## Impact of Communication Barriers on Organizational Outcomes:
## A Case Study on Logistics Companies

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**Abstract**

This research aims to study the impact of communication barriers on organizational outcomes in the context of a logistics company in Thailand. This research is a quantitative research. Studies were conducted with a sample group 112 respondents from the logistics company in Bangkok (Thailand), selected through non-probability sampling technique. The research tool used was a questionnaire. The statistics used in the research were Mean, S.D., Correlation and Regression Analysis. The results of the study has shown that communication barrier that influence the overall organizational outcomes in logistics companies in Thailand are consisting of organization culture, employee satisfaction, employee turnover intention and productivity with a statistical significance level of 0.05. Effective communication is a vital business process that can enhance organizational outcomes positively. Conversely, when communication within the organization is hindered by barriers and problems, it can significantly diminish the organization's performance and efficiency. Therefore, it is essential for corporate executives to use various strategies to increase work efficiency in every part of the organization.

**1. Introduction**

Communication is a process of sending understandable information from one person to another person (Keyton, 2011). Many people work together in businesses, and communication is important and necessary for successful individual functions in an organization to make the business successful. Communication means one person or group sharing with another, if there is no sharing there is no communication (Rani, 2016). Organizations have to manage clear communication channels from the upper level to the lower level. Actually, organizations need cooperation from everyone and all departments to work together and to maintain healthy relationships.

Communication barriers make sharing information less effective. "A communication barrier is anything that prevents us from understanding the message from the sender that is used to convey their information, ideas, and thoughts" (Rani, 2016, p.74). Communication barriers occur within the communication systems, whether it is an organization, communication between family members, or social networks. Communication barriers that take place within the communication systems are very unfortunate and unwanted, every individual wants to communicate in a smooth manner without the occurrence of barriers.

In businesses, there are a number of reasons that cause communication barriers for example language barriers, cultural barriers, attitude barriers, environmental barriers etc. The communication barriers affect organizational outcomes such as organization culture, employee satisfaction, employee turnover, productivity, and teamwork severely.

The focus of this study is logistics businesses. Logistics business, communication is a very important factor for logistics companies to be successful. There are communications within the company, between employees and customers, and between employees and other service providers to make proper decisions. Since the pandemic, logistics businesses have grown rapidly as customers prefer ordering online and getting products delivered at home.

To improve the effectiveness of communications organizations have to develop awareness and responsibility among the senders and receivers of the messages (Lunenburg, 2010). Also, the company should focus on the language barriers that foreign employees face because language barriers affect employees' attitudes and behaviors.

The success of all the organizations must arise from the operation management of the organization which must be managed for positive efficiency and effectiveness. With indicators, important organizational outcomes to develop the performance of employees and improve machine performance including developing the environment and infrastructure systems to support business operations to increase the competitiveness between organizations sustainably.

The results of operations in an organization overall that create organizational effectiveness as organizational outcomes including organizational culture, employee happiness, employee turnover, productivity, and teamwork etc.

Dyer and Reeves's (1995) study HR outcomes, operational outcomes, and financial outcomes. HR outcomes refer to those most directly related to HRM in an organization, such as employee skills and abilities, employee attitudes and behaviors, and turnover. Operational outcomes are those related to the goals of an organizational operation consisting of productivity, product quality, quality of service, and innovation.

Sageer et. al. (2012) found positive and substantive correlations between employee satisfaction-engagement and the business unit outcomes of productivity, profit, employee turnover, employee accidents, and customer satisfaction.

Pankaj (2014) found that in an organization with a culture that is strongly outcome oriented, the organization may perform well, if this value system matches the organizational environment and employees behave ethically.

From the research mentioned above. There are many organizational outcomes. But this study is a study of impact of communication barriers on organizational outcomes, therefore, the researcher chose to study only 4 items including organizational outcomes, employee satisfaction, employee turnover and productivity.

**Communication Barriers**

Communication is the sending of a message from a sender to a receiver that passes through some channels. Anderson and Narus (1990) describe "Communication" can be defined broadly as the formal as well as informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between firms. It may sound simple, but there are many possible problems or barriers that can keep the organization from effective communication. Some of the problems happen from the sender, and some problems happen from the receiver. Outside problems can also interfere with effective communication, whether they are physical or non-physical problems. If any kind of barrier blocks any step of communication, the message will be distorted and communication will fail. So, the organizations must find such barriers and take steps to remove them.

