

Effect of Project Communication Practices on the Performance of the Child Protection and Education Project Implemented by World Vision International in Rutsiro District, Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of project communication practices on the performance of a child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International Rwanda (WVIR). Specifically, to assess the effect of participatory communication on performance of a child protection and education project, to examine the effect of results-driven communication on the performance of a child protection and education project and to assess the effect of feedback mechanism communication on the performance of a child protection and education project in Rutsiro district. The theories guided this study are participatory communication theory, feedback intervention theory and goal-oriented communication theory. The study employed the descriptive and correlational research design. The target population was 142 people including project coordination staff, project team implementers, project promoters, project beneficiaries. The population was small and accessible; therefore, the census method was used. The data was collected using questionnaire and interview guide. The data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative approaches, including descriptive statistics and inferential statistics using SPSS version 25.0. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and analyzed based on responses. The findings revealed strong positive agreement with participatory communication ($M=4.27$), results-driven communication ($M=3.75$), and feedback mechanism communication ($M=4.16$). Regression analysis showed that for every one-unit increase in participatory communication, project performance increased by 1.354 units ($p=0.000$), while results-driven communication and feedback mechanisms had negative effects on performance, with decreases of -2.081 and -0.163 units respectively ($p=0.000$). These findings suggest that participatory communication significantly improves project performance, while results-driven communication and feedback mechanisms do not. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the project shares regular the project activities designed to foster trust and open communication among stakeholders and team members. Further, project should organize a regular communication training to equip project stakeholders with effective communication strategies for example how to provide feedback communication. Additionally, the project should encourage more proactive feedback through recognition programs and ensuring feedback.

Key words: Child Protection, Education, Project Communication Practices, Project Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication in projects occur in various formats; these include presentations, formal meetings, informal discussions, formal project documents, records and meeting memorandums. For communication to take place or for information to be shared effectively within projects, communication needs to be facilitated and supported by some form of media (Carvalho, 2023).

These media are more commonly known as project communication tools within the project management environment. Tools used in project communication includes among others: intranet (project databases), internet, (e- mail, chat, Skype), telephones, videoconferencing, voice over internet protocol (VOIP) and face- to-face. Projects by nature are complex, and may involve cross-functional and intercontinental collaboration with delivery or implementations spread across multiple client sites. Over and above this, one must consider the complex stakeholder relationships that must be managed. It is therefore imperative that communication be efficient and effective to foster a successful project environment (Tang et al., 2022).

The role of communication and its significance in project management literature has been investigated intensively, focusing on the relationship between communication and project management. This has led to communication being linked to the success or failure of projects (Yeo et al., 2022). For numerous years, the inability to successfully execute projects has remained a prominent concern for management, with communication being recognized as the primary factor preventing organizations from exerting influence and attaining success in project management. Depending on the project's size, scope, and sector, goals for a project will be met; as a result, completion is anticipated as soon as possible, by utilizing limited resources and achieving outcomes of exceptional quality. From this perspective,

only efficient and effective project management practices can yield results because they enhance the management of all the resources required for a project's successful completion. (Barbosa et al., 2021).

In Africa, communication strategies are the roadmaps designed to organize internal and external communication so that an organization's overall strategy can be executed (Wu et al., 2020). These strategies are fundamental in articulating, explaining and promoting a vision and a set of well-defined goals. They build a reliable, cohesive "voice" that links varied activities and goals in a manner that appeals to an organization's stakeholders (Ola-awo et al., 2021). In this study, communication strategies were viewed as the functional strategies that provided focus and direction to the communication function in an organization (Yeo et al., 2022). For instance, specifically in Nigeria and South Africa, concerns about the efficiency of communication within project teams have continued to attract the attention of researchers (Cheung et al., 2013). The lack of communication between these entities resulted in a housing bubble that consequently led to high rates of foreclosures and defaults (Culo & Skendrovic, 2010).

In the East African Community (EAC), the communication strategies employed by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) determine the level to which the trust and reputation of donors, stakeholders and employees in these organizations and their programmes are maintained and strengthened (Jameson, 2022). Communication strategies also determine the nature of relationships and collaboration created with the most important constituents of the organizations such as donors, the private sector and government agencies and who are critical in the successful implementation of the programmes (Njue et al., 2019). These strategies also affect the level of transparency and accountability of NGOs in the eyes of stakeholders as well as the capacity of the organizations to mobilize the support of the targeted beneficiaries and the required resources (Okinda, 2018). Besides, poor communication practices observed in EAC can often affect project team members' understanding of various objectives. According to Browne et al. (2021), team members of global businesses with advanced communication practices are more likely to complete their projects successfully. The majority of the population in the EAC, such as Rwanda, relies on agriculture as the main economic activity.

In Rwanda, 8% of the population relies on agriculture directly or indirectly as their major source of income and activity (Dan, 2020). Helping small farmers to access finance depends on communication and collaboration between various stakeholders and teams, as well as all life-sustaining resources. Therefore, communication is critical in the access finance to small-scale farmers' programs. With successful projects emerging to have been project managed, communication capabilities are an important factor in the success of the project (Banach et al., 2018). Joslin and Ralf (2021) described communication as live communication that responds and supports others, motivates staff and audience, and builds accessibility. Alves et al. (2022) stated that in order to eliminate barriers to managing a diverse workforce, a thorough investigation of effective communication is needed to improve employee outcomes that positively affect organizational outcomes.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Communication is essential in the construction industry, where project managers spend 90% of their time communicating with project participants. However, the project failure due to various factors such as lack of effective communication is a significant challenge in the non-governmental organization sector (Maramura & Shava, 2021); projects often fail due to poor communication within NGOs and between NGOs and local communities (Beatty, 2019); inadequate communication contributes to project failures over 30% of the time.

