

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Methods as Correlates of Employee Job Performance

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Abstract

This study investigated how verbal and non-verbal communication methods are related with the performance of the academic staff of Primary Teachers' Colleges (PTCs) in Central Uganda. The investigation was provoked by reportedly the deteriorating performance of the academic staff of most PTCs in the country despite government's efforts to train and motivate them. The study employed a correlational cross-sectional sample survey design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from a total of 120 respondents comprised of 5 Principals, 7 Deputy Principals, 13 Heads of Department and 95 members of the Academic Staff using questionnaire survey and interview methods. Data were analyzed with the use of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques as well as content analysis method. Study results revealed that verbal communication methods generally have a statistically weak relationship ($r=.446$, $p=.096$) with the performance of the academic staff; while non-verbal communication methods revealed a statistically significant relationship ($r=.998$, $p=.000$) with the performance of the academic staff. The researchers thus concluded that the kind of communication methods that managers/administrators employ on their staff have a bearing on how their staff perform their jobs, other factors notwithstanding. Therefore, it was recommended that colleges' administrators as well

as those concerned with communicating with the academic staff of PTCs should carefully select from the array of available communication methods those that have significant positive relationships with the performance of staff in order to enhance their job performance as well as that of the entire institution.

Keywords: Communication methods, Academic staff, Performance, Primary teachers' colleges.

1. Introduction

World over, teacher education is at the core of any education system. However, the success of teacher training across the world rests, to a large extent, on the job performance of the academic staff (or tutors as they are fondly called) of the respective teacher training institutions. But, in practice, guaranteeing a satisfactory level of academic staff performance in any teacher training college is a daunting task, even in institutions in the developed world. The case of the primary teachers' colleges (PTCs) in Uganda is therefore not any different. Yet, theorists proclaim that communication at workplace is one vital means for enhancing employee's ability to be productive and perform satisfactorily.

This paper looks at a study that investigated the correlations between verbal and non-verbal communication methods, and the job performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda. The study was provoked by reportedly the deteriorating performance of the academic staff of most PTCs in the country despite government's efforts to train and motivate them. In this section, the researchers present the background to the study, the study objectives, hypotheses, and the significance of the study.

According to Ssekamwa and Lugumba (2000), there were hardly any complaints about the performance of teachers in Uganda, including teacher trainers, till around the time of independence in 1962. In fact, the two authors reveal that the teacher trainers - in particular, were applauded for their commitment and strictness in virtually everything they did. As a result, even their products - the trained teachers - were generally regarded teachers of exceptional quality and performance. At that time, several factors were responsible for the good performance of the academic staff of teacher training institutions - amongst them was the way the colleges were managed. Indeed, the college administrators then were applauded for using different communication strategies in order to motivate and guide their subordinates. However, since the 1970s, the economic, social and political turmoil that the country underwent left indelible negative effects on the country's entire education system including on the performance of the academic staff of PTCs (Ssekamwa & Lugumba, 2000).

Several studies have already been conducted to establish the relationship between communication methods and employee job performance in different settings. For instance, Garnett, Marlowe and Pandey (2008) observed that appropriate use of communication can enhance organizational outcomes by improving the performance of employees. In that regard, communication is looked at as a managerial tool that is used for sharing information with members of the organization, coordinating their activities, reducing unnecessary managerial burdens and rules, and which ultimately improves organizational performance. In a study conducted by Emmitt and Gorse (2006), they found out that there exists a strong relationship between organizational communication and employee performance. These two scholars evaluated both the quality of supervisors and the feedback they provided to employees about their performances to determine how that related to the

overall effect of manager communication on employee performance. This kind of finding was corroborated by Downs and Adrian's (2004) who conducted a survey and discovered that organizational performance and characteristics of communication related to one another. In fact, in their study, they assessed the overall effectiveness of supervisors as communicators; and they found empirical evidence to support the assumption that there is a relationship between communication and job performance. However, all these studies did not focus on educational settings, and neither were they carried out in the context developing countries. This study was conducted in the context of a developing nation – Uganda.

