American Journal of
**Communication**
*(AJC)*

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AJP

American Journal of Communication
ISSN 2790-5764 (Online)
Vol. 5 , Issue 1, pp 1 - 16, 2023

www.ajpojournals.org

# Mode of Communication and Employee Engagement in Technical Training Institutions in Kenya

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** This study sought to determine the effect of the communication mode on employee engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya.

**Methodology:** The study was conducted using survey research design. Study population was all the 3780 trainers in the 102 public technical training institutions in Kenya out of which a sample of 360 respondents was used. Stratified random sampling, random sampling and stratified proportionate random sampling technique design were employed. Data was collected using a questionnaire which had both closed and open- ended (Likert type scale 1-5) questions. Questionnaires were distributed to 360 respondents out of which 322 completed the questionnaires giving a response rate of 89.4%. Cronbach's alpha was used to test for internal reliability of each variable used in the study. Data analysis was done by use of descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Findings:** Logistic regression coefficients showed that communication mode influenced employee engagement and in a negative way. The effect therefore, was not statistically significant ($\beta$=-0.647, p=0.114). This implies that communication mode is not a significant predictor of employee engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya.

**Recommendations:** The study recommends that technical training institutions should endeavor to embrace modern methods of communication. In an increased switch on world, the staff and the students rely on technology as their primary means of communication. Computers, smart phones and tablet devices are ubiquitous. It is imperative for technical training institutions to stop over relying on traditional methods such as notice boards, meetings and paper based newsletters like in the past years.

**Keywords:** *Communication mode, employee engagement, technical training institutions, methods of communication, channels of communication*

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is an all-time process. Every organization and in particular educational institutions at the tertiary level needs effective internal communication to succeed. However, management of many organizations appears not to reckon with the significance of communication in their systems. Bua (2014) opined that the success or failure of the teaching and learning process depends largely on the way and manner in which the communication process is initiated, developed and maintained.

In Kenya, engaging and enthusing the trainers has been a challenge. According to Koome (2014), there has been high academic staff turnover in technical training institutions in Kenya. High turnover is generally associated with poor or lack of effective internal communication (Ashfaq et al., 2012). Again, Antony et al. (2016) noted that many technical institutions have little financial power to buy modern management information systems to use in the daily operation and management of activities. They acknowledged that the problem has led to slow advancement of both structural, human resource and technological developments that these institutions experience.

Technical expertise forms the basis for the actualization of industrial transformation and a meaningful pursuit for Kenya's Vision 2030. In spite of this, technical education has been given "casual" treatment since independence to date (Oroni, 2012). Research in these institutions has mainly concentrated on students' issues like choice of courses, enrolment, gender disparity, training, physical facilities, learning facilities and students discipline among others (Njoroge, 2015). Simiyu (2009) in a study of Kaiboi Technical Institute noted that the managers of technical institutions ought to apply contemporary approaches in personnel management such as open house discussions and feedback mechanism so as motivate their staff and in turn affect the quality of teaching. Management and communication within these institutions which are charged with a great responsibility of transforming the country have not been given due attention. Based on this backdrop, the main task of this study was to focus on the effect of communication mode on employee engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya.

## 2.0 RELATED LITERATURE 2.1 Communication Mode

Communication mode refers to the medium used to transmit a message from the sender to the receiver (Stohl & Redding, 1987). Today there are more channels of communication to choose from than at any other time in history. Technology has changed the face of how humans communicate with one another. It is faster and sometimes hard to keep up with. Employees want a more democratic information exchange (D'Aprix, 2009). According to Maltz (2000), electronic, written, face-to-face, and phone are the common modes of communication. The most effective internal communication channel used in most organizations including institutions of higher learning is face-to-face communication (Frandsen, 2011). According to Zhang and Venkatesh (2013), organizations need to ensure that they use effective communication channels which would ensure that employees receive, respond, adjust and improve information flow within an organization. Communication channels are important and an organization ought to ensure that they have strong communication channels in order to ensure communication structure, employee

feedback, adjustments to change openness and hence contribute positively to employee performance.

