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**University of Hertfordshire Business School**

**MSc. MANAGEMENT**

**IMPACT OF ZOOM APPLICATION ON BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

The impact the Zoom application has is the incorporation into business communication to generate outputs in the form of accomplished organisational set goals. Business communication is integral to a firm's profit margin and reputation which continues to take centrefold in the growing use of virtual technology. While the use of virtual technologies preceded the Covid-19 crisis, its huge scale of application was given a boost with the rapid adoption of Zoom.

The aim of this study is to ascertain the impact of Zoom on internal business communication with focus on employee satisfaction and productivity. Secondary data was adopted for the purpose of this study. The annual time series data with econometric procedure were used. Data for the study was gotten from the Zoom Revenue and Usage Statistics (Business of Apps, 2022), zoom executive report (Zoom Report, 2020), and Zoom enterprise deployment guide (Zoom guide,2020). These data include the revenue, profits, daily usage, and customer based between 2018-2021.For the data Analysis, the Ordinary Least Square Method (OLSM) was engaged and adopted. The entire test was conducted and tested at 5% level of significance. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test was used to ascertain whether the variables of the study exhibit unit root property.

Based on the research conducted, the usage of Zoom has many positive implications on employee productivity and satisfaction. Other factors such as user adoption, security issues and communication strength will enhance the deployment of Zoom towards the improvement of employee productivity and satisfaction. Though certain negative factors such as lack of concentration, time consumption, energy consumption could act as barriers to employee satisfaction and productivity, if Zoom takes adequate measures, it will be at the apex of revenue generation and employee satisfaction in the coming future.

**Key words**: Business communication, employee satisfaction, work life balance, productivity, Zoom application

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**Impact of Zoom Application on Business Communications**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1Background of the Study**

The marketplace has continued to experience a quantum leap in the acceleration of digital technology at both the organisational and industry levels. The exponential growth in digitalization of the marketplace preceded the Covid-19 crisis that further intensified the shift to virtual operations and interactions (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Post-Covid-19 is likely to demonstrate an upscale in digital acceleration with the use of virtual communication becoming more ubiquitous as businesses adopt a blended or hybrid working arrangement combining both off-site and on-site working Brunetti et al., 2020). Even more so, as businesses seek speed and agility in business communication, the use of a digital tool such as Zoom may have emerged as a critical component of business communication amidst the need for higher productivity, cost-saving and faster execution of obligations to strengthen market competitiveness.

A video conferencing program, Zoom offers the possibility for several people to communicate simultaneously via video. The use of Zoom for business communication expanded exponentially amidst the Covid-19 crisis as firms adopted hybrid working arrangements (Abbott, 2020). While the use of virtual technologies preceded the Covid-19 crisis, its huge scale of application was given a boost with the rapid adoption of Zoom. However, business communication is rarely without its challenges and the use of digital technology such as Zoom virtual may also present challenges to employee productivity and customer engagement.

The ability of employees to communicate for effective collaboration is essential to productivity. According to Field, & Chan, (2018), business communication is fundamentally important to a firm's internal and external stakeholders’ engagement. Thus, enabling better communication could bring about significant benefits to a firm's overall health.

As such, digital communication tools are fast becoming vital to how technology can help a firm to build agility into its stakeholders’ engagement (Grundke et al., 2018). Brougham, & Haar, (2018) posits the digitalization of a business communication process may enable a firm to accomplish effective interactions among employees and its customers. Beer, & Mulder, (2020) asserts business communication is crucial to transmitting messages about strategy, customer engagement and branding. A business that seeks to create a strong brand may need to demonstrate in its business communication a consistent message tailored to its audience. Also, the study conducted by Kalogiannidis, (2020) indicates the effective use of internal business communication can help enhance rapport among the workforce, improve teamwork, and collaboration.

Business communication is integral to a firm's profit margin and reputation; thus, firms or organisations who communicate effectively can better operationalize their vision into successful outcomes. This is because business communication continues to take centrefold in the growing use of virtual technology.

Therefore, business communication represents a process of transmitting business information from an employee to another or from a business stakeholder to another (Acemoglu, & Autor, 2011). Conversely, ineffective business communication can undermine employee productivity and the overall performance of a business entity (Field, & Chan, 2018). According to Brougham, & Haar, (2018), this is because firms or businesses with deficient business communication are exposed to the risks capable of undermining organisational cohesion and customer-centricity.

Competitive advantage is increasingly built around business communication that enables speed and clarity to help accelerate team synergy and customer-centricity (Brunetti et al., 2020). Thus, the rapid shift to the digitalization of business communication such as the Zoom virtual technology stack requires critical inquiry given its potential impacts on employee productivity and customer engagement.

**1.2 Problem Statement**

The place of siloed business mind-sets may have become a disincentive as digital transformations compel cultural and behavioural changes especially in the form of increased collaboration and customer-centricity (Beer, & Mulder, 2020).As technology disruption intensifies, businesses are increasingly depending on virtual teams to produce business value (Chatfield et al., 2014) while also saving time and money through more affordable collaboration alternatives (Gibson and Gibbs, 2006).

The rapid advancement of information technology has made virtual teamwork increasingly practical. As a result, remote working has maintained a topic of interest in information systems research (Bartelt and Dennis, 2014; Dennis et al., 2012). With increasing businesses relying on information technology, there are a variety of benefits and management problems that are now being faced. Among the most significant ways wherein digitalisation has impacted organisations is in the field of communication (Pearlson et al., 2016).

Thus, business entities are increasingly pressed to maintain a productive internal and external business communication framework to enhance their ability to accomplish competitiveness, growth, and profitability. As such, the productivity of an organisation can be improved upon by avoiding communications problems (Welch and Jackson, 2007); as effective communications can help improve the chances of organisational success (Therkelsen and Fiebich, 2003).

Organisational communications, according to Spitzer and Swider (2003), should have three main goals. In terms of the message's goal, relevance, content, and worth, the information presented to the workers should be comprehended and accepted by the audience. Second, communication objectives such as informing, guiding, inspiring, or garnering employee engagement should be met (Spitzer and Swider, 2003). Finally, the communication outcome accomplishes key success factors including profitability, employee performance and happiness, product quality, sales, and consequently satisfaction of customers (Spitzer and Swider, 2003).

For example, studies conducted by Chmielecki (2015), Hacker et al (2019), and Al-Ani et al (2013) found digitalization of business communication tools to improve collaboration and knowledge sharing at work (Al-Ani et al., 2013). Business communications can influence trust among team members (Hacker et al., 2019). Studies such as Dorairaj et al (2012), Hambley et al. (2007) showed that using face-to-face communication to transfer information and knowledge is positively associated with trust.

As business organisations seek to maximise innovation capabilities by stretching time, generational, and geographic boundaries, the use of digital tools may have become inevitable. The demographic shift in the workplace with more young people coming into the workplace has also elicited the drive towards digital adoption. Twenge and Campbell (2008) found differences in values and personality between older and younger generations of employees. In order to create teams that focus on innovation, it is necessary to work closely with one another. This requires close communication, in most cases spanning geographical and time boundaries. Business organisations using Zoom can create communication systems that transcend geographical boundaries and time zones.

Though virtual communication technologies have emerged as a significant feature of business communications, challenges that may act as barriers to its effective deployment require a robust attention (Hacker et al., 2019). Thus, even when a firm’s employees are technology literate, communication across a digital channel may not come as a seamless process (Twenge et al, 2012).

Despite the advantages of videoconferencing apps, numerous drawbacks have been noted, particularly in terms of their limits when compared to face-to-face meetings (Larsen, 2015). Employees have described the "meeting inside meeting" issue as a challenge they've faced while using communication tools like Zoom (Larsen, 2015). Other challenges that may be present include the lack of synergy amongst multiple participants, possible non-adherence to meeting rules and loss of information clarity due to technical problems (Larsen, 2015).

One of the technical issues identified in Larsen's research was that these communication applications might not be as simple to use as they could be. Picture quality issues, a lack of standardised video conferencing setup in multiple locations, and difficulties sharing presentations utilising applications (Larsen, 2015) can all have a detrimental influence on organisational communication. These concerns may be categorised as technical infrastructure issues that organisations must address in order to maintain great communications while using these ICT technologies.

Because of digital technology, the workplace has continued to evolve. Flexible working and task automation are now possible thanks to digital technologies (Richardson, 2018; Autor, 2015). Workplace technological disruption is happening at a breakneck speed, resulting in "changing and disconnected space-times of connection and communication."(Wajcman and Rose, 2011).

In the same vein, digital disruption such as the use of Zoom for business communication may have altered brick and mortar office spaces. Telecommunications, according to Kellog et al., (2006), have improved employees' ability to self-organise their corporate activities. They no longer have to work in an actual office building as a result of this. Zoom, it may be inferred, decreased the requirement for a physical office structure. Despite the fact that ICTs improve dispersed office work, Gregg (2011) observed that these same technologies also cause people to return to their offices. Today, the "space as service" concept is prevalent, in which offices are shared by numerous teams that use the space for a certain amount of time (Knight Frank, 2018).

In terms of how it influences work-life balance, the link between office space and technology is neither linear nor homogeneous. The usage of communication technology, particularly for office operations, has resulted in working rhythms in which the office location and schedule are difficult to distinguish from those of other places (Gregg, 2011; Broadbent, 2015). Because real estate is a high-cost overhead for businesses, modern office space must be tailored to accommodate a more mobile workforce. Given that employees may operate in a variety of places, Zoom and similar communication tools provide this benefit.

Productivity, engagement, and enjoyment are all aided by good office design (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2014). The subject of how business organisations create workplaces to fit their demands remains unanswered. Many organisations are increasingly contemplating various forms of expenses such as lower employee engagement and loss of productivity as they become more data-driven and face rising office space prices.

Activity-based workplaces are flexible work spaces that save space and money. It allowed staff to make the most of their working space. Despite the financial benefits of activity-based workplaces, research has shown that they reduce productivity, privacy, and comfort, contributing to emotional tiredness (Kim et al., 2016). (Laurence et al., 2013). In addition, satisfaction with an activity-based office design is limited to certain employees (Hoendervanger et al., 2016).