This study was modelled on the Media Richness Theory (MRT). This theory was developed by Daft and Lengel in 1984 and improved upon in 1986 by the same theorists; before it was further improved upon in 2000 by Olson and Olson (Olson & Olson, 2000). The theory is used to rank and evaluate the richness of certain communication methods such as: phone calls, video conferencing, written documents, face-to-face and emails. According to MRT, work performance improves when team members use 'richer' media or methods of communication to handle equivocal tasks. The theory provides management with an understanding of the importance of defining and communicating the tasks well, and the means for defining and communicating the tasks in specific terms so that higher levels of performance become much more possible (George & Jones, 2002). In this study, the MRT was opted for because it hints on the relationship between communication methods and the performance of employees. The researchers hypothesized that if the administrators of PTCs in Central Uganda identified and used appropriate communication methods, it would enhance the job performance of their academic staff, other factors notwithstanding. However, if they chose inappropriate communication methods (or media), it would hurt the productivity as well as the performance of the academic staff of those institutions.

In the study, there were two key concepts, namely: communication methods and performance of the academic staff. According to Piran and Sheenan (2009), communication involves the transfer of information in ways that permit those who receive the information to interpret it and act upon it in the way intended. It is thus the process of imparting ideas in ways that are understood by others. Hansen and Paul (2004) meanwhile define communication as the process which involves the giving out of messages from one person, and the receiving and understanding of those messages by another or others. In this study, communication was looked at as the official messages or information passed in the PTCs from administrators to staff and vice-versa. Communication methods (or media) on the other hand are the storage and transmission channels or tools used to store and deliver information or data (Elving & Hansma, 2008). They are therefore the means for delivering and receiving information or data such as face-to-face, written, verbal, electronic, and other methods of communication. In this study, communication methods were broadly looked at in terms of verbal and non-verbal communication methods. Verbal communication methods were looked at in terms of using words of mouth to communicate; for examples, while addressing meetings, holding face-to-face discussions, communicating over telephones and through teleconferencing; while non-verbal methods of communication were looked at in terms sending and receiving messages through written words, gestures, touch, facial expressions and eye contacts. The dependent variable in this study was performance of the academic staff. Performance, according to Burnell (2011), is the act or process of carrying out something, or the execution of an action based on instruction. Camps and Luna-Arocas (2012) on the other hand define performance as an evaluation of the results of a person's behavior. In that regard, performance on a job involves how well or poorly a person

accomplishes a task or job. In this study, the performance of the academic staff were characterized by how well or poorly the staff handle their assigned and non-assigned tasks at work.

Contextually, this study occurred in PTCs in Central Uganda. In PTCs, there occurs a lot of communication among the administrators/supervisors, staff and students both at institutional and individual levels. However, there is no indication that the administrators/managers of PTCs in Uganda carefully select the medium (or methods) for communicating with their subordinates or peers. In other words, it seems most managers/administrators are not concern or make no consideration of the methods of communication they use while communicating with their subordinates. This could be the source of failure in soliciting best responses and performance of academic staff in PTCs; thus, the need for this investigation.

1.1 Study Objectives

Overall, this study was intended to investigate the relationship between two different types of communication methods with the performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda. Specifically, the study aimed at: First, finding out the relationship between verbal communication methods and the job performance of the academic staff; and second, establishing the relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study were expected to be useful to several stakeholders in the education sector in Uganda as well as countries that share Uganda's characteristics like Kenya and Tanzania. First, the study findings and recommendations could help managers/supervisors such as PTC administrators, Board of Governors, and other policy-makers to make a correct choice of the communication methods to use when communicating with the academic staff of PTCs in order to enable them communicate clearly; and probably, positively influence staff performance. This is essential because through appropriate method, communication provides managers with information they need for decision-making and identify workable solutions to problems. Second, the study may also enable academic staff to evaluate their communication methods, consequences, actions and behaviors; thus, improving the overall communication system of the institutions. Finally, this study could lay the foundation for further studies in the field of communication as well as on the performance of employees especially in the education industry.

2. Literature Review

Several scholars have already investigated the correlations between different communication methods and employee performances. In a study by Garnet, Marlowe and Pandey (2008), they concluded that communication in general can enhance organizational outcomes, perceptions and opinions about persons, communities as well as government. As a result, managers/administrators need to know how to select the methods and messages they require to communicate within their organizations; or else, there can occur misunderstanding. Some other writers also agree with this view. According to Sharma (2001), for instance, verbal communication often helps to bring individuals face-to-face. In doing so, verbal communication helps to raise the level of attention of all parties involved in communication at a particular time. As a result, the use of verbal face-to-face communication methods can enhance the performance of employees. However, many of those assertions were made in studies conducted in the manufacturing sector; thus, the need for this investigation in an educational setting.