It is imperative for companies to choose the right communication medium that fits the business strategy and business goal (Kataria, Kataria, & Garg 2013). Greenberg (2011) points out that the use of multiple channels, make communication most effective. The communication channels should help achieve organizational objectives and they include emails, newsletters, reports, scheduled meetings, memos, and conference calls (Johlke & Duhan, 2000; Maltz, 2000).

Regular communication from senior leaders and managers is considered as a key driver of greater levels of job performance and satisfaction (Keller, 1994). Nevertheless, an excess of communication can often become flawed. Ganster and Schaubroeck (1991) assert that when organizations and supervisors communicate excessively, employees can become overwhelmed and experience communication overload. Furthermore, Maltz (2000) asserts that organizations can either communicate with employees too frequently or not frequently enough. It may be difficult to measure the right amount of information. However, the information received must be the accurate (Stafford, Vanc, White, 2010). Therefore, this study supports the assumption that organizations and supervisors communicate with their employees within the functional zone i.e. the point at which frequency and effect intersect

An organization that does not communicate can experience the worst outcomes as it forces employees to speculate, listen to rumours and turn to the media for information about their company (Hoover, 2005). In times of change and challenge, communication can be the key to sustaining the business. As Hoover explains, even in a time of crisis, effective communication keeps employees engaged and the organization moving forward. On the contrary, the lack of communication can create a disparity between what employees hear from their manager and what they see in the media, it leads to distracted, de-motivated and disengaged employees who feel a lack of trust caused by lack of transparency whether what they hear is real or perceived.

**2.2 Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is multidimensional because engaged employees are emotionally, physically, and cognitively engaged in their daily work (Eldor & Harpaz, 2015). Vigor component of engagement has been reported as most crucial for job engagement (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). Vigor is the energy and enthusiasm that the employee brings to the work place, that is, characterized by high levels of energy, effort, resilience, persistence, and motivation to invest in their work (Kravina et al., 2014).The second dimension, dedication is being devoted, inspired and believing work is purposeful or meaningful; it is characterized by involvement in the work, enthusiasm, a sense of pride and inspiration (Taris, Schaufelli, & Shimanzu, 2010).

The third dimension, absorption is being immersed in the work to the extent that it is difficult for an employee to leave and time becomes less relevant to the employee; this dimension is characterized by immersion in one's work and the sense of time passing quickly (Bakker et al., 2011). Employee engagement decreases withdrawals, saves costs of separation, replacement and training, improves loyalty towards the organization, and increases organizations success and competitiveness (Kataria et al., 2013).

Marelli (2011) argued that employee engagement is associated with a high level of motivation to perform well at work, which is combined with passion for the work and a feeling of personal connection to the team and the organization. The benefits of work engagement in organizations are also high productivity and profitability; the customers become more satisfied and loyal, the employees are inclined to experience positive emotions such as, happiness, joy, and enthusiasm (Kravina et al., 2014). Engaged employees are noted to having lower turnover rates and higher retention (Ahmetoglu et al., 2015).

### 2.3 Communication Mode and employee engagement

Robert (2013) conducted a study to investigate the relationships among employee engagement, communication climate, and employees' communication channel preferences. The sample for this study consisted of 42 organizational members from the 24 hour helpdesk department of a large retail, petroleum business located in the Midwestern U.S. The employees surveyed included processors and specialists. The survey responses were used to investigate the stated hypotheses. The researcher did not identify any relationships between the ordinal engagement ratings and channel preferences. The results made him to fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between communication channel preferences and employee engagement. However, on the channel preferences respondents generally ranked email, face-to-face and posters/ brochures/flyers as their top three communication channel choices.

Waldeck, Seibold and Flanagin (2004) conducted a study on the relationship between three channels for information seeking and perceived socialization effectiveness. Moreover, they looked at predictors for employee selection and use of Advanced Communication and Information Technologies (ACITs). The three channels included in the study were ACITs, traditional media, and face-to-face communication. ACITs included email, Internet, Intranet, online chats, voicemail, cellular telephones, online databases, instant messaging, videoconferencing, pagers, and fax. Traditional media included: memos, newsletters, and employee handbooks. Responses were collected through questionnaires at four organizations which comprised hotels, finance and real estate. This study supported the notion that communication channels can work in conjunction with one another as supplemental information and that employees prefer specific channels depending on the related task or desired outcome. On communication effectiveness and employee choice, the study indicated that written communication was a popular communication tool in many organizations.

