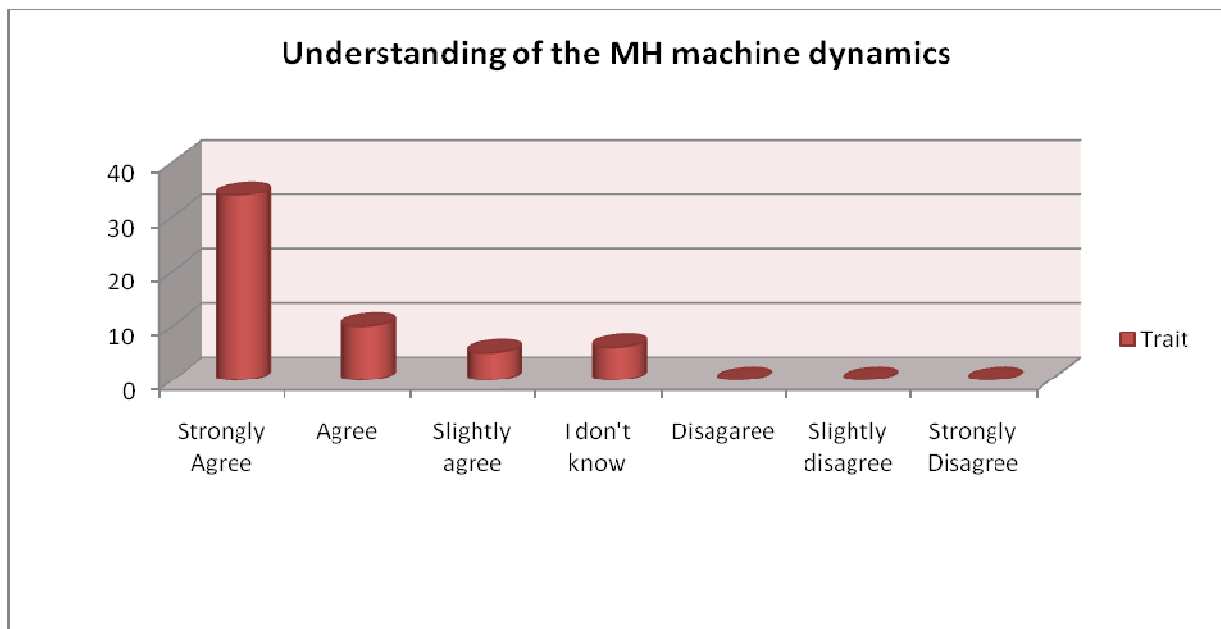
The MH machine was not only a new venture to UTK but also to other tea industries. This was initiated after a survey was conducted on minimum amount of plucking an employee can do in a day. All the respondents agree that the introduction of the MH machines was meant to ease the amount of work an employee had to do during high crop season as well as increase the overall output of the organization. 65 % of the respondents agree that UTK created a lot of awareness on the impact of introducing the machine in to use at the plantations.

After the survey on the viability of the project was completed the Members of management and supervisors were then tasked with creating awareness around the operations of the machine as well as possible outcome to the employees. Here, employees were allowed to give their feedback, from whence, the decision to proceed with the project or not would be arrived at.

Employees were provided a number of avenues to provide feedback, including, through their immediate supervisors as well as suggestion boxes fitted in strategic points. After the successful implementation of the pilot phase, the MH machines were then launched for official use at the plantations by the company leadership.

4.6.2 The dynamics of the introduction of MH machines

62 % of respondents agree that they understood all the dynamics of the introduction of MH machine by UTK. This was as a result of rigorous awareness creation by the company using varied avenues to reach the shop floor employees. Another 18 % agree to this while another 12% percent either agree, or do not know.8% of the respondents however, felt that the dynamics of the introduction were not understood during the introduction.