Zoom has enabled businesses to let their employees "work from home." However, this has deprived employees of the opportunity to interact physically with coworkers, which is a key feature of open-plan workplaces (Maher and von Hippel, 2005; Lashina et al., 2019). Increased physical contacts have been observed to help team members socialise, which is a component that contributes to job happiness (Lashina et al., 2019). As a result, while Zoom allowed employees to work from anywhere, it also prevented them from socialising and interacting with their coworkers.

During workplace design, factors such as temperature, lighting, air quality, noise, and visual disturbances are taken into account (Evans and Johnson, 2000). These are the factors that influence productivity, engagement, and enjoyment at work. Increased visual and acoustic disruptions, as well as poor air quality, may occur in open-plan workplace designs, lowering engagement and productivity (Sepannen et al., 2006). Digital technology provides answers to such problems by reducing the need to come into the workplace physically. Zoom may eliminate visual distractions, resulting in higher job endurance. Attempts to eliminate visual distraction, on the other hand, are considered as having the potential to impede collaboration and have other undesirable cultural consequences (Chen, 2019; Walker, 2017).

With the increasing use of Zoom technology among business organisations, studies are still required to critically assess its impact on business communication. In addition, the interplay between Zoom usage and business communication and how this affects organisational health jobs is still opened for interrogation. Business communication is known to greatly influence internal and external stakeholders’ engagement (Bangwal et al., 2017). Considering the foregoing, this inquiry seeks to examine the impact of Zoom on internal business communications with specific focus on employee job satisfaction and productivity.

**1.3 Research Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to ascertain the impact of Zoom on internal business communication with focus on employee satisfaction and productivity.

Its objectives are the following:

* To examine whether or not the use of Zoom in business communication undermines work-life balance to the detriment of employee satisfaction and productivity
* To ascertain whether or not the use of Zoom leads to business communication silos that negatively affects employee satisfaction and productivity.
* To determine factors that may help improve the deployment of Zoom for business communication that enhances employee satisfaction and productivity.

**1.4 Research Questions**

1-Does the use of Zoom in business communication undermine work-life balance to the detriment of employee satisfaction and productivity?

2-Does the use of Zoom leads to business communication silos that negatively affect employee satisfaction and productivity?

3-What are the factors that may help improve the deployment of Zoom for business communication that enhances employee satisfaction and productivity?

**1.5 Significance of the Study**

The increasing adoption of hybrid work arrangements has placed the use of digitalisation on the front burner of business communication. There is certainly not going to be a let-down in digital acceleration in the workplace (Brougham, & Haar, 2018); as such, business entities will always have a responsibility to create an environment whereby digital adoption can serve both their social and financial needs (Beer, & Mulder, 2020).

To this end this study may be significant in the following ways:

It may provide valuable outcomes that can enhance the quality of people management in the context of hybrid working arrangement. Thus, HR practitioners or managers saddled with the onerous task of reducing the barriers surrounding the adoption of digitalization in their business communications may find this study useful in enhancing interpersonal skills needed for its effective integration.

It will further boost scholarship in a field whereby more studies are required to understand how to systematically reduce the barriers associated with the effective deployment of digital technology such as Zoom for business communication.    
  
It may provide valuable outcomes that can be leveraged by business entities seeking to expand the use of digital tools such as Zoom in their business communications especially with regards to employee engagement and performance.

**1.6 Chapter Outlines**

This comprises five chapters illustrated thus:

Chapter one details the background of the problem areas of study and the specific focus of its aim and objectives.

Chapter two presents the theoretical focus and the review of the extant literature surrounding the subject of inquiry.

Chapter three highlights the methodological framework upon which the inquiry is based.   
  
Chapter four indicates the data presentation and analysis derived from the inquiry.   
  
Chapter five presents the conclusion of the study, its practical implications, possible limitations, and the recommendations derived from the critical analysis of the findings.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Introduction**

The strength of any communication in business is its ability to convey motivating messages. The decrease in office rent costs and saving time on commuting is to the detriment of employee satisfaction and productivity when the Zoom meetings are not like the workplace. This is necessary through examining whether or not the use of Zoom in business communication undermines the work-life balance of employee satisfaction and productivity. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of the Zoom application was used for group meetings and teamwork presentations while working at home. Zoom has been implemented as a systematic application to sustain communication in multiple fields business, science, health management, education, law, and other private spheres

(Fouda, 2020; Puddister & Small, 2020; Toney et al., 2021).

Accordingly, business communication as a significant component of organisational well-being can help build and nurture employee satisfaction, and boost morale, and commitment toward a firm's business goals and objectives (Delery & Gupta, 2016). The negative effect of Zoom on business communication silos affecting employee satisfaction and productivity is the absence of knowledge of the interpersonal communication skills and relationships of the employee working from home which the management should be aware of. There is a breach of informal communication thereby creating doubts about recommendations to be made by the employer. Through the medium of Zoom in business communication, distractions in the home environment of the employees make targets and goals not easily achievable, unlike in the workplace.

The challenge supervisors face as a result of efficient communication is coordinating team members who are interdependent as each of them is physically in different places (Greer et al. 2014:98). This is the reason the productivity of the employers has an adverse effect without the physical presence of face-to-face communication. To determine factors that may help improve the deployment of Zoom for business communication that enhances employee satisfaction and productivity. The following key areas of business communication are addressed

* The level of trust in business and building relationships even when either negative or positive feedback comes from the supervisors to the employees.
* Managers must allow employees to give their input but it doesn't mean every idea must be accepted.
* Managers should give employees the recognition they need which is a communication strategy in valuing their contributions to the organisation.
* Successful managers should get intimate conversations with employees on a regular basis but must be informal making communication a vital force.
* The concept of morning meetings must be promoted to increase listening skills and master the act of addressing team members together.
* To make communication relevant, the manager must be able to improvise well before speaking to his or her employees.

Business communication performs the critical function of ensuring firms sustain and even exceed their market expectations. The increasing penetration of digitalization has further stressed the critical importance of business communication to a firm's growth and development (Mckinsey & Co., 2021). Thus, business communication is essentially a key component of stakeholders’ management. On the other hand, external business communication seeks to enable a firm to sustain a better relationship with its external stakeholders, especially its customers whose repeated patronage is critical to a firm's market performance (Kalogiannidis, 2020).

As such, business communication underscores a firm's processes needed to create efficiency. Therefore, this chapter seeks to review the literature and theoretical underpinnings of business communication especially as it is affected by disruptive technologies notably of which is Zoom, which became massively ubiquitous amid the Covid-19 crisis.

**2.2 Theoretical Underpinning**

Business communication is embedded in the overall structure of an organisation. In this regard, the systems theory is adopted to interrogate business communication in the context of organisational wellbeing. The systems theory emanates from three theoretical strands.

Firstly, the general system theory originated from biological sciences using a set of systematic constructs to examine the empirical world (Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009). Secondly, it emanates from structural functionalism which underscores the functions performed by the system to include adaptation, goal attainment, pattern maintenance, and integration (Holland, 2012).

These functions, in turn, serve to keep a system alive and achieve its equilibrium aim.. Adaptation suggests the system has to respond to changes in its environment, an example is the use of virtual technology such as Zoom to ensure the continuity of business communication amidst the enforced lockdowns imposed by state governments. In this context, adaptation became necessary to maintain the development of an organisation at that time of a global health emergency instigated by the Covid-19 virus.  Goal attainment was intended for the adoption of Zoom by companies and this in a way represents the use of resources to accomplish set organisational goals. Pattern maintenance and integration meant the use of Zoom or any other virtual technology for business communication sought to ensure the continuity of the system or organisation. Over time, the systems theory has embraced constructs of multiple disciplines including communication and human resource management. Thus, the systems theory can be likened to a macro-level theory to help examine a social system such as an organisation with its numerous interdependent components (Van-Every & Taylor, 1998).

The basics of system theory is the comparative study of systems in adaptation to the environments as core elements connected in an internal network responding to external intervention triggering mechanisms in system formation.

A system is anchored on the configuration and patterns of the relationships arising from the interactions amongst its various units. The systems theory is illustrated across three levels of observations encompassing the environment, social organisation, and human actors in the organisation (Holland, 2012). The components of each system consist of a hierarchical ordering, and the interdependent components need to function in tandem with each other for the system to be sustainable.

An organisation as a system has components that are tightly coupled and interdependent. The underlying interdependence of the various components of an organisation is impacted by permeable boundaries (Chadwick, 2010). The permeable boundaries enable the organisation to receive inputs from the environment. In the context of this study, the use of virtual technology such as Zoom for a firm's business communication illustrates inputs received from the environment. The input which in this case is Zoom is then incorporated into business communication to generate outputs in the form of accomplished organisational set goals. However, before the output is generated, it undergoes a throughput process to generate feedback that is either positive or negative.

Thus, in utilising Zoom for business communication, a firm needs to subject it to a feedback mechanism to ascertain whether or not it is having the right effect on the staff and organisations. In a situation whereby the implementation of Zoom for business communication increases job stress and employee isolation, negative feedback is derived and if this is not addressed it can undermine the system. Conversely, where positive feedback is derived, the organisation can set out improvement regimens to maintain the system. Invariably, the use of virtual technologies for business communication does not have straightforward outcomes. The systems theory seeks to examine the causality of variables as they affect a system; business communication enables the interdependent components of an organisation to gel towards a common vision (Delery & Gupta, 2016). Since an organisation consists of actors which in this case are the employees and management, the business communication process faces the risk of equivocality in the information environment.

Thus, information processing needs to remove equivocality for the system to demonstrate the synergy to accomplish its responsibilities. The systems theory has been utilised for communication and human resource management studies at different times (Chadwick 2010; Brummans et al., 2014; Blaschke, Schoeneborn, & Seidl, 2012; Delery & Gupta, 2016).

However, the systems theory indicates organisations face the problem of disequilibrium and in the context of business communication, it has to be made to resolve the interdependent and interlocked behaviours needed to fix equivocality or disequilibrium. In other words, business communication even across digital processes such as Zoom needs to be assessed as per its usefulness to enable actors in the communication process to produce equilibrium. Since the outcome of Zoom virtual for business communication is incumbent on its users, the systems theory suggests the users must have the right skills and knowledge as it relates to enhancing the interdependent component units of an organisation. This has become imperative to avoid negative consequences; thus, HRM leaders will need to initiate employee training on virtual business communication in line with system thinking.