### 2.4 Theoretical Review

The study was anchored by media richness theory (MRT). MRT ranks media on a continuum of richness, or the ability of information to change understanding within a time interval (Daft & Lengel, 1986). This ability is determined by the medium's abilities to transmit nonverbal cues, express content in natural language, enable immediate feedback, and enable personalization (Daft et al., 1986). One framework used for choosing communication channels is Media Richness Theory (MRT). MRT categorizes the richness of communication mediums or channels in an effort to determine the most effective channel for the message (Lengel & Daft, 1988). A medium can enhance or distort the intended message. The explosion in electronic technology is making medium selection an even more critical issue. Rich media communication situations offer the opportunity

for immediate feedback, which has many positive organizational effects. The media richness theory informed this study as it asserts that a medium can enhance or distort the intended message. Also, the explosion in electronic technology is making medium selection a more critical issue (Compton (2014). Face-to-face communication is considered to be the richest medium because it provides immediate feedback and multiple cues while utilizing natural languages. Unfortunately, this may not be the most commonly used mode of communication in technical training institutions in Kenya.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

Survey research design adopted in this study provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. The design entails the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative data in connection with two or more variables which are examined to detect patterns of association (Fowler, 2009). The survey research design was found to be appropriate in the study since the researcher was studying a sample in order to make generalizations about the target population. Moreover, the design was suitable because it enabled the researcher to make quantitative descriptions of the opinions of the population. The independent variable was communication mode while the dependent variable was employee engagement. The study was conducted in public technical training institutions in Kenya.

The study population was all the 3780 trainers in 102 public technical training institutions in Kenya (Teachers Service Commission, 2018**)**. The respondents were both male and female trainers. Trainers were chosen for the study since they are the main employees expected to provide information out of experience and understanding. They are also a suitable population of study due to their accessibility in different counties. Technical training institutions were chosen in this research because of the key role they are expected to play in the realization of vision 2030. In this study, the sample population was derived from the 102 public technical institutions in Kenya. (Gay, 1992) recommends a minimum sample of 20% and in this study, the researchers used 30% which translated to 30 institutions.

This study adopted stratified random sampling technique where the researcher used the eight administrative regions (strata) in Kenya. Simple random technique was then used so as to draw samples from each stratum. Simple random technique ensured that all the institutions had an equal and independent chance of being selected. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was then used so as to ensure there is proportional allocation where each stratum (region) contributes to the sample a number of TVETS institutions that is proportional to the number of the institutions in that region.

A sample size of 360 respondents (trainers) was obtained using Slovin's formula of an infinite population which in this case is 3780 the total population of trainers in public technical institutions in Kenya. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used, to ensure the researcher maximizes on response rate. Gillham (2013) noted that the use of questionnaires is advantageous in a number of ways including efficiency, standardized responses and ease of analysis of the data there in. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection for the

study. Likert-scales are prevalent in social science research as they gain more statistically significant results (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

## 4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Methods of Communication

The study sought to establish the methods of communication available at the institution and the frequency which the trainers used them. According to Maltz (2000), electronic, written, face-toface, and phone are the common modes of communication. Hence, the respondents in the current study were asked to indicate how frequently they received communication in their institutions. The responses to methods of communication are shown in table 1. **Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the methods of communication**

| often Items | Always % | Very % | % | Sometimes % | Seldom | Never | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Written – Emails, memos, letters etc | 42.2 | 32.6 | 18.0 | 3.1 | 4.0 | | 1.94 | 1.044 |
| Verbal-face to face, meetings | 31.1 | 36.3 | 26.4 | 4.7 | 1.6 | | 2.09 | .946 |
| Electronic- websites, intranets | 19.3 | 19.9 | 32.6 | 16.8 | 11.5 | | 2.81 | 1.252 |

The results revealed that Written (M=1.94, SD=1.044) and verbal methods of communication (M=2.O9, SD=0.946) respectively were the most common and often used methods of communication in the institutions as opposed to electronic methods such as websites and intranets which were found to be used on some occasions as indicated by a mean value of 2.81 and a standard deviation of 1.252. The study findings indicate that written communication is more common than any other form of communication in technical training institutions. This agrees with Waldeck et al. (2004) who conducted a study to establish communication effectiveness and employee choice, indicating that written communication was a popular communication tool in many organizations.

