CONTRIBUTION OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMPLOYED BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS AND THEIR MANAGERS ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY: A CASE OF ISUZU - KENYA

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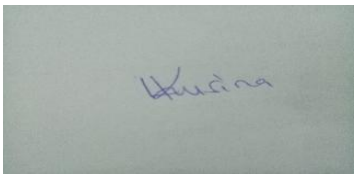
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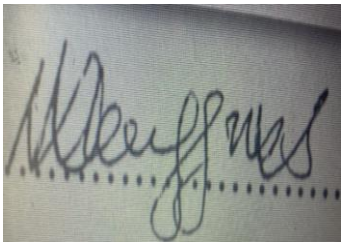
Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than St. Paul's University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed:  **Date: 30/09/2021**

Lydia Kusina (macsnrb423219)

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.



Signed: _____ Date: 30/09/2021

Dr. Martha Mbugguss (Supervisor)



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Dr. Faustin Chongombe (Co-Supervisor)

DEDICATION

To my family

For their support and inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My heartfelt gratitude goes to God the Almighty for enabling me carry out this study. It is by his grace that I came this far. I am indebted to many people whose tremendous input and contribution facilitated the completion of this thesis. I thank my supervisors, Dr. Martha Mbugguss and Dr. Faustin Chongombe for their commitment in offering guidance throughout this research process, and their devotion from the start all through to the finish of this thesis. Their competence, knowledge and expertise in research have contributed to the success of this work. Their sacrifice, availability and valuable contribution towards this work have been astounding.

A special thank you goes to my family especially my loving husband for their belief in me, financial support, encouragement and their prayers without which I would not have made it.

To my parents, today I live to celebrate the fruits of your dedicated parenthood, you inculcated infinite values in me and I have lived to the premise of the same, in a very special way, accept my unparalleled gratitude, you keep the shining hope in me alive every day.

I also wish to thank the participants who agreed to take part in the study, their contribution to this work goes a long way in helping lactating mothers have a better working place. I may not be able to mention everyone who contributed both materially and otherwise to help me carry out this study by name, but I do appreciate everyone for walking this journey with me.

ABBREVIATION/ACROYMNS

WHO	World Health Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
HR	Human Resource
US	United States

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ABSTRACT

This was a qualitative study exploring the contribution of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity in Isuzu East Africa-Kenya. The study sought to: establish the type of interpersonal communication applied between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity, establish reasons behind the choices of methods of interpersonal communication used, regarding work productivity, analyse the responses of each type of interpersonal communication used and determine the outcomes of the preferred interpersonal communication methods on work productivity. The study was guided by the uses and gratifications theory and the Shannon and Weaver Model of communication. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed through interpretational approach and presented according to themes informed by study objectives The respondents of this study were ten employed breastfeeding mothers from Isuzu East Africa Kenya who had benefitted from breastfeeding facilities at Isuzu East Africa and had children under four years and two supervisors who have directly supervised the employed nursing mothers. Respondents were selected using the random purposeful sampling. The study findings established that the respondents use face to face and mobile or telephone communication to communicate and that wellbeing, happiness and effectiveness are some of the outcomes they experienced when using their chosen forms of interpersonal communication. They also highlighted that the urgency of the situation at hand, physical elements, and time dictate on why they choose particular methods of interpersonal communication to communicate. The study recommends for sensitization of mid-level managers and breastfeeding employed mothers on the importance of interpersonal communication at the workplace and its role in ensuring work productivity.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the background of the study, the statement of the problem and the objectives of the study. It also provides the research questions, describes the significance, limitations and delimitations of the study, conceptual framework, assumption of the study and operationalization of terms.

1.2 Background of the study

In order to have good performance, it is important for an organization to have effective communication at the workplace. Managers who possess the ability to communicate well, can in a clear manner convey their ideas to give subordinates the ability to understand their needs and can make a positive contribution to the organization (Engage for success, 2019). Likewise, lack of communication can lead to frustration, decreased productivity, absenteeism and a higher employee turnover rate. Effective communication is very important because it directly influences the behavior of employees and the way they perform. Effective communication, including clear instructions, prompt delivery, and proper explanation, is an important consideration in strong co-operation between managers and employees (Szyszka, 2017). Therefore, communication pervades all aspects of human life including productivity in workplaces. It is known to boost productivity by evoking positive feelings such as happiness, empathy, encouragement and contentment. It has a negative impact on productivity if it induces unhappiness,

discouragement and discontent. The type of communication used, is especially critical in situations involving 'vulnerable' categories of people like breastfeeding working mothers who are sometimes discriminated in work scenarios and discouraged from work.

In the last few decades, there has been a major increase in the number of women having young children in the workforce globally. In 2012, 67.8 percent of women having children who are below the age of six were employed, more than twice the percentage in 1976, when only 31.4% of women worked outside the home (World Bank, 2020). With younger women joining the workforce, it is becoming increasingly important to pay attention to communication on issues such as maternity leave, breastfeeding breaks and breastfeeding facilities or expressing breast milk at work (Rollins et al., 2016).

Breastfeeding is an unparalleled way that provides proper nutrition and health care, growth and development for the baby and also helps in ovarian and breast cancer prevention among women (Hansen, 2016). Studies have also shown that breast milk is important in reducing the risk of common ailments, including diarrhea and respiratory tract infections, ear and urinary tract infections (Horta et al., 2015). Such advantages made the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2002 to suggest that infants be breastfed exclusively for the first six months and continue breastfeeding continuously for 24 months or even more with adequate nutrition (WHO & UNICEF, 2020).

Kenya has accepted these international recommendations and has put in place the necessary policy and legal frameworks to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. Kenya compares well at 61 percent with global exclusive breastfeeding prevalence of 38

percent, but falls short of the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation of global availability of 80% for better child survival, growth and development (WHO, 2014). In addition to the evidence that breastfeeding offers different health benefits to babies and mothers, many babies are not properly breast-fed for a variety of reasons. One such reason is that, female workers do not have enough support in the workplace to be able to effectively breastfeed as recommended by the WHO and the International Labor Organization (ILO) -Maternity Protection Convention No.183 and 191 of 2000 recommends at least 14 weeks (98 days) paid maternity leave ,one or two daily breaks or reduced working hours for female employees to breastfeed their babies and, where possible, the provision of nursing services under adequate hygiene conditions at or near the work place (ILO, 2017). In Kenya however, the Employment Act, 2007 allows three months of childbirth after which female employees return to work. This therefore means that the transition period to return to work after childbirth is a critical time to support the continued breastfeeding of female employees. Therefore, the only way breastfeeding mothers can meet these important health standards is to be able to breastfeed or express breast milk for some months in their workplaces.

However, this can only be achieved if they are not stigmatized by coworkers who might view the act of pumping milk at work as unprofessional. Coworker discrimination or stigma against breastfeeding employed mothers happens through subtle verbal and nonverbal communication because in some cases, women who need more breaks are seen as less productive (Zhuang et al., 2018).

Reducing breastfeeding obstacles for employed breastfeeding mothers by providing breastfeeding rooms and lactation breaks is one of the low-cost interventions that can reduce absenteeism and increase the effectiveness, dedication, and retention of the employee at work (Cesar et al., 2016). For example, Safaricom Kenya Limited, a telecommunications company situated in Westlands, Nairobi, has an updated Maternity Leave Policy which was driven at guaranteeing that the needs of the employed breastfeeding mothers are met. It also has an equipped and professionally operated childcare facilities with a doctor on location for emergency care, a secluded mother's room for lactation and comprehensive medical insurance ("Employee wellness to productivity", 2019; Kepsa, 2018). Other companies that have similar facilities in Kenya include Isuzu East Africa, Kenya Women Microfinance bank, Nestle, Mabati Rolling Mills, Kenya Red cross, Davies and Shirtliff, World Vision, Eka Hotels and Seven Seas ("Employee wellness to productivity" 2019; Kepsa,2018). Abassi and Hollman (2000) insist that managers must realize that employees play an important role in an organization's success. In addition, the key factors for organizational productivity are motivated and efficient individuals. Evidence suggests that a work based breastfeeding environment can support mothers who are breastfeeding to reach their breastfeeding needs and at the same time continue participating in the labour force, this is confirmed in a study that was done in two cities in Pennsylvania. The participants, who were employers, took part in the research and reported a huge amount of organizational success as a result of support given for breastfeeding at work (Payton et al., 2019).

Managers must develop two-way communication at work, ensuring that employees have all the resources to do their job, provide adequate training to improve their knowledge and abilities, establish systems for bonus work where various financial and non-financial incentives are given, create a unique culture that fosters hard work and brings to life success stories and form a robust system for managing managers and employees (Markos, 2010).

Previous studies have shown that most organizations often encounter communication challenges in formally supporting breastfeeding employed mothers. However, even though there are legal policies in place, they do not assure support for breastfeeeding, neither do they determine how to obtain such assistance (Bridges, Frank & Cutin (1997); Brown, Poags & Kasprzycki (2001) and Stratton & Henry (2011). Instead, it is through interpersonal communication where employees negotiate and experience breastfeeding support in the workplace (Rose (2012); Turner & Norwood (2013); Dunn, Zavela & Cline (2004). Interpersonal communication refers to interactions in which 2 (or more) individuals exchange and develop relations (McCornack, 2013). It is through these interactions, that employees are able to learn whether their employer will support them, withhold their support, explain to them, challenge them, expand their support, or implement them (Brashers, 2001). Interpersonal communication is therefore an important element of support for workplace breastfeeding. In organizations and individuals as a social being, communication is very important, whether good or bad is an inseparable beginning of life and also plays a key role in all undertakings directed at achieving

company goals (Ada et al., 2008). For example, effective communication has been found to improve job satisfaction (Holtzhausen, 2002) which in the long run improves productivity (Litterst & Eyo, 1982).

1.2.1 Isuzu East Africa

Isuzu East Africa is a global automotive company founded and headquartered in Tokyo Japan since 1937 (Isuzu, 2021). In Kenya it is located in Embakasi in Nairobi County. It has 228 employees of whom 27 are contract workers and only 20 are women. It has eight senior managers of whom only one is female. It also has ten other managers in the mid-level management of whom two are female. The organization uses various forms of communication to communicate with its internal and external shareholders such as newsletters, magazines, emails, website etc. The management also holds frequent physical and online meetings with its employees in a bid to help improve the performance of the workforce keeping employees informed of company policies, activities, services, community events, and other company matters. Isuzu East Africa's mission statement is -A global team delivering inspired products and services committed to exceeding expectations, while its vision statement is -A leader in transportation, commercial vehicles and diesel engines, supporting our customers and respecting the environment. It also engages itself in various corporate social responsibility activities (Isuzu East Africa, 2021)

1.3 Problem statement

Whereas the need for interpersonal communication is evident, previous research has identified a disconnect in communication in cases where businesses were ignorant of employee needs, because managers assumed it is was the responsibility of employees to make their need known whereas employees were not at liberty to do so (Stratton & Henry, 2011). Studies have shown that employed breastfeeding mothers continue to suffer despite the existence of breastfeeding policies at the workplace because of lack of proper communication between them and their immediate bosses (Zhuang et al., 2018). Anderson et al. (2015) found interpersonal communication on breastfeeding at the workplace lacking in a big way between employees and employers. It is through interpersonal communication, that managers and employees learn whether support from their employer will be provided, withheld, explained, misinterpreted, made individually, challenged, expanded, and implemented (Brashers, 2001). Therefore, interpersonal communication in the corporate world is an important element of workplace support for employed breastfeeding mothers and also to the organization in ensuring job satisfaction and productivity. In case communication is stifled or hindered, it can have a negative effect on employee retention, morale and overall productivity (Vdovin, 2017). This study explores the interpersonal communication gap existing between managers and employed breastfeeding women at the workplace despite the existence of breastfeeding policies guiding organizations.

1.4 Purpose Statement of the study

The aim of the study was to explore the contribution of interpersonal communication on work productivity between employed breastfeeding mothers and their bosses at Isuzu - Kenya.

1.5 Research objectives

1.5.1 General objective

To assess the contribution of interpersonal communication in employed breastfeeding mothers and their bosses to work productivity.

1.5.2 The study is guided by the following specific research objectives:

i) To establish the type of interpersonal communication applied between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity.

ii) To establish reasons behind the choices of methods of interpersonal communication used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers regarding work productivity.

iii) To analyse the responses of each type of interpersonal communication methods used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers in relation to work productivity.

iv) To determine the outcomes of interpersonal communication on work productivity.

1.6 Research questions

The following specific questions guided the study:

i) Which type of interpersonal communication is used between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity?

ii) What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with your boss regarding work productivity?

iii) How does the manager and the employed breastfeeding mother respond to each type of interpersonal communication regarding work productivity?

iv) What are some of the outcomes of interpersonal communication methods used by managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity?

1.7 Theoretical foundation

To better understand this study, the research used the Uses and gratifications theory which suggests that the human behavior of communication is driven by the needs and desires of the people (Papacharissi, 2010). Communication boost productivity by inducing positive feelings like happiness, contentment and empathy. The more an employee of a given company is contented or gratified through positive and effective communication, the more they become dedicated to their job (Vickery et al., 2015). Vickery et al. (2015) also added that employee productivity results from effective communication. This study also used the Shannon and Weaver model of communication designed to develop the effective communication between sender and receiver. It contains concepts such as source, transmitter, noise, message, receiver, channel, information destination, encode and decode (Mzumbwe, 2020).

1.8 Definition of terms

Breastfeeding- providing a child with breast milk either straight from the breast or as expressed milk in a bottle (World Health Organization, 2001).