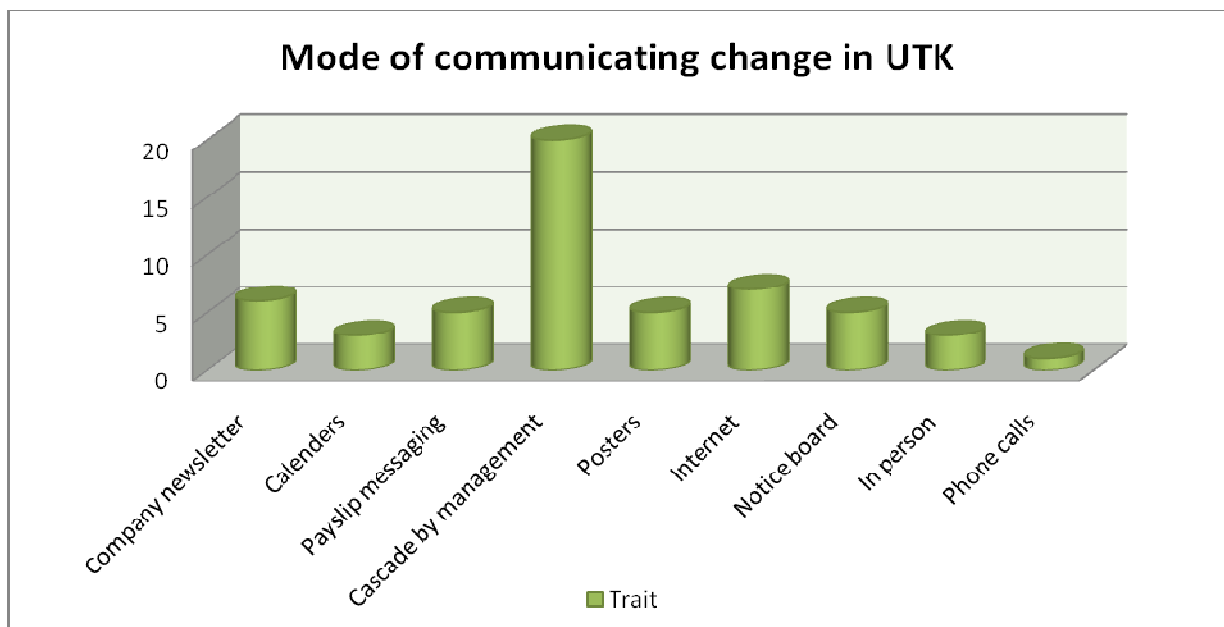


4.7 What makes effective communication between supervisors and employees

68 % of the respondents agreed that for effective communication between a supervisor and an employee, the supervisor must understand the communication needs of the recipient. Equally, the context of communication must be appropriate. Other traits that support effective communication include, value for all audience, avenue for feedback, incorporating all members of the audience. A Supervisor must also be well versed with the topic of discussion. On the other hand, an ineffective supervisor would be unable to maintain the flow of information and would often fail to create an understanding of the information being passed.

4.8 Avenues available for communication in UTK

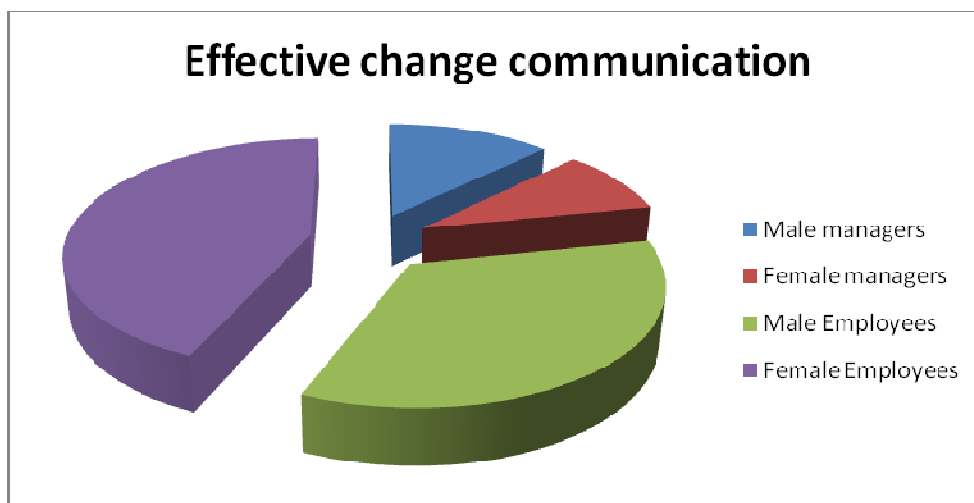
The avenues highlighted included, notice boards, posters, internet, cascade by members of management and supervisors, pay slip messaging, calendars, and newsletters. These were rated as follows.



The most popular mode of communicating change in UTK is through cascades by members of management and supervisors.

4.9 Evaluation of change communication in terms of gender

An assessment of the difference between males and females in their evaluation of change communication, the findings was as follows;



There were statistically insignificant differences on their assessment. Both groups agreed that there was effective change communication in UTK. Instead, both groups assign the organization similar assessment regarding the effectiveness of change communication. This is congruent with past research that suggested no significant differences between sexes as was seen in the works of Wilkins and Andersen's (1999) meta-analysis of management communication and Rucker and Gendrin's (2007)-evaluation of self construal and direct communication style.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of findings

The study was conducted with aim of achieving the objective of establishing the effective change communication strategies at the workplace. To achieve this objective analysis of data with regard to the respondents' response was done to determine the effectiveness of change communication strategies used by the organization. It explored how employees view effective change communication at the individual and organizational level.

The results of the study revealed that some strategies were more effective than others. The employee feel of the communication around the adoption of the MH machines was that they were provided with adequate information about this change. Their concerns around the technology were also addressed satisfactorily. In the analysis of the results from the questionnaires administered, it was clear that the most effective strategy was word of mouth followed through the supervisors. At the individual level, this framework is significant because change communication distributor (e.g supervisors) will be aware of how their effectiveness will be evaluated. As for the organizational level, information can be evaluated based on accuracy, (is all information true?), availability (is information accessible and in what venues?), and clarity (is the message delivered in an appropriate style in regard to employee comprehension levels?).