Further, the study sought the opinion of respondents regarding the process of getting feedback from the method of communication used in their institution as well as the effect of the communication method on the respondent's engagement. The results were presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Responses on the process of getting feedback**

| Items | | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feedback from the communication method | Feedback immediate | 232 | 72.3 | 72.3 |
| | Feedback is late applied | 69 | 21.5 | 93.8 |
| | Feedback is too late | 20 | 6.2 | 100.0 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 180 | 55.9 | | 55.9 |
| Effect of the communication method on the respondent's engagement Yes | 142 | 44.1 | | 100.0 |
| No | | | | |

The results showed that majority, 72%, of the respondents indicated that the feedback from the method of communication used was immediate, 21.5% said it was late while the least indicated that the feedback was too late. On the effect of the communication method on the respondents' engagement in the institution, 56% of the participants said that the method of communication used in their institutions had an effect on their engagement in the institution. This finding is in line with Kassing (2000) who found out that in workplaces where feedback was encouraged employees showed high organizational identification and openly verbalized their dissenting views knowing that these would be welcome.

### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Existing Tools and the Frequency of Use in the Institutions

The participants were asked to indicate how frequently their institutions used a given list of communication channels and the results were presented in table 3. **Table 3: Frequency of communication channels used in the institutions**

| | Always | Very often | Sometimes | Seldom | Never | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | | |
| Face to face | 40.1 | 34.2 | 18.0 | 6.8 | .9 | 1.94 | .968 |
| Phone calls | 19.3 | 37.6 | 34.5 | 7.1 | 1.6 | 2.34 | .921 |
| SMS | 16.8 | 34.2 | 38.8 | 5.3 | 5.0 | 2.48 | .996 |
| Meetings/briefings | 22.7 | 37.6 | 33.2 | 5.6 | .9 | 2.25 | .899 |
| Notice boards | 40.4 | 35.7 | 20.5 | 2.5 | .9 | 1.88 | .883 |
| Memos | 34.2 | 33.2 | 22.4 | 6.2 | 4.0 | 2.13 | 1.079 |
| Grapevine | 8.4 | 10.2 | 21.4 | 31.1 | 28.9 | 3.62 | 1.236 |
| Email | 14.3 | 16.2 | 29.3 | 22.1 | 18.1 | 3.13 | 1.291 |
| Whatsapp | 37.0 | 31.1 | 22.0 | 7.5 | 2.5 | 2.07 | 1.053 |

The most frequent channels of communication used were Memos (M=2.13, SD=1.079), Whatsapp (M=2.07, SD=1.053), notice boards (M=1.88, SD=0.883), Meetings/briefings (M=2.25, SD=0.899), SMS (M=2.48, SD=0.996), phone calls (M=2.34, SD=0.921) and face to face (M=1.94, SD=0.968). The respondents indicated that they used the communication channels very often. Additionally, emails were used though not as often as they were used occasionally. Grapevine was not a popular communication channel in the institutions as the participants indicated that they seldom used the method as indicated by a mean value of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 1.236. This implies that in technical institutions formal channels were effective. In an

organization where official channels are not efficient and trusted, employees turn to speculations, rumors and media for information about their company (Hoover, 2005).

The respondents were provided with an alternative to specify other channels of communication used in their institutions. This enabled the researcher to determine all the possible channels used for internal communication needs in technical training institutions. Other channels used in the institutions to share information are: social media platforms such as Facebook, letters, suggestion boxes and messengers, circulars from the government, magazines, signboards, sign languages and brochures as indicated in table 4.

**Table 4: Additional channels used to share information in the institution**

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Brochures | 1 | 2.3 |
| Circulars from the government | 1 | 2.3 |
| Other social media such as Facebook | 12 | 27.9 |
| Official letters | 15 | 34.9 |
| Suggestion boxes | 5 | 11.6 |
| Magazines | 1 | 2.3 |
| Messengers | 3 | 7.0 |
| Sign boards | 3 | 7.0 |
| Sign language | 2 | 4.7 |
| **Total** | **43** | **100.0** |

The results show that technical training institutions use a variety of channels. This is quite commendable as Greenberg (2011) points out that the use of multiple channels makes communication most effective. Similarly, media richness theory posits that the success of a good message also involves choosing the best way to deliver it. It is definite from table 3 and table 4 that most of the communication tools used in these institutions are traditional. According to Ayo, 2012 some of the traditional methods like notice boards, sign boards, messengers, magazines, face to face and others used in the current era of technological advancement make information access a challenge to students and trainers in technical training institutions in Kenya. Further, the respondents were asked to rate the current dissemination tools used in their institutions. The responses are shown in table 5.