Breastfeeding needs- support, communication, advice, facilities, time, and products that help mothers increase breastfeeding duration (Kornides & Kitsantas, 2013).

Breast pump- a device used to draw milk from a woman's breasts by suction (U.S. Food and Drug Administration, 2018).

Exclusive breastfeeding- providing an infant with breast milk directly from the mother, or expressed milk given by bottle with no other liquids or solids with the exception of drops consisting of vitamins, mineral supplements, or medicines (World Health Organization, 2017).

Interpersonal communication- interaction where two (or more) people exchange information and build relationships (McCornack, 2013). In this paper, interpersonal communication refers to communication between the employer and the breastfeeding mother regarding her need for lactation accommodations in the workplace.

Maternity leave- the time a new mother is allowed to leave work for some time after her child has been born (American Pregnancy Association, 2019). The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job protected leave per year (United States Department of Labor, 2017).

Productivity- This is the output gained from a fixed amount of inputs (Bohlander, 2009).

1.9 Assumptions of the study

There were several assumptions for this study:

i] There were existing policies that supported employed breastfeeding mothers at Isuzu East Africa

ii] Interpersonal communication impacted work productivity in Isuzu East Africa-Kenya.

iii] Isuzu E.A Kenya used interpersonal communication.

1.9.1 Justification of the study

This study sought to establish the contribution of interpersonal communication between employed breastfeeding mothers and mid-level managers on work productivity. Interpersonal communication is one of the most important skills business professionals can have. In companies and organizations of all kinds, effective communication determines whether a team can work and achieve key business objectives. Interpersonal communication plays an important role in the satisfaction, motivation and success of the employees.

This study can help in social change by highlighting the importance of effective interpersonal communication between managers and employees. Identification for the need to have effective interpersonal communication in an organization may inform leaders about ways to interact with employed breastfeeding mothers to help them meet their personal needs and the same time improve work productivity. The information can be very beneficial to managers who supervise women under this group as well as help the

employed breastfeeding mothers to know how to express and advocate for their needs to their bosses without necessarily affecting their work productivity. This study emanates from a perspective that, although policies that guide employers and employed breastfeeding mothers in the workplace exist, previous studies have shown that those policies cannot be effective without sufficient communication Anderson et al. (2015).

Interpersonal communication skills are essential for social interaction, and for the creation and maintenance of all relationships. Bad communication skills can cause irreparable damage to relationships; affects productivity, satisfaction, performance, morality, trust, respect, confidence, and physical health (Un ange passé, 2008). In any organization, success in achieving its goals depends largely on the skills of the manager and the ability to communicate (Magnus, 2009).

1.9.2 Scope of the study

This study was carried out in Nairobi County. The research was limited to employed breastfeeding mothers working under supervision of a manager. It focuses on mothers who had children under four years of age and have benefited from the breastfeeding support services at Isuzu East Africa. It is also limited to supervisors who have directly supervised the working mothers.

1.9.3 Limitations of the study

The following are the limitations of this research:

i] Information gathered relies on self-reported data as provided by the employed breastfeeding mothers in the study.

ii] The results obtained from this research represent the studied population in the identified period and cannot be generalized to the whole community.

Iii] Even though comparable to other populations within the society, the sample population

might not give a reflection of the same social demographics of the entire county.

1.9.4 Delimitations

The outcome of this research may not be characteristic or a full representation of the whole region of Nairobi or the whole country. The results are an instantaneous snapshot of a caseload and cannot be generalized to the whole population of working mothers.

1.9. 5 Significance of the study

The contributions from this study would be of interest to the following groups:

The employed breastfeeding Mother

For the mother to effectively understand and appreciate the place of interpersonal communication in an organization in advocating for breastfeeding needs without altering work productivity.

Organizations

To understand the importance or the contribution of interpersonal communication especially for the employed breastfeeding mother, in achieving key organizational objectives.

Policy Makers

To come up with policies regarding interpersonal communication and its importance in creating family friendly working environments.

Researchers

This research will form a base for future studies.

1.9.6 Chapter summary

This chapter elaborated the problem statement and the purpose of the study which was to establish the contribution of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity. The research questions raised are; i) Which type of interpersonal communication is used between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity? ii) What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with your boss regarding work productivity? iii) How does the manager and the employed breastfeeding mother respond to each type of interpersonal communication used in relation to work productivity? And lastly, iv) What are some of

the outcomes of the interpersonal communication methods used by managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity?

Chapter two entails the literature review providing an in-depth discussion from existing literature related to this research from various researchers and scholars.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of existing literature on interpersonal communication. It covers various aspects of interpersonal communication. It also discusses the conceptual framework, the Uses and gratifications theory and Shannon and Weaver model of communication as the relevant literature to support the study. The chapter finally identifies the research gaps that this study seeks to fill by answering the following research questions:

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Uses and gratifications theory

This is a social and psychological theory which implies that the behavior of human communication is driven by desires and needs, this theory has evolved over time and now it seeks to point out both the motives and consequences of utilizing new media

(Papacharissi, 2010). We use communication and utilize media to fulfill those needs and wants. In this way, the uses and gratifications theory is more concerned with the capacities that media serve for individuals than with what media do to individuals (Rubin, 2002).

Individuals get information, interaction, unwinding, mindfulness, elude and amusement through media which they utilize for interpersonal communication as well (Papacharissi, 2010). The theory is closely related to human psychology of needs, thought processes and influence. This theory can be applied to improve quality work connections in an organization. The supervisor offers employees appealing responsibilities, data sharing, communication, openings for improvement, and verbal rewards in exchange for solid communication, commitment and trust (Ballinger, Schoorman, & Lehman, 2009). Compelling communication on leadership and engagement of employees propel workers to contribute viably and remain in the organizations for a longer period (Mishra et al., 2014)

In contrast, Ballinger, Schoorman, and Lehman (2009) reported an absence of trust and respect in the absence of communication circumstances. As a result, employees who understand their managers want to build a relationship and are grateful for their managers apparent desire to do so (Mignonac & Richebe, 2013).

In this study, it can be argued that managers who empathize with employed breastfeeding mothers will be treasured than those who don't. Members of staff who receive constant backing and support from their management and coworkers, on the other hand, have a

solid affection to and happiness with their work (Karatepe, 2013). The contentment of workers with their work is critical to the victory of a company. Job satisfaction aids in the reduction of turnover. (Tews, Michel, & Stafford, 2013). The more an employee is satisfied as a result of effective and positive communication, the less likely that individual will leave that organization (Vickery et al., 2015). According to Vickery et al. (2015), effective communication is a predictor of employee productivity. Positive communication, motivation, happiness, and appreciation have all been shown proven to be beneficial. As a result, applying this theory to this research will aid in determining if interpersonal communication increases or decreases production in Isuzu East Africa - Kenya. It will also help the researcher to establish whether the use of interpersonal communication would maintain or weaken workplace relationships and productivity.

2.2.2 Shannon-Weaver Model of communication

A very basic way to describe communication is through the Shannon-Weaver model of communication. The Shannon-Weaver model of communication shows effective communication between a sender and receiver (Mzumbwe, 2020).

Figure 2.1 below from Mzumbwe (2020) illustrates the process described by the Shannon-Weaver model of communication.

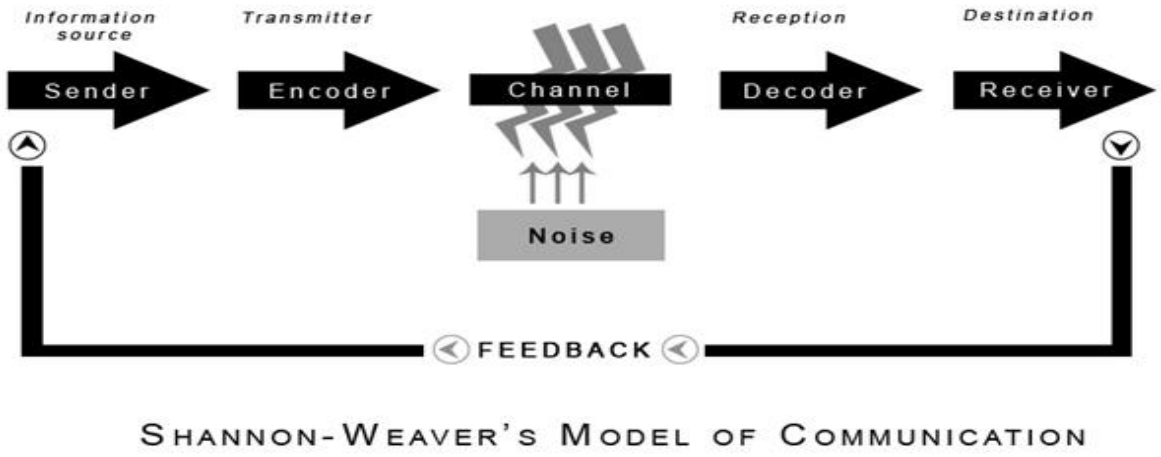


Figure 2.1 Adapted from Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication. (Mzumbwe, 2020).

Concepts such as the information source, transmitter, noise, message, receiver, channel, information destination, and encode and decode are all discussed in this model. (Mzumbwe, 2020). In this model, the senders play the primary role since they act as the originator and select the desired message or information while the receivers play the secondary role in communication. Instead of relying on the employed breastfeeding mothers (the receiver) to understand the breastfeeding policies (or the message) on their own, the managers (the senders) should communicate the organization policies more effectively to encourage the mother to breastfeed without affecting work output.

Noise is a disturbance that does not allow the receiver to understand the message that was intended by the sender. Noise in this case could be managers and co- workers who have a negative attitude towards employed breastfeeding mothers who require special

consideration at work (Mzumbwe, 2020). Managers (the senders) can help decrease possible noise by communicating with the employed breastfeeding mothers by communicating to co-workers on the need to support the employed breastfeeding mothers and by providing the necessary facilities. The employed breastfeeding mothers on the other hand can minimize the noise by communicating their needs in a proper way and following the guidelines set by their superiors.

Feedback is also an important component when it comes to effectively relaying a message or information. According to the Schramm's Model of Communication, communication is a never-ending circular process that includes feedback to let the sender know if the receiver has interpreted the messages correctly or not; the message becomes useless or even worse if the receiver does not interpret the message as intended .Schramm's Model of Communication used the major principles from the Shannon and Weaver Model of communication, but Schramm's model presents communication in a more psychological way whereas the Shannon- Weaver model is more technical. However, both models emphasize that communication is not a one-way process and that the message will lose its effectiveness if feedback is not part of the process. Schramm also believed that the background of the individuals who are involved is important in the communication process because messages will be interpreted differently by people with varied levels of education, experience, and cultural customs. It may be difficult for the sender to learn how to tailor a message for different individuals. Therefore, in this study, this theory can be used in establishing the use of interpersonal communication in

relationships between the manager and employed breastfeeding mother. It will also help in establishing the use of interpersonal communication in enhancing or reducing work productivity.

2.3 Conceptual framework

Ravitch and Riggan (2012) define conceptual framework as a visual explanation that is done either graphically or in a form of a narrative indicating the main variables under study. The conceptual model below has been developed to provide a systematic overlook of various independent and intervening variables in exploring the contribution of interpersonal communication between employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers at Isuzu East Africa.

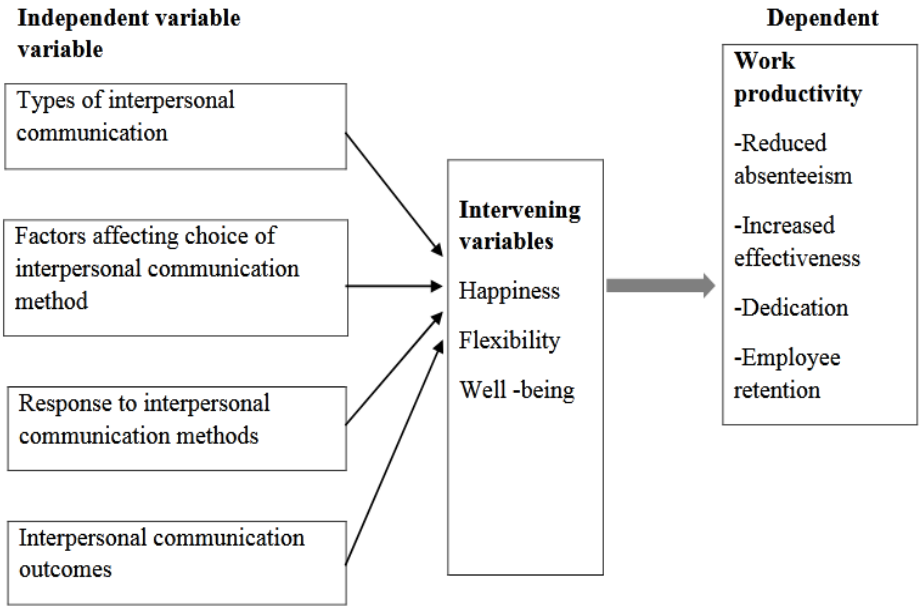


Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework for the study (Source: Researcher, 2020)

Nachmias and Nachmias (2000) argue that conceptual frameworks are descriptive groupings that are systematically placed in a broad structure of explicit propositions-statements of relationship between two or more empirical properties-which are to be accepted or rejected. These authors further expound that conceptual framework belongs to a higher level than a taxonomy because its prepositions summarize behavior as well as provide explanation and predictions for vast numbers of empirical observations.