Broecker (2006) opined that barriers in communication are anything that blocks any channel during a communication process between people and disturbs the process of information sending which leads to misinterpretation and misunderstanding of a message. The chronological dimensions and the incoherence in communications are the indications that communication barriers exist.

A communication barrier is anything that prevents information transfer from one person to another person effectively. They can interfere or block the message a person is trying to send. A communication barrier may occur due to attitudinal barriers, behavior barriers, cultural barriers, language barriers, and environmental barriers (Rani, 2016).

**Organization Culture and Communication Barriers**

Organizational culture is behaviors that are created or fused together by people within the organization. It arises from learning about one another and applying it and becoming a custom for that organization. Culture is a common thread between employees and organizations. There are many kinds of organizational culture that affect individual and organizational behavior (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). A good organizational culture always starts with a strong foundation that is the value of the organization. Organizational culture influences employee behavior (Pankaj, 2014) as the culture in an organization will make people work together.

Organizational culture affects employee perceptions as well as their behaviors in the workplace, and that contributes to the success or failure of an organization. The degree

to which the values of employees are compatible with the organization's culture predicts their attitudes toward the organization (O'Rielly, 2008).

Communication, like culture, is a contested term that has been subject to a multiplicity of definitional formulations (Dance and Larson, 1976). Wilson et. al., 1986 suggest a definition of organizational communication as an evolutionary, culturally dependent process of sharing information and creating relationships.

On the one hand, culture is a product of social interaction mediated through communicative acts, and on the other, communication is a cultural artifact through which organizational actors come to understand their organization and their role within it (Phillips and Brown, 1993).

### Employee Satisfaction and Communication Barriers

Satisfaction is the pleasant feeling you get when you receive something you want, or when you have done or are doing something you want to do. Morse (1997) defined satisfaction as the level of fulfillment of one's needs, wants and desires.

Employee satisfaction is a broad term used by the HR department to describe how satisfied or content employees are with elements like their jobs, their employee experience, and the organizations they work for. Employee satisfaction is a measure of how happy workers are with their jobs and working environment (Sageer et. al., 2012). Satisfaction has no limit for the employees to achieve and it may vary from employee to employee. Sometimes they need to change their behaviors to execute their duties more effectively to gain greater job satisfaction (Miller, 2006).

According to Men (2014), the satisfaction of employees with their jobs and leaders has been extensively studied in the business and organizational communication fields. For relationship management, satisfaction refers to the degree to which parties to the relationship are satisfied with each other. Stafford and Canary (1991) characterized a satisfying relationship as one in which "the distribution of rewards is equitable and the relational rewards outweigh the cost" (p. 225).

### Employee Turnover and Communication Barriers

Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006 found that employee turnover has been recognized as a major managerial concern in contemporary work organizations. Employee turnover is often used to measure an organization's ability to keep its employees and prevent them from leaving. Employee turnover is the act of replacing an employee with a new employee or the term applied to the cycle of hiring that happens within an organization.

According to Mobley (1977), we can define turnover as a withdrawal decision process in a sequence of several psychological steps: evaluation of the job, experienced job dissatisfaction, thinking of quitting, evaluation of the expected utility of search and cost of quitting, intention to search for alternatives, search for alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, comparison of alternatives versus present job, intention to quit/stay, and quit/stay (Kim, 2012).

Communication is also one of the antecedents of turnover. Organizations with good communication practices enable employees to complete their tasks successfully,

generate a working group environment, and increase job satisfaction. According to Jablin, (1987) communication has been identified as one of the predictors of turnover.

"Organizations must look for ways to increase communication satisfaction levels of their managers because addressing communication barriers with limited English speaking employees will help to reduce role ambiguity and conflict, which have direct impacts on turnover." (Madera et.al, 2014, p.123).

Petitt et. al. (1997) reported there was a high positive correlation between communication and job satisfaction, while other studies showed a link between job satisfaction and turnover (Tett and Meyer, 1993).

### Productivity and Communication Barriers

Productivity is a forever dynamic term that is always exposed by evolution and change (Sadeghi et. al., 2013). Productivity is a measure of the efficiency of the production process, such as measuring the ratio of produce relative to raw materials that are fed into it. Within a specified period, increasing productivity refers to increased production or reduced costs in order to generate profit for the business. To be more involved, such as production waste, cost, including time spent in production. According to Mali (2008), productivity is viewed as a measure of how well resources are brought together in an organization and utilized for accomplishing a set of results.