**Table 5: Overall rate for the current information dissemination tools**

| | Excellent % | Good % | Fair % | Poor % | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How would you rate the current information dissemination tools | 18.5 | 59.2 | 17.9 | 4.4 | 2.08 | .731 |

Overall, the information dissemination tools were good (M=2.08, SD=0.7131) where majority 59.2% rated it good and 18.5% of the participants rated it as excellent.

American Journal of Communication
ISSN 2790-5764 (Online)
Vol. 5 , Issue 1, pp 1 - 16, 2023

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**Table**

**4.3 Descriptive Statistics on the Effectiveness of Communication Channels in the Institutions**

The participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of the following communication channels as seen in table 6.

**6: Effectiveness of the communication channels in the institution**

| | Very effective | Somewhat effective | Neutral | Somewhat ineffective | Very ineffective | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | | |
| Face to face | 45.7 | 32.0 | 19.3 | 2.5 | .6 | 1.80 | .877 |
| Phone | 28.9 | 51.2 | 14.6 | 4.3 | .9 | 1.97 | .833 |
| Meetings/Briefings | 36.0 | 47.2 | 14.6 | 1.6 | .6 | 1.84 | .774 |
| Noticeboards | 28.0 | 42.9 | 23.3 | 5.3 | .6 | 2.08 | .881 |
| Memos | 30.7 | 41.0 | 19.3 | 7.5 | 1.6 | 2.08 | .967 |
| Grapevine | 7.5 | 14.6 | 24.9 | 32.7 | 20.2 | 3.44 | 1.182 |
| Email | 12.1 | 32.3 | 29.8 | 16.8 | 9.0 | 2.78 | 1.137 |
| Whatsapp | 37.9 | 34.5 | 22.4 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 1.98 | .978 |

Face to face (M=1.80, SD=0.877), phone calls (M=1.97, SD=0.833), meetings and briefings (M=1.84, SD=0.774), Noticeboards (M=2.08, SD=0.881), Memos (M=2.08, SD=0.967) and Whatsapp (M=1.98, SD = 0.978) were rated to be somewhat effective channels of communication in the institutions with face to face and meetings/briefings being seen as the most effective channels. This implies that the respondents preferred to have personal experience in communication. According to the media richness theory, face-to-face communication is considered to be the richest medium because it provides immediate feedback and multiple cues while utilizing natural languages. Again, as media richness theory articulates, rich media communication situations offer the opportunity for immediate feedback, which has many positive organizational outcomes. It is noteworthy that though face to face, meetings and briefing are seen as the most effective channels in this study they are not the most frequently used tools of communication as seen earlier in the analysis. This observation by respondents agrees with (Frandsen and Johansen (2011) who indicated that the most effective internal communication channel used in most organizations including institutions of higher learning is face-to-face communication.

Emails (M=2.78, SD= SD=1.137) and grapevine (M=3.44, SD=1.182) were rated lowly on their effectiveness which could be attributed to the fact that the two methods are not common or

**Table**

popularly used in the technical training institutions in Kenya. This was in line with a study conducted by Sarbaugh-Thompson and Feldman who found out that employee felt less connected to their colleagues with an increase in email usage (Byron, 2008).