In this study, the independent variables will entail the different interpersonal communication methods applied by employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers to communicate the manager's response toward those methods and the different

interpersonal communication outcomes. There are intervening variables in between the independent and dependent variables. The work productivity of an employed breastfeeding mother depends on the intervening variables by the independent variable (Interpersonal communication). Some of the intervening variables like happiness and flexibility cannot directly be influenced by interpersonal communication. However, interpersonal communication can be used to escalate productivity in the workplace by creating a proper communication environment. Again, through the use of interpersonal communication at the workplace, personal challenges can be addressed in a proper way to ensure the employed breastfeeding mothers remain productive at work. Work productivity can be measured using factors like happiness, appreciation, work flexibility, motivation and empathy.

2.4 Interpersonal communication

It is difficult and almost impossible to imagine any organization that does not require people to associate with other people. Employees of the organization may use interpersonal communication to handle complaints from their customers, to persuade their superiors to give you time off, or to comfort a colleague who is dealing with a serious problem.

Interpersonal communication is the sending and receiving of information between two or more people. Singh (2014) defines interpersonal communication as the transmission of data information and shared understanding between people. On the other hand, interpersonal communication also incorporates these interactions in a variety of

relationships, such as between co-workers and between managers and the lower ranking employees. The basic concept of interpersonal communication skills was first introduced in the 1950s (Berko et al., 1998). Furthermore, the ability to work well with others without any form of prejudice has been referred to as interpersonal communication skills. Indeed, in the recent years interpersonal communication has always been highly regarded as a crucial ingredient for effective corporate governance. This is the reason as to why organizations and institutions place great value on interpersonal communication (Singh, 2014). The advantage of Singh's work is that, these observations are lodged within a perspective built up on the argument that, the cost of improper communication can be higher, both at the individual level and workplace. As a matter of fact, in the personal sphere, retaining relationships with family and friends is often confronted with difficulties. Dealing with misunderstandings and trying to maintain a relationship with someone who holds political or religious point of view that conflict with yours, requires considerable effort and skills (Singh, 2014).

Not surprisingly, then, personal relations are often broken when efforts to maintain a relationship appear to outweigh the benefits. Therefore, interpersonal communication at the workplace may also experience the same challenges to those outlined above as belonging to the individual scope. However, communication at work has another obstacle to issues and expectations which can lead to more consequences when relations break down. For example, poor client communication can result in business loss. Improper

communication with a manager can lead to job loss. Abusive or discriminatory communication with an employee may, on the other hand, may lead to legal action.

2.5 Global, regional and local perspective of interpersonal communication

An employee's well-being is directly proportional to the sense of belonging to a company where they work. Companies around the world have therefore begun to use new forms of organization on the one hand that analyse individual skills and attitudes, while at the same time promoting empathy among employees.

A study conducted by Deloitte on more than 10,000 businesses and HR Leaders in 119 countries analyzing corporate power at the global level, found that 75% of respondents considered work experience to be important: investing in employee knowledge means building a company culture for personal well-being, and results specific in terms of performance and productivity. Combining personal feelings with business needs is a practice that a team leader cannot ignore (Human Capital Trends, 2019). In my opinion, while providing sound lessons on the need to cater for employees' psychological needs, none of these arguments adequately engage the critical issue of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers.

The U.S. economy has seen productivity growth rates above average over the past decade (Jorgenson et al., 2006). However, experts and scholars often attribute this development to globalization and growth of the information and communication technology. Several

scholars suggest the strategies individuals, groups and organizations striving to navigate this highly interconnected world (Saxenian 1994; Castells 2000; Friedman, 2005).

According to a study done in four Ghanaian organizations, employees want a transformation from the current pattern of over centralized communication system in organizations to a more horizontal interpersonal communication (Abugre, 2013). The findings also emphasize the importance of effective interpersonal communication and interaction as processes which can affect the attitudes of the employees. The results show that organizations can only rise by working together as teams both with managers and employees and by communicating effectively (Abugre, 2013). Therefore, communication skills help people to reach out to one another or to confront events that challenge our flexibility, integrity, expressiveness and critical thinking skills. In their study conducted at Nokia Siemens Networks Company in Kenya, Mutuku and Mathooko (2014) point out that communication and information sharing had a significant impact on employee motivation, followed by employee involvement in decision-making. However, by focusing on information sharing and basic communication in an organization, Mutuku and Mathooko (2014) overlooked the deeper subject of interpersonal communication in an organizational set up.

2.6 The Interpersonal Communication Process

The process through which people express themselves, interpret, and coordinate messages so as to create a shared meaning, meet social goals, manage personal identity, and carry out their relationships is known as interpersonal communication.

Interpersonal communication includes an exchange of messages which uses words, phrases and/or non-verbal behavior to communicate the thoughts, feelings and intentions. Encoding is the process of forming a message by choosing the words, phrases, and non-verbal behaviors. Interpreting messages received from others is referred to as decoding.

Below is the graphic illustration of the interpersonal communication process.

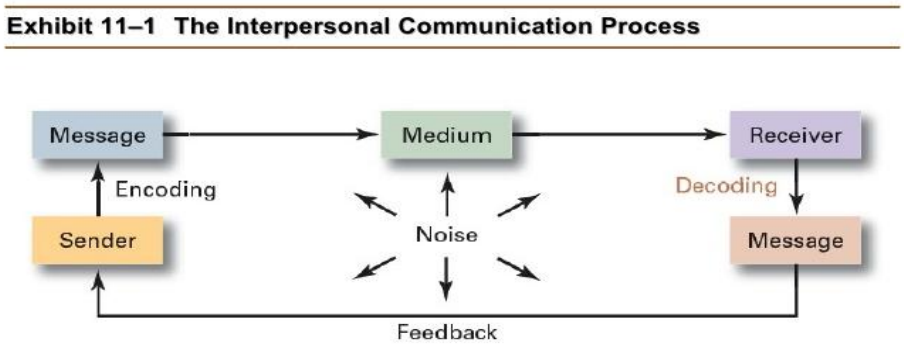


Figure 2.3: The interpersonal communication process (Source: Kapur, 2020)

According to Kapur (2020) the message is the sender's intended meaning. It has to be converted to symbolic form through encoding. The Channel is the medium through which the message travels, then decoding is when the receiver retranslates the message.

Distortions in the channel of communication affect the return message from receiver to sender. Effective communication is an art and must be effectively practiced at the workplace to better achieve an organization's objectives and achieve better results.

For example, clear communication between an employee and his or her manager is important in ensuring that the employee is allowed the necessary time to produce milk without disrupting the entire workflow. Anderson et al. (2015) in one study found out that even when breastfeeding mothers are conscious of the breastfeeding support provided at the place of work, interpersonal communication challenges arose while trying to get the support. For instance, using breaks to express milk requires interpersonal communication and negotiating whether legal policies in support of such practices exist. Participants in this particular study reported that interactions between people regarding lactation support in the workplace usually occur in response to unclear or confusing policies. These conclusions which Anderson discusses add weight to the argument that interpersonal communication is key between managers and employees in an organization. Singh (2014) acknowledges that the most important aspect of interpersonal communication is reinforcement, so the utmost important strategies for effective interpersonal communication are assurance tactics. He argues that people with strong interpersonal communication can always defend their rights, disagree and offer conflicting views without making other employees more efficient. With this in mind there is a need for how well-organized managers of the organization communicate effectively to help in

communication with staff, build better affiliations, and improve attitudes and work ethics (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2014).

Many researchers have found that superior subordinate communication is a key to the continuous success of the organization (Daniels, Spiker, & Papa, 1997). This is important as manager -subordinate communication is linked to many positive results, which includes co-operation on greater heights and satisfaction of an employee and as a result it enhances work productivity (Madlock, 2008). The same way interpersonal communication can be a challenge in supporting breastfeeding at work, it can also be a solution. Good interpersonal communication with direct managers can be carried out through personal suggestions or open discussions.

Research studies have also shown that communication improves employee performance (Goris, 2007) and poor communication reduces employee commitment to the company (Kramer, 1999). While it is clear that interpersonal communication is necessary, previous research also identifies a "communication breakdown" if employers were not aware of employee needs because employers felt it was their job to express their needs - and employees were not at liberty to do so (Stratton & Henry, 2011).In view of this, interpersonal policy communication is important because, as opposed to static, written policies, both people are dynamic in the conversation and can ask questions, clarify thoughts and create solutions. McCornack (2013) agrees that interpersonal communication conveys information, not only about the workplace policies but also whether an employer values his employees and considers their needs.

Butts et al. (2010) study focused on the impact of managers' communication style in determining management communication style for employee satisfaction. The results showed that there was no link to job satisfaction in using any particular style. Fix and Sias (2006) however highlight the employee perception about the supervisor's use of person centric communication style, the quality of their leader -member relationship and their satisfaction with work. Positive results were found to exist between person centric communication, leader-member relationship and job satisfaction. In addition, the research established that person centric communication is mostly associated with the job satisfaction of an employee.

2.7 Functions of Interpersonal Communication at the workplace

Interpersonal communication most commonly used in an organization involves day-to-day internal communication between employees, customer meetings, staff evaluation meetings, project discussions, and staff personal needs. Furthermore, online conversations today also contribute to a large portion of employees' interpersonal workplace. Interpersonal communication in the workplace plays an important role including problem solving in that it enables people to discuss issues and to measure the advantages and disadvantages of alternatives before the final solution is reached. It also helps in alignment of business goals, reduces workplace miscommunication in that, when employees feel they can talk freely to decision-makers, miscommunications at work, gossip and rumours are less likely to occur. It also ensures effective management and leadership where interpersonal relationships, and trust are built which are some of the

important skills for an effective leader. The technical expertise on the highly competitive 21st century markets alone is not sufficient for workers (Lazarus, 2013). The need for individual soft skills has indeed been very important (Seetha, 2014) without mentioning the complex and soft technical skills of the leading employees in the organization (Griffith & Hoppner, 2013). Interpersonal communication also helps in ensuring employees' success in that when a manager knows what worries employees - both inside and out of work it will help build stronger relationships with them. In the end, every employee is a person who is healthy and anxious away from work, with its challenges and tribulations. Understanding them will create trust, develop a character that helps with productivity and facilitate good communication. In this case, breastfeeding needs are recommended as an out-of-work problem and therefore communication between people can be used by the manager and the breastfeeding mother to agree on what will work best for both their individual and professional needs.

Better employee culture can also be achieved through interpersonal communication at the workplace. When it comes to corporate culture, openness and honesty can go a long way in making employees feel comfortable and valued (Hoppner, 2013). Effective communication does not mean simply to tell employees what they are expecting; it also includes listening to feedback from staff members, both good and bad. When employees feel they are being listened to, they feel appreciated and become an important part of the company. All of these things enhance the overall happiness of the workers, and happy workers are productive workers. Employees, on the other hand, who feel that they are not

being listened to or appreciated are more likely to be dissatisfied with their work. This dissatisfaction will create fear in their work and make it difficult for them to accomplish their tasks on time.

2.8 Relationship of interpersonal communication between midlevel managers and employed mothers.

Important and vital to all administrative functions, communication is the process of conveying information and making oneself understood by one or more people (Sanchez & Guo, 2005). Communication, in other words, involves transmission and understanding of meaning, transfer means, the message was received in a way which the recipient can interpret. However, to understand the message is not the same as the receiver agreeing with the message received. In general, communication is important in all organizational activities and the key to cultivation of a well-functioning environ through harmonized communication.

In this case, communication satisfaction with managers' methods and techniques has a major effect on work satisfaction, quality and consistency of communication methods. Similarly, productivity is a dynamic dependency which is determined by many factors, and the supervisory communication styles is one of the most important problems leading to positive or negative results. One of the most important factors that can result in job satisfactions is the relationship between employees and their direct managers (Dupre & Day, 2007). Communication defines interactions with individuals in an organization and how this interaction works for every selected tool. It is important to note that managers

interact daily with their subordinates who generally provide feedback on performance, appraisal performance, information and so on. These actions, in turn, promote or enhance the commitment of the organization as it is the way in which these practices are perceived to contribute to the commitment level. (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Tansky & Chohen, 2001).

2.9 Communication and employee performance

Some experts have expressed various assumptions about communication skills that have been applied as a prediction of work achievement. The significance of communication cannot be denied to organizations as they have been used to influence the bottom line as shown by the increasing evidence linked to work productivity (Mud et al., 2014). If effective communication is established, the organization is able to experience good coordination between groups or units whereas its absence will indicate problems in the operations of a company or cause serious damage to individuals. Managers often share information with their subordinates (Hartog et al., 2012). This ensures that employees understand the policies of the company (Ajala, 2012). More information is shared when the employee is expected to be more productive (Vergsese, 2017). Enhanced employee morale, retention rate and overall workplace productivity can positively impact effective communication at the workplace.

It is recommended that the people taking part in the communication process require to have competencies and basic skills, if not, the information will not be understood properly. Moreover, it basically depends on the available facilities in organizations and

actions of the management in determining how a message is received and accepted for delivery that is accurate (Chen, 2008). In addition, as one of the key issues, managers have been asked to examine the feedback received from employees that may affect the motivation for their work (Muda et al., 2014). This is in line with the current status of employees, including the timely delivery of that information, and therefore, they can act on the messages they receive, learning new skills from their employees through proper communication process. Beyerlein et al. (2003) states it is the responsibility of management to coordinate strategic support systems to allow employees communicate their needs and air their frustrations, because this will help the organization run smoothly and also make a number of employees become the biggest source. In view of this, other studies have also investigated open communication as having a direct relationship with employee performance (Dwyer, 2005). Other studies show, however, that supporting communication received attention as a source of employee performance (Ducharme & Martin, 2000).