Productivity is determined by improvement in both quantity and quality. It may also include innovation, cost reduction, product enhancement, and reduced production time.

Personnel with high productivity will help the business to increase the productivity of the organization by producing cost-effective products/services as well as working well beyond expectations. Productivity is one of the most essential components of a successful business but this can only be achieved with quality employee who is engaged and enthusiastic about their task. (Barol, 2012).

Communication is one of the keys to the most efficient and productive teamwork. At the same time, failed communication can also ruin everything. A team or organization with a well-established communication system is more successful. Communication may begin from the establishment of a system of command and decision-making power in the workplace, understanding the different meanings of work and understanding matching goals, to personal communication that has a positive impact on working in a team system, etc.

As a state by Salis and Williams (2009), productivity could strongly be enhanced by adopting a human resource management strategy aimed at facilitating knowledge sharing through face-to-face communication in personal relationships, problem-solving groups, teams, and between employees and management.

## 2. Research Objective

To study the impact of communication barriers affecting on organization outcomes.
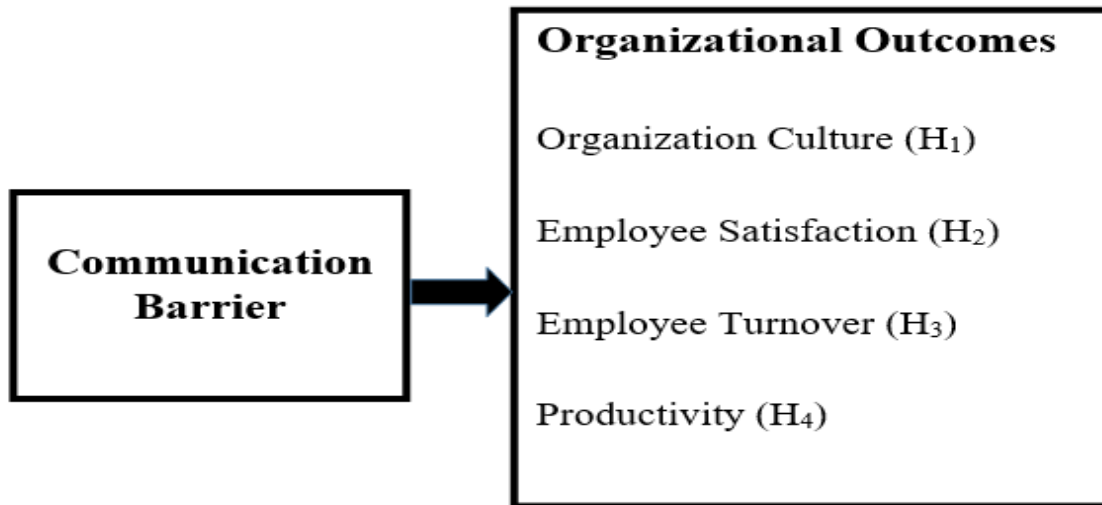
**Conceptual Framework of The Study**



Figure 1 Conceptual framework on impact of communication barriers on organizational outcomes: a case study on logistics companies

## 3. Hypotheses

$H_1$: Communication barrier has impact on Organization Culture
$H_2$: Communication barrier has impact on Employee Satisfaction
$H_3$: Communication barrier has impact on Employee Turnover
$H_4$: Communication barrier has impact on Productivity

## 4. Research Methodology

This research is a quantitative research. The respondents of the current study were employees of Logistic Companies in Thailand, heterogeneity was maintained in terms of respondents' age, work experience, and job profiles, which described the nature of their jobs. Respondents ranged in age from 20 to 60 years, and their total work experience was from 1 year to 22 years, questionnaires were distributed to 10 domestic logistics companies in Bangkok, amounting to a sample group of 112 people, selected through simple random sampling. All participants were requested to complete the online questionnaire through Google Form. The content validity of the items for this study was evaluated by experts who were committee members of the researchers in business field from Higher Education in Thailand.

The linear regression analysis modelling (Hair et. al., 2010) was used to find statistically relevant impact between communication barrier and organizational culture including organizational culture ($H_1$), employee satisfaction ($H_2$), employee turnover ($H_3$) and productivity ($H_4$).