The opposite of verbal communication is non-verbal communication. According to Rajhans (2012), non-verbal communication is the kind of communication that occurs through sending and receiving wordless cues between people. It includes sending and receiving messages through gestures, touch, posture, physical distance and eye contacts (Pöchlacker & Shlesinger, 2002). However, there are also misconceptions about non-verbal communication including the idea that meanings are in words (Conrad & Poole, 2011). This misconception can lead to much misunderstanding between people and frustrate the effectiveness of communication between supervisor and subordinate, and subsequently performance. However, Piran and Sheenan (2009) caution that what a particular word means to someone may not be what it means to another. For example, the word evaluation carries different meanings for people at different levels in an institution. While lower-level employees might feel that 'this means the end of their job', the upper-level management might feel that 'this means support for their work'. However, according to Worth (2004), no word has meaning apart from the person using it, making non-verbal communication very important in any work situation. Therefore, when using verbal or non-verbal communications, managers/administrators must take note on the encoding and decoding of the messages.

3. Methodology

This study was approached majorly from the positivist research paradigm, though elements of the interpretivist approach were also employed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that were investigated. Specifically, the study employed a correlational cross-sectional sample survey design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from a total of 120 respondents comprised of 5 Principals, 7 Deputy Principals, 13 Heads of Department and 95 Academic Staff using questionnaire survey and interview methods. The design was correlational because the researchers aimed at establishing the relationships between two different types of communication methods (verbal and non-verbal) with the performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda. It was also cross-sectional in nature because the researchers aimed at collecting data from a cross-section of the target population at one point in time in order to avoid wasting time returning to the field to collect additional data that would make the process rather time consuming and costly if the design was longitudinal in nature. In addition, using the design would help to generalize the findings obtained from the sampled population to the targeted population of all principals, deputy principals, and heads of department as well as academic staff members in all the PTCs in Central Uganda. The study respondents were selected through purposive and stratified random sampling techniques; and the data were analyzed with the use of appropriate descriptive (frequencies and percentages) and inferential (Pearson Correlation technique) statistical techniques as well as content analysis method.

4. Results

The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between two different types of communication methods (verbal and non-verbal) with the performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda. In this section, the researchers present the results of the study. The section is divided into three parts, namely: the background information on respondents; the descriptive statistics on the dependent and independent variables; and the verification of research hypotheses.

4.1 Background Information on Respondents

The researchers obtained information on the background characteristics of respondents. This was intended to ensure that data were collected from the authentic group of subjects. Information on the backgrounds of respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Distribution of Respondents by Background Information

Background Characteristic	Attributes	Frequency	Percent
College Status	Core PTCs	54	57
	Non-core PTCs	41	43
	Total	95	100
Sex Distribution	Male	50	53
	Female	45	47
	Total	95	100
Age Distribution	<30 years old	11	12
	31 – 40 years old	29	30
	40 plus years old	55	58
	Total	95	100
Marital Status	Married	65	68
	Divorced/Separated	12	13
	Single	18	19
	Total	95	100
Educational Qualifications	Grade V Diploma holders	24	25
	Bachelor's Degree holders	56	59
	Master's Degree holders	15	16
	Total	95	100
Years of Work Experience	<1 year	7	7
	1 – 5 years	13	14
	5+ years	75	79
	Total	95	100

Table 1 displays the distribution of study respondents according to different background characteristics. First is the distribution of respondents according to the status of their colleges. There are generally two types of primary teacher's colleges (PTCs) in Uganda), namely: core and non-core PTCs. Core PTCs are those institutions that run both pre- and in-service teacher education programs; whereas the non-core PTCs are the institutions that have only pre-service programs. In this study, 57 percent (or 54) of the respondents were drawn from core PTCs and the remaining 43 percent (or 41) came from non-core PTCs. This happened mainly because there are generally more core PTCs in the country than non-core ones. According to the Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports [MoES] (2013), there are 52 primary teachers colleges (PTCs) in Uganda; 45 of these are owned and funded by the government and 7 are owned by faith-based bodies; and out of the 45 government-funded PTCs, 23 of the colleges are core while 22 are non-core institutions.

