

**ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF ICT ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT
TEAM PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF SELECTED TANZANIA
FEDERATION OF COOPERATIVE PROJECTS, DAR ES SALAAM**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PROJECT
MANAGEMENT OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

2015

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled "**Assessing the Influence Of ICT on Project Management Team Performance: The Case of Selected Tanzania Federation of Cooperative (TFC) Projects, Dar es Salaam**" in partial fulfillment of the requirements for degree of Master in Project Management of

.....

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.....

Date

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DECLARATION

I, **Ahadiel E. Mmbughu**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted and will not be presented to any other Institution or University for similar or any degree award.

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Signature

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Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. & Mrs. Mmbughu for their care and great support during my education to this far. May the Almighty God bless them Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to various people and institution, who and which contributed in one way or another towards the successful completion of this study. I am in particular indebted to my supervisor Dr. Salvio E. Macha of the Department of Business Management for his tireless guidance and constructive criticisms during the whole period of my study.

My sincere gratitude is due to the staff and all worker of the Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives (TFC) for their assistance during the time of data collection. I would specifically like to acknowledge My Family, my wife Amina Mrinji My kids, Mary and Brighton for their patience for the whole duration of my course undertaking until now am ending up my studies. Sometime I was to come home very late or spend weekend away from them while attending classes or discussions to make sure that I do my best to attain the course objectives. However, I remain solely responsible for any errors and omissions found in this report.

ABSTRACT

Proper use of technologies such as Information Communication Technology (ICT) is very important for facilitating successful project management, for ensuring success project routine hence organizational performance. Despite the awareness of the relationship between job performances and job satisfactions, influence of internal communication into organization performance and/or project team performance remains relatively uncertainty. This study strived on knowing those relationships and how to strengthen the performance of project teams using ICT. Moreover special focus of the study was on the effective application of ICT on meeting federation communication target through its projects for different stakeholders such as members and project staff/teams. The study employed the cross-sectional research design using both primary and secondary data types. A questionnaire data collection tool supported with personal communications was used targeting respective organization employees, specific project teams and specific type of data. Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) with the aid of Likert scales used to facilitate data analysis. The study noted that, there is strong relationship between projects which are implemented within an organization and the quality of project teams; however, interrelationship between them is somehow complex within and outside other projects. The usage of sophisticated technologies such as ICT for improving performance of the projects and organizations is necessary and have profound role in motivating the project team members. It is recommended that, integrating technology such as the advance used of ICT into project management process could be one of the best ways that contribute to project teams hence organization success.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COL	Common Wealth of Learning
EAFF	East Africa Farmers Federation
EC	European Commission
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
FOs	Farmer Organizations
FVCs	Food Value Chains
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
L3F	Life Long Learning for Farmers
PM	Project Management
SACCO	Saving and Credit Co-operative
SFOAP	Strengthening Farmer Organization in Africa Program
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TFC	Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives
UPS	Upgrading Strategies

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Information Communication and Technology (ICT) is very important for facilitating successful project management. To ensure successful project performance, project resources especially the people who are involved in the project must be well-managed applying skills of project management (PM) (Humaidi and Asarani, 2012). However, without proper PM following required guidelines, most projects do not meet time and budget goals, or fail to satisfy expectations (Sausser and Eigbe, 2009). According to Spaho (2013), organization communication in business settings using ICT or other means is necessary for conducting business and deliver service of a particular organization in an efficient manner. Whereby, we have two major types of communication such as internal or organizational communication (directed to employees) and external communication (directed to the other actors in the working environment).

Since 1970s, organizational behavior scholars have focused much attention on factors that might affect project team performance given the nature of communication. Whereby, factors which have been studied have less attention to communication satisfaction of the team members (Pearce and Segal, 2004). Also, dissatisfaction of communication sometimes can result into conflicts within organizations depending with the nature of projects which are implemented. These are areas of interest because people have different opinions, while some individuals

cannot accept other people's different opinion while doing project related activities (Spaho, 2013).

Thus, internal communication is also a form of corporate communication that can be formal or informal, horizontal, upward or downward. It can take various forms like meetings, team briefing, interview, employee or work councils, an internet, memos, newsletters, the grapevine and reports. It forms one of the key components of corporate culture, together with vision, values, norms, systems, believes and habits. According to Mills and Shirley (2001), corporate internal communication within projects teams or otherwise must be regarded as the lifeblood of the organization. Lack of its efficiency lead to errors of judgment, which can also lead to wrong decisions, creation of mistrust and reduce organizational cohesion.

In the same line with argument above and the world situation of organizational communication, Gayeski (2007) outlined that labour turnover and organizational particularly in African context is underperformance mark the huge victims of inefficient corporate internal communication. However such studies have recently received criticism from Schaffner (2010) after making empirical analysis on labour turnover in both developing and developed economies. The study revealed that characteristics of labour forces in two economies vary significantly; that while salary and wages play influential factor in determining employee enthusiasm in developing countries, efficiency of labour forces in the counterpart economies is driven by general corporate culture including internal communication. In this regard, no mistakes will be made by saying that without good internal communication there is

no good external communication, which will then result in inadequate performance of organizations available in Africa and beyond.

Any organization in African and other related countries such as Tanzania leading a positive change which requires the use of a diverse set of communication techniques to deliver appropriate messages, solicit feedback, create readiness for change along with a sense of urgency, and motivate recipients to act. Project leaders and managers are responsible for communicating to the organization, the risks in clinging to the status quo and the potential rewards of embracing a radically different future (Denning, 2005). With the above mentioned connotation which is contrary to the observations from preceding studies. It is more logical that in developing countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) including Tanzania, internal communication holds less impact to the performance of the organization. The rationale to undertake this study therefore lies from above emphasized contradictions of findings of the cited literatures and see how ICT can be used to improve the performance of project teams using cases of some projects.

1.2 Problem Statement and Justification

Despite the awareness of the relationship between job performances and job satisfactions, influence of internal communication into organization performance and/or project team performance remains relatively uncertainty. According to Pearce and Segal (2004), effectiveness of these types of relationship within organizations reported to be new research field and little is known on the use of ICT in internal communication. Thus, it is worthwhile this study to contribute on the way this internal communication influence project teams performance using a wider

application of ICT in Tanzania Federations of Co-operatives (TFC). Since this is a fashionable field nowadays and covering federation such as TFC which has the growing role and importance within the country would have significant impact for effective management of project teams and the use of technologies particularly ICT.