## 5. Research Results

The study Impact of Communication Barriers on Organizational Outcomes: A Case Study on Logistics Companies is shown in Table 1 to Table 4 as following;

Table 1 Organization Culture with Communication barrier

| Independent variable (predictor) | b | Std. Error | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | .518 | .308 | | 1.681 | .096 |
| Organization culture (H₁) | .860 | .078 | .725 | 11.054* | .000 |
| F= 122.199  R =.725  R² = .526  AdjR² = .522  p value = 0.000 | | | | | |

**Note: \*** $p < 0.05$

In Table 1, which represents the first step of the analysis, organization culture ($H_1$) variables are included as control variables alongside the communication barrier. The results reveal that the communication barrier (p = .000, b = .860) is statistically significant. This indicates that the communication barrier has a positive influence on organization culture and is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results displayed the value of $R^2 = .526$, indicating that the predictive efficiency coefficient for communication barriers that influence the organization outcomes, as organization culture, accounted for 52.60%. The remaining 47.40% predictive efficiency was attributed to other variables that were not included in the study.

Table 2 Employee Satisfaction with Communication barrier

| Independent variable (predictor) | b | Std. Error | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | 1.258 | .258 | | | |
| Employee satisfaction (H₂) | .703 | .065 | .717 | 10.784* | .000 |
| F= 116.290  R =.717  R² = .514  AdjR² = .509  p value = 0.000 | | | | | |

**Note: \*** $p < 0.05$

In Table 2, which represents the second step of the analysis, employee satisfaction $H_2$ variables are introduced as control variables alongside the communication barrier. The results indicate that the communication barrier (p = .000, b = .703) remains statistically significant. This suggests that the communication barrier has a positive influence on employee satisfaction and maintains its significance at the 0.05 level.

The results displayed the value of $R^2 = .514$, indicating that the predictive efficiency coefficient for communication barriers that influence the organization outcomes, as organization culture, accounted for 51.40%. The remaining 48.60% predictive efficiency was attributed to other variables that were not included in the study.

Table 3 Employee Turnover with Communication barrier

| Independent variable (predictor) | b | Std. Error | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | .331 | .571 | | .580 | .563 |
| Employee turnover (H₃) | .832 | .144 | .482 | 5.764* | .000 |
| F= 33.229  R =.482  R² = .232  AdjR2 = .225 p value = 0.000 | | | | | |

**Note: \*** $p < 0.05$

In Table 3, which represents the final step of the analysis, $H_3$ variables are introduced as control variables alongside the communication barrier. The results reveal that the communication barrier (p = .000, b = .832) remains statistically significant. This indicates that the communication barrier has a positive influence on employee turnover intention and maintains its significance at the 0.05 level.

The results displayed the value of $R^2$ = .232, indicating that the predictive efficiency coefficient for communication barriers that influence the organization outcomes, as employee turnover, accounted for 23.20%. The remaining 76.80% predictive efficiency was attributed to other variables that were not included in the study.

Table 4 Productivity with Communication barrier

| Independent variable (predictor) | b | Std. Error | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | 2.754 | .333 | | 8.272 | .000 |
| Productivity ($H_4$) | .310 | .084 | .331 | 3.679* | .000 |
| F= 13.539  R =.331   $R^2$ = .110   AdjR$^2$ = .101 p value = 0.000 | | | | | |

**Note: *** p< 0.05

In Table 4, which represents the third step of the analysis, $H_4$ variables are included as control variables alongside the communication barrier. The results indicate that the communication barrier (p = .000, b = .310) is statistically significant. This implies that the communication barrier has a positive influence on productivity and maintains its significance at the 0.05 level.

The results displayed the value of $R^2$ = .110, indicating that the predictive efficiency coefficient for communication barriers that influence the organization outcomes, as productivity, accounted for 11.00%. The remaining 89.00% predictive efficiency was attributed to other variables that were not included in the study.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of the study examining the impact of communication barriers on organization outcomes, including variables like organization culture, employee satisfaction, employee turnover intention and productivity, indicated that communication barriers have a significant influence on all of these variables collectively.

### Organization Culture:

The finding that communication barriers influence organizational culture is in line with research conducted by Phillips and Brown in 1993. Their study highlighted that all forms of culture, including corporate culture, are a social product it is constituted and maintained by the ongoing communicative interaction of the communication. Although the national culture and other cultures in which an organization is embedded (Ingersoll & Adams, 1986) are important, it is the ongoing communication of organization members that produces the fabric of myths and symbols through which those actors, and to some degree extra organizational actors, come to understand the organization and its place in the world (Pfeffer, 1981).