2.9.1 Breastfeeding laws

The growing controversy on maternal paid employment and breastfeeding has been addressed three main ways in governments around the world. First, they have regulated working conditions for protection of motherhood as long as employers are required to grant maternity leave at least since the year 1919 (Brodribb, 2012). Secondly, employers are burdened to accept breastfeeding and lactation by their employees under the anti-

discrimination law. The third approach is to promote best practice for supporting breastfeeding, for example education and support for interested employers.

In Kenya, the Health Act 2017 has made the necessary provisions on breastfeeding at the workplace. Employers are obligated to grant all nursing employees break intervals for nursing in addition to the regular times off for meals to breastfeed or express milk. The nursing break includes the time it takes an employee to get to and from the lactation station and is counted as paid working hours provided that such interval is not more than a total of one hour for every eight-hour working period (Ministry of Health, 2017).

Employers are required to establish Lactation stations in the workplace that will be provided with adequate equipment and services including hand washing equipment, refrigerators or appropriate cooling facilities, electric pumps for breast pumps, a small table and comfortable chairs. The lactation channel should not be found in the rest rooms. Employers are required to take drastic measures to prevent any direct or indirect use of the promotion, marketing and marketing of infant formulas and or substitutes within breastfeeding stations. (Ministry of Health, 2017). Nevertheless, today businesses that have company breastfeeding policies and procedures in place breastfeeding duration remain shorter compared to breastfeeding mothers who do not return to work (Anderson et al., 2015).

Managers influence the work environment by either conforming to or overlooking workplace policies concerning breastfeeding, supporting informally or discouraging lactating employees or ignoring concerns that may arise amongst employees who are

trying to continue to breastfeed (Rojjanasrirat, 2004).However, while providing sound guidelines and lessons for organizations to follow to ensure employed breastfeeding mothers are comfortable, none of those guidelines adequately address the critical issue of interpersonal communication between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their bosses.

2.9.2 Age, gender or position

Anderson et al. (2015) in his study acknowledges that many participants pointed out the communication challenges arising from an environment that is male-dominated or by speaking to a male manager directly on breastfeeding support. According to the study, participants pointed out that male colleagues had uneasiness in conversing about lactation. A different study by Sheppard et al. (2013) in Columbia noted female–female clash as more problematic than male–male and male–female conflict in the workplace. This study was done following the perception that women find it difficult working with one another.

Position of power of the breastfeeding employee, is considered every so often to be a lower power grade equated with managers, since employed breastfeeding mothers are a bit early in their careers since they are in their childbearing years. In many cases, employees often need to negotiate directly with their supervisors in order to provide support for breastfeeding at work. Interpersonal communication is a challenge when balancing of power goes hand in hand, which means that one person in a relationship has greater power than another. In such a case, the manager has authority above the

employee, and this limits the employee's capability to communicate freely about his or her needs in relation to breastfeeding support.

In their study, Anderson et al. (2015) discovered how large numbers of participants felt that attitudes towards breastfeeding in general, and pumping in particular, differed significantly between (younger) generation and "older" generations, whose breastfeeding attitudes sometimes coincided with current approaches. The researchers found that there was a lack of communication between employees and employers due to age (mothers are younger), gender (mothers are female) and employment rank in the workplace (mothers are more commonly at beginning ranks). Such dynamics reduce mothers' capability to communicate, as they are frightened to speak out. The authors stress the importance of interpersonal communication to ensure employees and employers are conscious of the needs of employees. This will increase the support of breastfeeding to an upper level that will address equality and diversity. On matters gender, women are perceived to have greater empathy and skills to build stronger relationships than men (Matsa & Miller, 2014). This means that working breastfeeding mothers may find it easier to talk to a female manager compared to a male manager. These findings contradict a study conducted by (Sheppard et al., 2013) in Columbia that found conflicts between women and women to be more problematic than men and women in the workplace.

2.9.3 Internal corporate communication

The real responsibility of the supervisor is not only to manage the department or the activities of the organization but to manage conversations and meaning (Czech &

Forward, 2013). In other words, management is a form of communication as leaders are talk about the past, present and the future in which their ideas and intentions are expressed through language, stories, metaphors, narratives, and culture (Hackman & Johnson, 2009).

Managers and managers traditionally spend most of their time communicating with their subordinates in one way (face-to-face interview, memos, notice boards, general meeting, staff handbook, community speeches, etc.). Today however, more and more employees are finding that the most important part of their job is communication which ideally is the exchange of understanding, which comes from the recipient leading to better and more effective organization because it is the basis for management.

Communication flow can create identification with employees to submit desirable values, in relation to the goals and objectives of the organization. However, better performance can only be achieved if there is a reasonable level of expectation and when social interaction between managers and employees is fair and equitable (Wang, 2005). However, employees also need to contact their managers directly to make their work or out of work needs of the job known and addressed. Employee communication is the dissemination of information related to the day-to-day work of an employer and is also paramount if the employee is expected to be an effective staff member. It identifies human considerations as an important source (Buchanan & Doyle, 1999).

Chow, Fuller and Olson (2011) have reviewed the attitudes of the US managers in supporting breastfeeding at the workplace. Five focus groups comprising of 25

participants were conducted with supervisors and managers in the state of Michigan to evaluate their attitude towards supporting breastfeeding. In this study, interviewed managers recognized that each employee may have different needs in breastfeeding; managers therefore expressed willingness to talk to staff to achieve a positive experience. This means that efficient communication between managers and staff is beneficial for addressing the different needs of individual staff (Chow et al., 2011).

Similarly, Rojjanasrirat (2004) conducted a study to better understand breastfeeding experiences after returning to work. Fifty women completed a questionnaire about the types of support they received when they returned to work (Rojjanasrirat, 2004). Participants in this study felt unsupported in a large way by managers and their workplace. Only 8% of women had spoken about breastfeeding needs to their manager before going back to work. About 60 % thought that if they had received information and support about breastfeeding aid, they would have been more likely to continue breastfeeding after returning to work (Weber et al., 2011). To help with breastfeeding at work, a breastfeeding mother and her manager should negotiate terms about breastfeeding needs through interpersonal communication (Anderson et al., 2015).

The attitudes of managers and managers affect women's decision to combine breastfeeding with work, which means the supervisors have a direct influence in employee performance (Chow, Fulmer, & Olson, 2011).

2.9.4 Interpersonal Communication Methods mostly used in the workplace

Some of the methods that are commonly used for interaction at the workplace include face to face communication, group meetings, telephone, memos, informal presentations, fax machines, traditional mail, bulletin boards, audio and video tapes, employee publications, hotlines, email, voice mail, computer conferencing, newsletters, magazines teleconferences, video conferences and non-verbal communication. Other modern methods include corporate television. This is a type of indoor media, which includes monitors in various locations within the organization - such as elevators and corridors. They are connected to the Internet and display a wide range of content for staff and visitors. The exhibits are designed to inform and inspire people. Monitors can present mixed stories, organizational news, business culture items, goals and achievements and announcements. Because communication times are fast, content needs to be short and interesting.

2.9.5 Overcoming the Barriers of Effective Interpersonal Communication

Sethi and Seth (2009) proposed several ways of overcoming barriers to effective communication which include use of simplified language by structuring your language to clear, trouble-free sentences, the receiver would be capable to without difficulty apprehend what the sender is saying. Control emotions, by taking consideration of how sensitive an issue is. Listening ardently to enable an individual to place themselves in the sender's role and try to know precisely what message they are attempting to convey and the use of feedback, which is usually accomplished by the sender, as a way of

confirmation by the use of closed ended questions or using an open-ended query to have the receiver recapitulate the message.

2.9.6 Workplace challenge

Recent global changes in women's social position, as well as fast improvement in women's educational attainment, have resulted in new job options with increased responsibilities. This becomes a challenge when the mother tries to juggle work and her caregiver responsibilities (Valizadeh, et al., 2017). A major barrier to the continuation of breastfeeding for employed breastfeeding mothers is juggling breastfeeding and work responsibilities (Bai, Fong, & Tarrant, 2015). During their infant's first year, one-third of all women in the United States worked outside the home, and around 34% of these employed mothers worked full-time. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). According to Dagher et al. (2016), 70 percent of employed moms with children under the age of three had full-time occupations, and roughly one-third of these moms returned to work between the first and third month after giving birth. As a result, it's critical to comprehend the hurdles and facilitators to breastfeeding starting and continuation at work (Dagher, McGovern, Schold & Randallet, 2016).

Kimbro (2006) examined the relationship of combining breastfeeding with paid employment for new mothers. By 3 months, half of the 4,331 moms in this group had stopped nursing, and by 6 months, 75% of the moms had stopped.

Breastfeeding women who return to work are frequently exhausted because they must feed their infants at home while attending to family and employment responsibilities. This exhaustion could lead to concerns about maternal health and well-being (Valizadeh, et al., 2017). Weber et al. (2011) distributed a questionnaire to 998 female employees who had taken maternity leave within the last 20 months. They found that 60% of the respondents stated they planned to continue breastfeeding once returning to work, however, just 40% of those who returned did so (Weber et al., 2011). They also found that 25% stated that one of the main reasons they stopped was because of lack of manager support (Weber et al., 2011). Quitting breastfeeding because a mother has returned to work means that Breastfeeding and employment are challenging to combine for women in comparison to moms who stay at home with their children, this puts moms and their infants at a health disadvantage (Kimbro, 2006). Brown, Poag and Kasprzycki (2001) used focus groups to study about an employer's knowledge, attitudes, and practices when it comes to offering breastfeeding support to lactating staff. The majority of employers in these focus groups said that offering breastfeeding support relieves some of the stress for breastfeeding employees who want to maintain a work-life balance (Brown et al., 2001).

Employers who encourage breastfeeding employees, according to these participants, contribute to mothers' peace of mind, making moms more productive and less likely to skip work or abandon their jobs (Brown et al., 2001).

In summary, women have expressed a need for support from coworkers and managers such as an accepting environment which includes interpersonal communication to

understand their needs better, private spaces and time for pumping (Bai & Wunderlich, 2013; Rojjanasrirat, 2004). According to studies, it takes an average of 30 minutes to express milk, and moms should be given those breaks two to three times a day (Brown et al., 2001). Therefore, this means one has to have an understanding manager to allow for such breaks hence the need for interpersonal communication and relationships. Employers or managers need to provide a supportive environment in order for lactating employees to feel comfortable enough to discuss their needs (Bai & Wunderlich, 2013).

2.9.7 Face to face communication

The best way to transmit emotions and attitude is through face-to-face conversation.

It provides synchronous feedback between two or more people and communicates verbal and nonverbal social indicators to help people understand each other better (Trevino, Daft & Lengel, 1990).

Face-to-face communication is richer because of the verbal and nonverbal clues that are used. Verbal and nonverbal interactions are interwoven, according to Lamichhane (2016), because both are crucial for face-to-face conversation. Nonverbal communication is especially crucial for emotional communications that express the sender's feelings, attitude, and intent (Lamichhane, 2016).

In Dubai, a survey was done in a motor firm with 20 full-time employees - four face-to-face interviews were done among both supervisors and subordinates According to the survey, verbal and written responses from supervisors had a considerably greater positive

impact on employee job satisfaction than immediate responses such as emails, texts, and so on.

The findings revealed that supervisors' communication abilities were linked to job satisfaction (Tasnim & Akkas, 2017). Verbal communication, on the other hand, is critical for ‘facilitating human cooperation by allowing us to share assumptions, intents, and communicative conventions, and therefore govern social behavior and human relationships' (Narunsky-Laden, 2015). When there is a dispute between verbal and nonverbal messages, the nonverbal comprehension of the message frequently takes precedence. Nonverbal communication ‘improves communication comfort by reducing ambiguity and establishing a common basis for understanding’ (Lamichhane, 2016).

2.9.8 Technologically mediated interpersonal communication

Interpersonal communication discussions would not be complete without acknowledging the impact of the internet, video technology, telephone and other new media. The incorporation of media technologies into society has resulted in a number of societal changes that have affected individuals and families to become more adapted in a variety of ways (Lai & Gwung, 2013).

According to You et al. (2017), social alteration is the process of making changes to the social system. It mostly impacts people's social connections and communication networks, as well as those of their families. According to Walther, Loh and Granka (2005), there are two main points of view on this topic. Nonverbal cues, according to one

theory, conceal essential information about attitudes, feelings, and partner qualities from interactants, resulting in less friendly, relational, intelligible, and effective communication. The absence of nonverbal cues can have some benefits in terms of emotion management.

It might be easier to control our own emotions, for example, for starters, since everything must be typed, there is time to review the message before sending, since there is time to look over the content and reflect on one's state of emotions, writing down emotional messages reduces the weight and intensity of the emotion. Furthermore, since there is no possibility of accidentally leaking nonverbal cues, you have conscious control over which emotions you choose to convey in your email.

As a result, e-mail is considered a reasonably "secure" environment. (McKenna, Green, & Gleason, 2002). However, the use of new communication technologies in employee communication has raised the overall level of organizational communication (Miller, 2009).

Fax, telephone, video conferencing and internet facilities such as social media, intranet and email are examples of electronic communication technologies used in the workplace.

As a result of the intimacy and immediacy of people chatting in the same room, (Begley, 2004) asserted that face to face remains the most potent human interaction.

These new forms of technology largely influence interpersonal relationships in the contemporary society. Currently, most interactions are mediated by technology, and these include email, phone calls, SMS, video conferencing and social networks.

In mediated communication, traditional nonverbal dimensions such as "facial expression, gestures, bodily positions, personal distance, voice diversity, and eye contact" are frequently lost (Krohn, 2004).