Based on social learning theory, individuals are capable of initiating their own learning, managing their own learning, and making an effort to create data through their efforts, creating, and connecting with data (Yu et al 2010; 2015). According to Ainin (2015), the Social Learning Theory essentially discusses how environmental and psychological feature components work together to generate a change in a person's behaviour and learning pattern.

The goal-setting theory of motivation stipulates that goals or objective setting are directly related to task performance, setting appropriate goals, and allocating financial, material and human resources towards attaining these goals will contribute to a greater and better organisational performance (James 2017). Setting goals serve as a real source of work motivation for employees, as work will be geared towards a target.

It is important to involve employees in the goal-setting process, as this intensifies the motivational factor, managers should also request feedback regularly from employees while encouraging and coaching them.

**2.3 Organisation Performance**

The shared character of individuals allows for the relevance of communication in daily social interactions. The output or outcomes of corporate communication that are observed and assessed using the organisation's aims, goals, and objectives as a measuring standard are referred to as organisational performance. Richard et' al., 2019) assess the market performance of items, shareholder returns, and financial performance of an organisation using a multidimensional methodology. The profit and loss statement returns on assets and investments, as well as profit margins, are excellent indicators of a company's performance. The actual number of purchases that a product generates is used to measure its market performance. The third dimension (shareholder returns) considers various topics which economic value-added is a part of. More crucially, many companies have tried to manage their performance using the "balanced scorecard" system, an evaluation system that tracks and measures success against different factors, such as customer service, social responsibility, and employee engagement. (Richard *et’ al*., 2019).

Poor communication between employees to managers and among fellow employees hinders organisational performance. Managers should communicate the goals of the organisation to employees and the plan of action designed to achieve the goals. Managers should also encourage feedback from employees, on successes made and challenges encountered. Effective communication should be encouraged between fellow employees too, for operational collaboration. This will assist the leader in engaging with the followers in a way that inspires them and enhances their motivation and confidence, while also understanding each follower's talents and flaws. This allows the leader to recognise and reward great accomplishments, as well as identify followers who require intellectual assistance. Failing to implement an effective communication system will adversely affect organisational performance (Hargie 2016).

Rebecca (2017) elucidated on some hindrances to organisational performance, they include poor job matching. Since leadership is a process through which managers in an organisation influence and inspire employees to work towards achieving organisational goals, poor leadership doesn't inspire workers and will negatively affect an organisation's ability to achieve set objectives. Poor motivation hinders organisational performance, given that motivation is the driver that steers individuals towards goals.

According to Bakotić (2016), Individual employee performance cannot be considered in isolation from organisational performance. Despite the fact that the findings of several studies demonstrate a strong relationship between work happiness and individual performance. The situation is more complicated when it comes to the link between work satisfaction and organisational performance. Various variables impact organisational success, including internal aspects that the firm may alter and external factors that are beyond the company's control. In certain circumstances, attitudes in general, and specifically work satisfaction, have a significant impact on organisational behaviour, but this is not always the case. The effect of external events, conditions, and circumstances can occasionally limit its impact. It would be naïve to assume and anticipate that the influence of employee satisfaction on organisational behaviour, and hence on organisational success, is always and in all situations obvious. Employee happiness and engagement have been linked to organisational success, as assessed by productivity, profit, employee turnover, employee accidents, and customer satisfaction.

One of the key aspects to determining how the impact Zoom operates in business communication is branding in business. Branding involves a marketing strategy with information relevant to the essential requirements of organisations (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007). The brand loyalty of stakeholders' impact on consumer brand preference is fully maximised to its potential as an effective tool of marketing that communicates the logo and brand identity (Hareem and Zeb, 2011). This is where consumer loyalty comes in when the brand owners implement various strategies to achieve the goal of gaining purchasing decisions of consumers. The successful strategies of marketing for organisations are the strategic road map with the use of brand elements, awareness, and advertising (Alhaddad 2015). The survival, profitability, and growth of larger brand organisations are dependent on product awareness improvement and the image of the organisation (Chunyingb 2013; Foroudi 2019; Shaouf, Lu & Li 2016). In purchasing specific brands, the emotional responses and experiences of customers originate through Brand Advertising (Prentice and Loureiro 2018).

This is what makes it a vital role in the product enhancement and purchase intentions thereby influencing buying behaviour of the customer to remain loyal to the product or service (Coelho et al. 2018; Buil et al. 2013; Chaab & Rasti-Barzoki 2016). Customer awareness of certain product capabilities is targeted by organisations as a competitive strategy with the means of communicating brand advertisement (Hess & Bitterman 2016; Dehghani & Tumer 2015). For the development and improvement of products with the competitive tool of brand advertising, Brand owners build their brands with their targeted audiences reached using the integrated marketing theories to ascertain the concerns and complaints of consumers (Hollebeek et al 2014).

The negative impact on the identity of a brand is when products are differentiated and the capacity to engage consumers is not properly managed (Pawaskar & Goel 2014). The competitive advantage factor is expedient with high brand awareness resilience against promotional pressure from competitors when the quality of a product and customer perceived value of satisfaction is achieved (Murthi & Rao 2012; Rubio et al. 2014). With a higher market share and a fast-growing competitive environment, gaining a competitive advantage becomes possible on time.

**2.3.1 Concept of Employee Engagement**

The concept of employee engagement has continued to gain more awareness because it has been identified to have a positive relationship with admirable organisational features such as productivity (Rich *et al.,* 2010), commitment (Chalofsky and Krishna, 2009), and overall organisational success. Maslach *et al.* (2001) identified workload, social and community support, rewards and recognition, fairness and values, and control as the main factors that determine employee engagement in an organisation. The lack of any of these components might eventually lead to employee burnout. In other words, effective employee engagement is dependent on how the employee perceives the workload, community support, work community, means of reward, and fairness of an organisation. Robinson *et al.* (2004) defined the term employee engagement as an employee's positive attitude towards the core values of the organisation such employee works for. According to Robinson, an employee can only be said to be engaged when such employee is conversant with the business context of the organisation and does everything within his/her power to improve organisational performance.  Meyer and Gagne (2008) defined employee engagement as a motivational state of an employee characterised by the employee's tendency to exert his/her full ability on the job role assigned to him for the benefit of the organisation.

The way an organisation operates i.e. the way the organisation hires and fires employees, the way the organisation assigns job roles to employees, and the way the organisation handles staff development have a significant effect on employee engagement. Organisations with a positive work culture that allows the employee to thrive are more likely to have a high level of employee engagement than another organisation with toxic work culture and limited staff development opportunities (Sathe, 2017), hence the level of employee engagement in an organisation depends on the employer and the type of work environment he creates.

The employee engagement status of an employee can be categorised as engaged, disengaged, or actively disengaged as described by Gallup Consulting (2008). Engaged employees are those employees who willingly sacrifice a lot of their time, energy, and intellect for the success and development of the organisation. Disengaged employees are those employees who wait on orders from the organisation management before they discharge their duties. Disengaged employees are often of the opinion that they are unwanted and underutilised by the management of their organisation. The actively disengaged employee has little or no engagement to offer their organisation. They act like rebels and are always antagonising the management of their organisation.

Actively disengaged employees usually put the organisation in a disadvantageous position by sabotaging the efforts of other members of the organisation. To keep employees engaged, an organisation should provide staff development opportunities that can make their employees feel wanted and utilised (Anitha, 2014). According to Sterling (2006), opportunities for staff development are the strongest factor influencing employee engagement. However other authors such as (Dijani 2015 and Maximo 2015) believe that leadership style has the greatest influence on employee engagement as positive leadership traits such as transparency, accountability, fairness, integrity, trustworthiness and proper communication can make employees feel safe, confident, and wanted by the management of their organisation (Maximo 2015).

* + 1. **Measurement of Organisational Performance.**

Generally, the concept and the importance of organisational performance are widely acknowledged, however, how to measure organisational performance has sparked several debates over the years as no single measurement is capable of properly depicting the full extent of the performance of an organisation.

Several researchers have measured organisational performance in various organisations using quantitative data generated from the organisation's profit in terms of ROI, ROE, etc. however the performance of an organisation is more than just the financial statement or the profit and loss statement of the organisation as the definition of performance involves other non-financial related terms such as efficiency and employee satisfaction. Based on these grounds, the measurement of performance management has been widely conceptualised using both financial and non-financial estimates separately based on the objectives and the perception of the researcher. Financial estimates such as ROI, ROE, and profit and loss statements have proved very useful in the evaluation of performance management as they are capable of providing non-bias estimates and are also particularly useful when dealing with single industry studies as a result of the uniformity in measurement.

* + 1. **Financial Performance of Organisations**

Measurements of organisational performances using financial estimates are much more popular than non-financial estimates. According to Davis *et al*. (2000), financial estimates for profit-oriented organisations can be estimated using sales and profitability. For a profit-oriented organisation, the profit and loss statement is a strong indicator of the efficiency of employees in the organisation and also a strong indicator of the management's ability to increase sales. Profit margin, profit growth, ROI, ROE, Return on Assets (ROA), and Return on Sales (ROS) are considered some of the most widely acknowledged indexes for determining the performance of an organisation based on financial statements.

* + 1. **Non-financial Performance of an Organisation.**

Although not as widely used as financial performance when measuring organisational performance, non-financial performances can and have also been used to measure organisational performances. Employee commitment is usually fostered by positive organisational features such as effective leadership, fairness and justice, good staff development, and appropriate rewards and recognition practices. Hence, organisations with very high employee commitment can be said to have achieved organisational success. Employee organisational commitment and job satisfaction have a strong relationship with employee turnover as low job satisfaction will consequently lead to low organisational commitment. Employees with low organisational commitment are more likely to quit their job which might eventually result in high employee turnover. Hence organisations with very low organisational performance experience high employee turnover while organisations with very high organisational performance experience very low employee turnover. For this study, the profit and loss statement will be used as the financial determinant of organisational performance while employee turnover, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment will be used as the non-financial determinant of organisational performance.

**2.4 Digital Communication**

The continued influence of digital communication tools in the workplace has intensified business communication, especially for team collaboration as organisations invest in the creation of agile teams. To this end, team collaboration technologies have emerged to enhance business communication. These collaboration tools can seamlessly render real-time interactions, distinctive user experience, and cloud-based data storage. These tools are agile and iterative; as such, they can be integrated into broader enterprise software (Mckinsey & Co, 2016). Some of these tools such as Google Meet, Microsoft Team, and Zoom have become ubiquitous features of business communication (Gartner, 2020). This is particularly so following the Covid-19 crisis that upended the workplace which, in turn, created a new normal of greater application of collaboration technologies. Business communication is driven by the need to ensure firms deliver on their internal and external obligations.