Distributions among project teams have been documented showing unfavorable impact on project performance. The role of internal communication through the use of ICT among project team members has not much empirically studied. The impact of ICT on the performance of projects is not well understood (Bardhan *et al.*, 2012; Perumal and Bakar, 2011). Thus, it is important for organizations and/or project teams to use a diverse set of communication techniques to deliver appropriate messages. In this regard, it is also important this study to be done so as contribute on the way internal communication can be done to influence performance of project teams using a wider application of ICT within an organization.

Since an effective internal communication is required not only for maintaining human relations but also for achieving good performance for projects. This study strived on knowing those relationships and how to strengthen the performance of project teams using ICT. Moreover special focus of the study was on the effective application of ICT on meeting federation communication target through its projects for different stakeholders such as members and project staff/teams.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study attempts to assess how internal communication through ICT determines the organizational efficiency and effectiveness and more importantly the specific

project team performance. This would help to show the importance given to this field. As mentioned above, this is a relatively challenging research field particularly in Tanzania and a lot of studies in the field have appeared recently. Since there is growing interest because the field is fashionable due to increasing number of multinational companies, thus this study was useful. As compared to other management components, communication issues used to have specific features which do not allow its research in the same way. Thus, this study was very significant not only because it targets the federation (TFC) which revealed to have unique behavior changes over time but also adding more knowledge to the relation organizations and policymakers whereby further research become inevitable.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

To assess the influence of technology (ICT) on project management team performance using selected projects within TFC as case study site in Dar es Salaam.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- (i) To find out the internal communication tools used by the project management.
- (ii) To understand the effectiveness of internal communications using ICT.
- (iii) To identify the relationship between internal communication and project management performance.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Central Study Question

Considering the conflicting stances about the role of internal communication using ICT on performance of project teams and management as pinpointed in the

literatures above, the central question of this study is “*does the former determine the later in Tanzania*”.

1.5.2 Research Questions

- (i) What are the internal communication tools used by the selected project team managements?
- (ii) What are the relationships between internal communication using ICT and project team performance?
- (iii) How effective internal communication is using ICT in managing project teams?

1.6 Scope of the Study

One department of the TFC was targeted for data collection and mainly primary data and secondary data was used. It covers an analysis of tools used, understanding effectiveness and project team performance as far as the use of ICT within the federation is concerned. The study also considered project teams at different level of the department as the target population hence collect specific data from them.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

- (a) *Communication*: based on Russu (2001) definition represents the process of transmitting information from a person to another through symbolical messages such as sounds, letters, and figures, other signs, face expressions, gestures which serve for the mutual understanding of the persons in order to achieve their individual objectives and the common ones at the scale of the whole organization. Communication can be downward, upward, horizontal or diagonal.

- (b) *Internal communication*: also known as organization communication is the communication involving organization with its close stakeholders particularly employees or departments across all levels of such entity. Based on Richmond *et al.* (2005), organization or internal communication is the process by which individuals stimulate meaning in the minds of other individuals by means of verbal or nonverbal messages. In this context, organization communication is a key element of organizational climate.
- (c) *Internal communication tool*: a tool simply offers an opportunity to think hard about whether the organization needs to improve its internal communication. The internal communication manager integrates information through a variety of media or tool, these can be electronic media that are delivered and or accessed electronically either by computer, telephone, email, posters and memos etc. Face to face interactions may work closely with employees and organizational practitioners. According to Hener (2010) in her analysis of the research revealed that some of the mechanism in internal communication used is formal and informal meetings, minutes and reports, e-mail and electronic media.
- (d) *Organization (project teams) performance*: is the practice of the particular organization based on framework that builds on the synergy between planning and assessment, and results in the discernment of impact and value. Project team performance can be measured using different levels of indicators such as of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance to stakeholders and financial viability (Daly *et al.*, 2003).

- (e) *Relationship between internal communication and project team performance:* can be observed through strategic focus for organization communication given concern of the leaders or managers of the project or organization (Barnfield, 2003). Since, managers within organizations are in a role of personal influence in their relationships with employees, good relationship should be in place so as to influence not only performance of the organization but also job satisfaction to all employees (Bartoo and Sias, 2004).

1.8 Organization of the Study

Chapter two begins with a discussion of the theoretical and empirical review. The rest of the chapter covers issues concerning literature review of different studies which have been done by several scholars. The chapter concludes with a review of recent empirical studies concerning standing point of the current study and variables studied.

Chapter three provides a detailed discussion of the methodology adopted by the study and describes data sources. Mainly descriptive results are discussed in chapter four while conclusions and recommendations are presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The primary purpose of this section is to explore the theoretical underpinnings and empirical studies that seek to explain the relationship between communication within the organization and its associated performance such as project team performance. In particular, a discussion is presented first on theories related to organization communication. Since several theories and communication models have appeared starting from Laswell's Model (sender-message-means of communication-receiver-effect), a primary model which omits the feedback and which was perfected afterwards. Thus, this study takes notes assumptions and limitations of these given theories hence conclude by theoretical standpoint of the study.

2.1.1 Cybernetic Theories

The cybernetic theory has been used by several researchers to justify its ability of sending message to consumers, beneficiaries or final information user of the organization through advertisement (Miles, 2007). Hence, the theories related to this can be adapted by this study since it is good for the federation (TFC) to be known to primary beneficiaries, thus, be fully utilized by those targeted groups.

Moreover, development of theories and ideas like cybernetic theories about organization communication is strongly influenced nowadays by the actual context of the information society in full process of globalization. Current research defines organizational excellence as "the ability of people to use technology such as ICT for

creative solving of complex problems” (Zagan-Zelter, 2005). Also, we believe that, institutional excellence and good performance can’t be achieved without communication. The new informational technologies have radically changed the communication means and ways at all institutional levels; this is why the majority of recent works in the field emphasize these aspects. In this regard, this study will apply the same approach.

2.1.2 Organizational Information Theory

The study also reviewed theory which was developed by Karl Weick. A key component of Weicks theory is the information afforded by the organization’s environment, which explaining the impact of behaviors within the project teams or organization. This theory is about the complexity of information management within an organization builds upon general systems theory and phenomenology (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Additionally, the organization must both interpret the information and coordinate that information to make it meaningful for the members of the organization and its goals so as to impact on its performance (Figure 1).

In this regard, organization information theory explains how organizations use information found within the environment to interpret and adjust to change. The organization engages in a series of cycles that serve as means to reduce uncertainty about the message. The idea of sense making is also a theme within organization information theory. When an organization interprets information, there is already a frame of reference in a place and this is enough information for an organization to change course.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section explores empirical studies on the internal communication and performance of the organization. Through this study, some of the challenges facing the organization internal communications system will be summarized. This study will also assess advantages; function and tools of internal communication comply with the theory and as inputs towards developing feasible methodology of the current study.