In Rwanda, harmful cultural, lack of awareness and access to family planning resources. Further, dropout rates, malnutrition, child abuse and neglect, local child protection procedures, school violence, and communication issues are the challenges face child protection and education of NGOs (Banda, 2023). In addition, Kamuli (2019) reported that school-level factors, such as lack of number of teachers, and lack of quality education delivery, also contribute to increased dropout pressure. Dufitumukiza et al. (2020) reported a rise in primary school dropouts from 7.8% in 2019 to 9.5% in 2020-2021, while secondary school dropouts increased from 8.2% in 2019 to 10.3% in 2020/21.

Previous studies were relevant to the current study, but they were conducted in different contexts. For instance, Mayfield and Mayfield (2017) investigated the link between leadership and effective communication in companies from various sectors in India, basing their study on a literature review. Another study by Akarika et al. (2023) examined the patterns of communication flow and organizational effectiveness in local government councils in Nigeria. The study concluded that results-oriented communication is crucial for enhancing service quality within an organization. Additionally, Alexis (2022) studied on enhancing smallholder farmers' resilience through effective climate communication channels in Ruhango District, Rwanda. However, these studies only provided a general discussion of communication practices and did not directly relate them to project performance. Moreover, their methodology differed from the one utilized in our study, and they presented conflicting findings on the effectiveness of various communication practices. As a result, our review of the literature revealed several gaps related to concepts, contexts, methodologies, and findings. Overall, there is a lack of studies that examine the combined effect of the participatory, results driven and

feedback mechanism on project performance. Therefore, this study aimed to address these research gaps by investigating the effect of project communication practices on the performance of child protection and education project.

1.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives are highlighted below

- i. To assess the effect of participatory communication on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district.
- ii. To examine the effect of results-driven communication on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district.
- iii. To assess the effect of feedback mechanism communication on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The following are the Research Hypotheses that was used in order to achieve its objectives

H01: Participatory communication has not significant effect on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district.

H02: Results-driven communication has not significant effect on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district

H03: Feedback mechanism communication has not significant effect communication practice on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on the following participatory communication theory, feedback intervention theory and Goal-Oriented Communication Theory.

2.1.1 Participatory Communication Theory

The concept was introduced by Freire in 1970. Participatory communication theory is based on the idea that the success of development initiatives relies on their ability to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process. This theory emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and open dialogue in decision-making to ensure sustainable and community-supported projects.

Participatory communication is a theoretical approach that emphasizes the active involvement and engagement of participants in the communication process (Incio et al., 2021). It recognizes the importance of participants' contributions and values their perspectives and experiences. This approach aims to create a sense of community and empower individuals by giving them a voice and agency in the communication process. Participatory communication is seen as a way to address social issues, promote social change, and confront crises. It is also considered essential in development projects/programs, as it can facilitate social change within existing institutional systems. However, the success of participatory communication projects depends on factors such as participants' motivations and gratifications, as well as the compatibility of the project with the society's value system. Effective communication in participatory practice remains a challenging task, but it is crucial for productive conversations and problem-solving.

Furthermore, participatory communication theory emphasize the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in the communication process, valuing their perspectives, and promoting active participation in decision-making and problem-solving (Prakash Subedi & Karki, 2022). When applied in the context of project management, participatory communication theory can significantly impact project performance. It emphasizes the importance of fostering a shared understanding among stakeholders. By encouraging open dialogue and exchanging ideas, project teams can ensure that everyone involved clearly understands its goals, objectives, and expectations. This shared understanding reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and miscommunications, leading to more efficient project execution and improved performance (Muniruddin et al., 2024). Participatory communication theory provides a fair communication framework based on dialogue and empowerment. This theory proposes that dialogue facilitates balanced sharing of knowledge, which leads to the creation of new knowledge and the discovery of the best option for change (Thoft et al., 2020).

The theory is critical since by encouraging participation from all stakeholders, including team members, clients, and end-users, there's a better chance of everyone understanding the project goals, requirements, and constraints. This can lead to clearer communication channels and fewer misunderstandings, which are often the root cause of project delays or errors. When stakeholders feel involved in the decision-making process, they are more likely to feel committed to the project's success. This commitment can translate into greater dedication to meeting project milestones, delivering

high-quality work, and resolving issues promptly. This theory is meaningful in this study because it aided to explain the participatory communication variable.

2.1.2 Feedback Intervention Theory

Feedback Intervention Theory (FIT), developed by Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham, is a psychological framework that explores how feedback influences performance and behavior. FIT posits that feedback impacts individuals through cognitive processes, shaping their perception and interpretation of their performance. This cognitive aspect highlights that feedback involves not just receiving information but also processing it to make adjustments that enhance performance (Locke & Latham, 2021).

FIT categorizes feedback into three levels: task, process, and self. Task-level feedback provides specific information about the outcomes of the task being performed. Process-level feedback addresses the methods and strategies used during the task, helping refine approaches. Self-level feedback influences self-perception, including self-esteem and self-efficacy, which can impact motivation and performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 2022). Understanding these levels is crucial for tailoring feedback to address different aspects of performance effectively. The theory also emphasizes the role of feedback in directing attention and setting goals. FIT suggests that feedback helps individuals focus on relevant performance aspects and aligns their efforts with specific goals. When feedback is clearly linked to performance objectives, it provides actionable insights that guide individuals in achieving their goals. This alignment is essential for driving performance improvements and ensuring that feedback leads to meaningful outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2021).

FIT emphasizes how feedback influences cognitive processes and performance, which is directly applicable to participatory communication practices. In participatory communication, stakeholders are actively involved in the communication process, and feedback is a critical component. According to FIT, participatory communication enhances performance by engaging individuals in the feedback loop, which helps them focus on relevant aspects of their tasks and understand their roles better. This active involvement allows for a more comprehensive understanding of project goals and challenges, leading to more effective contributions and improved project outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2021). For WVR projects, applying FIT to participatory communication can help evaluate how involving stakeholders in feedback processes influences project success and overall performance.