Therefore, digital technologies as the accelerators of business communication tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Team are increasingly considered significant to galvanising team collaboration and external business engagements. In turn, digitalization has continued to elicit the greater adoption of collaboration tools by firms for improved business processes. According to Brynjolfsson & McAfee (2014), digital business communication tools are continuously evolving with more innovative features to improve collaboration and communication within and across a firm. Furthermore, Mckinsey & Co (2016) asserts digital business communication tools can enhance by 25% team productivity. This is perhaps due to the benefits gained from the ability of team members to communicate using channels such as Zoom with the capacity for many-to-many communication.

As Carreiro & Oliveira, (2019) posits, the increasing adoption of digital platforms by firms indicates business communication is no longer sequestered as it has become even more robust with enterprise information readily accessible to guide internal and external collaborations. This is because the channels through which business communication is conducted have never been more important given the increasing influence of digitalization in the workplace and by extension the global marketplace (Dutta & Borah, 2018). Digital communication technologies have repurposed business communication in a significant way due to their flexibility and transformative capabilities to enhance organisational performance (Guinan, Parise, & Langowitz, 2019).

Haddud & McAllen, (2018) posits that while digital communication technologies can add value to a firm's performance, leveraging their full potential to improve team synergy and efficient communication requires organisational change and agile management regimens. This, more often than not, takes time to become a vital component of a firm's corporate culture. This may not be far-fetched since organisations' widespread implementation of digitalization to drive their business communication may need to phase out their legacy infrastructure for this nimbler, iterative, and faster approach. This can precipitate organisational change which often than not comes with a culture change to sustain the new normal (Matt, Hess, & Benlian, 2015).

According to Mckinsey & Co (2017) digitalization of business, communication can add value to employee productivity from a wide range of areas including consumer marketing, professional services, and employer branding amongst others. Digitalization of business communication is value-driven when systematically implemented in conjunction with the employees (Gartner, 2020). According to Mckinsey & Co (2021) digital business, communication has become the norm, and collaboration technologies such as Zoom and Microsoft Team are shaping the trajectory of business communication. The researchers argued that staff inputs in the implementation of these collaboration technologies are needed to enhance the capacity of a firm to get the full benefits of their potential value.

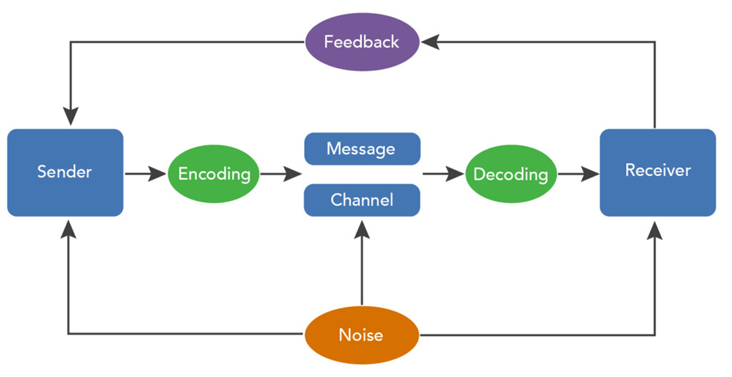
These business communication technologies have become valuable in the marketplace with 72% of the respondents surveyed by Mckinsey & Co (2021) stating their companies had deployed at least one technology for team collaboration and networking. In the same vein, the Mckinsey & Co (2021) survey indicates the deployment of business technologies in firms will assume an even higher density even across countries with low technology infrastructure. The study also found the deployment of digital business communication stacks such as Microsoft Team and Zoom will likely shape the trajectory of collaboration tools in the workplace. However, the benefits derived from these technologies indicate a mixed outcome. For example, the benefits remain high when respondents’ firms efficiently deploy the collaboration tools for internal purposes of nurturing team synergy, and engaging customers and business partners, and suppliers. Conversely, the outcome may turn out to be negative when the firm does not efficiently deploy digital technologies for business communication.

**2.5 Business Communication**

Digital business communication is the engine upon which remote work is accelerated. Thus, digital business communication via Zoom seeks to create relationships and connections that extend even beyond an organisation. However, business communication conducted via digital or non-digital means has to have a formal structure predefined by the organisation (Brummans et al., 2014).

This is because business communication is not an informal process of communication as it is systematically deployed to accomplish organisational goals and objectives (Hynes, 2012). However, it does not foreclose the use of informal communication as it can help strengthen the bond between team members in business communication. But the informal aspect of business communication will not violate extant rules guiding communication in the workplace (Delery & Gupta, 2016). Business communication comprises internal-upward communication, internal-downward communication, internal-horizontal communication, and external communication (Chadwick, 2010).

Therefore, the business communication process of a firm needs to take into cognizance the various aspects of business communication (Chadwick, 2010). This cannot happen by chance, continued staff training and development may be required and even more so when the communication is conducted using a tool such as a Zoom or any other virtual technology. The basic components of any information medium consist of the source, message, channel, and receiver. The source of the information in a communication is essential because of the variables involved such as the interpersonal skills, and knowledge of the individual(s) involved.



***Figure 1: Communication Process***

Interpersonal skills are pertinent because the source or the sender in a business communication needs to demonstrate the right attitude, exemplify the firm's corporate culture, have cultural awareness, and be able to create a good impression (Chadwick, 2010). The source also needs to know the deliverables to guide team members in achieving them. The message has to be clear and not ambiguous to elicit comprehension. Because it is being done virtually does not necessarily suggest information being conveyed by the source will be immediately understood by the receiver (Blaschke, Schoeneborn, & Seidl, 2012). Thus, the source of the information should ensure the receiver for which it was intended does not reinterpret it.

The channel of communication is essential since business communication conveys trade secrets especially when it concerns internal business communication. Thus, it has to be done over a secured portal, and where the medium is weak or causes a break in communication, it has to be repeated to avoid misrepresentation (Hynes, 2012). There are instances where the broadband internet connection is weak or susceptible to outside interference, such as requiring urgent attention so as not to compromise the information being conveyed.

Lastly, the receiver in a business communication especially when it concerns internal business communication has to be able to comprehend or decode the message being conveyed by the source.  As such, the source and the receiver in business communication have to undergo the same training to ensure a synergistic communication flow (Chadwick, 2010).  An understanding of the other party plays a major role in business communication because ambiguity in the process often than not leads to miscommunication. Thus, the receiver needs to be able to encode and decode the message to guarantee an effective business communication process. According to Hynes (2012), the processes of encoding and decoding are essentially critical to ensuring business communication achieves the intended consequences. Brummans et al., (2014) assert for business communication to be effective, feedback is vital to encoding and decoding the message. Business communication should not be a monologue but a conversation between two parties, the source, and the receiver.

According to Chadwick (2010), different meanings can be attributed to a message such as denotative and connotative. For example, a general message being conveyed virtually by a firm's management to all staff members represents the same meaning and, as such, denotative. This can come in the form of a message stating the company's achievements and challenges for the year ended; the chances of such a message being misunderstood are slim. Thus, denotative messages are less exposed to the risk of misinterpretation as the message is the same for all staff members (Brummans et al., 2014).

Conversely, connotative interpretation coming from a business communication suggests it may be misunderstood; this, in turn, requires proper feedback mechanisms to ensure clarity (Chadwick, 2010). It is even more relevant when the communication is conducted using digital means such as Zoom as the meaning of the messages being conveyed by the source can get misrepresented due to another party's inability to effectively read subjective cues such as facial expressions and body language easily discernible in physical conversation.

**2.6 Hybrid Work Schedule**

The Covid-19 crisis created an abnormal situation with global ramifications that necessitated urgent changes in the workplace. Organisations had to adjust to working offsite by using a remote working tool such as Zoom. While remote working preceded the Covid-19 crisis, it assumed a significant prominence when firms were directed to shutter their offices in compliance with safety protocols to mitigate the virus. For example, less than 6% of employees in the EU worked remotely in 2019, a year before the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 (Mckinsey& Co, 2021). Zoom as a virtual communication tool was rarely known before the Covid-19 crisis only for it to experience massive growth as firms leveraged it to virtually conduct business communication amidst the need for remote working. This effectively changed the organisation of work as firms in great numbers are implementing a hybrid work schedule whereby staff members alternate between on-site and offsite or remote working (Gartner, 2020).

Thus, the Covid-19 crisis effectively created a new normal that is being accelerated by business communication tools such as Microsoft Team, Google Meet, and Zoom that offer in real-time both text and audio-visual interactions.

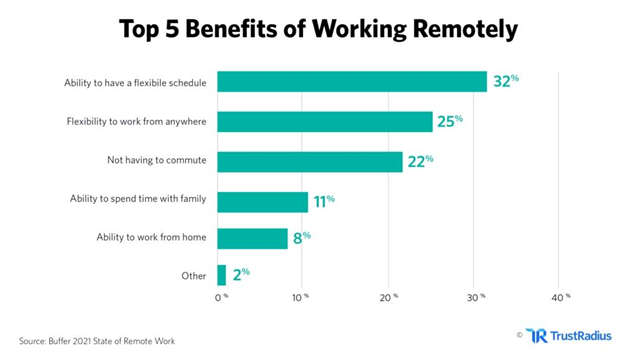
According to Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes, & Bailey (2016) firms seeking to implement a hybrid work arrangement will need to provide applicable technical support, grant a measure of autonomy to the employee, and also reduce direct control. Therefore, hybrid or remote working needs a collaboration tool that can enable managers to synergize with their team members, establish trust between employer and employee, and effectively accomplish work goals (Mckinsey & Co, 2021). In this instance, virtual business communication tools are continuously being deployed in the ICT sector, the education sector, medical services, and many other sectors, as both profit and not-for-profit organisations are increasingly communicating virtually (Gartner, 2020).

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***Figure 2:* Statistics of Zoom Video Communications**

The business sector, in particular, was on the brink of collapse during Covid-19 induced lockdowns and this may have elicited the vast adoption of Zoom virtual technology to carry out internal and external business communications. Accordingly, this technology with its innovative features may have changed work and socio-economic life as was known before the Covid-19 crisis. In addition, digital business communication tools are constantly evolving with even more innovative features. This is as firms seek to sustain a hybrid work arrangement without compromising productivity. However, business communication is not without hiccups even when it is conducted using advanced technology such as Zoom. According to Brummans et al., (2014) digital business communication does not foreclose the need for interpersonal skills required in the traditional communication process.