Changes in digital engagement, such as the usage of emoticons and emojis as alternatives for traditional non-verbal communication, have improved the ability to express attitudes, emotions, and intent (Alshenqeeti, 2016).

Since communicators can see and hear each other, using Skype or video conferencing, for example, helps to remove the negative effects of limited nonverbal clues. It is necessary for a communicator to be present in order to perceive the importance of an interaction partner. The communicator perceives warm, pleasant, personal interaction when he or she has a high social presence (Venter, 2017).

2.9.9 Chapter summary

The chapter has presented a review of existing literature. It first discussed the basic understanding of interpersonal communication, the global regional and local aspect of the use of interpersonal communication in businesses. The rest of the literature was reviewed under themes such as the interpersonal communication process, communication and employee performance, workplace challenges for employed breastfeeding mothers,

breastfeeding laws and technologically mediated interpersonal communication. Moreover, a theory and a communication model namely Uses and gratifications theory and the Shannon and Weaver communication model were discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the narrative approach used in research that was applied within this study. It also describes the research site, design, sample and sampling procedures, data collection methods, data processing, analysis and presentation methods used in the study. It concludes by discussing the ethical considerations that guided the research process.

3.2 Research Design and Rationale

This research used a qualitative design to examine the contribution of interpersonal communication between employed breastfeeding mothers and managers at Isuzu East Africa -Nairobi. Using this method, selected respondents were able to clearly communicate their own experiences. The data for this research was gathered using a semi- structured interview. Patton (2002) argues that interviews are vital and significant when we are unable to see people's feelings, thoughts, and intentions, as well as how they make sense of the world around them. Quantitative researchers investigate variable relationships or groupings, whereas qualitative researchers interpret data (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004). In terms of design, qualitative research is emergent in design (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot, 2013). Based on the feedback of the study

participants, the study elaborates on the themes that developed. As a result, the qualitative method was employed to collect the participants' experiences.

The research was guided by four main questions: i) Which type of interpersonal communication is used between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity? ii) What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with your boss regarding work productivity? iii) How does the manager and the employed breastfeeding mother respond to each type of interpersonal communication used regarding work productivity? iv) What are some of the outcomes of interpersonal communication methods used by managers and employed breastfeeding mothers in relation to work productivity?

3.3 Target Population

The target population included mothers who had children under the age of four years in Isuzu East Africa Kenya in Nairobi and were breastfeeding while working and have also benefitted from the company's breastfeeding facilities, and managers who have directly supervised the beneficiaries. The researcher selected Isuzu East Africa – Kenya for the study because it is a company that offers support to breastfeeding employed mothers by providing the needed facilities (Employee wellness key to productivity, 2019; Kepsa, 2018).

The total population of employees working at Isuzu East Africa at the time of study was 228. For its daily communication, the company uses interpersonal communication, the

most commonly used being internal employee communication and client communication. Narrowed down, the company uses face to face, written communication, emails, corporate intranet platform, company notice board, memos, business reports, staff meetings, brainstorming sessions, telephone calls and texting to communicate within and outside the company. The population included employed breastfeeding mothers who have benefitted from the established breastfeeding facilities and mid-level managers from Isuzu East Africa who have directly supervised the beneficiaries.

3.4 Sampling Frame

This is a statistical technique that entails selecting a group of people from a population to provide specific information regarding the whole population, particularly with the aim of making forecasts based on statistical statistics.

A sample frame is a resource from which a sample is drawn. For the purposes of this research, random purposive sampling was used for sampling. The initial total sampling frame was sixteen but four respondents opted out forcing the researcher to interview 12. These were ten female employees with children under the age of four who were working while breastfeeding and two mid-level managers who have directly supervised the employed breastfeeding mothers in Isuzu East Africa - Kenya. Creswell et al. (2014) argue that, after conducting the first 12 interviews in a standardized study, it reaches a point where the sample size no longer includes new evidence. Such a scenario is referred to as the “point of diminishing return” which occurs when adding the sample size no

longer brings in new evidence. Diminishing return is also a data saturation problem and is an indication to the researcher that the data collection is coming to an end.

In addition, Creswell (1998) points out that the process of collecting in-depth interviews can be completed by 12 or 25 people in research studies, but this can result in overload of information if the number is more than this. This is an often misunderstood common problem in qualitative research which can lead to repetitive and unnecessary information (Crossman, 2017). The aim of the phenomenological qualitative study is to understand the impact of phenomena through the interview of small examples (Creswell, 1998).

3.5 Inclusion criteria

The study used purposive sampling to reach the ten female employees who had children under four years and were working and breastfeeding at the same time at the time of the study and had benefitted from the breastfeeding facilities at Isuzu East Africa and two managers who had directly supervised the employed breastfeeding mothers were also included in the study. Whereas many female employees expressed knowledge of interpersonal communication and the company's support program for breastfeeding mothers, the inclusion criteria for this study was a female individual who has worked and benefited from the facilities and is also aware of the interpersonal communication needs and not all female employees.

3.6 Data collection instruments

This study used a random purposeful sampling of the 12 respondents stratified by their age, breastfeeding and working experience. To acquire a better understanding of the phenomenon, a purposeful sampling strategy was adopted. Purposeful sampling is frequently used in conducting qualitative research to allow the researcher to identify and select samples that have rich information linked to the phenomenon of interest, and it allows the researcher to rely on his or her own judgment when selecting study participants. This method was chosen by the researcher because it is the most cost- and time-effective sampling approach available.

Random purposeful sampling entails selecting a group of people who are suited to participate in the study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007) since targeting the entire population is impractical (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena & Nigam, 2013).A researcher applies random purposeful sampling when the intention is to focus on a specific group (Suen, Huang & Lee, 2014). It is imperative the individuals selected for the study will have successful relevant experience on how they address interpersonal communication issues with their immediate bosses. Using a purposeful random sampling will ensure that the interviewees are qualified to respond to questions. While the research community does not identify a precise number of interviews, the ability to reach and demonstrate data saturation is emphasized as a key consideration in deciding the number of interview participants.

The data saturation point is defined as the moment at which no new themes arise (Francis et al., 2010). According to Crouch and McKenzie (2006), having fewer than 20 participants in a study which is qualitative in design allows a researcher to develop and maintain a strong relationship with the participants, allowing for a more open and honest exchange of information.. It's also crucial to make sure the interviews are long enough in the process so that there's enough data to evaluate (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The number of interview participants required for the study is reduced as a result of the selection of qualified interview participants (Mason, 2010). After getting permission from participants, the interviews were recorded with a recorder to gain accurate findings. The researcher also sought the company documents for additional data which guided the researcher in establishing the different interpersonal communication methods used by Isuzu East Africa. Secondary data sources, according to Baxter and Jack (2008), provide the researcher with additional aspects that strengthen the conclusions.

3.7 Data collection procedure

Data collection started in early May – mid May 2021. To gain access to the participants, the researcher collaborated with the organization's leaders. The organization gave a list of individuals who met the eligibility criteria, and after obtaining the list, the researcher contacted each possible participant. 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted at the participants' convenience. Three interviews were conducted over the phone, while nine were performed in person, depending on the convenience of the participants. Interviews were conducted between seven to ten minutes and were captured with a recorder. The

researcher transcribed each interview word for word (verbatim). Each of the questions was open-ended, with probes added as needed to study the perceptions of employed breastfeeding women in greater depth. Participants were also asked to answer four questions on their age, education level, seniority, and gender (for the managers).

The participants' interviews were performed in a one-on-one manner to allow them to feel more at ease and secure in their settings.

3.8 Data Analysis Plan

The information gathered from key informant interviews was transcribed and coded, the transcriptions were then subjected to a thematic analysis using the interpretational analysis method in line with the study objectives which were to establish the type of interpersonal communication applied between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers on work productivity, to establish reasons behind the choices of methods of interpersonal communication used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers in relation to work productivity, analyze the response of each type of interpersonal communication methods used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers regarding work productivity and to determine the outcomes of interpersonal communication regarding work productivity.

The researcher employed the interpretational analysis method to clearly identify themes and codes within the interviews. Braun and Clarke (2006) defined thematic analysis as a data analysis method. This entailed familiarizing the researcher with the data and

identifying early patterns and themes by reading and rereading the transcribed text. Thematic analysis is a flexible research tool that can possibly produce a rich and detailed, yet difficult account of data due to its theoretical freedom, that is, it is not restricted by a certain framework with which it must comply (Braun & Clarke, 2006) Each participant was given a code name such as A, B, C, D, E, and so on in order to maintain their anonymity. These code names have nothing to do with the participants' actual features.

Direct quotations were also used to convey the contributors' original viewpoints to the audience. The fundamental factors for ensuring the correctness of a qualitative study according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) are credibility and transferability. The gathering of rich data, member checking, sustained engagement, purposeful sampling, and peer debriefing were all used in this study to conform to these criteria. These methods ensured that the information was as accurate and reliable as possible.

3.8.1 Ethical Procedures

After a formal defense of the project and approval by the faculty of business studies-department of communication studies, the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) granted the study a research permit. Participants were recruited for the study based on informed consent following a thorough description of the project's goals and potential applications of the findings.

Before recruiting, the researcher obtained permission from Isuzu East Africa's management to perform the study on their premises. In terms of benefits, the participants

were told that the study's findings would be shared with them, and that management would feel compelled to make the required modifications to their interpersonal communication tactics in order to maintain job efficiency. The findings will be utilized to develop employee-friendly communication rules. As a result, the research has the potential to assist other employees at the company.

During the period of conducting the interviews, the participant’s confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed. At the same time, the informants' anonymity has been well-kept through the use of pseudonyms. This was done to ensure that the study findings do not expose the employees' identity, putting them at risk of being victimized by their employers. The results will be published in peer-reviewed publications, and unpublished copies of the thesis will be available at the St. Paul's University library.

3.9 Problems encountered and their solutions

Following a misunderstanding that the research could be part of a review procedure or an audit, earning the trust of Isuzu East Africa management proved difficult at the start of the data collection procedure. To dispel the suspicion, the researcher presented an introduction letter from St. Paul's University, as well as the NACOSTI academic research authorization.

Participants were initially apprehensive to discuss issues related to the study's theme, but they were assured of anonymity throughout the investigation. As a result, the researcher

established an early rapport with the informants and maintained absolute confidentiality and anonymity throughout the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The data from the study is presented, analyzed, and interpreted in this chapter. The qualitative interviews were performed in a semi-structured format, as described in the previous chapter, and focused primarily on how respondents understood the importance of interpersonal communication between breastfeeding working mothers and their managers on work productivity. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher and as a result three themes in connection to interpersonal communication and work productivity between working breastfeeding mothers and their managers emerged. The themes were empathy, satisfaction and flexibility.

4.2 Response rate

The research team interviewed breastfeeding employed mothers and their direct managers and clarifications were given where necessary. Out of the total sample of 16 respondents, 12 were interviewed .Out of the 12 respondents, 10 were employed breastfeeding women who have benefitted from the breastfeeding facilities at Isuzu East Africa and two were managers who have directly supervised the female respondents. Of the two managers one was female and the other was male. The response rate from all the respondents represented 75% response rate.

4.3 Social Demographic characteristics

The goal of the research was to document various social demographic characteristics of the respondents in relation to their responses on work productivity and interpersonal communication. The social demographic features included age, level of education, gender and seniority for managers.

4.3.1 Age of respondents

Age of respondents was taken as a very important variable in this study because it sheds light on the maturity and ability of the subjects in interpreting interpersonal communication in relation to work productivity. Again, mature respondents are able to conceptualize issues concerning interpersonal communication and work productivity and subsequently undertake corresponding decisions. The findings on the ages of respondents were as presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by age

Participant	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**
Age	**41**	**41**	**37**	**39**	**36**	**37**	**40**	**28**	**27**	**33**	**34**	**42**

Age bracket	**Frequency**	**Percentage%**
26-30	2	16.66
31-35	2	16.66
36-40	5	41.66
41-45	3	25
Total	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher (2021)

The observations in table 4.1 demonstrate that of 12 respondents, 2(16.66%) respondents were between 26-30 years, 2(16.66%) were between 31-35 years, 5(41.66%) were between 36-40 years and 2 (16.66%) were between 41-45 years of age.

Going by the findings, indicated in table 4.1, respondents aged between 36-40 years (41.66%) were the majority. This group was considered to have rich experience on the latest issues on interpersonal communication and work productivity, since they are in their active age of career. Those above 41 years of age were 3(25 %) respondents.

According to Pew Research (2018), more women are waiting to have children later in life due to the fact that many are delaying marriage to pursue further education and participate more in the labour force.

4.3.2. Education level of respondents

Education is acknowledged worldwide as a powerful driver of social change in any society. Those with higher levels of education tend to adopt new ideas and innovation faster than those with low levels of education. In this sense, the respondents' education was viewed as a significant variable in this study. Table 4.2 summarizes the data of the respondents' educational attainment.

Table 4.2: Education level of respondents

Characteristic	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Education level		
None	0	-
Primary	0	
Secondary	2	16.66%
Tertiary	10	83.33%
Total	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher (2021)

As shown in table 4.2 above, out of the sampled 12 respondents about 83.33% had tertiary education while only 16.66% had reached secondary level. None of the

respondents stopped at primary school level and also none had zero education. These findings show that all the respondents 100% had tertiary and secondary education. These findings have an implication on the uptake and understanding of interpersonal communication and work productivity at Isuzu East Africa. The level of education has implications on other social economic activities like securing employment and proper understanding of interpersonal communication strategies and work productivity. Women with a greater level of education, on the other hand, have been reported to be more sensitive to the interpersonal communication messages because they pay more attention than men to underlying meanings (Wood, 2009).