The goal setting theory on the other hand is further utilized in the sense that, whenever organizations seek to make significant changes, they use communication to this end, while effective communication would be an indication of the achievement of desired outcomes and hence communication becomes a vehicle to drive desired outcomes. With regard to cascading information, UTK has done a lot to make employees understand the change and be part of the implementation process. UTK also provides a number of channels through which employees can obtain information as well as conveying it, as one strategy to evaluate feedback. On the male – female view of effective communication, there were statistically insignificant difference on their assessment. Both groups agreed that there was effective change communication in UTK. This is congruent with past research that suggested no significant differences between sexes as was seen in the works of Wilkins and Andersen's (1999) meta-analysis of management communication and Rucker and Gendrin's (2007)-evaluation of self construal and direct communication style.

Supervisory communication, was highly rated with most employees agreeing to its effectiveness. From the assessment, there is a moderate positive change communication. That is the more positive employees regard the supervisory communication, the more positive is evaluation of change communication. This findings supports past notions of the importance of supervisor relationship to cascade any expected changes (Gilbreath & Benson 2008).

5.2 Conclusion

The results of this study have clearly shown that the choice of strategies to use to pass information to the target audience in an organization determines the results. It is clear from the findings that some strategies are more effective than others and therefore UTK should not only

focus more on those strategies that can further improve effectiveness to effectively meet the communication needs of its diverse audience.

5.3 Recommendations

1. There is need to device new communication strategies that are not used so as to verify whether they would bring in more results.
2. The already existing strategies that are working for the organization can be improved for better results.
3. There is need to consider use of the internet and social media to reach other audiences.
4. Awareness about the existing web pages should be created since most of the target population is widely using the internet on daily bases and yet they are not aware about it.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study only covered two stakeholders of the organization, since UTK has many other stakeholders, a similar study is recommended covering them. Also, data analyzed only covered the change communicated with the introduction of MH machines; a similar study should be carried out on other aspects of change in UTK at periods to could yield different results.

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Appendix A

Communication Effectiveness in Organizations

Interview Guide

Hallo. My name is....., a student at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a survey on change communication in UTK. I would like to ask you a few questions that will take about 10 minutes. Do you consent?

1. What makes communication effective in your company?

2. Tell me about the kinds of work situations people experience here that require communication.

3. Describe for me that situation in which communication can work poorly.

4. Were you already working with UTK When the mechanized harvesting machines were introduced?

5. If so, how was this communicated to employees?

6. Would you say the employees understood the dynamics of the introduction of these machines?

Yes

No

7. Describe how supervisors communicate with employees in UTK.

8. What makes communication effective between supervisors and subordinates?

9. What makes communication ineffective between supervisors and subordinates?

10. What avenues are available for communication in UTK?

11. Would you say they are effective for communication? Yes No

Why? _____

12. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about communication in UTK?

Appendix B:

Communication Survey

Guide notes

Most of the questions ask you to circle a number on a scale that appears to the right of the item.

Choose the answer that best matches how you feel about the statement. Then circle the number on the scale that best matches how you feel about the statement.

Using the Key below, Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements as a description of how things are at UTK. Circle the best match

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | I don't Know | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

1. Changes at UTK are communicated effectively.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

2. When change occurs at UTK, I am the last to know about it.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

3. Changes that are caused by internal forces (e.g., personnel changes) are communicated well.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

4. Decisions about change are freely shared with all employees.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

5. Changes that are caused by external forces (e.g., the economy, government regulations, etc.) are communicated well.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

6. I feel that information about change is shared with me at the appropriate time.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

7.. Policy or procedure changes that impact my job are communicated effectively.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

8. When there is a change to my duties and responsibilities, UTK communicates that change well.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

9. People share information at UTK

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Sources of Information about Change

Below are seven potential sources of information about change at UTK. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements as a description of how things are at UTK

1. Change is communicated effectively by:

- a. Supervisors
- b. Fellow Employees
- c. Intranet
- d. Notice boards
- e. Unit to Unit
- f. Senior Management
- g. The Grapevine

Supervisory Communication

Below are questions addressing supervisory communication at UTK. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements as a description of how things are at UTK.

Use a TICK where appropriate

10 Supervisors are willing, receptive listeners.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree I Don't Know
Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree

10. Supervisors effectively communicate work expectations.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree I Don't Know
Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree

11. Supervisors are willing to share information.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree I Don't Know
Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree

12. Supervisors communicate effectively with upper management.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree I Don't Know
Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree

This section is optional. Please fill if you consent

Background Information: I like to have some background information for statistical purposes.

The questions are very general and the answers will not identify you.

Do not put your name:

13. What is your sex? Male Female