Chadwick (2010) asserts physical or traditional business communication indicates interpersonal qualities that are lacking in virtual business communication technologies such as Zoom. Conversely, Mckinsey & Co (2021) posits business communication conducted using virtual technologies complements rather than undermines the traditional communication process. Perhaps, the growing adoption of hybrid work arrangements by firms cannot be detached from the complementary role of virtual technologies in the overall business communication process.



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| ***Figure 3:* Benefits of remote work** |  |

Simultaneously, virtual business technologies and flexible work practices are spreading as leading firms continue to implement hybrid work arrangements, a necessity for improving staff engagement for autonomy and a more improved work-life balance (Conway et al., 2016). According to the Gartner Survey, 82% of business leaders intend to implement flexible work arrangements that allow employees to work remotely even while in full-time employment (Gartner, 2020). Thus, the Covid-19 crisis accelerated a process hitherto moderate in its implementation to a much larger process of digital transformation of the workplace into a hybrid where technology plays a significant role in business communication (Mckinsey & Co, 2021). While government lockdowns that put business continuity at risk are being lifted in many countries, ensuring employees enjoy some flexibility and autonomy may have further added impetus to the implementation of hybrid work arrangements. According to Gartner (2020) even before the Covid crisis, hybrid or remote working had been an effective way of enhancing the operational efficiency of geographically dispersed teams and had been handy in situations of natural disasters with businesses needing operational continuity. But again, hybrid work arrangements can not be said to be an all-comers affair before the Covid-19 crisis as a significant number of firms globally had little or no experience implementing it (Mckinsey & Co, 2021).

In the public sector, the hybrid work arrangement was a rarity before the pandemic even more so in developing countries (Mckinsey & Co, 2021). While digital communication had become part and parcel of organisational setting before the Covid-19 crisis, the vast utilisation of nimbler forms of it such as Zoom and Google Meet for business communication became much more pronounced afterward (Gartner, 2020).

To this end, firms have continued to accelerate the broader digitalization of their business processes to operate effectively amid the disruption of business communication by virtual technologies (Mckinsey & Co, 2017). In addition, firms are beginning to appreciate the potential benefits that may be derived from adopting a hybrid work arrangement, even while barriers that can undermine its effectiveness remain present.

Therefore, the use of virtual business communication does not necessarily guarantee success in terms of higher productivity, team synergy, staff work-life balance, and faster process of decision making amongst other potential benefits. According to Carreiro & Oliveira, (2019), the positive outcomes from digital adoption do not occur seamlessly, more often than not, risk mitigation strategies are needed to ensure effectiveness in accomplishing the right results. This is even more so for firms that operate in jurisdictions with low technological density or where supporting infrastructures such as high-speed internet and electricity are inadequate. Mckinsey & Co (2021) state that even where infrastructure is of the highest quality, utilising Zoom for business communication can sometimes be impeded by fluctuations in the internet connection.

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***Figure 4:* Remote Work Report 2020**

Thus, virtual business communication like other technologies propelled by the internet requires continuous fine-tuning to deliver optimal performance (Carreiro & Oliveira, 2019). Unlike legacy technological infrastructure, digitalized tools such as Zoom are iterative and driven by speed and continued innovations (Gartner, 2020). The internet as its domain also puts it at the risk of being hacked or compromised to the detriment of a firm's business communication.

For example, business communication via Zoom may be breached by third parties and in the process, sensitive company information could be compromised. Since the introduction of emails into business communication, firms have faced significant risks of third parties intercepting correspondences amongst team members or using impersonation to initiate fake correspondences to steal sensitive business information (Mckinsey & Co, 2017). Firms lose billions of dollars annually to email compromise and the vast application of business communication technologies such as Zoom may have further increased the risks of data theft and impersonation among others. There is the need for firms deploying virtual business communication such as Zoom or Microsoft Team to establish protocols to guide its utilisation by workers in hybrid arrangements. For example, organisations tend to mandate their staff members to switch on their videos while using virtual business communication and also not to use public Wi-Fi to connect to an official meeting. However, this is sometimes taken for granted by employees and this window of laxity can be exploited by criminal elements to intercept sensitive business information (Mckinsey & Co, 2021).

Carreiro & Oliveira, (2019) posits the use of virtual technologies in business communication cannot be left to chance especially due to factors with ramifying effects on corporate wellbeing. Employees have individual personalities and the nature of work is fast becoming autonomous with firms needing strategy, and supportive organisational culture to thrive in an increasingly digitised business communication space (Mckinsey & Co, 2017). As Gartner, (2020) points out, high-performing firms continue to boost their competitiveness by using virtual business communication technologies to enhance staff members' self-reliance and motivation toward job embeddedness and satisfaction.

The benefits and disadvantages of virtual business communication can be assessed as it impacts society, employees, and the organisation. The societal benefits may be derived from less burden on the transportation infrastructure as more workers can perform their work responsibilities remotely from their homes. It has enabled workers with disability and other special needs to take up employment without the burden of having to commute to and from work. This, in turn, may have positively impacted the labour market by creating employment opportunities even for individuals located outside the territorial jurisdictions of a hiring firm (Mckinsey & Co, 2021). However, the deployment of virtual business communication may provoke social challenges such as a disconnected society as individuals are isolated from each other (Gartner, 2020). The Covid crisis exacerbated the risk of social isolation with the mandatory lockdowns and social distancing imposed by governments across the world.

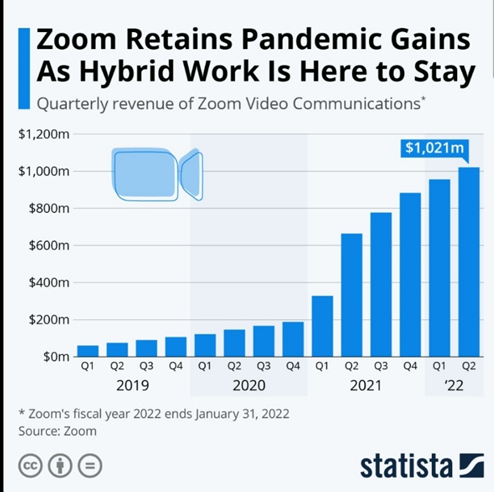
As per the employees, studies have indicated that digital business communication has both positive and negative outcomes. This is due to multiple factors comprising the nature of the work, individual employees’ situations, family conditions, and the characteristics of the organisation (Conway et al., 2016; Delery & Gupta, 2016). However, the benefits derived by employees from the use of virtual business communication can take the form of enhanced work autonomy, time-space flexibility, cost savings, and increased time for family and social activities (Gartner, 2020). This, in turn, can result in less stress on the job, reduce employee turnover, boost job satisfaction, and ensure greater occupational wellbeing (Mckinsey & Co, 2017). However, these benefits may sometimes be difficult to establish due to factors such as the home being less conducive to work compared to the physical office; multiple roles overlapping, blurring the line between work and leisure, isolation, and loneliness, especially for staff members who live alone, prolonged work hours and increased workloads (Mckinsey, 2021). Digital business communication ensures the office does not close; as such, firms implementing it need to put in place operating protocols. This is because the absence of a standard operating protocol can lead to an increase in job stress detrimental to occupational health and the safety of the workforce.

Nonetheless, the effect of virtual business communication technologies on various aspects of employee engagement such as work-life balance, job satisfaction, and general employee well-being is still an evolving area of research given the non-linear outcomes of variables (Conway et al., 2016). However, the significance of virtual technologies in business communication may not be without merit due to their perceived benefits to firms that implement them. Studies have shown that higher job satisfaction boosts retention and work performance (Delery & Gupta, 2016; Gartner, 2020). However, even as employee wellbeing can be enhanced through hybrid or remote working propelled by technologies such as Zoom or Google Meet, its cost-effectiveness remains critical to firms implementing it (Mckinsey & Co, 2021).

As such, the possible benefits of business communication technologies to organisations will suggest less absenteeism, higher productivity, and work quality, increased commitment, less stress in recruitment, a high retention rate of skilled employees, and a reduction in the unit work costs (Gartner, 2020). Nonetheless, accomplishing these benefits may not be straightforward as other variables can act as determining factors. For example, an increase in employee productivity and long-term commitment may occur due to training and development programs and salary increment provided by the employer and not necessarily due to remote working accelerated by virtual business communication technologies.

The literature on the benefits and challenges of operating a virtual business communication system, as well as the adaptation factors, suggest it requires the concerted effort of a firm's management to systematically ascertain them using periodic employee surveys. Thus, the conditions under which virtual business communication is conducted to enhance remote work arrangements require continued evaluation to accomplish the intended results (Conway et al., 2016). For example, amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic employers had no choice but to implement a work from home arrangement to ensure business continuity. The alternative would have been to shut down their business operations as governments imposed strict lockdowns.

This was an unprecedented health emergency that confronted a globalised economy; even leading firms were unprepared for it and this created enormous amounts of stress and uncertainty (Gartner, 2020). Therefore, although remote working was not a novel idea in the workplace, its sudden widespread implementation across multiple industries particularly with Zoom was a whole new experience for a significant number of firms and their employees (Mckinsey & Co, 2021). Accordingly, remote working became a requirement and a necessity needed to stem the spread of the virus. It was not a voluntary choice by firms and even as the worst of the crisis may have ended Zoom accelerated business communication may have become normalised as hybrid working arrangements combining on-site and remote working gains wider acceptance in the corporate environment (Gartner, 2020).

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***Figure 5:* Fiscal Report for Zoom 2022**

For example, surveys conducted to gauge employees' perceptions regarding hybrid work arrangement indicates a significant number of employees do have a positive consideration for its continued implementation (Gartner, 2020). It has become a vital engagement tool and the cost-benefit to the employer seems positive. For married employees with children or dependents, a hybrid work arrangement may be vital to their occupational wellbeing. However, the effect of Zoom or any other innovative business communication technologies on hybrid work arrangements may not be different from the perceived benefits or barriers emanating from studies conducted before the Covid-19.

The circumstances are quite different but the subject matter is the same; as such, factors such as employee support, and the company’s well being may not be lacking in substance with regards to the effect of technologies such as Zoom on business communication in a hybrid work arrangement.