FIT's core focus on feedback mechanisms makes it highly relevant for evaluating feedback practices within project communication. According to FIT, effective feedback mechanisms facilitate continuous improvement by directing attention to performance issues and providing actionable insights. In the context of WVR projects, feedback mechanisms that are well-designed and implemented can help teams adjust their strategies, enhance their performance, and solve problems effectively (Kluger & DeNisi, 2022). Applying FIT to feedback mechanisms in WVR projects allows for an examination of how different types of feedback whether task-related, process-oriented, or self-referential impact project performance and contribute to overall success. This theory is important to this study because it gave the explanation of feedback mechanism communication variable.

2.1.3 Goal-Oriented Communication Theory

Goal setting is a key motivational process (Locke & Latham, 1984). Goals are the outcome that a person is trying to accomplish. People engage in activities that are believed to lead to goal attainment. As learners pursue multiple goals such as academic goals and social goals, goal choice and the level at which learners commit to attaining the goals influence their motivation to learn (Wentzel & Skinner, 2022).

Besides goal content i.e., what a person wants to achieve, the reason that a person tries to achieve a certain goal also has a significant influence on learning and performance. Goal orientations refer to the reasons or purposes for engaging in learning activities and explain individuals' different ways of approaching and responding to achievement situations (Santoro, 2020). The two most basic goal orientations are mastery and performance goals (Bursali & Öz, 2018). Different researchers refer to these goals with the following terms: learning and performance goals, task-involved and ego-involved goals (Kwasnicka et al., 2021), and task-focused and ability-focused goals. A mastery goal orientation is defined as a focus on mastering new skills, trying to gain increased understanding, and improving competence (Atstsaury et al., 2024). Gere (2019) stated that Goal-Oriented Communication Theory (GOCT) refers to a theoretical framework that focuses on understanding and improving communication by emphasizing the goals that individuals aim to achieve through their communicative interactions. The theory suggests that people engage in communication with specific objectives in mind, such as obtaining information, building relationships, exerting influence, or achieving some form of personal or social outcome.

The theory clarified their need for use of communications in enabling INGOs to attain its performance goals where their success of their implementation of its projects was among these goals given their nature of its operation. Hence, through their articulation of performance expectations, provision of performance feedback, task communication and use of information in problem solving, their management of their organization could ensure that no



misunderstanding occurred pertaining what project teams or its staff in general needed to do in order to ensure that its projects were successfully implemented. This theory is relevant as it helped the researcher to explain the results-driven communication variable.

2.2 Empirical Review

The empirical literature comprises the effect of project participatory communication, results-driven communication, and multi-channelled communication practices on project performance.

2.2.1 Effect of Participatory Communication on Project Performance

A study was carried out by Joslin and Müller (2015) on project communication, personal commitment, social networks, and perceived performance of the project in France. The study used a correlational research design on a sample of 345 respondents. The results of the study showed that there are notable positive associations between project communication, distinguished performance of the project, personal commitment, and social networks. Effective project communication, social networks, and personal commitment have led to the conclusion that conditions and social networks for better performance of citizenship schemes. The study focused on social network and project performance.

Aminahi (2016) assessed the adoption of participatory communication when executing the small farmers' empowerment project in Eastern Indonesia, which was undertaken by the government in cooperation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). A case study design was employed. The low adoption of participatory communication led to minimal cooperation and dialogue between the small farmers and the other stakeholders. This resulted in constrained exchange of information and knowledge required in decision-making phases of the project, leading to its poor implementation. Reaching a consensus on the ideal situation and priority areas was constrained, leading to poor coordination in decision-making processes, which adversely affected the success of the program. The study focused on participatory communication and small farmers.

John and Etika (2019) studied on sustainable development through participatory communication: an assessment of selected community projects in cross river state, Nigeria. The study investigates the adoption of participatory communication in Nigerian communication interventions. It examines three developmental projects in Cross River State and aims to answer four objectives and four research questions. The study uses Participatory Communication Theory (PCT) as the theoretical foundation and collects data through quantitative and qualitative methods. The main data gathering instrument is a questionnaire, and the data is analyzed using simple percentage. The research concludes that participatory communication is a crucial component in facilitating development projects and should be prioritized in community projects. It is recommended that participatory communication be adopted at every level of development projects to engage people and ensure the successful implementation of projects worth millions of naira. The study focused on participatory communication and community projects.

Abasenga (2023) studied on communication difficulties for Foreigners in Rwanda. The study aimed to understand the linguistic backgrounds of foreigners in Rwanda, identify the communication challenges they face, and identify solutions to overcome these issues. The research used questionnaires, interviews, and documentation to gather data. The findings revealed that many foreigners in Rwanda have different linguistic backgrounds from Rwandans, and some opportunities were missed due to these difficulties. The study also highlighted solutions for handling communication difficulties for foreigners in Rwanda. The study recommends that foreigners should be aware of Rwandan culture and the Rwandan national language, Kiyarwanda, and recognize the use of Language Service Providers (LSP) in their services. The findings highlight the importance of understanding and addressing these communication challenges for foreigners in Rwanda. The study focused on communication and foreigners.

2.2.2 Effect of Results-Driven Communication Practice on Project Performance

A study done by Kernbach (2015) on communication skills found that they are the most important skill since project managers are constantly involved in formal or informal communication at each stage of the project. The study established that construction project managers spend 76% of their time on the project communicating verbally. The study indicated the consideration of listening in project manager's communication skills. It indicated the building a good network of communication, the project manager needs to create trust and understanding of relationships with project team members. The study underscores the notion that effective communication is indispensable for project success. Since project managers are constantly engaged in formal and informal communication throughout the project lifecycle possessing strong communication skills is essential. The study focused on communication skills and project performance.