2.2.1 Importance of Internal Communication

Communicating within an institution results into various benefits, such as those which are related to performance of the organization and others related to motivation go to project teams or employees. For instance, internal communication can be an effective tool for motivating employees involved in change (Luecke, 2003). Moreover, leaders as change agents must provide employees with abundant, relevant information with regard to impending changes, justify the appropriateness and rationale for change, address employees' questions and concerns, and explore ways in which change might affect recipients in order to increase acceptance and participation (Green, 2004).

Moreover, Daly *et al.* (2003) recommended and justified that communication competence plays a big role in employee job satisfaction and job performance. Also communication plays a big role in employee engagement which means employee behavior and participation in the organization that impact on organization and/or projects implementation success.

2.2.2 Function of Internal Communication

Internal communication is news-oriented function focused on getting relevant timely and accurate information to the appropriate stakeholders. According to Daly *et al.* (2003) the internal communication practitioner focuses on educating, creating awareness and sharing knowledge of company data. Desired results include encouraging feedback, reinforcing constructive dialogue and reinforcing the stakeholder's role in activities, problems and accomplishment.

In this regard, communication can function to transmit information and sharing information plus feelings, all this are vital for a successful organization change. Project teams or employees' acceptance of and participation in change depend on their perception of personal benefits associated with the change which can be associated with internal communication (Gilley, 2005). Project teams or employees question, evaluate, and think about arguments for and against internal communication which change to determine its strengths and weaknesses; thus, well-developed rationalizations are more likely to be accepted, while weaker arguments are rejected by employees and other important stakeholders of the organization (Knowles and Linn, 2004).

2.2.3 Internal Communication Tools

The internal communication manager integrates information through a variety of media, like electronic media that are delivered and or accessed electronically either by computer, telephone, email, electronic newsletters, blogs, wikis, podcast, voicemail, conference calls and text messaging, print-paper based like brochures, postcards, posters and memos. Face to face interactions may work closely with

employees and organizational practitioners. According to Hener (2010) in his analysis of the research revealed that some of the mechanism in internal communication used is formal and informal meetings, minutes and reports, e-mail and electronic media.

2.2.4 Effectiveness of Internal Communication

On the basis of Rahim (2002) competent organizational communication must consider its many contents within the organization. Effective organization communication is dependent upon the appropriate use of networks and channel of communication within the organization. Organization must recognize and adopt the variety of approaches to motivate workers.

2.2.5 Roles of Project Teams on Organizational Communication

Smith and Yang (2004) conceptualized the communication technician role as that of a technician service provider. The dominant union makes strategic decisions, specify organizational actions and designating the communication directed at publics about such actions. A public relation practitioner at this level is responsible for implementing communication plans or campaign directed at the organizations stakeholders. Therefore the practitioner as a public facilitator must work carefully with the management to solve the problems step by step. At last the facilitator should be able to ask the questions and write information on how the problems will be solved (Smith and Yang, 2004).

2.2.6 Internal Organization Communication and Scope

Hener (2010) reported that competent organizational communication must consider its many contents within the organization. Organization must recognize and adopt the

variety of approaches to motivate workers. While communication is common denominator in all types of motivation, the most motivation devise or strategy will fail if its message and timing are not matched to its individual and organization needs.

General motors' policy statement on project team or employee communication as quoted in (Smith and Yang, 2004). Internal communication is so entwined with the process of organizing and with organizational structure, power and culture that many theorists of organizational communication argue that organizations could not exist without communication.

2.2.7 Project Team/Organization Performance

Performance of the project team and/or organization is the practice of the particular organization based on framework that builds on the synergy between planning and assessment, and results in the discernment of impact and value. Generally, organizational performance can be measured using different levels of indicators such as of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance to stakeholders and financial viability (Daly *et al.*, 2003).

Understanding organizational change and performance involves examining types of change within firms or organization. No matter its size, any change has a ripple effect on a firm performance (Miles, 2001). At the corporate or macro level, frequent organizational changes and performance focus on strategy and business models adopted by a particular organization (IBM, 2006), often involving multiple leaders or reporting lines, incorporation of new technologies, acquisitions or expansion, or

downsizing. Consequently, managing the complexities of change challenges leaders at all levels of an organization performance (Biech, 2007).

Change may be further defined when viewed from an evolutionary perspective as transitional, transformational, or developmental. Transitional change, the most common, improves the current state through minor, gradual changes in people, structure, procedures, or technology. According to IBM (2006), these management-driven changes and/or organization performance may be department, or organization wide, in their attempt to enable the organization to get better at what it does.

2.2.8 Relationship between Internal Communication and Organization

Performance

As explained earlier that relationship between internal communication and organization performance or performance of the project team can be observed through strategic focus of a particular organization communication given concern of the leaders or managers of the organization (Barnfield, 2003). Since, managers within organizations are in a role of personal influence in their relationships with employees, good relationship should be in place so as to influence not only performance of the organization but also job satisfaction to all employees (Bartoo and Sias, 2004).

Leading a positive change to organization hence project team performance requires the use of a diverse set of communication techniques to deliver appropriate messages, solicit feedback, create readiness for change along with a sense of urgency, and motivate recipients to act. Leaders and/or top manager of an

organization are responsible for facilitating smooth communication within the project activities or organization (Denning, 2005). Consequently, communications should be frequent and enthusiastic, while leaders simultaneously curb their bias toward unrealistic optimism (Larson and Tompkins, 2005).

Disappointing or unfavorable results of internal communication given organization performance due to unfulfilled or inaccurate promises and predictions undermine leadership credibility and lead to employee perceptions of injustice and misrepresentation (Tomlinson *et al.*, 2004). Organizational justice research reveals that people who experience an injustice report feeling resentful and a desire for retribution, while those who perceive that they have been treated fairly display attitudes (Denning, 2005). Evidence suggests that informational justice caused by international communication, which is being truthful when things go wrong, a fair process, and treatment with interpersonal dignity, enables recipients to accept an undesirable outcome and finally relate in one way or another with organization performance (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007).

2.3 Conclusion and Theoretical Standpoint in this Study

The study of organizational communication has been among the preoccupations of researchers and practitioners for a long time. Starting with classical theories and finishing with the modern ones, almost all thinkers referred in some way to the role of organizational communication. For Taylor, communication was extremely important in the hierarchy whereas, for Fayol horizontal communication was essential. If for both of them communication between superiors and subordinates was really important, for the representatives of the relations and human resources trend

the most important became the communication relations inside the group, opening the way for the study of informal communication. Modern theories bring an integrated perspective in the study of communication, which is extended at the level of the whole organization. Newer orientations (postmodernism, critical psychology, feminism) propose alternatives for the organizational life, centered on emphasizing power and domination, but also flexibility and self-management (Drenth *et al.*, 1998; Rahim, 2002).