**2.7 Conclusions**

The extant literature indicates both positive and negative outcomes of using virtual business communication to accelerate hybrid work arrangements. The boundaries between work and home may have been impacted as firms implement a hybrid work arrangement driven by virtual technologies.

Nonetheless, employers and employees seem to have benefited from flexible scheduling, higher productivity, and cost reduction from using virtual technologies to conduct business communications. Subsequent chapters seek to further interrogate the subject matter to derive recommendations for employees and employers, especially relevant to the current situation of hybrid work arrangements using virtual technology which in a way has the possibility of encroaching on personal boundaries in terms of employee satisfaction and employee productivity.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the research work explicitly and objectively, within the perimeters of the subject’s focus, deals with how the research work would be executed. It will, among other things, highlight the type of data collected, sources of the data, research design, measurement of variables, model of specification, location, method of collecting such data and estimation techniques. In addition, it will equally deal with how the data was structured and analysed.

This chapter would be proving that the methodology and processes adopted are the greatest match for the study's aims and objectives and will produce valid, authentic, realistic, and trustworthy findings. The findings of this study will then be put through a reliability and accuracy test before being passed on to other researchers in the same field.

**3.2 Research Design**

A research design, according to Onwumere (2019), is a type of framework that leads and influences the researcher on their research knowledge, skills and understanding of his or her investigation and analyses. The time series econometric tool and stepwise processes were used to examine the impact of Zoom on internal business communication with focus on employee satisfaction and productivity. Estimating the relationship between the impact of Zoom and business communication consists of two phases with strong emphasis on employee satisfaction and productivity.

 The first step is to check the series' stationarity, or sequence of integration, as the sequence should be stationary. The linear estimate of the connection is the second stage. The linear estimation technical tool seeks to get unique estimates of parameters that will allow us to interpret regression coefficients and, as a result, provide a little better fit research outcomes without affecting the research tool's key competences and expertise. (Emeka et. al, 2019).

**3.3 Model Specification to capture the research questions**

The Classical linear regression model is the econometric tool engaged for better results in this study to analyse the impact of Zoom on internal business communication with focus on employee satisfaction and productivity (Emeka et. al, 2019). One of the veritable tools for measuring impacts or effects of an independent variable on a dependent variable is a regression analytic tool. This is chosen because of the complexity and exponentiality of the research’s independent variable (Zoom).

Taking cognizance of hypotheses and empirical findings of past scholars, the below expressed models will be tested to determine the extent to which Zoom has positively impacted the internal business communication (Employee satisfaction and productivity).

Similarly, the coefficients of the regression analysis result explicitly showed the negative impact of Zoom on employee productivity and satisfaction. Some of the parameters turned out to be negative in the result, it showed a negative indicator on the dependent variables (employee satisfaction and productivity). According to Mendoza, too many virtual meetings can cause employee productivity and satisfaction to plummet (Mendoza, 2020). An intensive report research showed that video conferencing is so ‘excessive’. It was objectively buttressed that such meetings cost $1,500 per employee when compared with wasted time (Wundamail, 2020). Advances in time series research have shown beyond doubt that much usage of platforms like Zoom may cost more to the business environment in terms of money, energy, and time. Furthermore, video conferencing can become a distraction as submitted by a strategic researcher, that most employees agreed that they were very distracted when they were immersed in continuous virtual streams of distraction on various apps and were more effective when uninterrupted over a longer space of time (Wundamail,2020). TechRebublic submitted that 12% of Zoom users stopped using the platform due to the security concern that has gone viral over time. The high level of issues with video meetings as identified by users/respondents cut across technical problems, frequent interruptions and colleagues communicating with each other is another problem (59%) worthy of note (TechRepublic,2020).

Zoom has recorded a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of about 75% paid users according to a third party survey in 2020. Zoom is seen by most respondents as more convenient to deploy and/or use than its competition due to its superior features, rehabilitation, productivity, and customer’s satisfaction. Customers who switch to Zoom video communication submit and increase in performance, productivity, and engagement (Zoom Executive Summary Report, 2020). In this research project, secondary data from past scholars was used to identify factors that may improve the deployment of Zoom for business communication that enhances employee satisfaction and productivity.

The econometric regression analysis equation is explicitly explained below.

*ES*= *f*(ZM)……………………………………………………………………………………(1)

*EP* = *f*(ZM)…………………………………………………………………………………...(2)

Therefore, by virtue of linearizing equation 1 and 2, this gives us equation 3 and 4. The result is stated below.

*ES*= *β*0 + *β*1 ZM+ *µ*…………………………………………………………………………..(3)

*EP*= *β*0 + *β*2 ZM+ *µ…………………………………………………………………………..(4)*

Where;

*β*0 =   The intercept or autonomous parameter estimate of the regression analytic tool.

*β*, *β*2 = Parameter estimate representing the coefficient of Zoom.

*ES* =   Employee satisfaction.

*EP*   = Employee productivity.

*ZM* = Zoom.

*µ* =   Error term (or stochastic term) (Emeka et. al, 2019).

**3.3.1 Apriorism Sign Expectation and Decision-Making Criteria**

This, more often than none, has been referred to as the existing synergy or relationship among the model's dependent or independent variables, as proven by economic theory postulates (Bernard, 2018). The model's outcome or parameter estimates will be interpreted based on the assumed signs of the parameters as specified by economic theory. To put it differently, the model's estimated coefficients will be evaluated to see if they adhere to economic theory's postulates (Bernard, 2018).

Partial differentiation with respect to each variable to obtain apriori sign expectation of equation (2) must be carried out. This will give us equation 5;

dES

\_\_\_ = *β*1 > 0

dZM

dEP

\_\_\_ = *β*2 > 0…………………………………………………………………………………(5)

dZM

On the *apriori* justification and decision-making rule, the positive *β*1 and *β*2 depicts a cordial synergy between ES and ZM and between EP and ZM; it shows that on *apriori* basis, the ES and EP increases due to an increase in usage of ZM (Emeka et. al, 2019).

**3.4 Sources of Data**

Secondary data was adopted for the purpose of this study. The annual time series data with econometric procedure were used to examine the impact of Zoom on the internal business communication with focus on employee satisfaction and productivity. Zoom was chosen because of the exponentiality and impacts of the company and the magnitude of coverage during the covid-19 pandemic. Data for the study was obtained from the Zoom Revenue and Usage Statistics (Business of Apps, 2022), Zoom executive report (Zoom Report, 2020), and Zoom enterprise deployment guide (Zoom guide,2020).

These data include the revenue, profits, daily usage, and customer based between 2018-2021.

**3.5 Measurement of Variables**

The study variables were measured as shown below;

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Variable | Variable | Measurement |
| Dependent | Employee satisfaction | This indicates the degree at which employees enjoy the impacts of Zoom during. |
| Independent | Zoom | Zoom is a video conferencing software package that provides video chatting service, allowing numerous people to communicate concurrently. How this positively influenced business communication. |
| Independent | Employee productivity | The total value output/performance of the employee as a response to the use of Zoom. |

Francis, O. C, (2019).

**3.6 Estimation Technique**

The Ordinary Least Square Method (OLSM) is engaged and adopted for data analysis. The entire test will be conducted and tested at 5% level of significance. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test was employed to determine if the variables in the research display unit root property, as it was in previous studies. This is to see if the economic variables' synergy is fictitious or absurd.

When compared to other econometric methodologies, the ordinary least square (OLS) estimate method is preferred since the computing procedure is straightforward. The variance of the Ordinary Least Square estimator is comparable to that of any other linear unbiased estimator; they are linear and normally distributed; they are efficient, consistent, and symmetrically unbiased. As a result, the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator is stated to be the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) (BLUE)(Emeka et. al, 2019).

**3.7 Decision rule**

The decision rule is that the null hypothesis will be accepted if the critical/t-value (±1.96) is greater than the calculated value, otherwise the null hypothesis will be rejected. That is, using the *t*-test (*t*-statistic), we say that a variable is statistically significant if *t\** (*t*-calculated) is greater than the tabulated value of ±1.96 under 95% (or 5%) confidence levels and it is statistically insignificant if the *t\** is less than the tabulated value of ±1.96 under 95 % (or 5%) confidence levels. Thus;

H0: *β*0 = 0 (Null hypothesis)

H1: *β*1 = 0 (Alternative hypothesis) (Emeka et. al, 2019).

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Data presentation, analysis and interpretation comprise the use or conversation of the various observation obtained, through secondary data gathered in the process of time series research to make inference for possible analysis and interpretation for future use and recommendations (Bamgbose, 2019). Data, in its raw state, may not be appreciated unless they are arranged, analyzed, and organized for presentation and evaluation in form of Bar chart, Pie chart, graphs, and frequency table, the arrangement mostly depends on statistical technique. Data Analysis and Data Presentation have a practical implementation and evaluative purpose in every possible field. It can range from academic studies, commercial, industrial, and marketing activities to professional practices (Jaiyeoba, 2020).

In a raw state, data tend not to be explainable unless it is broken down into fragments for a lay man to understand. Data analysis is a veritable step when breaking down data into more understandable charts or graphs. The Analytic tool used for analysing the raw data which must be processed further to support certain number of applications (Aiede, 2021). Therefore, the processes of analysing data usually help in the interpretation of raw data and extract the useful content out of it. The transformed raw data assists in obtaining useful information (Analytics Hub, 2022).

In this chapter, the researcher will present and analyze the various data collected during the study. The researcher employed the use of table and linear regression tool in making the analysis of the findings of the secondary data, which comes in form of figures and facts from past research, and this was used to make certain recommendation for further findings in the next chapter.

**4.2** **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

Having critically considered many data gathered from reliable sources, the table below shows data collected from the Zoom Revenue and Usage Statistics (Business of Apps, 2022), Zoom executive summary report (Zoom Report, 2021), and Zoom enterprise deployment guide for businesses (Zoom guide,2020). These data include the revenue, profits, daily usage, deployment strategy and customer based between 2018-2021.