Mehmood (2022) studied on the impact of organizational culture, structure, and innovation strategy on hotel performance using effective communication as a mediator in Pakistan. Data was collected through a quantitative research design, with over 340 questionnaires delivered to top-level managers at each hotel. The results show that organizational culture, structure, and strategy all have a significant positive impact on performance, as measured by the

balance scorecard. Effective communication serves as a partial mediator between all organizational factors and performance. The findings suggest that hotels should focus on innovation strategies and organic structures to improve communication and performance. Additionally, a customer-focused and employee-focused culture that supports job variety and satisfaction among staff members can enhance effective communication, ultimately improving hotel performance.

Femi (2014) study investigated the relationship between communication and workers' performance in selected organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Data was collected through a questionnaire with 120 respondents. The results show a significant relationship between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity, and commitment. The study recommends that managers should regularly communicate with employees to improve workers' commitment and performance. This highlights the importance of effective communication in today's globalized world. The study focused on communication and workers' performance.

Muragijimana et al. (2024) studied on impact of communication strategies on organizational success, focusing on participatory, result-based, and multi-channel communication strategies. A sample of 150 workers from Rwanda participated in various service deliveries, and the data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis. Results showed that openness, dialogue, consultation, and shared decision-making were strongly correlated with time schedules. Performance expectations and feedback provision were also found to be significant factors in cost efficiency, time schedules, and service quality. The use of information in problem-solving was also found to be effective during service delivery. The number of channels used in delivering messages was strongly agreed upon by 35.2% of the respondents. The cohesiveness and consistency of multi-voiced messages were found to be significantly correlated with time schedules. The study concludes that participatory communication is correlated with dialogue and time schedules, and results-driven communication is associated with feedback on cost efficiency, time schedules, and service quality. The study focused on result-based communication and organizations.

2.2.3 Effect of feedback mechanism on Project Performance

In Singapore, Cheah (2020) conducted a study on the effect of Structured Feedback on Performance: The Role of Attitude and Perceived Usefulness. The study randomly assigned three teams with 12 students to the treatment group and four teams of 16 students to the control group. In the treatment group, company supervisors were asked to provide structured written feedback for the treatment group using structured feedback forms, which focus students' attention on task level, process level, and self-regulation level at three project milestone stages. In the control group, students received feedback from company supervisors without any feedback form. At the end of this project, a survey was conducted to measure students' attitudes toward feedback in supporting learning and their perceived usefulness of company supervisors' feedback. The results show that company supervisors' structured feedback positively affected students' overall project performance in presentation and report, and students' positive attitudes toward feedback and perceived usefulness of company supervisor's structured feedback are positively related to students' report performance. The study focused on effect of Structured Feedback on Performance.

Lu et al. (2019) studied the relationship between quality management practices and inter-organizational project performance. It examines the moderating role of governance mechanisms (contract governance and trust) on this relationship. Results from 265 questionnaires from China show that quality management practices significantly contribute to project performance. Contract governance enhances the positive effect of quality management practices, while trust's moderating effect is insignificant. The study suggests that contract governance could strengthen the effect of quality management practices in inter-organizational projects. Further research on contextual factors is needed. The study focused on feedback on Performance.

Ochieng (2022) studied on effect of performance feedback system on employee performance in Kenya Forestry Research Institute. The Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) has been facing challenges due to globalization and decreasing funding, leading to a need for improved employee performance. To address this, the institute has implemented performance feedback systems to ensure consistency in employee performance. However, despite these systems, employee performance remains low. A study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the performance feedback system and employee performance in KEFRI. The research used a descriptive research method, involving a census approach and utilizing primary and secondary data. The study found that the performance feedback system had a positive and significant effect on employee performance in KEFRI. The study also found that feedback frequency had a significant positive influence on employee performance. The study also found that performance feedback communication channels had a statistically significant positive effect on employee performance. Feedback-based training also had a positive influence on employee performance. The study focused on effect of performance feedback system on employee performance.

Bahati et al. (2016) examined the practices of feedback in formative assessment in Rwandan higher education, specifically at the University of Rwanda. The study uses a qualitative approach to gather perspectives from lecturers and students on the subject. Data collected through interviews, student focus group discussions, and document analysis

revealed that formative assessment and feedback were understood as binding prescriptions within limited academic regulations. Feedback was often reduced to marks, and lecturers were in charge of all formative assessment efforts. The lack of clarity and feed forward instructions in delayed feedback led students to receive feedback without using it to enhance their performance. The study focused on practices of feedback in formative.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study was based on descriptive and correlational research designs, which was chosen to assess the cause-and-effect relationships between project communication practices and project performance. The descriptive research survey design effectively describes data on project communication practices and performance, while a correlation research design is particularly effective in determining how changes in independent variables can influence the dependent variables (Neumark, 2018). In this study, the researcher manipulated specific communication practices such as participatory communication, results-driven communication, and feedback mechanisms to examine their direct effects on project performance. The study employed a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaire, while qualitative data was gathered through interviews.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The study targeted 142 population involved in child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district. The following table gives details of the different categories of population that was targeted.

Table 1

Target Population

Category	Total population
Project coordination staff	6
Project team implementers	30
Project promoters	40
Beneficiaries	56
Total	142

Table 1 above shows that a total of 142 people, the project is comprised by child protection and education. It implemented in Rutsiro district. The target population is composed by study 6 project coordination staff at district level, 30 project team implementers, 40 project promoters and 56 beneficiaries.