Second, Table 1 shows the distribution of study respondents according to their sex composition. The results show that there were more male participants in the study than their female counter-parts. This suggests that more males than females are employed in the PTCs and this is also in consonance with the general patterns of employment in most organizations in Uganda.

In terms of age distribution, Table 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents (58% or 55) were over 40 years of age. These were followed by those aged between 31 and 40 years. Only 11 percent of the study respondents were below 30 years of age. This distribution suggests that the bulk of the workforce in PTCs are individuals of advanced age. But with regard to this study, it meant that data

were collected from mature individuals who have sufficient experience of what happens in their workplaces with regard to communication methods and employee performance that were the subject and object respectively of this study.

The researchers also looked at the highest educational qualifications of the study respondents. Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents (59% or 56) were Bachelor's degree holders. These were followed by Grade V Diploma holders (25% or 24), and finally, Master's degree holders (16% or 15). This distribution reveals that the bulk of the study population was constituted by knowledgeable individuals who were capable of giving valid information concerning the issues that were investigated.

Finally, the researchers also looked at the years of experience of the respondents. Table 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents (79% or 75) had worked in the colleges for over five years. Only 7 percent (or 7) of the respondents had work for less than a year. This implies that the information obtained in the study should be valid and reliable since it was gathered from those with sufficient experience about the institutions.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Independent and Dependent Variables

The researchers sought the views of the respondents on each of the study variables that were investigated. Respondents were given statements with which they were required to agree or disagree with in order to determine what they think or feel about the use of verbal and non-verbal communication methods and how they were related to their work performance. The researchers used the five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (SD) - coded as 1, to strongly agree (SA) - coded as 5. The results depicting respondents' views on the use of verbal communication methods are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Views over Use of Verbal Communication Methods

Items on Verbal Communication	Response Categories					
	SD	D	U	A	SA	
My superiors often communicate with me on performance related issues...						
during general meeting	20(21.1%)	16(16.8%)	1(1.1%)	31(32.6%)	27(28.4%)	
through personal meetings	11(11.6%)	16(16.8%)	1(1.1%)	40(42.1%)	27(28.4%)	
through sending another person	10(10.5%)	40(42.1%)	0(0.0%)	43(45.3%)	2(2.1%)	
Through phone calls	5(5.3%)	24(25.3%)	2(2.1%)	58(61.0%)	6(6.3%)	
Through using SMS	19(20.0%)	21(22.1%)	1(1.1%)	26(27.4%)	28(29.4%)	
Through using voicemails	37(39.0%)	31(32.6%)	4(4.2%)	19(20)	4(4.2%)	
Through the internet	55(57.9%)	21(22.1%)	6(6.3%)	9(9.5%)	4(4.2%)	
By teleconferencing	52(54.7%)	25(26.3%)	3(3.2%)	9(9.5%)	6(6.3%)	

According to Table 2, the majority of the respondents (58 or 61.1%) agreed that their superiors often communicate to them over work and performance-related issues during face-to-face meetings. This is a type of communication where both verbal and non-verbal methods of communication are used. However, the use of the verbal communication dominates during meetings. This finding suggests that management of PTCs in Central Uganda rely, to a large extent, on face-to-face verbal communications made during meetings in order to communicate to their staff on how to improve their performance at work. However, during interviews, one Principal said “I rarely rely on meetings to communicate to my staff about issues of work performance. I prefer to use the one-to-one talk in order to communicate such issues”. Meanwhile, another interviewee, a Deputy Principal, remarked that “I actually love communicating to staff verbally during meetings because it provokes discussion that can yield new ideas at work. Such ideas can be used to promote the performance of the individuals and that of the institution as a whole.” This suggests that different administrators employ different methods of communication depending on their personal preference, issues to be handled, and the context in which the communication occurs.

With regard to whether the staff are communicated to about work-related issues through personal face-to-face meetings, the majority of the respondents (67 or 70.5%) agreed that their superiors often call them for a face-to-face personal meeting in order to discuss with them different work-related matters. Indeed, in an interview, one academic staff revealed that “My Principal often summons me for a discussion whenever he has critical issues to talk about with me. I find this approach more respectful than if he talked about the same issues during the general staff meeting”. This suggests that a supervisor can use personal face-to-face meetings to communicate with his/her staff in order to induce better performance at work.