**Table 4.1.** Zoom revenue, profits, daily usage, deployment strategy and customer based, employee productivity and satisfaction between 2018 and 2021.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Revenue** | **Profit** | **Daily Zoom meeting participants** | **Zoom business customers** | **Employee productivity boost. (Minutes per employee per week)** | **Increase in Time-to-value employee and customer satisfaction (%)** |
| 2018 | $ 331 million | $7 million | 8 million | 45,600 | 45 | 50 |
| 2019 | $ 623 million | $21 million | 10 million | 82,400 | 48 | 65 |
| 2020 | $ 2.6 billion | $ 671 million | 350 million | 470,100 | 52 | 70 |
| 2021 | $4. 09 billion | $ 1.06 billion | 2.1 billion | 191,000 | 65 | 90 |

**Sources:** *Business of Apps (2022); TechRepublic (2021) Zoom report (2021), Webtribunal (2021), Statista (2021), Journal of Forester Total Economic Impact Study Commissioned by Zoom (2022).*

*Test of research question 1*

*Data Analysis, 2022*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 4.2: SUMMARY OUTPUT (Regression Statistics for employee productivity and Zoom usage)** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | |
| *Regression Statistics* | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Multiple R | 0.865827 | correlation value | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| R Square | 0.83383 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.899255 |  | employee productivity, employee satisfaction= 95138.17+0.4253282\*t | | | | | | |  |
| Standard Error | 218932.5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Observations | 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ANOVA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *df* | *SS* | *MS* | *F* | *Significance F* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Regression | 1 | 1.48E+10 | 1.48E+10 | 0.309015 | 0.634173 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Residual | 2 | 9.59E+10 | 4.79E+10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 3 | 1.11E+11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *Coefficients* | *Standard Error* | *t Stat* | *P-value* | *Lower 95%* | *Upper 95%* | *Lower 95.0%* | *Upper 95.0%* |  |  |
| Intercept | 95138.17 | 537295.4 | -0.17707 | 0.875764 | -2406934 | 2216657 | -2406934 | 2216657 |  |  |
| Increase in Time-to-value employee (%) | 0.425328 | 7651.289 | 0.555891 | 0.634173 | -28667.6 | 37174.12 | -28667.6 | 37174.12 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RESIDUAL OUTPUT | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Observation* | *Predicted Zoom business usage* | *Residuals* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | 117526 | 71926 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 181325.2 | 98925.2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 202591.6 | 267508.4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 287657.3 | 96657.3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Figure 6: Increase in Time-to-Value*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 4.2 SUMMARY OUTPUT (Regression Statistics for employee satisfaction and Zoom usage)** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | |
| *Regression Statistics* | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Multiple R | 0986827 | correlation value | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| R Square | 0.84483 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.834255 |  | employee satisfaction ity, employee satisfaction= 95138.17+0.4253282\*t | | | | | | |  |
| Standard Error | 228932.5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Observations | 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ANOVA |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *df* | *SS* | *MS* | *F* | *Significance F* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Regression | 1 | 1.48E+10 | 1.48E+10 | 0.309015 | 0.634173 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Residual | 2 | 9.59E+10 | 4.79E+10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 3 | 1.11E+11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *Coefficients* | *Standard Error* | *t Stat* | *P-value* | *Lower 95%* | *Upper 95%* | *Lower 95.0%* | *Upper 95.0%* |  |  |
| Intercept | 95438.17 | 537295.4 | -0.17707 | 0.875764 | -2406934 | 2216657 | -2406934 | 2216657 |  |  |
| Employee satisfaction | 0.525328 | 7651.289 | 0.555891 | 0.634173 | -28667.6 | 37174.12 | -28667.6 | 37174.12 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RESIDUAL OUTPUT | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Observation* | *Predicted Zoom business usage* | *Residuals* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | 117526 | 71926 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 181325.2 | 98925.2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 202591.6 | 267508.4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 287657.3 | 96657.3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Data Analysis, 2022*

*Figure 7: Employee Satisfaction Graph*

From the result of linear regression above, zoom has a positive impact on employee productivity and satisfaction. This is because both analysis shows positive intercept. Furthermore, the R-square and Adjusted R-Square shows a direct and positive impact of Zoom on employee productivity and satisfaction. For every increase in the use of Zoom, there is 0.525328 increase I employee satisfaction. Similarly, for every increase in the usage of Zoom, there is 0.425328 increase in employee productivity. The implication of this is that the more the usage of Zoom platform, the higher the chances that employee productivity will increase.

*Test of research question 2*

* 1. **Business Communication Silos that negatively affect Employee Productivity and Satisfaction due to Zoom Usage.**

Mendazo, in 2020, submitted, having made time series research, leveraging on the findings of Tech Republic, that about 45% of mobile employee said they’re ever productive if their time is uninterrupted compared to short time of distractions and interruptions using zoom meeting platform (TechRepublic, 2020). Furthermore, the result from engaging and surveying over 20,000 remote employees across the UK and US in 2020, which cut across different socioeconomic background, ethnicity, gender, and work patterns, showed a pointer to global economic destructions and productivity anomalies (Wundamail,2021).

During the survey, a reasonable number of employees submitted that continuous streams of video apps are more distracting than long hours work engagements. Similarly, others who have participated in video conferencing said they have made little or no significant contributions. Virtual meetings could bring about communication barrier to the workflow of employee (TechRepublic,2021). Majority of video conferencing participants do not have time to complete actions agreed over video meetings. Virtual meetings give significant abstraction of productivity, but no tangible work/task is done or produced (Wundamail, 2020). 15% of zoom participants stopped using the platform based on security grounds (TechRepublic, 2020).

From the findings of the secondary data above, it is crystal clear that more usage of zoom could lead to distractions in workplace, communication barriers, little or no productivity, technical issues, lack of adequate feedback which make the objective of a meeting not to be achieved.

*Test of research question 3*

* 1. **Factors that may improve the Deployment of Zoom for Business Communication that enhances Employee Satisfaction and Productivity.**

Many organizations considering zoom to be the platform of choice when planning an IT related endeavors must include standardization procedures and certain factors in place (IR Media, 2020).

1. User adoption

There are five major categories of adopters of innovations which include;

1. Innovators
2. Early adopters
3. Early majority
4. Late majority
5. Laggards.

(Hsu et. Al, 2007)

The above categories of adopters should be well considered when planning deployment of zoom for business communication that will improve employee satisfaction and productivity. Questions like how the zoom collaborations and usage affect daily life of employee should be considered. Easy user adoption guarantees great return on investment on the long run (IR Media, 2020).

1. Security

15% of Zoom users have stopped using it at one time or the other due to security concerns (Wundamail, 2020). Many features like meeting password, invitation sharing, participant removal, session locks, waiting rooms should be worked on the more to allow more users in the future when planning deployment for business communication that will enhance productivity and satisfaction (IR Media, 2020).

c. other factor is communication of essential update. This will take care of communication barrier.

**4.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

From the linear regression analysis above, it is crystal clear that zoom has positive significant relationship with business communications with emphasis on employee satisfaction and productivity. However, there are certain business communication siloes that negatively affect employee productivity and satisfaction which include distractions in workplace, communication barriers, little or no productivity, technical issues, lack of adequate feedback among host of others. Based on past findings of scholars and researchers, it is to be concluded that zoom usage gives about 52% work per minutes per employee in terms of productivity and it guarantees 70% time-value ratio. Though zoom usage has some negative aspects, its advantages outweigh its disadvantages (*Total Economic Impact Study Commissioned by Zoom, 2022).*

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 INTRODUCTION**

  The research work comes to a conclusion with this chapter. This chapter will offer the summary of findings, conclusion, recommendation, and suggestion/need for more study, as well as sufficient information to advise future researchers on the influence of Zoom on corporate communication, with a focus on employee productivity and happiness. One of the elements of the results summation is to offer an in-depth assessment for each of the findings, utilising anchor terminology that validates rather than distorts the meaning of the findings while keeping in mind the study topic's aims and objectives (Ayoola, 2020). The goal of this chapter is to discuss the main outcomes of a research study, or what the project suggested, disclosed, or indicated. This typically refers to the end result as a whole, rather than the findings or suggestions that resulted. (Beula, 2021). This study focused on the impact of Zoom on Business Communications, with the analysis of effects of Zoom on employee productivity and satisfaction. The study revealed that Zoom has a positive and significant impact on business communications. It showed that as the use of Zoom increases, employee satisfaction and productivity also appreciate. Zoom has been demonstrated to have a large and favourable impact on business communications performance. Furthermore, the data demonstrated that Zoom has a strong and substantial link with employee productivity, which explains the greater Zoom utilisation rates and improved employee performance and efficiency found in the analysis. However, there are certain negative aspects of the usage of Zoom which can affect employees in one way or the other (Mendazo, Wundamail,2020).  It was also observed from the study that Zoom usage skyrocketed by 50-60% between 2019 and 2022 as many business organisations now engage the video communication platform. These roles make Zoom a leader in video conferencing platforms around the word for meeting solutions (Gartner, 2021). Due to their engagement in using Zoom, it is imperative one realises Zoom can be used to mobilise businesses to do more since it has the potential, potential, and prospects.

**5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This study becomes imperative because Zoom has more potential to increase its revenue and profits in the coming years. Moreover, if several deployment strategies to override the negative effects of usage are put in place, Zoom has more coverage to land as the future of business organisations in terms of delivery and productivity remains bright with engagements in information technology.

Based on the research conducted by the researcher, the following are some of the research findings:

**i.**         Zoom has a positive impact on employee productivity and satisfaction (Analysis, 2022). For every usage of Zoom, there is an increase in employee productivity and satisfaction.

**ii.**      There are several business communications siloes that negatively affect employee productivity and satisfaction. Some of these results include distractions in the workplace, communication barriers, technical issues, lack of adequate feedback among a host of others (TechRepublic, 2020).

**iii.**   Certain factors could improve the deployment of Zoom for business communications that will guarantee employee productivity and satisfaction. These factors include employee adoption, security, communications of essential updates (IR Media, 2020).

**iv.**      The regression analysis shows a positive indication between the dependent variables (Employee productivity and satisfaction) and the independent variable (Zoom). This suggests a direct positive relationship between the three variables considered in the research. An increase in the judicious use of the platform will result in increase in employee productivity and satisfaction (Analysis, 2022).

**5.3 CONCLUSION**

Zoom has been found to have many positive implications on employee productivity and satisfaction based on research conducted by the author of this research work. Other factors such as user adoption, security issues and communication strength will enhance the deployment of Zoom towards the improvement of employee productivity and satisfaction. Certain negative factors such as lack of concentration, time consumption, energy consumption could act as barriers to employee satisfaction and productivity, if Zoom takes adequate measures, it will be at the apex of revenue generation and employee satisfaction in the coming future.