Given the small size of the total population, the study employed a census method to ensure that data is collected from every individual, including all 142 respondents. This technique eliminates the need for sampling and provides comprehensive and accurate information about the entire population. By utilizing a census, the study avoids sampling errors and achieves a complete view of the data, which is crucial for drawing reliable conclusions regarding project communication practices and their impact.

3.3 Research Instruments

The research was founded on primary data, which was gathered using questionnaires and interview guide. According to Yaddanapudi and Yaddanapudi (2019) questionnaire is a practical tool used by researchers to gather data from respondents. It allows for large amounts of information collection, easy quantification, and cost-effectiveness. It covers a large group of respondents quickly, allowing in-depth research and first-hand experience. This method allows for a quick and cost-effective way to gather valuable information.

The researcher used of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire had two sections; Section A consisting of respondent's demographic information, section B consisting of questions about participatory communication and project performance. Additionally, A Likert scale is a rating tool used to gauge opinions, attitudes, or behaviors by presenting a statement or question followed by a series of answer statements, which respondents choose based on their feelings. The scale rating was from 1-5 where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree.

Furthermore, this study used interview guide. Menon et al. (2020) define an interview as an interview without any set format but in which the interviewer may have some key questions formulated in advance. Thus, the respondents gave the subject of the whole issue in general and the respondents were asked to relict the information without any bias. The researcher designed an interview schedule as one of the data collections instruments for this study. The interview was given to the project coordination staff to complete the information about qualitative data. The interview questions aim to elicit relevant information concerning the effect of project communication practices on project performance.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

This study used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and analyzed based on responses. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics for summarization and interpretation. Both methods were used to approximate and characterize the data.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of project communication practices on performance of child protection and education project. The focus was on analysing the data from the questionnaire to gather quantitative information, particularly on the impact of project communication on the performance of project. SPSS version 25.0 was the tool for data analysis.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

In this section, respondents provided the socio-demographic information including gender, age, marital status, qualification of the participants.

Table 2

Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percent
Questionnaires Returned	124	87.3
Questionnaires Not Returned	18	12.7
Total	142	100.0

Table 2 indicates the response rate of questionnaire. Out of 142 respondents, 124 (87.3%) returned and filled the questionnaire and 18 (12.7%) respondents didn't return the questionnaires. This strong participation rate indicates that the majority of respondents were engaged and willing to contribute their input, which enhances the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

Table 3

Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	80	64.5
Female	44	35.5
Total	124	100.0

Table 3 provides a detailed breakdown of respondents by gender. Out of the 124 total respondents, 80 are male, representing 64.5% of the valid responses. In contrast, 44 respondents are female, making up 35.5% of the valid responses. The frequency of male respondents is notably higher, indicating a gender imbalance in the sample. This distribution shows that the male representation is more dominant within the study population.

Table 4

Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
Between 25-30 years	5	4.0
Between 31-45 years	109	87.9
Over 46 years	10	8.1
Total	124	100.0

Table 4 provides an overview of the age distribution among the respondents. Out of the 124 total respondents, the age group "Between 31-45 years" is the most prominent, representing 87.9% of respondents. This indicates that the majority of respondents fall into this age range, reflecting a strong representation of mid-career professionals in the study. The next largest group is those "Over 45 years," with 10 respondents, making up 8.1%. The smallest group is "Between 25-30 years," with only 5 respondents, or 4.0%.

Table 5*Marital Status of Respondents*

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	26	21.0
Married	91	73.4
Divorced	4	3.2
Widower	3	2.4
Total	124	100.0

Table 5 outlines the marital status of the respondents in the study. Among the 124 total respondents, the majority are married, with 91 individuals representing 73.4% of respondents. The next largest group is single, with 26 respondents, accounting for 21.0% of respondents. This shows that a notable, though smaller, portion of respondents are not married.

Table 6*Educational Level of Respondents*

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	12	9.7
Bachelor's degree	105	84.7
Master degree	5	4.0
PhD degree	2	1.6
Total	124	100.0

Table 6 presents the distribution of respondents by their level of education. Among the 124 total respondents, the majority hold a Bachelor's degree, with 105 respondents, representing 84.7% of respondents. The next largest group consists of respondents with a Diploma, totaling 12 respondents or 9.7% valid respondents. Smaller proportions are observed for those with a Master's degree (5 respondents or 4.0%) and a PhD degree (2 respondents or 1.6%). The dominance of this educational level should be considered when interpreting the study's findings, as it may influence the results based on the educational background of the respondents.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

This section provides descriptive statistics essential for addressing the research questions related to participatory communication practice, results-driven communication, and feedback mechanisms on the performance of project. It also explores the perceptions of surveyed respondents regarding these aspects. The analysis was based on the level of agreement from the survey responses, with the scale ranging from SA=Strongly Agree (5), A=Agree (4), UN=Undecided (3), D=Disagree (2), to SD=Strongly Disagree (1). The focus of the analysis is to understand how these factors contribute to project performance, with results and findings presented in the subsequent tables.

The mean analysis was based on the table below:

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics on Participatory Communication and the Project Performance*

Views of respondents	Mean	Std. Dev.
World Vision International Rwanda values and promotes open communication with all stakeholder.	4.57	.590
Communication channels used by World Vision International Rwanda are effective in facilitating dialogue and feedback	4.11	.324
I feel adequately informed about the objectives, progress, and challenges of projects	4.11	.748
World Vision International Rwanda encourages active participation from staff members in project decision-making processes	4.23	.427
World Vision International Rwanda effectively involves local communities in shaping project activities and priorities	4.56	.633
Communication strategies employed by World Vision International Rwanda strengthen community relationships and trust.	4.28	.848
Effective communication practices contribute significantly to achieving project goals and objectives	4.05	.398
Overall	4.27	.566

The data from Table 7 reveals that respondents generally perceive WVIR's participatory communication positively. The result revealed a very high mean score of 4.57 indicating a very strong positive agreement, and standard

deviation of 0.590 indicating heterogeneity in opinions among respondents. Similarly, WVIR is seen as effective in involving local communities with a very high mean indicating a very strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in opinions ($M=4.56$, $SD=0.633$) and encouraging active participation from staff with a very high mean indicating a very strong positive agreement and homogeneity in responses (mean $M=4.23$, $SD = 0.427$).