On whether administrators often send messages to their staff through other persons – peers or not - about work-related issues, about a half of the respondents agreed (50 or 52.6%) and the other half (about 48%) disagreed to the use of this communication method. This means that this method verbal communication of sending messages through emissaries is used only to a moderate extent. In fact, this was corroborated by what an interviewee said that “Many people in position of responsibility prefer to deliver their messages by themselves for fear of being misquoted”. This implies that while sending of messages through other people is a potential method of communication, its use requires good judgement on the part of the sender and the emissary.

With regard to whether administrators in PTCs in Central Uganda use phones for direct phone calls, short messages (SMS) or through voicemails to communicate to their staff, the majority of the respondents agreed with the use of phone calls (64 or 67.4%); but the majority disagreed with regard to the use of SMS (54 or 56%) and voicemails (68 or 71.6%). This suggests that administrators in the PTCs may not be conversant with the several functions of phones as a means of communication technology (IT).

Finally, with whether the administrators “use teleconferencing to communicate to their staff about performance related issues”, the majority of the respondents (77 or 80.1%) disagreed with that statement. However, one respondent said “I do not even know how teleconferencing works. Therefore, my administrators cannot communicate to me through a system I am not even aware of”. This suggests that certain types of verbal communication cannot be used due to technological and other constraints.

The researchers also collected respondents' views about the use of non-verbal communication methods in their colleges. The results are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3.

Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Views over Use of Non-verbal Communication Methods

Items on Non-verbal Communication Methods	Response Categories				
	SD	D	U	A	SA
My superiors often communicate to me through					
Writings	9(9.5%)	27(28.4%)	1(1.1%)	42(44.2%)	16(16.8%)
Gestures	14(14.7%)	16(16.8%)	6(6.4%)	42(44.2%)	17(17.9%)
Touch	21(22.1%)	45(47.4%)	4(4.2%)	13(13.7%)	12(12.6%)
Postures	16(16.8%)	36(37.9%)	7(7.4%)	27(28.4%)	9(9.5%)
Paralanguage	25(26.3%)	16(16.8%)	6(6.4%)	32(33.7%)	16(16.8%)
Facial and eye contact	12(12.6%)	13(13.7%)	4(4.2%)	45(47.4%)	21(22.1%)

According to Table 3, the majority of the respondents (58 or 61.0%) agreed that their superiors often communicate to them over work and performance-related issues through writing. These written communications could be in the form of personally addressed letters, circulars and memos. This suggests that management of PTCs in Central Uganda rely, to a large extent, on written letters, circulars or memos in order to communicate to their staff on how to improve their performance at work. However, during interviews, some administrators especially Principals and Deputy Principals revealed that they often employ a variety of communication methods while dealing with staff depending on the issues at hand. In fact, one Principal said "I often prefer holding face-to-face discussion with individual staff when dealing with serious work-related issues rather than writing letters". Meanwhile, another interviewee, a Deputy Principal, remarked that "I do not mind writing to a staff who does not do his/her work well. It helps to shake them up". This suggests that different administrators employ different methods of communication depending on their personalities and the issues to be communicated about.

With regard to whether the staff are communicated to through gestures, the majority of the respondents (59 or 62.1%) agreed that their superiors often use gestures to communicate to them about work-related matters. Indeed, in an interview, one academic staff revealed that "I understand the body language of my Principal very easily if he is uncomfortable with what I am doing". This suggests that a supervisor can apply appropriate gestures in order to communicate with his/her subordinates instead of waiting to always write to them.

On whether administrators use touch and postures to communicate to their staff in the PTCs, only a small percentage (26.3% or 25 and 37.9% or 36 respondents respectively) of the respondents agreed

that they do so. In fact, this was corroborated by what an interviewee said when she stated that “My Deputy Principal used to touch me unnecessarily when talking with me. I had to discourage him from doing so. Now, he does not touch me.” This implies that while touch and postures are potential methods of communication, they make some individuals feel uncomfortable; and therefore, their use as communication methods needs to be consciously determined.