**5.4 RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the result of this research, the following recommendations have been put forward;

**i.**       Zoom should maintain a stable policy to prevent some of the negative siloes to affect employee satisfaction and productivity.

**ii.**     An effective policy should be made based on the standard operating procedures policies which should be aimed at achieving a result for participants.

**iii.**   Programme should be planned to positively affect business communication with focus on employee productivity and satisfaction.

**iv.**   Zoom should consider certain deployment factors like users’ adoption, security issues and channel towards achieving greater results with respect to revenue generation and users’ satisfaction.

**v.**               Zoom should also look inward and work on areas of user’s complaints to serve better in the coming future.

**vi.**             The technical team of Zoom should consider a refiring process to solve the problem at hand.

**vii.**           A sensitization programme should be planned to re-orientate Zoom users to change their mind about the security issues. This will allow about 15% of users that have left the platform due to security issues.

**5.5 SUGGESTION/NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

       The researcher, therefore, suggested that research should be made on the following areas:

**I.**          Impact of Zoom on business communications.

**II.**          The effect of Zoom on employee productivity and satisfaction.

       This will go a long way in giving a better understanding of the subject matter. Many research agencies should devise means to adequately unravel the impacts of Zoom on business communications which focus on employee productivity and satisfaction.

**CHAPTER SIX**

**REFLECTIONS**

**6.0 Personal Reflection**

This part will include my own reflections of my work, as well as a critical evaluation of how I accomplished this dissertation. To analyse my experience, I will be using Gibbs' reflective cycle framework (Kumar, 2016). As a result, I will be able to make conclusions that may be used to create an action plan for my future growth. Using this framework, I'll be able to plan out an organised dialogue in order to learn from this experience. The steps of Gibbs' architecture are as follows: description, feelings, assessment, analysis, conclusion, and action plan (Wilson & Miller, 2018). The utilisation of reflection has been generally credited with making knowledge acquisition from experience easier.

**6.1 Description**

This paragraph will be concerning the description of my experience. As an international student i had a focus on what i would want to achieve with this program, my first day in class never really happened until the second semester due to the covid pandemic, so here i was hunched over a laptop in a new country, new home and staring into the screen of my trusty old laptop at new classmates and funny enough it was on Zoom application platform.

My BSc major as a Computer Scientist kicked in when i was considering what would be a research topic, something different, unique. As fate would have it there again was Zoom among the probable research areas in the many listed by Mary to assist and pique individual interest, well that definitely got some processors in my head churning. I decided to take a look into it, to research about the intertwined of world business and technology. Information technology is important to business performance because it has a direct impact on the processes that businesses utilise to produce and deliver value in order to be profitable: As a result, IT is crucial to a company's overall strategy (Drnevich and Croson, 2013).

**6.2 Feelings**

My first response to my dissertation were enthusiastic despite the enormity of the word count, vis-à-vis the work to be put in especially in terms of paraphrasing as it particularly is not my strongest of suit and I really wanted to ace it, not just for myself but particularly for the support from my family. Coming from a family with pride in education and a mum who always drummed into me to lead by example, this masters’ program was hers’ despite i was the one doing it, that thought process alone spurred me. Did I mention she has a copy of my first and second semester results and I still get the flak for scoring 55% in a certain assessment. I do not think I will ever hear the end of it. I believe I can tie this motherly motivation to Razza et. al, 2021 which says Individuals with a subjective history of success feel proud when they achieve a new task goal, and this achievement pride induces anticipatory goal responses that energise and steer behaviour toward the task goal. I do firmly believe that this achievement no matter how humbling it is to me would however be my mother’s source of greatest pride especially as she is already on the topic of a PHD.

**6.3 Evaluation**

In retrospect, primary research data would definitely have made the dissertation slightly easier as sourcing for secondary data especially with my keywords matching so much data that do not align with my areas of research made sifting for references proper hard work. The pandemic situation comes with highs and lows, however being tripled vaccinated did not absolve me from catching Covid after never having it and losing a whole month that should have been dedicated to this dissertation. However, my family came through and reminded me it could have been worse. Well, I am back on my feet and here I am putting these words despite not being much of a talker but am grateful for life , a month of Covid is not nice.

**6.4 Analysis**

According to Newson et.al, 2021, lack of face-to-face interaction, on the other hand, might have a detrimental impact on people's well-being. Self-isolation associated with quarantine during earlier worldwide illness epidemics was linked to negative psychological states, according to one meta-analysis, especially for older persons with fewer social networks to lean on. In numerous nations, data from the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic revealed poorer wellbeing and increased mental health difficulties, with possible links to rigorous measures limiting face-to-face contact and/or an increase in pandemic-related mortality rates. Individuals who had face-to-face contact during the COVID-19 pandemic were less likely to have depressed symptoms than those who spoke through phone or video, according to a large-scale UK-based longitudinal research. This theory definitely aligns with my period of isolation while sick with Covid. Apart from having social networks to lean on, especially LinkedIn Learning, my family was there to support me and I was still able to add some materials to my dissertation and this very theory of Newson was sourced on twitter via her personal handle while searching for data despite my condition.

**6.5 Conclusion**

It has been a wonderful experience with lots of life lessons. I can tell what motivates me and the situations and persons that enhance this motivation. I am a better researcher, more patient and definitely way better at time management when compared to before. Looking back at the beginning of this journey and where I am at the moment, I do feel a tinge of pride not particularly on the completion of the programme but rather at obstacles and expectations surpassed both in-class and out of it. Apart from educational qualifications, accepting cultural diversity, navigating life scenarios and propeling with the change of environment, lifestyle and being much more aware of climate change. In total, I am more optimistic about what the future holds for me and how to handle it.

**6.6 Action Plan**

In a situation in the future where if I encounter similar scenarios to my dissertation process (ill health), I will respond way better especially as time of being indisposed can not be determined. So doing, I will be able to put all necessary persons on notice and concerning the situation at hand. In addition, I will preemptively source for data before picking a research topic, it must be a prerequisite before undertaking any project as the search for data in this dissertation has taken me to new places on the internet. In this light, I will close with a quote from Neil Armstrong “ Research is creating new knowledge”.

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Prikladnicki, R. (2013). Globally distributed system developers. In *Proceedings of the 2013  
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## 

## Appendix 2: Dissertation Log

## 

**UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE**

**DISSERTATION LOG**

This is an important document, which will need to be attached to your Dissertation. This log will be taken into consideration when awarding the final mark for the Dissertation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Student’s Full Name:** | **OLUFEMI OLUMIDE AKINLADE** | **Student ID:** | **20029053** |
| **Supervisor’s Name:** | **JOHN HOBSON** | **Dissertation Module Leader’s Name:** | **MS AYODELE ONABANJO** |
| **Dissertation Topic: IMPACT OF ZOOM APPLICATION ON BUSINESS COMMUNICATION** | | | |

#### 

#### SECTION A: MONITORING STUDENT DISSERTATION PROCESS

**The plan below is to be agreed between the student & Supervisor and will be monitored against progress made at each session.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Milestone/Deliverable Date** | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Final details of proposal to be agreed between student and supervisor | JAN 20 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Suggest milestones are: |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 Refine initial proposal | FEB 11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 Complete literature review | MARCH 26 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 Complete methodology section | APRIL 8 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 Complete data collection | APRIL 9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 Complete data analysis | APRIL 9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 Complete conclusions and recommendations | APRIL 10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 Submit draft for feedback | APRIL 11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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**SECTION B: ETHICS**

Ethics form protocol number (Primary Research Only): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION C: RECORD OF MEETINGS**

The expectation is that students will meet their supervisors up to seven times and these meetings should be recorded.

Meeting 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting | JAN 20,2022 |
| Progress Made | * Review of research question |
| Agreed Action | * Meeting on what is required for a successful dissertation * Refinement of research questions |
| Student Signature | Olufemi Olumide Akinlade |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting | March26, 2022 |
| Progress Made | * Feedback on literature review |
| Agreed Action | * Literature review should relate more closely to Zoom app than video conferencing features and apps. * Use of appropriate charts, figures and tables |
| Student Signature | Olufemi Olumide Akinlade |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting | April 8,2002 |
| Progress Made | Methodology |
| Agreed Action | Go ahead given on mode of methodology |
| Student Signature | Olufemi Olumide Akinlade |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting | April 9, 2022 |
| Progress Made | Secondary data Collection and Analysis, |
| Agreed Action | 20 Variable agreed for analysis |
| Student Signature | Olufemi Olumide Akinlade |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 5

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting | April 10,2022 |
| Progress Made | Conclusion and Reflection |
| Agreed Action | Feedback given on usage of English in conclusion. |
| Student Signature |  |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 6

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting |  |
| Progress Made |  |
| Agreed Action |  |
| Student Signature |  |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

Meeting 7

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of Meeting |  |
| Progress Made |  |
| Agreed Action |  |
| Student Signature |  |
| Supervisor’s  Signature |  |

## 

**SECTION D: COMMENTS ON MANAGEMENT OF PROJECT**

***(Optional - to be completed at the end of the Dissertation process)***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
| Signature of Student: | Date: |
| Signature of Supervisor: | Date: |
| Ethics Protocol Number (Primary Research Only): | |

**Secondary Research Declaration**

I declare that my research involves ONLY secondary sources that any member of the public  is legitimately free to access and use without obtaining permission.

I declare that my research includes agreed access to the company / organisation / charity  named in this dissertation; I have permission to access sources which are confidential to it; and I have agreed to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of these sources.

I understand that should I wish to amend my study and collect data from human participants,  I am required to apply for and receive UH ethics approval prior to recruiting participants and  collecting data.

I understand that failure to obtain UH ethics approval for the collection of primary data  constitutes a breach of ethics and academic penalties may apply.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Programme Title** : Management Research Project or Dissertation | |
| Dissertation Module  : Ms Ayodele Onabanjo  Leader’s Name | |
| Student’s Name : Olufemi Olumide Akinlade | Student’s  : 20029053  ID Number |
| Student’s Signature : | Date : 29/12/2021 |
| Supervisor’s Name : Mr John Hobson | |
| Supervisor’s  : J B Hobson  Signature | Date : 4 Jan 2022 |