Although respondents expressed a very strong positive agreement that communication channels are effective with a very high mean and homogeneity in responses among respondents ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.324$) and that effective communication practices contribute to achieving project goals with a very high mean indicating very strong positive agreement and homogeneity in opinions ($M=4.05$, $SD=0.398$), there is more variation in responses regarding being adequately informed about the project with a very high mean indicating a very strong positive agreement and heterogeneity in responses ($M=4.11$, $SD=0.748$) and strengthening community relationships with a very high mean score of 4.28 indicating a very strong positive agreement and standard deviation of 0.848 indicating heterogeneity in opinions among respondents.

The overall very high mean of 4.27 for combined statements reflects on overall strong positive agreement that there is effect of participatory communication on performance of child protection and education project implemented by WVIR, with a standard deviation of 0.566 indicating a heterogeneity in opinions among respondents. This variation suggests some areas for improvement in ensuring consistent and effective stakeholder engagement. This implies that WVIR should focus on addressing information gaps and enhancing trust-building measures across different communities. The findings are supported by John and Etika (2019) asserted that the adoption of participatory communication in Nigerian communication interventions was crucial component in facilitating development projects and should be prioritized in community projects. Further, Joslin and Müller (2015) added that there are notable positive associations between project communication, distinguished performance of the project, personal commitment, and social networks. Effective project communication, social networks, and personal commitment have led to the conclusion that conditions and social networks for better performance of citizenship schemes.

According to the interview with the key informants on the same point, they reported

“While World Vision International is recognized for its strong commitment to open communication and stakeholder involvement, there are notable challenges in ensuring that all stakeholders feel equally informed and engaged. The informants highlighted that some community members perceive communication efforts as inconsistent, which affects their overall trust and engagement with the project. This feedback aligns with the survey findings, indicating that despite the generally positive perception of WVIR’s communication practices, there are areas requiring improvement to achieve more uniform and effective stakeholder engagement across all groups”.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics on Results-Driven Communication and the Project Performance

Views of respondents	Mean	Std. Dev.
World Vision International Rwanda effectively communicates clear objectives and expectations for project outcomes	2.88	1.196
Communication within WVIR is focused on achieving measurable results and impact	4.10	.421
I receive timely and relevant feedback on my contributions towards achieving project goals.	4.26	1.179
Communication practices within WVIR align effectively with organizational priorities and strategies	3.94	.398
I understand how my role contributes to the overall mission and goals of WVIR through communication	3.42	.820
I feel that communication efforts are focused on maximizing the impact of projects in the communities we serve	4.39	.491
I believe that communication about project results influences decision-making processes for future project planning and implementation	3.55	1.074
Overall	3.75	.797

Table 8 reveals a mixed picture of communication practices within child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International Rwanda. The effectiveness of communication regarding clear objectives and expectations was rated at a moderate mean of 2.88 indicating moderate agreement with a standard deviation of 1.196 designate heterogeneity of responses, this indicates significant variability in experiences. In contrast, communication focused on measurable results received a very high mean of 4.10 indicating a very strong positive agreement and a low standard deviation of 0.421 designating homogeneity in responses. Timely and relevant feedback was rated at a very high mean of 4.26 indicating a very strong positive agreement and standard deviation of 1.179 designating heterogeneity in responses.

Communication alignment with organizational priorities scored a high mean of 3.94 indicating a strong positive agreement and a low standard deviation of 0.398 indicating homogeneity in opinions among respondents. Understanding of individual role contributions had a high mean of 3.42 indicating strong positive agreement and a high standard deviation of 0.820 designating heterogeneity in responses. Efforts to maximize impact were highly rated with very high mean of 4.39 indicating a very strong positive agreement and a low standard deviation of 0.491 designating homogeneity in responses. Finally, the belief that communication about project results influences future decision-making had a high mean of 3.55 indicating an strong positive agreement and standard deviation of 1.074 designating heterogeneity in opinions among respondents.

Therefore, the overall data indicates that while the effect of result-driven communication on performance of child protection and education project implemented by WVIR excels in areas with a high mean 3.75 indicating an agreement, and high standard deviation of 0.797 designating heterogeneity in responses among respondents. This means that the measurable results, providing timely feedback, and maximizing project impact, there are notable inconsistencies in communication regarding objectives, role contributions, and the influence of project results on future decision-making, specially, performance of child protection and education project implemented. The high variability in responses suggests that experiences and perceptions of communication practices differ widely among respondents. The findings are supported by Muragijimana et al. (2024) asserted that there is impact of communication strategies on organizational success, focusing on participatory, result-based, and multi-channel communication strategies. Results showed that openness, dialogue, consultation, and shared decision-making were strongly correlated with time schedules. The use of information in problem-solving was also found to be effective during service delivery.