Finally, with regards to the use of facial expressions and eye contact, the majority of the respondents (66 or 69.5%) agreed that their superiors use facial expression to communicate to them. However, one respondent said “I am not comfortable with the use of certain expressions that seems to be seductive. It irritates me”. This suggests that messages relayed through the use of facial expressions and eye contact can easily be misunderstood; therefore, whoever decides to use facial expressions and eye contact must employ them cautiously.

The last part of the descriptive statistics was used to represent the views of the respondents on the dependent variable – performance of the academic staff. The results on performance are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Descriptive Statistics on Respondents’ Views over Staff Performance

Indicators of staff performance	Response Categories					
	I always...	SD	D	U	A	SA
Carryout my duties by roster		3(3.2%)	15(15.8%)	2(2.1%)	46(48.4%)	29(30.5%)
Carryout guidance and counseling		9(9.5%)	19(20.0%)	2(2.1%)	54(56.8%)	11(11.6%)
Set and mark students’ work		6 (6.3%)	21(22.1%)	0(0.0%)	47(49.5%)	21(22.1%)
Teach students by timetable		12(12.6%)	15(15.8%)	4(4.2%)	46(48.4%)	18(18.9%)
Keep records of work covered		7(7.4%)	29(30.5%)	4(4.2%)	38(40.0%)	17(17.9%)
Display students work in class		9(9.5%)	29(30.5%)	6(6.3%)	34(35.8%)	17(17.9%)
Develop aids from local materials		4(4.2%)	5(5.3%)	2(2.1%)	69(72.6%)	15(15.8%)
Effectively conduct my lessons		17(17.9%)	20(21.1%)	2(2.1%)	37(38.9%)	19(20.0%)
Involve learners during lessons		3(3.2%)	15(15.8%)	2(2.1%)	46(48.4%)	29(30.5%)
Take students for fieldwork		9(9.5%)	19(20.0%)	2(2.1%)	54(56.8%)	11(11.6%)
Serve Clubs and societies’ patrons		6(6.3%)	20(21.1%)	0(0.0)	48(50.5%)	21(22.1%)
Use teaching aids during teaching		12(12.6%)	13(13.7%)	3(3.2%)	42(44.2%)	25(26.3%)
Prepare my lesson plans		14(14.7%)	17(17.9%)	3(3.2%)	35(36.8%)	26(27.4%)

Submit my schemes of work early	9(9.5%)	29(30.5%)	4(4.2%)	44(46.3%)	9(9.5%)
Submits my lesson plans daily	4(4.2%)	5(5.3%)	2(2.1%)	69(72.6%)	15(15.8%)
Students pass well in my exams	17(17.9%)	20(21.1%)	2(2.1%)	37(38.9%)	19(20.0%)
3/4 of students pass all my papers	9(9.5%)	27(28.4%)	4(4.2%)	44(46.3%)	11(11.6%)

According to Table 4, the majority of the respondents overall agreed that they generally perform well their duties. For instance, 78.9 percent (or 75) of the respondents agreed that they carryout their duties according to duty roster; 68.4 percent (or 65) agreed that guide and counsel students; 71.6 percent (or 68) agreed that they set and mark their examinations on schedule; 67.4 percent (or 64) agreed that they teach the students as per the time-table; and 57.9 percent (or 55) agreed that they prepare and keep records of their work. This pattern of response was maintained for all the indicators of job performance of the academic staff that participated in the study. This suggested that when staff are provided the opportunity to rate their performance, they will offer biased answers where they will rate themselves as satisfactory performers. This is because the information that were gathered from the administrators during interviews contradicted the data collected with the use of questionnaires from the academic staff. In fact, during the interviews, the Principals and their Deputies express dissatisfaction with the performance of many of their academic staff. One Principal remarked that "Some teachers work well when you closely monitor them; otherwise, they can dodge work". Another interviewee, a Deputy Principal said that "Teachers, as any human beings are tricky and can actually decide to avoid work. Therefore, many of them perform well only when they expect some handsome rewards at the end of the day." Another Principal said, "Most of my staff are well-trained. However, their performance at work is relatively poor because of their complaints over the merger pay they get in salaries and allowances. If the issue of pay could be addressed, may employees would perform well". These findings imply that the administrators are aware that their staff are not optimally performing; and they know some of the factors causing deterioration in the performance of their staff.