**Employee Satisfaction:**

This result aligns with the findings of Men's (2014) study on "Strategic Internal Communication: Transformational Leadership Communication Channels, and Employee Satisfaction." Men's study concluded that leader communication channels have a minor but favorable impact on employee satisfaction. Employees have higher levels of satisfaction with the organization when their supervisors employ face-to-face communication channels more frequently.

The consistency of the results is further corroborated by other research studies. In alignment with the current study, the research by Sageer et. al. (2012) on "Identification of Variables Affecting Employee Satisfaction and Their Impact on the Organization" found that 1 of 13 Steps or things which can be done to increase employee satisfaction and loyalty, thereby positively impacting our business revenue and profit are making proper communication channel and building good and supportive relationship with coworkers as well as with supervisor. Employee satisfaction can also be increased by demonstrating respect for everyone in the organization or company.

The consistency of the result regarding the influence of communication on employee satisfaction is further supported by Mbango and Phiri's study on "Customer satisfaction as a mediator between causes (trust and communication) and the outcome (customer loyalty) in business-to business relationship marketing in the South African cement manufacturing industry" in 2015. Effective communication has been identified as one of the most important causes of satisfaction in the South African cement industry. It has a positive influence on satisfaction and influences loyalty. Effective communication leads to greater customer satisfaction which in turns leads to increased loyalty. In addition, effective communication leads to commitment which in turn leads to trust and trust leads to satisfaction.

**Employee Turnover Intention:**

The finding is consistent with Siti (2008)'s research on "Effects of communication on turnover intention: A case of hotel employees in Malaysia" in which the results indicated that the hypothesized linkage between each of the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) factor and overall communication as well as that between overall communication satisfaction and turnover intention was significantly supported.

The finding is also in line with the research by Madera et.al, (2014) on "Managing language barriers in the workplace: The role of job demands and resources on turnover intentions". It was found that as job resource, communication quality affects not only the experience of job demands, such as role conflict and role ambiguity, but also turnover intentions.

**Productivity:**

Salis and Williams (2010)'s research on "Knowledge Sharing through Face-to-Face (FTC) Communication and Labour Productivity: Evidence from British Workplaces" supported this finding. It is found that a positive association between productivity and FTFC in problem-solving groups, teams and meetings of senior or line managers and employees, provided that FTFC is adopted on a continuous basis.

In conclusion, our study has shown that the communication barrier impacted the overall organizational outcomes of logistics companies in Thailand, with a statistical significance level of .05. This is consistent with the study conducted by Tranakjit (2014), which found communication is the key and management tool to driving the organization. Coordination of agencies' image creation creates prosperity and organizational development. Furthermore, Cornelissen (2008) illustrated that communication is an important element of management that works both as a factor and a resource in managing the organization. If there is no communication, it is impossible to manage the organization effectively. Effective communication is a vital business process that can enhance organizational outcomes positively. Conversely, when communication within the organization is hindered by barriers and problems, it can significantly diminish the organization's performance and efficiency. Therefore, it is essential for corporate executives to use various strategies to increase work efficiency in every part of the organization.

## 7. Recommendations

### 7.1 Recommendations for applying the research results:

The study found that the organization's culture, employee turnover, employee satisfaction, and productivity are all impacted by communication barriers, which in turn affect the overall organizational outcomes. It indicates that organizations with low communication barriers are likely to achieve favorable outcomes. Effective interdepartmental communication is essential for ensuring a comprehensive grasp of the organization's objectives, as the success of the organization relies on the collective efforts of its various departments. Effective communication from organizational executives fosters a shared culture among individuals within the organization. A robust organizational culture, in turn, minimizes employee turnover. Furthermore, organizational executives must be cognizant of employee satisfaction and productivity.

### 7.2 Recommendations for further research:

Based on the research findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research:

The study was done using a sample group consisting solely of logistics companies located in Bangkok. Therefore, other sample groups should also be studied to cover all areas and all types of industries.

Moreover, this study only focuses on communication barriers and found a significant result. Therefore, other factors influencing organizational outcomes should also be studied to increase the predictive efficiency further.

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