**7: Responses on channel satisfaction**

| Item | True % | False % | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| The current communication channels make it easy to converse with my immediate supervisor when there is a problem | 93.5 | 6.5 | 100.0 |
| The communication channels make me aware of what my colleagues in the departments are working on | 89.8 | 10.2 | 100.0 |
| I am satisfied with the current communication channels used by the institution | 85.1 | 14.9 | 100.0 |

To add to the findings, from the results in table 7, it was established that the communication channels discussed earlier made it easy for the respondents to converse with their immediate supervisor when a problem arose (93.5%) and that the channels made them aware of what their colleagues in the departments were working on (89.8%). Lastly, the participants indicated that they were satisfied with their current communication channels that were being used by their Institutions (85.1%). This implies that most of the channels of communication used in Technical Training Institutions in Kenya are working properly.

| | | Employee Engagement | Communication mode |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employee Engagement | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.106 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .057 |
| | N | 322 | 321 |
| Communication mode | Pearson Correlation | -.106 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .057 | |

**Table**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N | 321 | 321 |

**4.4 Correlation Analysis Table 8: Correlation analysis**

From the table 8 it was established that there was a negative insignificant linear relationship between communication mode and employment engagement, r = -0.106, p= 0.057. Therefore, from the results, communication mode was not found to be a significant factor to be considered for employee engagement. **4.5 Regression Analysis**

**4.5.1 Effect of Communication Mode on Employee Engagement**

A simple logistic regression was performed where employee engagement was used as the response variable while communication mode was taken to be the explanatory variable. To assess the effect of communication mode on employee engagement the following hypothesis was tested:

**$H_{01}$:** There is no significant effect of communication mode on employee engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of communication mode on employment engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya. Logistic regression analysis was used to find out if there is a relationship between communication mode and the dependent variable (employee engagement) by evaluating the contribution of the independent variable in explaining the dependent variable, when the other variables are controlled. The results in table 9 show a Nagelkerke $R^2$ value of 0.016. This means that communication mode was found to explain 1.6% of the variation or change in employee engagement in the technical institutions.

**Table 9: Logistic regression model of communication mode and employee engagement**

| | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp (B) | 95% C.I. for EXP(B) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Communication mode | -.647 | .403 | 2.577 | 1 | .108 | .524 | .238 | 1.154 |
| Constant | 3.574 | .876 | 16.655 | 1 | .000 | 35.654 | | |
| Number of Observations | | 321 | | | | | | |
| Nagelkerke $R^2$ | | 0.016 | | | | | | |
| Chi (1) F statistic | | 2.50 | | | | | | |
| Prob>chi= | | 0.114 | | | | | | |
| -2 Log likelihood | | 201.33 | | | | | | |

The logistic model equation is as follows: $LN\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = 3.574 + -0.647\ X_1$

Where:

$LN\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right)$ is the natural log of the odds of employee engagement (the dependent variable)

$X_1$ is communication mode (independent variable)

The analysis of the variance (ANOVA) results is showed by Chi (1) statistic, which indicated a test statistic value of 2.50 and a probability value of 0.114 (prob>chi = 0.114). The reported p value (0.114) was found to be greater than the probability that 2P ($Z > z^*$) = α (level of significance) which was 0.05 (α=0.05). Therefore, there was no sufficient evidence to reject the claim that the overall model was not statistically significant. Thus, the model with communication mode as the independent variable when used independently was found to be statistically insignificant in predicting employee engagement.

Further, the logistic regression coefficients shows that communication mode influenced employee engagement and in a negative way. However, their relationship or the effect was not statistically significant (β=-0.647, p=0.114). This implies that communication mode is not a significant predictor of employee engagement. Further, a scatter diagram was plotted to show how communication mode and employee engagement related.