4.3.3 Gender of managers

Since men and women have different responsibilities, gender is sometimes seen as a major factor of social inequality. Men have more authority in society than women, which has led to gender being considered a significant part of the social realm. Women are thought to have a higher level of empathy and interpersonal relationship-building skills than men (Matsa & Miller, 2014). This means employed breastfeeding mothers might find it easy to approach a woman boss compared to a male boss. This contradicts (Sheppard et al., 2013), who claimed that in the workplace, female–female conflict is more problematic than male–male and male–female conflict. Table 4.3 below summarizes the findings on the gender of managers.

Table 4.3: Gender of managers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Female	1	8.33
Male	1	8.33
Total	**2**	**16.66**

Source: Researcher (2021)

As shown in Figure 4.3 above only 1(8.33 %) female respondent was at the managerial position at Isuzu East Africa. Similarly, only 1(8.33%) male respondent has supervised an employed breastfeeding mother, meaning gender representation was equal at the managerial level. Similarly, a study by (Scarborough, 2018) concurs with the above findings that women are progressively working in the same occupations and positions as men.

4.4 Analysis

Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data in this study, as outlined by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This entailed familiarizing the researcher with the material and identifying preliminary patterns and themes by rereading the transcribed text. This allowed the researcher to assign basic codes to the themes that were related to the outlined research questions. By de-vising a mind map, the codes were then structured into a hierarchical framework for ease of understanding and divided into topics and sub-themes.

The mind map was then adjusted until it revealed a clear picture of the prominent themes, with little overlap between them. The themes were then organized into related dimensions and viewpoints for further exploration, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the researcher's field of study. The responses to the survey were particularly personal to the respondents, but they were constantly reflected in the experiences of other Isuzu East Africa employees. Data saturation resulted from the repeating of frequent experiences that were unique but identical.

4.5 Results

This section condenses and recaps the findings of the and analyses in accordance with the four objectives outlined earlier which include establishing the type of interpersonal communication applied between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers on work productivity, establish reasons behind the choices of methods of interpersonal communication used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers regarding work productivity, analyse the response of each type of interpersonal communication methods used by employed breastfeeding mothers and managers on work productivity and finally to determine the outcomes of interpersonal communication in relation to work productivity.

Empathy, pleasure, and flexibility were among the major themes that emerged from the data that were analyzed by the researcher.

4.5.1 Interpersonal communication methods used by breastfeeding mothers and managers

The study's first objective was to establish the types of interpersonal communication methods used between employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity at Isuzu Kenya. It was established that Isuzu East Africa uses interpersonal communication, the most commonly used being internal employee communication and client communication. Narrowed down, the company uses face to face, written communication, emails, corporate intranet platform, company notice board, memos, business reports, staff meetings, brainstorming sessions, telephone calls and texting to communicate within and outside the company. The corporate intranet platform is used to convey company news, avail reference documents and forms for employees. The company's notice board is used for making announcements pertaining employees, informing them about issues like adjustments to working hours; amendments to company policies and even job openings that the organization is attempting to fill, among other issues.

The posters give Isuzu East Africa employees access to information they need to know about their jobs in general, and the information they provide may assist them find answers to issues they have without having to go to a manager or the HR department.

Based on this research, it was also discovered that Isuzu East Africa has constructed professional-managed play and sleeping rooms within child day-care facilities. At the

same time, there exist facilities for refrigeration as well as facilities for storing bottles safely.

There are also reserved breastfeeding moms' rooms available, which are fully equipped.

The following sub-headings have been used to organize the findings and debates related to this objective: Face to face communication at Isuzu Kenya and Mobile/telephone communication.

4.5.1.1 Face to face communication at Isuzu Kenya

This comes from the understanding that it is crucial to be able to perceive and analyze the reactions of the individuals you're speaking with. When communicating face to face, one can measure an understanding of the conversation and the interest in it by observing expressions, poses and gestures. Facial expressions, posture, and gestures can be used to determine a person's understanding and interest in a conversation when conversing face to face in a manner that technological communication simply cannot. Face-to-face conversation develops a link of trust between people. It is a good method for discussion because the listener provides immediate feedback as expressed in the interviews below:

> **C:** "*Mmmh I feel like when I do a face to face communication ,I get a more accurate response from my supervisor ,i feel like when I am asking for permission to take time to go and express milk ,whatever we will discuss is more fulfilling to me if may be there is too much work and she is asking me to take some more time I understand because we are talking one on one and I see her facial expressions whether she is asking me to do more or she is understanding my situation …"****(33 year old mother of 2)***
>
> ***E: "I** prefer face to face communication, I think that works well for my productivity .It helps me to understand and negotiate with my supervisor on when to take breaks*

*because we have had an up-close kind of communication between me and my boss".**(37 year old mother of 2)***

***K:** "My boss (supervisor) often discuss face to face about breastfeeding schedules with me. This frankly makes a young mother who is breastfeeding, such as myself, feel at ease in the job, it is the kind of support that any working breastfeeding mother requires to successfully breastfeed and settle mentally at work…"**(28 year old mother of one**).*

A:** "We know from best practices that workplace flexibility is required to accommodate working nursing women. For example, we are aware that mothers often need two, three, or even four sessions of around 15-20 minutes each within an hour to pump milk, an open and honest communication between managers and these category of women will go a long way towards ensuring that they through this smoothly, most of the time we do these communication on a face to face basis so that we are able to understand each other well and reach a compromise that will not affect work productivity…" **(Female supervisor)

B:** "I prefer face to face communication when communicating with the employed breastfeeding mother, this is mainly because, when you talk to someone in person, you may show commitment, honesty, and sincerity that you can't express over the phone, text or chat. It conveys the other person's honesty and clear facial expressions. I am able to see whether the employee really means what they say through facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and volume among others ..." (**Male supervisor)

From the above findings, Face-to-face communication is recognized as a highly efficient channel since it allows for quick, brief interactions with instantaneous feedback to both team members. Second, nonverbal clues can aid in the communication of hazy notions that would otherwise necessitate long exposition in writing. According to Battiston et al (2017), being physically closer helps coworkers to speak face-to-face, which is beneficial in situations where information is complicated and must be digested rapidly. The researchers also claim that when face-to-face communication is used, productivity is increased, and that this effect is stronger for urgent and difficult projects, homogeneous teams, and high-pressure situations (Battiston et al, 2017). According to research

conducted by Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier (2002), face-to-face communication is the most effective technique to develop solid relationships based on mutual respect and symmetrical discussion. However, (Kupritz et.al, 2010) are of a different opinion, they argue that, while the advantages of efficient face-to-face communication between managers and employees are widely recognized, it is rather costly in terms of time spent on disruptions, arguments and long discussions.

4.5.1.2 Mobile phone/Telephone

From the interviews done at Isuzu Kenya, the telephone is an indispensable tool in the company's business. When brainstorming or when an employee's contribution is required during the session, employed breastfeeding mothers believe it is a superior communication tool than email. The employed breastfeeding mothers, use it when they want to make quick requests, inquiries or follow ups from their immediate supervisors. They do, however, point out that communicating over the phone has the disadvantage of a lack of nonverbal indicators and sometimes connectivity issues as captured by informants below:

> ***H:*** *"To me a phone call is the best interpersonal communication method I use when communicating with my supervisor. This is because the needs of a breastfeeding employed woman are just too many, I have asked for permission so many times before, so I often feel embarrassed talking to him face to face"..* ***(40 year old mother of 3)***
>
> ***D: "****I mostly consider using face to face or telephone conversations when communicating with my supervisor, I feel like I don't get immediate responses when using emails because of the many breastfeeding needs I have, I feel like those emails get ignored therefore I would rather call or meet him face to face"..****(34 year old mother of one)***

F: *"In most cases, I usually use emails when communicating with my boss on work related matters because the issues are more official, I also use email once in a while to make requests for my breastfeeding needs especially when I am requesting for a day or two to be away, otherwise I mostly use phone calls or face to face when my boss is around.."* ***(39 year old mother of 4****)*

M: *"Mmm when talking to my boss I mostly prefer face to face because talking phone, you can't know the body language and facial expressions on the person that you're talking to compared if you're talking to him/her face to face. But sometimes when I have no time talking to him directly then I use the phone but talking to him face to face is more accurate …"****(27 year old mother of one)***

According to related research done by Mano et al. (2012), e-mail has significant organizational and work performance benefits. This is mostly due to the rapid distribution of information pertinent to the activities at hand hence improving work productivity, however, the study also noted that, while lengthy mail provides critical information, it also causes information overload, which results in high levels of work stress and distress. The data that is sent must be deciphered, stored, retrieved, and managed. It introduces new tasks, necessitates prioritization, and increases reliance on others to get the job done, raising the employee's psychological burden. Increased e-mail communication is likely to be stressful since it emphasizes the importance of data management (Mano et. al., 2012).

4.5.2 Factors influencing respondents' choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating at the work place.

The second goal was to identify the factors that influence the choice of forms of interpersonal communication used by respondents in communicating in relation to work productivity. The objective was to interrogate both the employed breastfeeding mothers

and their supervisors. In this study employees expressed different opinions as to why they choose particular methods of interpersonal communication to communicate.

The following subheadings were used to organize the findings and debates on this objective: the urgency of the situation at hand, physical elements, and time.

4.5.2.1 Urgency of the issue at hand

From the interviews, the preference of using mobile phones/telephones to communicate came out strongly compared to emails and letters. This is from the understanding that when the respondents have a pressing/urgent issue and cannot be able to quickly talk to their managers face to face, they use their telephones/mobile. They pointed out that more information is usually provided when talking rather than writing a letter or sending an email as expressed in the excerpts below:

> ***G:*** *"Phone calls are a life saver, my boss travels a bit more, so when he is away and I have a pressing need as a nursing mother, I just call. I also use it for seeking quick clarifications on work assignments" (**36 year old mother of 3)***
>
> ***E:*** *"I work in the sales department at Isuzu, sometimes I encounter work related situations and even personal situations that require urgent responses from my supervisor, because I have a small baby I am still breastfeeding .In such instances, make several phone calls so as to share the information and come up with a solution but when the boss is around I will quickly run to his desk for help".. **(37 year old mother of 2)***
>
> ***B:*** *"As a supervisor, there are times you are away from the workplace and work has to be done. Even though you dedicate someone else to take care of the job left I have the responsibility to find out how employees under me are doing, I normally make phone calls to people I supervise ,more so I have a few breastfeeding employed mothers working under me, it is the company's policy and my responsibility to ensure they are comfortable because we have been trained to understand their needs, so when I am way and they are in distress, they can call and we make arrangements on how they can be supported**"...(Male supervisor)***

From the above findings, it can be observed that in situations where urgent information is required to handle an important assignment, mobile phone calls may in reality increase productivity. However, (Thompson, 2006) claims that most calls made by employees while at work are not related to business in his study titled, the influence of cellular phone use in the modern workplace. He claims that by simply receiving a call, regardless of whether the recipient picks it up or not, might have a negative influence on productivity. This, he claims, is due to the fact that determining whether or not to pick up a call might cause an employee to lose concentration.

He goes on to say that if the individual is working on a production line, this lack of concentration has more serious repercussions.

4.5.2.2 Time factor

The Key informants, were of the view that time factor is a major component in influencing the method of interpersonal communication they use. In that, the informants will choose a certain method of interpersonal communication and use it to communicate depending on the time .For instance, they pointed out that when they are far away from their bosses, they opt to use a phone call for an immediate personal response. There are also times when they can't call their bosses through phones or face to face forcing them to use other forms of communication like Emails or texts in cases where their managers are held in crucial meetings or assignments. The female respondents also noted that, their

bosses are usually harsh to them when they spend extra time in their lactation rooms. At the same time, the managers also noted there are times they can't use face to face or call the employed breastfeeding mothers especially when they are engaged with work, expressing milk in the lactation centres or during late working hours as the revelations below indicate:

> ***L:*** *"While we applaud the company for the assistance to improve our children's well-being, supervisors often get annoyed with us, since they believe we have spent too much time with the child at the cost of being at your desk to complete or finish your work in time...."* ***(A 27 year old mother of one).***
>
> ***E:*** *"Time and communication are both very important to me and my supervisor at the workplace. For both of us making a clear, proper and timed reply for our interactions really matter because we both need each other in ensuring the company goals are achieved, especially for me since I have the needs of a breastfeeding employed mother"* ***(37 years old mother of 3)***
>
> ***B:*** *"Choosing the correct time, place, and opportunity to provide information is a very important aspect of communication. Ideally, good communication, has less to do with what you say and more to do with how you deliver it in precise time and duration. If I am talking to an employed breastfeeding mother in this case and I don't get feedback at the right time it can be so frustrating…"* ***(Male supervisor).***
>
> ***A: "****Time is a crucial component in communication. When communicating with the employed breastfeeding mother, we must both pay attention and communicate in a timely manner, since this adds value to one's viewpoint. When time is effectively controlled throughout a communication, it leads to excellent communication with the intended results for both..."* ***(Female supervisor)***

From the above findings, it can be noted that when using interpersonal communication, it is important for individuals to decide how much speed is required to contact a colleague or work mate. One needs to establish the mode of communication that will enable them pass information easily and faster for instance, will it be easier or enough to pass a certain form of communication using a memo, a telephone call for some who are not present, or

face to face email etc. People's lifestyles, personal relationships, and job lives are all influenced by how they use their time. People from different cultures have varied perspectives of time, which can lead to interpersonal difficulties. Punctuality, relationships, and readiness to wait are all aspects of time perception (Lateiner, 2011).