According to the interview with a senior management level executive at child protection and education project regarding the effect of results-driven communication, the participants reported that

“The clarity of objectives and expectations often falls short, impacting how well staff understand and align with project goals. He noted that while WVIR excels in focusing on measurable results and providing timely feedback, there are challenges in consistently using communication about project outcomes to inform future decisions. The executive emphasized the need for better integration of results into strategic planning to improve overall project effectiveness and organizational alignment. The senior staff members at child protection and education project remarked that while the organization does well in communicating the impact and outcomes of its projects, there is a need for more consistent and detailed communication about the specific objectives and expectations. Those staff members pointed out that although feedback is generally timely and relevant, integrating insights from project results into future planning is often inconsistent”.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics on Feedback Mechanism Communication and the Project Performance

Views of respondents	Mean	Std. Dev.
World Vision International Rwanda has effective feedback mechanisms in place to gather input from stakeholders	4.24	.856
I am aware of the various channels through which feedback can be provided within World Vision International Rwanda	4.22	.541
Feedback mechanisms at World Vision International Rwanda are accessible and easy to use.	4.06	.724
I feel encouraged to provide feedback on projects and organizational processes."	3.96	.794
Feedback provided through World Vision International Rwanda's mechanisms is taken seriously and acted upon	4.38	.489
There is transparency in how feedback is processed and communicated to stakeholders.	3.91	.463
World Vision International Rwanda fosters a culture of continuous learning and adaptation based on stakeholder feedback	4.38	.762
Overall	4.16	.661

Table 9 indicates that feedback mechanisms at child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International Rwanda are generally perceived positively by respondents. The effectiveness of feedback mechanisms received a very high mean score of 4.24 indicating a very strong agreement and a standard deviation of 0.856 specifying heterogeneity in opinions among respondents, this signifies that the respondents view these systems as effective. Awareness of feedback channels scored a very high mean of 4.22 indicating a very strong agreement and a standard deviation of 0.541 specifying heterogeneity in responses. Accessibility and ease of use were rated at a very high mean of 4.06 signifying a very strong agreement and a standard deviation of 0.724 specifying heterogeneity in responses, showing that the systems are user-friendly. Respondents feel somewhat encouraged to provide feedback, with

a high mean score of 3.96 indicating an agreement and a standard deviation of 0.794 specifying heterogeneity in responses among respondents.

The perception that feedback is taken seriously and acted upon was notably high, with a very high mean of 4.38 indicating a very strong agreement and a low standard deviation of 0.489 specifying homogeneity in responses, reflecting strong trust in responsiveness. Similarly, transparency in feedback processing and communication scored a high mean of 3.91 indicating an agreement and a standard deviation of 0.463 specifying homogeneity in responses among respondents. Lastly, fostering a culture of continuous learning based on feedback received a very high mean score of 4.38 indicating a strong agreement and a standard deviation of 0.762 specifying heterogeneity in responses.

The overall very high mean of 4.16 for combined statements reflects on overall strong positive agreement that there is effect of feedback mechanism communication on performance of child protection and education project implemented by WVIR, with a standard deviation of 0.661 indicating a heterogeneity in opinions among respondents. This signifies that while feedback mechanisms are effective and valued, enhancing transparency could further strengthen stakeholder trust and engagement. The findings are supported by Cheah (2020) asserted that there is effect of Structured Feedback on Performance: The Role of Attitude and Perceived Usefulness. The results show that company supervisors' structured feedback positively affected students' overall project performance in presentation and report, and students' positive attitudes toward feedback and perceived usefulness of company supervisor's structured feedback are positively related to students' report performance.

According to the interview with participants on the same point, they reported that

“While the feedback mechanisms are generally effective, there is room for improvement in how feedback is processed and communicated. They added that although the organization does well in gathering and acting on feedback, there is sometimes a lack of transparency about how feedback is used to make decisions. This can lead to uncertainty among staff about the impact of their input and how it contributes to organizational changes. They also posited that while the feedback mechanisms are well-established and accessible, there is occasional dissatisfaction with the transparency of how feedback is managed. They further highlighted that although feedback is collected and acted upon, there is often limited visibility into how this feedback influences decision-making processes and project adjustments. This means that the lack of clarity can impact staff morale and engagement, as they may not always see the direct effects of their contributions on organizational practices”.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Child Protection and Education Project

Views of respondents	Mean	Std. Dev.
I am satisfied with the overall performance of projects managed by World Vision International Rwanda.	4.39	.491
The projects implemented by World Vision International Rwanda have positively impacted the lives of beneficiaries	4.00	.345
Resources (financial, human, and material) are effectively utilized in World Vision International Rwanda projects.	4.24	.856
Projects managed by World Vision International Rwanda are completed within set timelines and achieve their stated objectives.	4.10	.755
World Vision International Rwanda effectively collaborates with stakeholders in project implementation.	3.45	.687
Overall	4.03	.626

The data in Table 10 shows that respondents generally view the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International Rwanda. Satisfaction with project performance received a very high mean score of 4.39 indicating a very strong positive agreement and a standard deviation of 0.491 specifying homogeneity in responses. The impact of projects on beneficiaries was rated with a high mean of 4.00 indicating a strong positive agreement and a standard deviation of 0.345 specifying homogeneity in opinions.

The effective utilization of resources (financial, human, and material) scored a very high mean of 4.24 indicating a very positive strong agreement and a standard deviation of 0.856 specifying heterogeneity in responses. Projects being completed within set timelines and achieving their objectives had a very high mean score of 4.10 indicating a very strong positive agreement and a standard deviation of 0.755 specifying heterogeneity in responses. However, the perception of WVIR's collaboration with stakeholders was lower, with a high mean of 3.45 indicating a positive agreement and a standard deviation of 0.687 specifying heterogeneity in opinions among respondents.

The overall very high mean of 4.03 for combined statements reflects on overall strong positive agreement that there is performance of child protection and education project implemented by WVIR, with a standard deviation of 0.626 indicating a heterogeneity in opinions among respondents. This signifies that while project performance is recognized for successful project execution and impact, there are opportunities to enhance stakeholder collaboration.

The findings are supported by Femi (2014) asserted that there is relationship between communication and workers' performance in selected organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Data was collected through a questionnaire with 120 respondents. The results show a significant relationship between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity, and commitment.