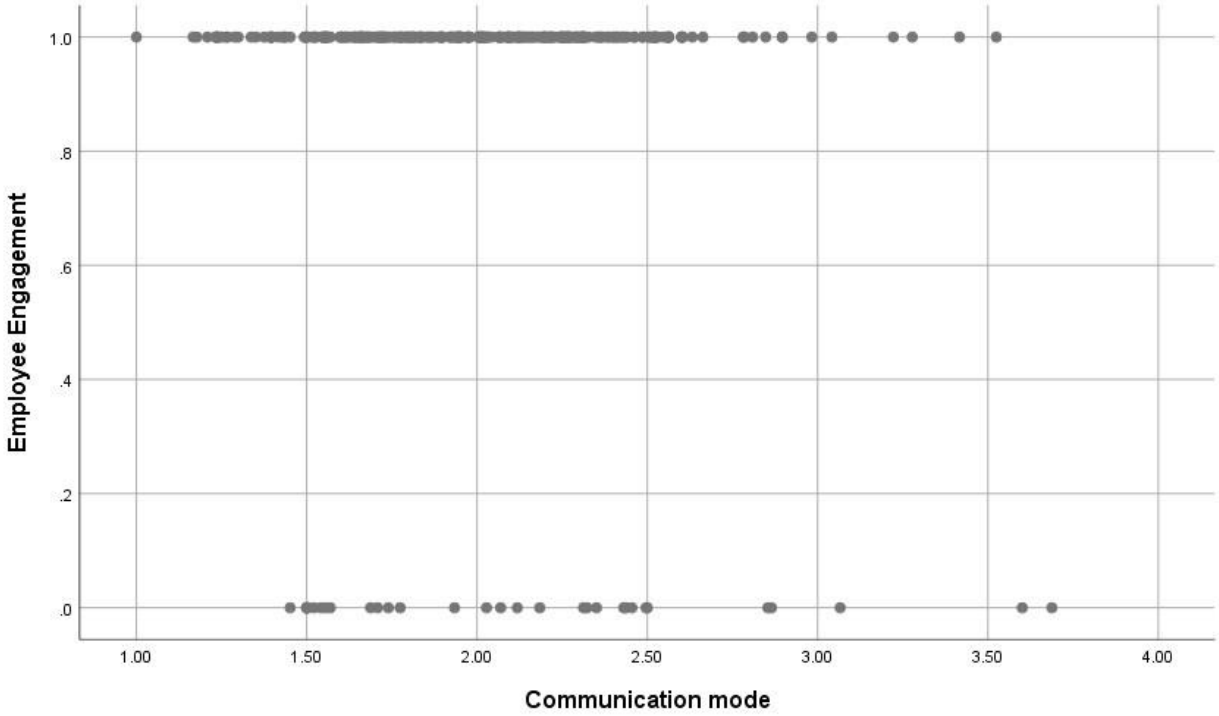


**Figure 1: A scatter diagram for the relationship between communication mode and employee engagement**

From the results in figure 1, it can be concluded that there was no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there was significant effect of communication mode on employee engagement in technical training institutions in Kenya. The finding implies that the general communication problem in technical institutions is basically a failure to communicate at all. This may be attributed to the fact that it is usual for managers or supervisors to use multiple communication channels such as memos, telephones, meetings, letters and emails. On the other hand, the staff may not have such a multiplicity of media at their disposal and hence have limited ways to reach their managers. This can force employees to apply ineffective media in delivering messages to their management (Orpen, 2012). Also, the trainers may have no say on the medium used but their concern may be how and from where the information gets to them. The findings of the current study allowed the researcher to fail to reject the null hypothesis which hypothesized that there was no significant relationship between communication mode and employee engagement. This was in line with a study conducted by Roberts (2013) on the relationship among communication climate, channel preference and employee engagement. The study found out that there was no significant effect on channel preference and employee engagement.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Communication mode had a Nagelkerke $R^2$ value of 0.016. This means that communication mode was found to explain 1.6% of the variation or change in employee engagement in the technical institutions. The analysis of the variance (ANOVA) results is showed by Chi (1) statistic, which indicated a test statistic value of 2.50 and a probability value of 0.114 (prob>chi = 0.114). The reported p value (0.114) was found to be greater than the probability that 2P ($Z > z^*$) = α (level of significance) which was 0.05 (α=0.05). Therefore, there was no sufficient evidence to reject the claim that the overall model was not statistically significant. Thus, the model with communication mode as the independent variable when used independently was found to be statistically insignificant in predicting employee engagement.

Further, the logistic regression coefficients shows that communication mode influenced employee engagement and in a negative way. However, their relationship or the effect was not statistically significant (β=-0.647, p=0.114). This implies that communication mode is not a significant predictor of employee engagement.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that technical training institutions should embrace modern methods of communications. In an increased switch on world, the staff and the students rely on technology as their primary means of communication. Computers, smart phones and tablet devices are ubiquitous. It is imperative for technical training institutions to stop over relying on traditional methods such as notice boards, meetings and paper based newsletters like in the years gone by. Furthermore, there are many different software systems and platforms on the market that can encourage and foster information sharing and help improve internal communications e.g. college mass communication systems such as Desk Alerts.

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