4.3 Verification of Research Hypotheses

This study was based on two research hypotheses, namely: 1) there is a significant relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff; and 2) there is a significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff. To verify these hypotheses, first, the hypotheses were converted into null hypotheses. Thus, the tested null hypotheses were stated as follows: 1) there is no significant relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff; and 2) there is no significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff. Second, the researchers generated indices from the questionnaire responses to measure each of the variables, namely: verbal (vcms) and non-verbal (nvcms) communication methods as well as the performance (acadperf) of the academic staff of PTCs. Thereafter, the hypotheses were tested with the use of the Pearson correlation technique. The results of the test of the first null hypothesis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5.
Relationship between Verbal Communication Methods and Job Performance

		Verbal communication	Performance
Verbal communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.446
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.096
	N	95	95
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.446	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.096	
	N	95	95

Correlation is insignificant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 5 show that there is insignificant relationship between verbal methods of communication and the performance of academic staff in PTCs in Central Uganda. The correlation coefficient is low ($r=.446$) with a p-value (.096) that is greater than the critical value of $p (.05)$. This implies that there is no significant relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of the PTCs. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that “there is no significant relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff” is upheld; and the research hypothesis that “there is a significant relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff” is rejected. This implies that the more verbal communication methods are employed in PTCs, the lower may be the performance of the academic staff, other factors held constant.

The second null hypothesis that was tested was stated as “there is no significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff”. The results of the test of the second null hypothesis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Relationship between Non-verbal Communication Methods and Job Performance

		Non-verbal communication	Performance
Non-verbal communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.998(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.998(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 6 show that there is a significant relationship between non-verbal methods of communication and the performance of academic staff in PTCs in Central Uganda. The correlation coefficient is very high ($r=.998$) with a p-value (.000) less than the critical value of $p (.05)$. This implies that there is a significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of PTCs. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that “there is no significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff” is rejected; and the research hypothesis that “there is a significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff” is upheld. This implies that the more non-verbal communication methods are employed in PTCs, the better will be the performance of the academic staff, other factors held constant.

5. Discussion

The first objective of this study was “to find out the relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of PTCs”. With regard to this objective, the study found out that there was an insignificant positive relationship between verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of PTCs studied. This finding appears to concur with that of several other scholars. According to Conrad and Poole (2011), certain verbal communication methods such as telephone conversations and teleconference can enhance employee performance, not significantly. They attributed this to the ability of the individuals to use effectively such communication gadgets. They however, observed that face-to-face verbal communications can enhance employee performance better than the non-face-to-face verbal communications. Overall, different scholars seem to agree with the fact that verbal communication can enhance employee performance; but they caution that care must be taken in choosing the media and the messages that must be communicated. In their counsel, media rich in relaying information and receiving feedback should be preferred over those that are less rich in doing the same.

The second objective of this study was to “establish the relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff of PTCs in Central Uganda”. As far as this objective was concerned, the study found out that there exists a significant relationship between non-verbal communication methods and the performance of academic staff. The researchers attributed this to feelings and expressions displayed through body language. This finding, however, was in congruence with that of Bissel, Messersmith and Kelly (2012) who discovered that body language is always more believed and trusted than non-verbal communication. As a result, the use of non-verbal communication methods helps to positively influence employee performance more than verbal ones. In fact, Gernett, Marlowe and Pandey (2008) contend that non-verbal communication is a strategy that can easily be monitored to determine if the individual is appropriately conveying messages to the key target audience. Therefore, the effectiveness of using verbal communication to enhance staff performance can be measured through the promptness of performing assignments, tasks, generating actions and providing timely results. It can also be measured through demonstrated attitude towards the supervisor.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings that ‘there was a significant positive correlation between the use of non-verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff;’ yet ‘there was insignificant positive correlation between the use of verbal communication methods and the performance of the academic staff’, the researchers thus concluded that the kind of communication

methods that managers/administrators employ on the academic staff of PTCs have a bearing on their job performance. Premised on the conclusion drawn, the researchers recommend that college's administrators as well as those concerned with communicating with the academic staff of PTCs should carefully select from the array of available communication methods those that have significant positive relationships with the job performance of the academic staff in order to enhance their performance as well as that of the entire institution.

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