Despite the criticisms of the internal organization communication related theories particularly classical theories. These theories are considered relevant in underpinning the theoretical foundation of this study. In other words, this study takes them as guiding theories, without completely disregarding the external factors by integrating important points and modern theories into this study methodology. As mentioned before, the study has complied with some theories assumptions in favor of increasing project team and/or organizational performance based on internal organization communication.

2.4 Information Gap

The literature cited in the study relied much on roles of internal communication, its functions and advantages. They did not much capture about the importance and impacts of internal communication and its relation with project teams/organization performance. Therefore, little is known about this, thus, this study tried to fill the gap by assessing tools used for internal communication, corresponding relationship with project team performance and how all this can be made more effective.

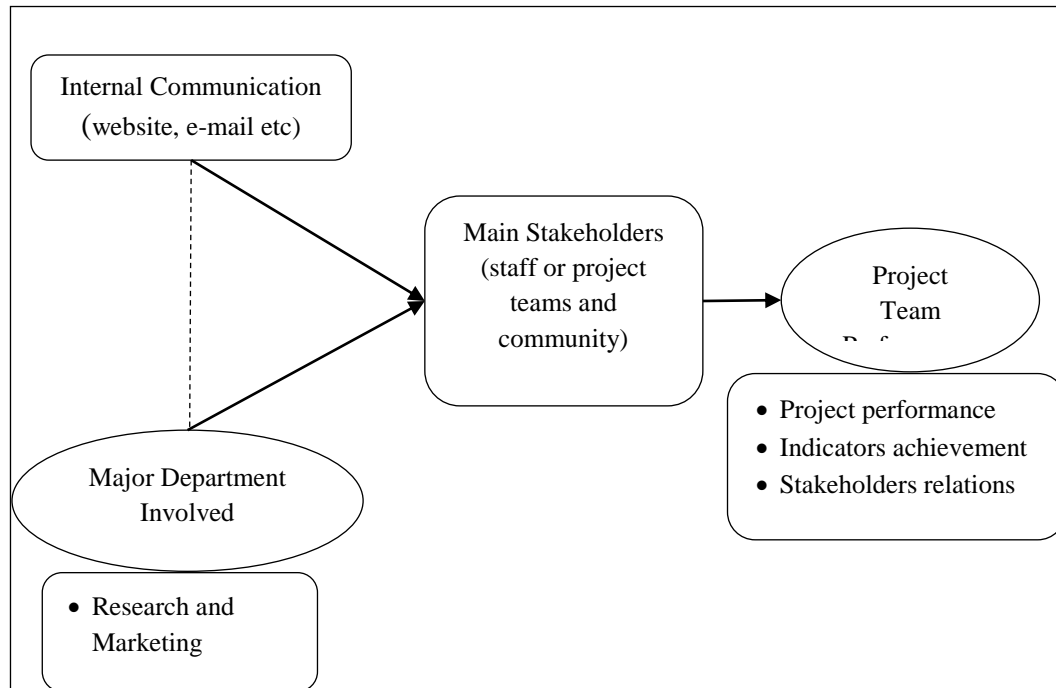


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

This study was carried out in Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. A case study of Project Teams under Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives (TFC) used to answer research questions of the study.

3.1.1 Population of the Study

According to Kothari (2007), the term population means an entire group of individuals, events or objects that have common observable characteristics. It refers to all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a given universe. The study used case study based approach and targeted population was employees of the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives that comprises 22 employees. A total of twelve employees from different cadres in the organization from staffs and supporting staffs were selected for the study.

3.2 Main Philosophy of the Study

According to the nature of this study, both research philosophies were used that are positivism and interpretivism approach or quantitative and qualitative. The candidate use quantitative design to obtain different measurements of data particularly secondary data and qualitative design to obtain different views and opinions from targeted respondents.

3.3 Research Design

The study employed the cross-sectional research design. In this type of research study, representatives of the population, project teams' members interviewed once for answering questions of interest.

3.4 Sampling of Respondents

3.4.1 Sampling Frame

TFC employees particularly within Research and Marketing department were the targeted respondents for this study.

3.4.2 Sampling Unit

As far as this study is concerned and as mentioned above, sampling unit is TFCstaff who is working within the targeted department.

3.4.3 Sample Size

The sample size of this study was 12 respondents, who was taken and included to represent the total population. The federation has few staff who are working with specific projects hence the number sample size was satisfactory for capturing required data and information from project team members and other staff.

3.4.4 Sampling Procedure

Multi-stage sampling method was used. Whereby, at the first stage selection of the organization has been done purposively. Thus, before selection of respondents randomly, the second stage involved proportionate stratification sampling such as

employees within the organization was grouped in two major strata. These groups are employees at the management level and other staff (project teams) within the Research and Marketing department who are supporting the organization and specific projects activities.

3.5 Types of Data and Sources

3.5.1 Primary Sources of Data

The primary data was collected from the selected respondents in the study area.

3.5.2 Secondary Sources of Data

Secondary data was collected from TFC office, research reports and necessary published documents.

3.6 Data Collection Methods and Tools

The research for this study included limited sources of data and most of them were obtained from the selected organization and they have been obtained purposely. Mainly, primary data was used in this study as they will be gathered using questionnaire tool (Appendix 1). Some secondary data was obtained from the organization. As mentioned above, questionnaire supported with personal communications was used targeting respective organization employees, specific project teams and specific type of data. Representatives from these major groups were interviewed using general questionnaire which captured all important questions given objectives of the study.

3.7 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

3.7.1 Data Processing

Data to be collected was cleaned to eliminate errors and omission then coded so as to make it simple prior to analysis.

3.7.2 Data Analysis

Some of variables of the specific objectives were analyzed using Likert scales based on perception of the respondents using in the study (Appendix 1). The data and information obtained from the survey was subjected to analysis using mainly descriptive statistics. Generally, some computer programs were used to facilitate data analysis of the study such Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) supported by Microsoft Office Excel and Likert scales measurement of variables.

3.7.3 Data Presentation

Findings and information generated was presented in form of tables, figures and text and detailing the information by the aid of Microsoft word program.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Data

Consistence of the data and information obtained through the any research determine its reliability and validity. Reliability has to do with accuracy and precision of measurement procedures. Validity implies applicability and usefulness of the data obtained through such reliable design and all the way to conclusive findings (Kothari, 2007). In this regard, this study pre-tested its main tool used for data collection such as questionnaire for data reliability and validity.