4.5.2.3 Physical factors

Physical factors also emerged as a major determinant of the choice of interpersonal communication method used by both the breastfeeding employed mother and supervisor. In that, sometimes physical noise occurs and destructs the message. The noise can be as a result of physical noise, written, psychological or even technological. For written noise for instance, bad handwriting is considered a physical barrier, when using phones or emails to communicate to the managers, missing sound while chatting or message sending failure in chats and emails are examples of technological noise that can occur in the medium or channels. The respondents noted that, sometimes noise could be managers and co- workers who have a negative attitude towards employed breastfeeding mothers who require special consideration at work (Communication Theory.org, 2010) as shown in voices below:

> ***D:*** *"The whole breastfeeding thing is just a psychological noise to me, its demands are too numerous, and they compete with your little time to complete the scheduled tasks, which can be tiresome. I had thought that bringing the baby to work would help me relax psychologically, but it appears to be another source of distraction...my supervisor is not yet at ease with it, and neither am I.".. (**34 year old mother of one).***
>
> ***E:*** *"I thought it would be easy for me to communicate freely with my boss about my breastfeeding needs because of the policies already in place but it has not been*

easy at all because at times my boss's attitude towards me turns out negative when I ask for some time to express milk, sometimes I also feel stigmatized because there is a perception that I care more about my needs rather than what I am employed to do, this is a major barrier to me personally and my work"... ***(37 year old mother of three)***

The findings above show that some study participants expressed personal discomfort, either as a result of having to communicate frequently with their bosses to express their breastfeeding needs and the very physical act of breastfeeding, or as a result of leaving the child unsatisfied, hungry, and crying for more so that they can resume duty on time. This results to emotional pain among the breastfeeding mothers .They expressed that they are constantly bothered and depressed during the day, which has an impact on their work. According to Farler and Broady-Preston (2012), a workplace is also a community in and of itself, and employees acquire their feeling of identity and belonging from it. As a result, workplace stress would have a substantial effect on employees, putting the entire organization's performance at risk (Ahmad et al., 2012).

4.5.3 Response of interpersonal communication methods used by respondents.

The study's third objective was to find out how respondents respond to each type of interpersonal communication they use regarding work productivity. The following sub-headings have been used to organize the findings and discussions related to this objective: Keen listening, asking more questions and summarizing messages heard before responding.

4.5.3.1 Listening keenly

For instance ,the respondents noted that when using face to face, apart from listening keenly to what the speaker is talking about, they observe body language which consists of actions ,gestures combined with facial expressions like smiling or frowning .However, managers interviewed noted that although face to face communication is useful in conveying viewpoints and fostering openness to the breastfeeding employed women, it can be a weak tool for enforcing policies or providing directives where many specifics are involved as outlined in the interviews below:.

> ***C:*** *"One time I was trying to express my situation to my female boss as a breastfeeding employed mother and she was able to listen to me and empathize with me because, she had had a baby the previous year so that made her try fit in my shoe, it was so encouraging I was able to go through my situation easily"...* ***(33 year old mother of 2)***
>
> ***G: " I*** *find that ,most of the time my manager tries to understand my situation ,especially when I am making a face to face request, an email may not pick what I want to pass across, so I prefer using face to face when I am in the office* ***"(36 year old mother of 2)***
>
> ***B: "****As a supervisor when I want to emphasize a viewpoint to the employed breastfeeding mother I do face to face and follow up with an email, especially when issues being raised are more official and work related, I usually go for face to face first because I always want my point to be understood well. However, face to face is a challenge when it comes to giving directives and formal communication"(* ***Male supervisor)***
>
> ***I:*** *"Some of these* bosses, *I think have attitude…I am sorry to* say, *because there is a set time for us to go and express or breastfeed at the Centre, sometimes when you go to their desk to inform them that you are going to breastfeed, they don't even pay attention to you, it is like you are a nuisance. Some will continue typing on their computers or scrolling their phones without even looking at you ,that kind of attitude makes me feel creepy****"(41 year old mother of 4)***

> ***E:*** *"Most managers assume they know what employees are saying because it corresponds to their own perception of what someone is likely to say. As a result, insufficient or poor information gathering, failure to understand the true message being conveyed, relationship challenges among us, inadequate feedback, and low morale toward assigned tasks "* ***(37 year old mother of three)***

The findings above support the prior conclusions by demonstrating that effective listening is the key to good communication (Fulwiler, 2018). Understanding who your audience is and what their needs are is the most crucial technique to ensure that others comprehend what you're trying to express. This will allow you to tweak your message to make it more appealing to others. Furthermore, (Fulwiler, 2018) discovered that effective listening fosters empathy, which is defined as being actively responsive to the needs of others rather than simply knowing them. Focusing on this, especially when engaging with people who may be below your cadre in your organization, will help you create stronger relationships and urge them to assist you in meeting your current and future needs.

4.5.3.2 Asking more questions

In the study, key informants observed that, they take time to ask questions in areas that need clarity when communicating to each other. They noted that questions allow them to clarify misunderstandings and to acquire more information while showing interest in the speaker's ideas as captured in the interviews below:

> ***K:*** *"There was a time we had a conflict in the office with my supervisor, he had asked me to perform certain duties before taking my 15 minutes break to express milk in the lactation room, I made a mistake of not asking questions pertaining the work he had given me and therefore I dint deliver as per his expectations and it*

*was a really bad experience for me ,I felt like I had given a lot of attention to my breastfeeding needs and cared less about my work**(28 year old mother of one).***

A: "It** is just common sense for breastfeeding employed mothers and us as supervisors to ask questions on areas that we appear not understanding each other, this can go a long way in avoiding conflicts in the department "(**Female supervisor).

The results of this study support the conclusion of (Weer et al., 2010) that asking questions to clarify your knowledge and display interest in what is being stated is critical. Further, (Weger et al., 2010) posits that, if you have no particular questions, you can choose to repeat what you have understood back to the speaker in your own words to clarify any points by the speaker. Clarification is critical in many situations, especially when the information being given is complex. Communication can be difficult for a variety of reasons, especially when discussing sensitive emotions, listening to complex information, or following instructions (Skillsyouneed, 2021).

4.5.3.3. Summarizing what has been said before beginning to respond

The respondents noted that paraphrasing and summarizing what has been discussed between them has helped to boost their work place relationships. It has helped to ensure that they have correctly understood what the other has said .Those responses are captured in the interviews below:

E:** " I have worked here for more than 8 years and from experience, I have learnt the art of summarizing what I discuss with those working under me just to make sure we are on the same page"(**37 year old mother of 3).

***G: "**I often paraphrase what I discuss with my immediate boss, so that I understand where he is coming from, this has really helped me boost my work relationship with*

*him, initially I used to miss on important points he raises to me when we are communicating, even when I am writing an email, I ensure I summarize my points at the end****"… (36 year old mother of 3)***

J: *"I have been here for quite some time ...about 10 years. And I am privileged to have gotten the services any working woman who has a breastfeeding child would want to get, though communication gets a bit trickier at times, we just need to strive and make sure we as employees understand each other. Personally I prefer being given information in bits and in an orderly manner, when the information I receive is too clogged I miss out on important points... "(****42 year old mother of 3).***

The foregoing findings confirm Murphy's (Murphy, 2009) argument that summarizing allows communicators to transmit someone else's thoughts while at the same time keeping the key concepts of the original source in their own terms. It's critical to limit yourself to only the most crucial aspects of the conversation, and to deliver it from the speaker's perspective rather than the listener's. The purpose of a summary is to examine understanding rather than to provide explanations, judgments, interpretations, or solutions (Skillsyouneed, 2021).

4.5.4 Outcomes of the interpersonal communication methods used by respondents

The fourth and last objective was to investigate the outcomes of the interpersonal communication used by employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers on work productivity. The respondents highlighted several outcomes of the interpersonal communication methods they have been using. The findings and deliberations on this objective have been carried out across the following sub—headings: Wellbeing, happiness and effectiveness.

4.5.4.1 Well being

The respondents illustrated how their choice of interpersonal communication methods have resulted to enabling them express themselves properly .They expressed how through the use of face to face communication, phone call or emails ,they have been able find the right words to vocalize their emotions and ideas as outlined in the interview below.

> ***B:*** *"I've learned how to give clear directions and instructions, as well as how to properly lead and manage, because when I became a supervisor, several times I have had to make critical decisions for my department .Embracing interpersonal communication has made me look and feel confident, I have also learned to disagree sometimes with those under me like these breastfeeding employed women politely but firmly"..(**Male supervisor**)*
>
> ***F:*** *"Working at Isuzu East Africa has made me lower my emotions, you know how sensitive mothers can be when it comes to their small children, because all the facilities that I need as a breastfeeding employed mother are available here, my emotions were a bit uncontrollable before especially when it comes to anyone who tried to block me from attending to my baby's needs, I have had two children while working here and I like the person I have become"* ***(39 year old mother of 4)***

The findings presented above give credence to the work of (Mukherjee, 2017) who highlighted the contribution of interpersonal communication in an individual's well-being. Mukherjee (2017) noted that having a positive emotion, as a result of a good communication with the other person, creates an agreeable state of mind and body, and builds physiological, psychological and social resources to face stressful lives and contributes to physical and mental health.

4.5.4.2 Happiness

The respondents noted that, the interpersonal communication methods they use have contributed to their happiness because of the satisfaction they get after being listened to, supported and getting to help one another. The managers feel happy being able to help a breastfeeding employed mother meet her breastfeeding needs while the breastfeeding employed mother feels happy for being supported and hence enabling them improve on their work productivity as portrayed in the interview below:

> ***D:*** *"The key in any relationship is efficient communication, this is the only way to express what exactly you want. Your feelings, what makes you happy and what is bothering you should be told time to time without fear. Sharing of thoughts is good whether in the workplace or on the personal level. Isuzu has given us employees and to be specific breastfeeding mothers a leeway to express our thoughts with our managers and make us feel comfortable"…* ***(34 year old mother of one).***
>
> ***F:*** *"I like those conversations that can go on for hours before you realize it. Those conversations that make you laugh and have relaxing moments even in the midst of a busy and tense environment. It helps me get heavy things off my chest and place good memories into me. This makes me most happy, I like to talk and this has made things so easy for me here at Isuzu because I am free spirited even with my boss"* ***(39 year old mother of four).***

A comprehensive study of happiness and productivity has shown that employees are 13% more productive when happy (Oxford university, 2019). The survey also found that happy employees don't work longer than their unhappy coworkers – within their working hours, they are simply more productive. The study also shows that happy employees usually care for the company and are driven to achieve its goals, they are the ones who even trouble to find out these goals in the first place. When employees are happy, they feel that they are invested in the goals of the organization (Ainomugisha, 2021). Happiness increases productivity because it leads to more commitment, and happy

employees are also more present. They are more focused on customer requirements and are attentive to company processes and systems. All these factors combine to increase productivity and profitability for organizations (Ainomugisha, 2021).

4.5.4 .3 Effectiveness

The respondents narrated that the methods of interpersonal communication used to communicate at Isuzu East Africa has made them more effective in improving their work productivity and also communicating generally in the work place. The art of listening and understanding each other's needs has helped in ensuring they are effective in their work as captured below.

> ***A:*** *"Because, if effective communication lacks, conversations are most likely to be misinterpreted. If communication passing from one to others is unclear and uninviting, even non-verbal signals are likely to be misunderstood. As a result, the work itself will be unproductive and unsatisfying .Here at Isuzu we emphasize on every one having good communication skills and that is why we are among the top company's in Kenya that treat breastfeeding employed mothers very well".....(* ***Female supervisor)***
>
> ***L:*** *"Isuzu has really helped us as mothers still in the reproductive age, their policies on breastfeeding have worked to my advantage .My boss is also good he listens to my concerns as a mother who is still breastfeeding with the actual desire of trying to understand what I am saying. The more a workers is listened to, the more they go extra mile to do their work, like now I have more responsibilities than before because I work well with my boss even if I am breastfeeding"....****(27 year old mother of one)***

The findings above indicate that effectiveness comes as a result of the actions of employees and managers. Employees and managers who show effectiveness on the job

provide high-quality results. Companies often measure efficiency by performance assessments. The efficiency of employees has an enormous influence on the quality of a product or service that often dictates the reputation of a company and the satisfaction of its clients. (Miksen, 2019). Efficacy is often the case when managers measure employees' productivity by whether performance goals have been achieved without closely looking at how they have been achieved (Gino 2013).

4.6 merging themes

4.6.1 Empathy

The findings of this study showed empathy emerges as an important theme. Being empathetic means being able to understand other people's needs and being conscious of their thoughts and feelings. Sadly, it was long overlooked as a performance indicator as a soft skill (Centre for creative leadership, 2021). These arguments have been supported by the key informants as captured below:

> ***C:*** *"One time I was trying to express my situation to my female boss as a breastfeeding employed mother and she was able to listen to me and empathize with me because, she had had a baby the previous year so that made her try fit in my shoe, it was so encouraging I was able to go through my situation easily"…* ***(33 year old mother of 2)***

A study conducted by (Centre for creative leadership, 2021) analysed from 6731 managers in 38 countries found that empathy in the workplace is positively related to the performance of work in the workforce. Based on the results, managers who exercise empathy for direct reports are seen by their own bosses as better performers in their jobs.

Throughout the sample the results are consistent: those managers who were rated empathically by subordinates were also rated by their own boss as highly effective.