According to the interview on project beneficiaries' satisfaction, the participants stated

“World Vision implements initiatives to safeguard children's well-being and promote quality education. Their child protection programs include community-based mechanisms, awareness campaigns, and advocacy efforts to strengthen child protection systems and promote child rights. Additionally, it is working with local authorities, community leaders, and families to address poverty and social norms that contribute to children's vulnerability. The organization is committed to improving access to quality education for all children, particularly those from marginalized and vulnerable communities. One key goal is to enhance literacy skills for girls and boys in early grades”.

Table 11

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.648 ^a	.419	.404	.455

a. Predictors : (Constant), participatory communication practice, results-driven communication practice and feedback mechanism communication practice

The model summary in Table11 reveals that the predictors (participatory communication, results-driven communication, and feedback mechanism communication) account for a substantial portion of the variability in the dependent variable. With an R value of 0.648, there is a moderate to positive correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable. The R Square value of 0.419 indicates that approximately 41.9% of the variability is explained by the model, while the Adjusted R Square of 0.404 provides a more precise measure, accounting for the number of predictors and showing that about 40.4% of the variability is explained. The standard error of the estimate is 0.455, reflecting the average distance between observed values and the regression line.

Table 12

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.112	3	5.704	27.436	.000 ^b
	Residual	23.701	114	.208		
	Total	40.814	117			

a. Dependent Variable: project performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), participatory communication practice, results-driven communication practice and feedback mechanism communication practice

The ANOVA table was used as a statistical test that determines if there are significant differences between the means of the independent variables participatory communication practice, results driven communication practice, and feedback mechanism communication practice on project performance. The regression model has a sum of squares of 17.112 with 3 degrees of freedom, resulting in a mean square of 5.704. This produces an F-value of 27.436, which the F-statistic assesses the overall significance of the regression model, testing whether there is a significant difference between the model with predictors (participatory communication, result-driven communication and feedback mechanism communication) and the performance of child protection and education project. In this case, it is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 13

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
1		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
	(Constant)	8.352	.649		12.869	.000
	Participatory communication	1.354	.193	.935	7.015	.000
	Results-driven communication	-2.081	.243	-.144	-8.563	.000
	Feedback mechanism communication	-.163	.086	-.135	-1.895	.063

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

The adopted model presented as follow:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Therefore, the model Project performance = 8.352 + 1.354 (participatory communication) - 2.081 (results-driven communication) - 0.163 (feedback mechanism communication) + 0.649.

The table 13 present the coefficient for the regression model predicting performance of child protection and education project based on the predictors: participatory communication, results-driven communication and feedback mechanism communication. The constant has an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 8.352 with standard error of 0.649 ($p=0.000<0.05$).

Regarding to predictors, for very one-unit increase in the participatory communication, there is a 1.354 unit increase in the performance of child protection and education project ($p=0.000<0.05$). Similarly, result-driven communication shows a negative effect, with a -2.081 unit decrease in the performance of child protection and education project for every-one unit increase in the results- driven communication ($p=0.000<0.05$). Further, the feedback mechanism communication has the negative effect, with -0.163 unit decrease in the performance of child protection and education project for every one-unit increase in the feedback mechanism communication ($p=0.063>0.05$).

These results indicate that only participatory communication significantly contribute to predicting and positively influencing the performance of child protection and education project in the context of the regression model. However, the results-driven communication and feedback mechanism communication significantly didn't contribute to predicting and negatively influencing the performance of child protection and education project.

In light of these findings, the hypotheses can be evaluated as follows:

H01 (Participatory communication practice has no significant effect on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district) is rejected. The data shows a significant positive effect of participatory communication on project performance.

H02 (Results-driven communication practice has no significant effect on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district) is also rejected. The data indicates a significant negative effect of results-driven communication on project performance.

H03 (Feedback mechanism communication practice has no significant effect on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district) cannot be rejected. The effect of feedback mechanism communication practice on project performance is not statistically significant.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This section consolidates the findings of the study regarding the impact of various communication practices on the performance of child protection and education project implemented by World Vision International organization in Rutsiro district. The focus was on three distinct aspects of communication: participatory practices, results-driven approaches, and feedback mechanisms. The analysis provided valuable insights into how these communication practices influence project performance.

The study concluded that participatory communication practice has a significant positive effect on project performance. This result demonstrates that for every one-unit increase in the participatory communication, there is a 1.354 unit increase in the performance of child protection and education project ($p=0.000<0.05$). The study further concluded that results-driven communication has a significant negative impact on project performance. The negative coefficient reveals that result-driven communication shows a negative effect, with a -2.081 unit decrease in the performance of child protection and education project for every-one unit increase in the results-driven communication ($p=0.000<0.05$). The study found that feedback mechanism communication also has a significant negative impact on project performance. The negative coefficient reveals that the feedback mechanism communication has the negative effect, with -0.163 unit decrease in the performance of child protection and education project for every one-unit increase in the feedback mechanism communication.

These results indicate that only participatory communication significantly contribute to predicting and positively influencing the performance of child protection and education project in the context of the regression model. However, the results-driven communication and feedback mechanism communication significantly didn't contribute to predicting and negatively influencing the performance of child protection and education project.

5.2 Recommendations

The child protection and education project should implement regular communication processes to distribute project information, identify challenges faced by team members, and ensure comprehensive information is shared. The

communication officer should regularly check the network to address variability in perceptions and improve engagement. Regular sharing of project activities is recommended to foster trust and open communication among stakeholders. Regular communication training should be organized to equip stakeholders with effective strategies, such as providing feedback, to enhance clarity in project goals and inform future adjustments. Proactive feedback should be encouraged through recognition programs and ensuring feedback is provided. These recommendations aim to improve overall engagement and ensure the project's success.

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