3.9 Detailed Fieldwork

The research fieldwork had started by reporting to the federation (TFC) for self-introduction and gets an approval letter that assisted in whole process of data collection in the study area and better introduction to staff. Setting the strategies and logistic required for means of reaching the required respondent so as to obtain required data as mentioned above.

3.10 Research Ethics Considerations

The following research ethical conducts have been considered and looked when this study undertaken:

- (a) The study ensured that, all the investigations of a given phenomenon carried out in accordance with the government regulations. This includes reporting to the administration of federation where main data collection obtained and inform them about the intended data collection and analysis exercises with the impact of research to the academic benefits hence the country.
- (b) This research was abided by the standard rules of research including ensuring that standard tools of data collection. In addition, the information analyzed would be of the acceptable level to our University.
- (c) The set of this research is associated with minimal risks. However, supervisors in this research established clear and fair agreements with candidate prior to their participation and actual implementation of the research. The agreements include clarification of the obligations and responsibilities of student at each stage of the research.
- (d) The information provided is also for research purposes and not for any other use.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 TFC Activities Landscape and Projects Overview

Among other things which have been done so far by the federation given the vision of TFC, democratic cooperatives are facilitated and coordinate their establishment in a competitive environment. This is to assure majority of the poor people particularly farmers join the cooperative and improve their living standard socially and economically. As far as project management is concerned, TFC is promoting the prosperity of societies such as farmers affiliated to in accordance with cooperative principles; collect, analyze and disseminate associated information, conduct research and consultancy for stakeholders in the area of marketing, business development and financing; mobilize new members; give publicity and initiate participatory education and training programs; lobbying and advocacy and improve collaboration and networking just to mention few.

For instance, so far some of the projects which are implemented with TFC as part and parcel of its activities are L3F, SFOAP, Trans-SEC and Farm Trade. Life Long Learning for Farmers (L3F) model is a collaborative pilot program between TFC and common wealth of learning (COL) which targeted unreached communities in Southern Highland part of the country particularly Njombe and Mbarali districts. The concept behind this pilot program is to reach smallholder farmers and other key beneficiaries through natural learning, personal strategic learning and/or formal learning. Through L3F key stakeholder are simply facilitated given program process including giving community understanding for commodity value chains. More

importantly, modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) also have been used during the facilitation process. Capacity of our stakeholders such as Saving and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) have been built and strengthened.

Another related project which is implemented by TFC is SFOAP which is the acronym of Strengthening Farmer Organizations in Africa Program. Activities started in 2009 as a result of dialogue between African leaders of regional and national Farmers Organizations (FOs) and the European Commission (EC). The major aim of this initiative is to strengthen organizations' institutional capacities in management, accounting, communication, strategic planning, representation, knowledge management, policy process and networking. A total of 12 national level farmer organizations under the umbrella of East Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) are getting the support for the period of three (3) years consecutively.

TFC as a member of EAFF is also implementing Farm Trade Project in Tanzania. The overall aim is to integrate smallholder farmers into formal trading systems hence facilitate access of not only national but also regional markets through their organizations. The same and related activities through this project are also implemented in Kenya and Uganda given the support of EAFF. A total of 1,500 farmers targeted to benefit directly with the project. Major food crops within the country such as maize and rice are the main targets. Moreover, the focus is to attain a total of four (4) specific activities such as i) to form regional networks of farmers organizations; ii) to strengthen the capacities of farmers organizations to engage in the selected value chains through various structured trade options; iii) to advocate for the enactment or implementation of enabling policy, trade and regulatory regimes;

and iv) to develop a knowledge sharing mechanism for farmer organizations engaged in structured trade.

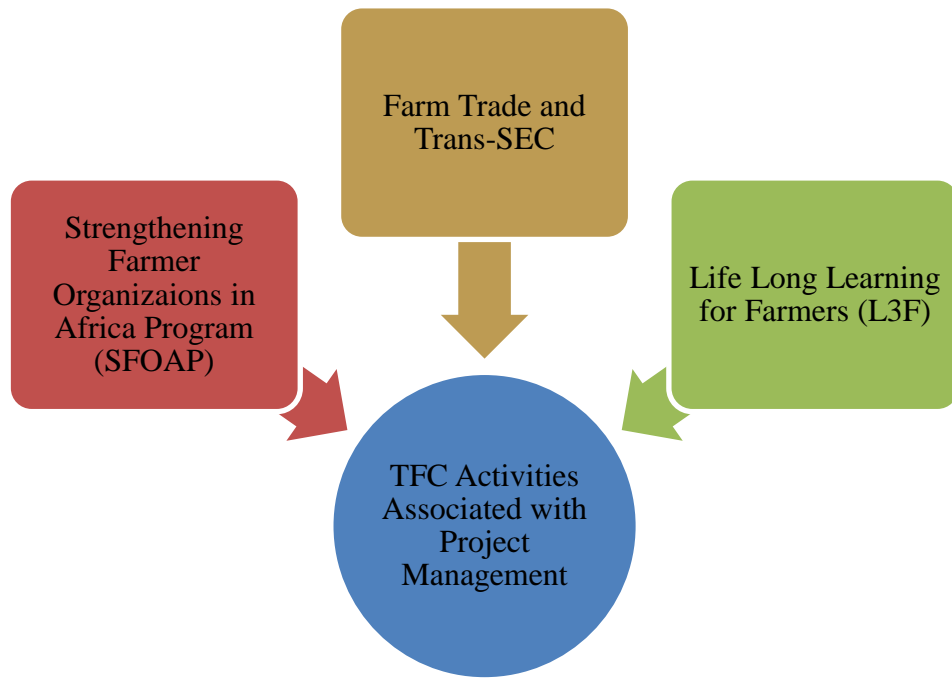


Figure 2: TFC Activities Related to Project Management

Therefore, given the structure of TFC and nature of project related activities which are performed by the federation; the above projects and activities are relatively related to prospective Trans-SEC upgrading strategies (UPS) which is the recent project within the federation, food value chains (FVCs) and their corresponding FVC components along different scales (Figure 2).

4.2 Project Team Members Connection to the Federation

As the way of knowing the awareness of project team members within the federation, some questions set for getting their understanding as far as the federation's mission, vision and objectives is concerned. The main purpose of these is to assess the connection of project team members into their roles and responsibilities hence their

influence of federation projects performance. Whereby, 62% of surveyed project team members agree that they have understanding on the TFC's mission, vision and objectives and for those who are strongly agree and neutral are 18% and 20% respectively. Most of project team members (75% strongly agree) have better understanding on how their work contributes to the achievement of the federation objectives. Moreover, majority (86% strongly agree) have the perception that, they are important part of the federation and more than 94% are committed to the federation mission. The results shows that, project team members do have adequate knowledge towards their roles hence they are performing their activities for meeting specific project goals hence meeting the mission of the federation.

4.3 Current Processes and Effectiveness of International Communication

Various internal communication media/tools are used by the federation for sharing information between members of staff or project team members. This section aims at rating their importance hence checking the extent ICT has been rated out of other means of internal communication. General the level of importance has been rated given media/tools used for internal communication by the federation, whereby, e-mails, federation website, organization letters and informal meetings were rated very high compared to others (Figure 3). Surprisingly, formal meetings and print resources which thought they could have better impact on the performance of project related activities rated very low. In this regard, most of tools revealed to have preference of less than 50%. Thus, combination of both ICT related means of communication and others can easily facilitate internal communication within an organization hence better performance.

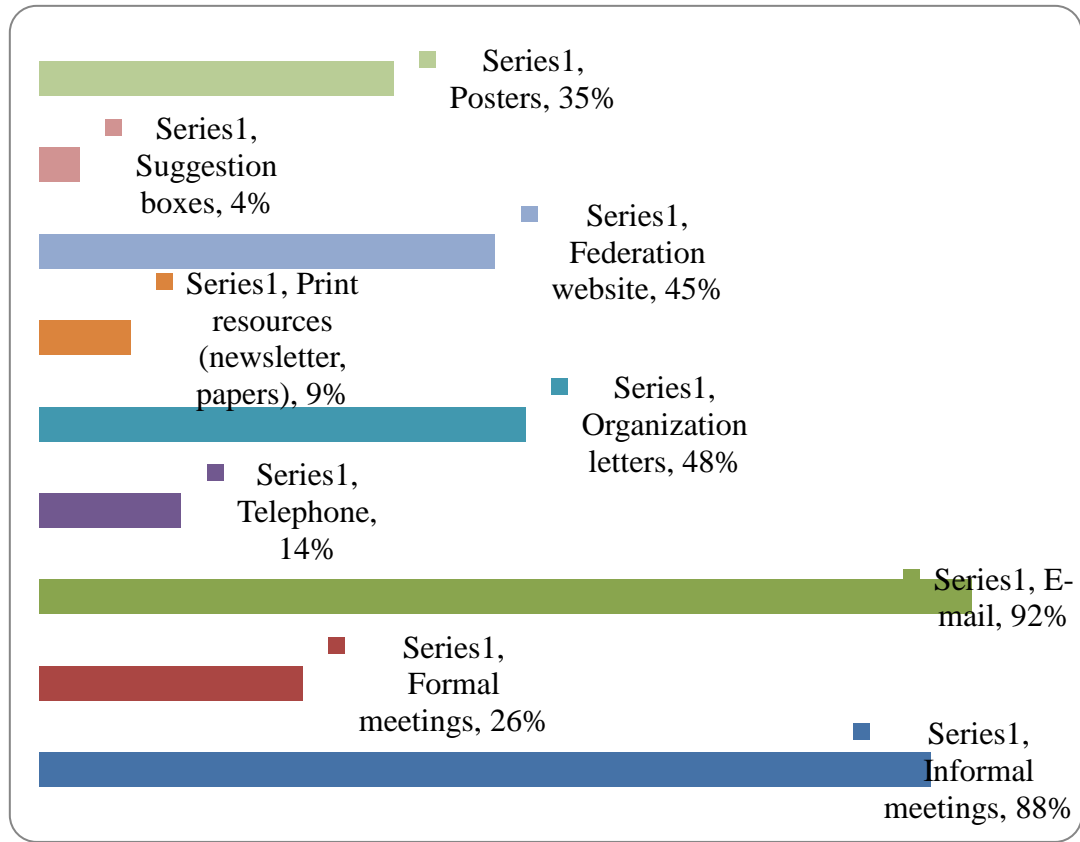


Figure 3: Level of Importance of Communication Media/Tools

Table 1 shows the rates of how effective current internal communication processes are at conveying the information to the targeted stakeholders. On percentage wise, project team members of staff interviewed reported that, board members decisions and directions are “very good” for conveying a specific message for effective communication by 83% level. Whereby, decisions and directions from senior management and outputs and/feedback from specific program or project activities rated “good” by 72% level. Unfortunately, relevant external news was rated “poor” (24%) while other means were rated “average” and their corresponding percentage level revealed in Table 1.

Table 1: Effectiveness of Current Internal Communication processes for Conveying the Information

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Board decisions and directions	83%				
Senior management decisions and directions		72%			
Federation news and initiatives			49%		
Programme updates/outputs		74%			
Relevant external news				24%	
Use of ICT to project teams, staff and others			54%		
Office policies and procedures			52%		
Staff news/noticeboards			48%		

In order to improve the dissemination of information to project teams members, staff or community using ICT, it has been suggested that, more sophisticated ICT tools can be used by the federation for improving job performance. Moreover, these tools can motivate and smooth communication throughout all federation stakeholders during specific activities or project related activities execution.

4.4 Decision-making Processes using ICT and Resources Familiarity

As mentioned above, some of decision-making processes have been reported to be made and communicated using the aid of ICT. The use of ICT for facilitating decision-making processes has been encouraged since they are effective enough hence increase performance of the organization. Project team members and federation staff revealed that, management decisions generally communicated to them fairly effectively using ICT means particularly the use of e-mail compared to

other means. Through the use of e-mail means of communication or making decision, project team members and staff are able to make the necessary decisions for the job or communicated information effectively.

However, in case of miscommunication physical contacts, phone calls and formal and informal meetings opted to fill the communication gaps. Generally, project teams and/or staff are not sufficiently consulted by management using different means of ICT. This is due to inadequate availability of alternative ICT means of communication within the federation. However, respective project team members tend to have fairly relative effective way of communicating within their departments especially the use of e-mail; other means which also preferred are project teams meetings and discussions.

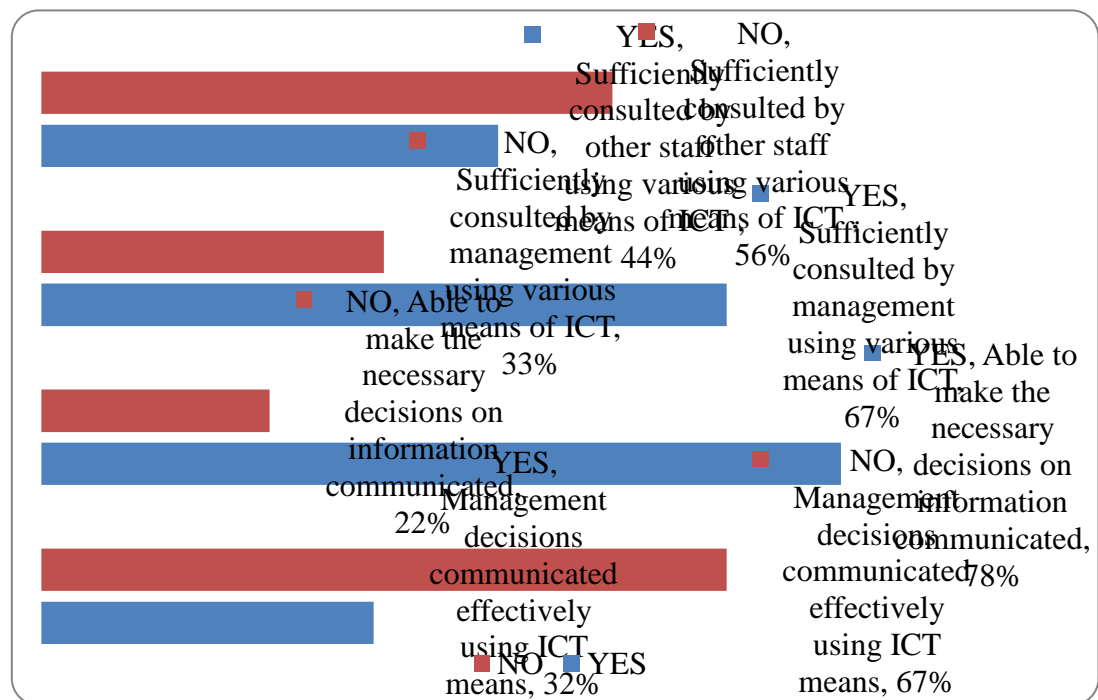


Figure 4: Project Team Decision Making Process using ICT

Through this study, it has been also reported that, project team members and staff of the federation are relatively fairly familiar with communication related resources available. It also shows how often the resources have been used for undertaking day-to-day activities for instance for undertaking project related assignments. Project team members are not familiar with 46% of total resources which are used to facilitate internal communication within the federation. In connection to that, most of resources which reported to be new in their working environment were not used at all compared to the ones reported to be common or/and they are familiar with. For instance, project team members and other federation staff are familiar with federation annual reports, online resources particularly those which are available or reported in their website, journal papers, program factsheets and federation logo and style which used in most of official documents. Despite the familiarity of these communications related resources, they are not using them on “daily” basis. Some of them are used “weekly”, others “monthly” and “rarely”. Thus, so as to strengthen the performance of the teams which are involved in different projects and programs, they better increase the use of program factsheets which reported to be used “rarely”. Not only that but also, annual reports and other forms of publications such as journal papers and online resources should be part and parcel of daily routine materials for increasing job and federation performance. Project team members also reported that, resources which are new to them are beneficial to their federation and for enhancement of project related activities.

4.5 Information Acquisition and Federation Performance

Information acquisition and performance of the federation has been assessed using the perception scores graded by project team members and other staff of the

federation. Table 3 has been used present summary results of the scores given statements which reveal different types of information gained including the use of ICT for improving performance of the federation. In this regard, employees within the federation have been reported to be extremely important source of different forms of information.

Table 2: Information Acquisition and Federation Performance

S/N	Statement	Score
1	Employees in our federation are an extremely important source of information	5
2	Previous decisions are a very useful source of information for current decisions	5
3	New means of internal communication using ICT are always worth trying even if they may prove risky	3
4	Reports prepared by external experts/consultants are an extremely important source of information	4
5	Our federation uses a clipping service – the regular collection of papers and articles of interest to us	1
6	Our competitors are an extremely important source for learning new methods and services related to internal communication	3
7	Expertise on the industry, products, and services is an extremely important criterion for improving internal communication practice	4
8	External sources (reports, consultants, newsletters, etc.) are extremely important for the operations of our federation	4
9	In our federation we explicitly reward employees that are a source of quality information	3
10	In our federation we often organize internal training for employees related to effective internal communication	3
11	We frequently send our employees to various seminars, workshops, conferences with intention to acquire information	4

Note: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not disagree nor agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree, X=do not know

Also, decisions which were made in the past reported to be very useful source information and for guiding current decisions. Surprisingly, the federation is using clipping services inadequately such as collection of papers and other related online materials and/documents for the benefit of the federation and sharing necessary information to all staff. Moreover, the federation should also improve internal trainings related to effective internal communication particularly the use of sophisticated ICT means and tools. Also, find the way of rewarding or motivating those employees who would be reported to offer or be source of quality information to the federation. Moreover, new tools and/or means of ICT are worth trying though some of them might look risky (Table 3).

4.6 Discussion of the Findings

Apart from having sophisticated ICTs means to facilitate internal communications hence project team performance, motivation and incentives schemes reported to be of highly influencing hence organization performance. This is not a surprise, as motivation is essential to learning and performance, particularly in technology-mediated environments where team must take an active role in their job task by being self-directed (Lee, 2000). Moreover, Perumal and Bakar (2011) reported that, technology aspect is needed as one of the motivation factor in project management team. Advancement of technology could motivate project teams in terms of communication, teamwork and work efficiency. Also, adopting new technologies related to ICT is crucial to sustained competitiveness for many organizations. In construction, manufacturing and service industries, new technology can lead to product and process improvements that produce tangible market advantages.

Influence of the management and project leader on supervising and giving important direction using ICT means have been very important. The associated findings have been reported by Stare (2011) that, project culture and smooth communication by management using various means of ICT is one of the most influential factors of successful project implementation in enterprises and are part of the overall organizational culture. Another important issue of project culture which stimulates performance of project teams using ICT means is the organizational policies, procedures, rules and strategies; the tools and principles of project work in the enterprise (Lee, 2000). This has been also mentioned through the current study that, an internal meeting whether are formal or informal also has some influence on the performance of the project teams, instead of ICT means.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The main objective of the study was to assess the influence of technology i.e. ICT on project management team performance using selected project within Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives as the case study site located in Dar es Salaam. Selection of the study area and institution was based on multi-stage sampling procedure, whereby, the federation projects were selected purposively and final respondents (project team members) were selected randomly. With the support of the questionnaire complemented with different types of Likert scales, the required data and information gathered targeting specific variables and objectives of the study.

The findings show that, there is strong relationship between projects which are implemented within an organization and the quality of project teams; however, interrelationship between them is somehow complex within and outside other projects. The usage of sophisticated technologies such as ICT for improving performance of the projects and organizations is necessary and have profound role in motivating the project team members. Thus, performance of the organizations does not only rely on organization process and structures, but also on the better usage of technologies such as ICT. The technologies can give a higher impact that keeps the teams who are implementing projects motivated throughout the life time of the project. Though, rewards and other forms of motivations for staff that are source of quality information within the organization can add value.

5.2 Recommendations

Organizations should find the way of emphasizing every staff member, reinforce and strengthen available project teams from all level with full use of ICT means and tools. New tools and/or means of ICT are worth trying for improving performance of a particular organization and smooth activities implementation though some of them might look risky.

Integrating technology such as the advance used of ICT into project management process could be one of the best ways that contribute to project success. When project team members see their test results and work progress immediately, they are more likely to be interested and motivated towards the outcome. In order to acquire and retain the best talent and work progress, organizations must understand the better ICT technologies and tools that the new workforce expects and then find a way to support, reward and motivate their employees. If project managers and team leaders do not support their preferred technologies throughout the working progress, this could lead to project failure and delay as well. Project managers and leaders need to be aware of their project technology preferences or good ICT means and provide the ICT tools and equipment to the project team as they can be more motivated hence improve performance of the organization.

5.3 Future Research Topics

As far as this is concerned, most of issues addressed are related with how project teams can be facilitated using ICTs as communication means for influencing project performance hence the performance of the organization. The related areas of interest are other field of studies such as, how the ICTs in combination with other internal

communication means can influence performance of the organization. In connection to that, the more rigorous analysis can also be complemented to strengthen the future studies. Thus, it would be plausible to undertake the related analysis on the wider coverage of institutions particularly public sectors apart from this which rely on private sector and check the section of project management.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: TFC STAFF Questionnaire (for any Project Team Member)

In the questionnaire I ask you about impact of various elements of Tanzania Federation of co-operatives (TFC) internal communication process with the emphasis on the influence of Information Communication Technology (ICT) on project team performance. The questionnaire itself has different parts. I would like to ask you to be realistic of our federation and objective in assessing and giving views. I assure complete anonymity of the gathered data. These will be represented on aggregate level alone for the academic research purpose. Please provide answers on all questions even though you feel that they repeat themselves occasionally. This is the only way to assure statistical validity of the questionnaire. In spite this; for some questions if you feel that certain statements is truly irrelevant, circle the letter “X” (do not know).

1.0 Connection to the Federation

1.1. Please indicate [tick ✓] whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I understand the TFC's mission, vision and objectives					
I understand how my work contributes to the achievement of the TFC/ federation's objectives					
I am an important part of the federation/organization					
I am committed to the TFC's mission					

1.2 Do you feel you are an important part of the federation/organization? If yes, why? If no, why not and are there any changes you could suggest to improve the situation?

.....

.....

.....

2.0 Current Processes and Effectiveness of International Communication

2.1 Please rate [tick ✓] how important the following media/tools are to you for communicating and sharing information between project leaders and project team members on a regular basis.

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Never use
Formal Meetings					
Informal Meetings					
E-mail					
Telephone					
Organisation letters					
Outlook messages					
Print Resources (newsletters, papers)					
Website					
Intranet					
Suggestion boxes					
Memos					
Posters					
Other:(specify) _____					

2.2 Please rate [tick ✓] how effective current internal communication processes are at conveying the information:

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Board decisions and directions					
Senior management decisions and directions					
Federation news and initiatives					
Programme updates/outputs					
Relevant external news					
Use of ICT to project teams, staff and others					
Office policies and procedures					
Staff news/noticeboards					
Other: (specify) _____					

2.3 Do you have any suggestions to improve the dissemination of information using Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) to project teams, staff or community?

.....

3.0 Decision-making Processes using ICT

3.1 Are management decisions generally communicated to you effectively using ICT means? YES/NO.

.....

3.2 If YES on 3.1 are you generally able to make the necessary decisions to do your job or communicated information effectively? YES/NO. If not, please explain.

.....

3.3 Do you generally feel that you are sufficiently consulted by management using various means of ICT? YES/NO.If not, what would you like to see happen?

.....

.....

3.4 Do you generally feel that you are sufficiently consulted by other project team members/staff using various means of ICT i.e. e-mail etc? YES/NO.If not, what would you like to see happen?

.....

.....

4.0 Resources

4.1 Are you familiar with the following resources, and how often do you use them (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Rarely, Never): [tick ✓]

	Familiarity		Regularity of use				
	Yes	No	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
Staff List serve							
Intranet site							
e-Newsletter							
Annual Reports							
Online Resources							
Journals							
Newsletters							
Website							
Staff handbook							
Programme factsheets							
Brochures							
Toolkits							
Federation logo and style guide							
Other: (specify) _____							

4.2 For any of the resources listed above that you are not familiar with; would you use them if you knew more about them? YES/NO.....

.....

4.3 Can you think of any other internal communication resources which would be useful to you?

.....

.....

5.0 Information Acquisition and Federation Performance

Please circle one choice for each of the following statements.(1=strongly disagree,

2=disagree, 3=not disagree nor agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree, X=do not know)

1. Employees in our federation are an extremely important source of information. 1 2 3 4 5 X
2. Previous decisions are a very useful source of information for current decisions. 1 2 3 4 5 X
3. New means of international communication using ICT are always worth trying even if they may prove risky. 1 2 3 4 5 X
4. Reports prepared by external experts/consultants are an extremely important source of information. 1 2 3 4 5 X
5. Our federation uses a clipping service – the regular collection of papers and articles of interest to us. 1 2 3 4 5 X
6. Our competitors are an extremely important source for learning new methods and services related to internal communication. 1 2 3 4 5 X
7. Expertise on the industry, products, and services is an extremely important criterion for improving internal communication practice.

1 2 3 4 5 X
8. External sources (reports, consultants, newsletters, etc.) are extremely important for the operations of our federation. 1 2 3 4 5 X
9. In our federation we explicitly reward employees that are a source of quality information. 1 2 3 4 5 X
10. In our federation we often organize internal training for employees related to effective internal communication. 1 2 3 4 5 X
11. We frequently send our employees to various seminars, workshops, conferences with intention to acquire information. 1 2 3 4 5 X

6.0 Identifiable Needs and Areas of Improvements

6.1 What area of the federation's internal communications using ICT needs most improvement?.....

.....

6.2 Do you have any suggestions on how to address this?

.....

.....

Thank you very much