4.6.2 Flexibility

Study participants said flexibility in the workplace was one of the main assistance for mothers in breastfeeding that they could provide. In this particular organization, reporting time for breastfeeding mothers is relaxed, until their baby at least a year old. For example, many managers allowed mothers to work late in the morning and they could return home early after completing their work as clarified below by one of the managers

> ***B:*** *"We don't really strictly monitor the mothers, in most instances, we let them go home after they finish their job.*
>
> *After a year, she begins working full time...She (Mother) can be here in the morning by 9 a.m. She can go early after 10:00 or 11:00 early lunch when she finishes her job.* ***(Male supervisor)***

Similarly, when shift work takes place, the breastfeeding maternal mothers will be given more consideration to select a suitable shift for them. For example, the mothers are scheduled to work either morning or afternoon and to make up for the rest of the hours during the weekend. Moreover, mothers can also be supported when talking to their immediate supervisors and colleagues. Such support, however, depends on the preference given to maternal breastfeeding by individual managers and colleagues. This view is captured below:

> ***C:*** *"...When we have breastfeeding mothers in our workplace, the employees had no bad feelings for them. The staff and their team leaders tried to support mothers…"* ***(33 year old mother of two)***

From the research, it was noted that due to the availability of breastfeeding facilities including the option of having flexible hours, there was enhancement in productivity and a reduction in days of absenteeism, because infants tend to be healthier hence less absenteeism. Managers should be reassured that it will likely benefit breastfeeding mothers. Support to workplaces like flexible working hours can help improve productivity in the workplace over time (Abdulwadud & Snow, 2007).

4.6.3 Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction also came up as an emerging theme from the study. It was established to be one of the most effective ways of improving job satisfaction by establishing communication lines between employees and their supervisors or between managers and supervisors. Satisfaction among employees means that employees are fully committed to their tasks and believe their efforts are appreciated. On the other hand, if they don't feel that in their work or in how things are run within an organization, this becomes a common cause as to why employees leave (Chron, 2020).

> **E*:*** *" I feel more satisfied working at Isuzu as a breastfeeding employed mother, because here even getting pregnant alone earns you more salary, and after that I get to enjoy the breastfeeding facilities and the policies that come with that, so I am more than satisfied..."(****37 year old mother of three)***

B:*" If you look around very few companies offer what we offer to our female employees, so we have stood up in the market and also built our brand" (**Male supervisor)***

The above findings concur with Kaye and Evans (2000) argument that although money and profit are important to employees, they are more interested in challenging and meaningful work, good managers and learning and development opportunities. A similar study (Mayo, 2003) found that employees don't just care about money but are better motivated by meeting their social needs while at work. In this case, Isuzu East Africa has tried to stand up and portray itself as a caring organization by taking care of its female employees resulting to satisfaction, work productivity and retention.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. It begins with an overview of the study, the summary of the findings, conclusions of the study based on the results of the research. Recommendations for both policy makers and practitioners are presented based on the study results.

5.2 The General Overview of the Study

The aim of this research was to investigate the contribution of interpersonal communication between employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers on work productivity: case of Isuzu East Africa. The study was guided by four questions namely: i)Which type of interpersonal communication is used between the employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers in relation to work productivity? ii) What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with your boss regarding work productivity? iii) How do the manager and the employed breastfeeding mother respond to each type of interpersonal communication regarding work productivity? iv) What are some of the outcomes of interpersonal communication methods used by managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity?

The research team interviewed breastfeeding employed mothers and their direct managers and clarifications were given where necessary .Out of the total sample of 16 respondents 12 were interviewed .Out of the 12 respondents, 10 were employed breastfeeding women who have benefitted from the breastfeeding facilities at Isuzu East Africa and two were managers who have directly supervised the female respondents. Of the two managers one

was female and the other was male. From the outcome of the study, conclusion and recommendations to both the policy makers and practitioners were made.

5.2.1 Types of interpersonal communication methods used between employed breastfeeding mothers and their managers on work productivity

The study revealed that face to face was ranked as the most commonly used form of interpersonal communication used to the benefit of the target group with majority agreeing that this form has been used to their benefit, while email use was rated the least used form of interpersonal communication in that particular organization.

Therefore, the results show, while it is efficient in a two-way interaction, the use of emails by respondents in Isuzu East Africa is not used on urgent matters. When employees send e-mails to colleagues or customers, the recipients access and answer the e-mail when they get time. In most cases, it has been established that emails cannot work well if a quick reply is required. When time is of the essence in communication, it is a much better approach to contact someone, send an instant message, a text or a phone call than writing an email. This corroborates with the observations made by Schiavo (2007), that technology-mediated interpersonal communication are more widespread in developed countries than in many countries in the developing world, where more conventional ways of communications like word of mouth may still be dominant. The respondents observed that they mainly use emails when it comes to communicating official matters since it is a critical tool for establishing transparency and accountability. It was also established that email is required for certain uses and activities, but that email

is not much preferential when you need to have a conversation with a person or group of people.

5.2.2 Factors influencing the choice of methods of interpersonal communication used in relation to work productivity

On the factors that influence the choice of methods of interpersonal communication used by respondents in relation to work productivity, it was found out that Urgency of the issue at hand, physical factors and time determined the choice of interpersonal communication methods used.

From the study, the use of mobile phones was essential in cases where immediate information is required to address a pressing problem hence improving work productivity. The use of mobile phones came out as the easiest way for supervisors to reach their employees and manage their daily business needs. Regarding time factor, the study established that there is need to establish the mode of communication that will enable them pass information easily and faster. It was also noted that the consideration of time on the choice of interpersonal communication methods can impact personal relationships, lifestyles and work life and if not observed it can result in conflicts between individuals hence affecting work productivity. On the physical aspect, the study found out that some participants expressed personal discomfort, either with the process of having to communicate frequently with their bosses to express their breastfeeding needs .This psychological noise pains them emotionally. They indicated that they are disturbed and depressed throughout the day, which has an impact on their work

5.2.3 Responses on the interpersonal communication methods used by respondents

The key informants observed that they respond to each other when communicating by listening keenly, asking more questions and summarizing messages heard before responding. Listening was found to encourage empathy not only to understand others, but also to be actively aware of their needs, while asking more questions .When communicating with each other, it allows them to clarify misunderstandings and to acquire more information while still showing interest in the speaker's ideas. Summarizing messages heard before responding helps them to understand each other hence building mutual relationships which in the long run help to improve work productivity.

5.2.4 Outcomes of the interpersonal communication methods used by respondents regarding work productivity

The key informants in this study noted that Wellbeing, happiness and effectiveness were some of the outcomes of interpersonal communication methods they use in their interactions in relation to work productivity.

Happiness was an important element that came out during all discussions with the women who took part in the study .It was established that communication leads to friendship, and those who have friends and good working environments are happier even in a work environment. The more employees share among themselves through disclosure and words, the more relationships deepen across social spheres and even at the work place. These connections, and the gratitude they catalyze, lead to happiness. When an employee

is happy, work productivity improves. Given that the happiness of employees has recently become one of the most common company goals, the employees' happiness and its outcome for the organization need to be looked at. Since the 2000s, the study of employee satisfaction, in particular its causes and relationship with other factors, has attracted substantial attention. Employees who are happy are more productive and more committed as well as satisfied with their jobs (Marescaux et al., 2019).The female respondents described how they experienced positive attitudes towards their needs to have breastfeeding support which allowed them to work comfortably as they struggle to juggle with the two of working and taking care of their breastfeeding needs. This was especially evident when it came to returning to the place of work after maternity leave. Most women comfortably disclosed to their managers that they were still breastfeeding without fear of being subjected to judgment or criticism for continuing to breastfeed after their return to the work place. This is because there is less stigma since Isuzu Kenya has a progressive maternity policy and environment that has ensured breastfeeding employed mothers are not stigmatized.

The study also established that well-being of an individual as a result of positive communication brings positive emotions- which give the body and mind a pleasant state hence, happiness and more successful performance at work. Choice of good interpersonal communication methods was also found to contribute in bringing effectiveness which helps in bringing high performance results at the work place. All the respondents agreed that there is need to address the different challenges brought about by each method of

interpersonal communication to ensure that all workers are comfortable and are able to perform as expected.

5.3 Conclusion

The summary of the major findings and discussions of the study according to the four objectives which initially formed the basis for the study are as follows; the study established that face to face interpersonal communication was found to be the most popular mode of communication between employed breastfeeding women and managers at Isuzu East Africa while email was rated the least used form of interpersonal communication. Mobile phones /telephones were used in cases where face to face communication is a challenge and when respondents wanted to make quick communication.

This study supports previous research and shows that managers have direct involvement in employee work performance. Therefore, employer's attitudes are very relevant for a woman's decision to combine breastfeeding with work (Chow, Fulmer, & Olson, 2011). Almost all participants stated that, although the company had a written policy on breastfeeding employees, not all their supervisors were empathetic about them breastfeeding in the workplace.

The study also points out that interpersonal communication is significant in ensuring employed breastfeeding mothers are comfortable at the work place. It also indicates that

positive communication strategies for breastfeeding mothers and their managers at their workplaces can increase the productivity of work.

In conclusion, the study established that technology has permeated every sphere of life and has played a significant role in revolutionizing communication strategies in general. However, face-to-face interpersonal communication reigns supreme in a situation where a section of the workforce requires special consideration.

5.4 Recommendations

This study generated evidence to enable making of suggestions and recommendations on three areas, namely: formulation of communication policies that will target to enhance communication between breastfeeding employed women and their managers, the recommendations for practitioners and finally, suggestions or recommendations for further research.

5.4.1 Recommendations to policy/policy makers

The following recommendations have been suggested to policymakers on the basis of the findings of this research:

1. Sensitization needs to be done to mid-level managers, supervisors and breastfeeding employed mothers at Isuzu East Africa to emphasize on the importance of interpersonal communication at the workplace and its role in ensuring work productivity and an employees' performance.

2. Isuzu East Africa needs to underscore the interpersonal communication aspect in their breastfeeding policy since it was noted that although a policy for breastfeeding mothers in completing their parental duties and bonding with their babies exists, it has not captured the interpersonal communication aspect which has come out very strongly from the above study. Breastfeeding mothers are still left with the burden of advocating for their breastfeeding needs despite the existence of a policy that covers them.

5.4.2 Suggestions for further research

1. This particular research was limited in scope due to the sample size and research questions at hand, therefore more research can still be done on the topic of interpersonal communication and breastfeeding using other research designs.

2. More studies could be done on communication in relation to work productivity basing on socio-economic status, marital status, ethnicity, education, or age. All of these can be linked to interpersonal communication and the differences between people of various backgrounds in other communication styles.

3. A comparative study should be conducted on the interpersonal communication strategies used by organizations that have breastfeeding support systems for their breastfeeding employees and their managers and those organizations that do not have the breastfeeding facilities. The proposed study will be able to establish the communication strategies used by those organizations to enable companies that intend to set up

breastfeeding facilities for their female employees compare and borrow positive aspects for their organizations.

4. This study focused mainly on managers at the mid-level; therefore it is recommended to carry out future studies involving top managers and policy makers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: BUDGET PLAN

No	ITEMS	COST IN KSH.
1	Stationery, typing papers, pens, flash disk.	**7000.00**
2	Printing	**5000.00**
3	Binding	**3000.00**
4	Communication/telephone services and bus fare	**5000.00**
	Total	**20,000.00**

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear respondent,

My name is Lydia Kusina, I am a Master's student at St. Paul's University department of communication. I am carrying out a research study entitled contribution of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity a case of Isuzu Kenya.

I am collecting information from female employees who have a child under four years and was breast feeding at the time they were working. I also seek to gather information from their immediate managers who were supervising them during the same period. This information will be used purely for academic purpose.

If you agree to be interviewed, I will be asking you about the contribution of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity in Isuzu Kenya. There is no right or wrong answers, the questions I will ask, your opinions and experience will be important to me and so kindly I would request you to be honest and truthful in answering them. The interview will take about 30 minutes, if you do not want to answer any question, you are free to stop the interview any time. I would like to take notes and pictures of the discussion, your name will NOT be used in the notes. The notes will be kept safely and will be considered private and

confidential. They will be used for the study only and later be destroyed. The pictures will form part of the appendices of this study report. If you have any questions after the interview you may contact me on 0714217414.

CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have understood the information provided to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and any question that has been asked has been answered to my satisfaction. I consent to participate as a respondent in this research.

Yes ☐

No ☐

Name of interviewer Signature Date

APPENDIX 3: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What is your age bracket?

a) 26-20

b) 31-35

c) 36-40

d) 41-45

2. What is your level of education?

3. What is your gender?

4. What is your level of seniority at work?

APPENDIX 4: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

EMPLOYED BREASTFEEDING MOTHER

1. Explain to me briefly, which type of interpersonal communication do you use to communicate to your manager at the work place?

2. What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with your supervisor?

3. How does the manager respond to each type of interpersonal communication used?

4. What are some of the outcomes of the different types of communication used by managers on work productivity?

5. Can you briefly share your personal experience about how interpersonal communication with your supervisor has contributed to your work productivity?

6. How long have you worked in Isuzu East Africa –Kenya? Have you experienced any career growth since you joined the company?

7. What gender is your manager? How is your experience working with them?

MANAGERS

1. Explain to me briefly, which type of interpersonal communication do you use to communicate to the employed breastfeeding mother at the work place?

2. What factors have influenced the choice of the forms of interpersonal communication used in communicating with the employed breastfeeding mother?

3. How does the employed breastfeeding mother respond to each type of interpersonal communication used?

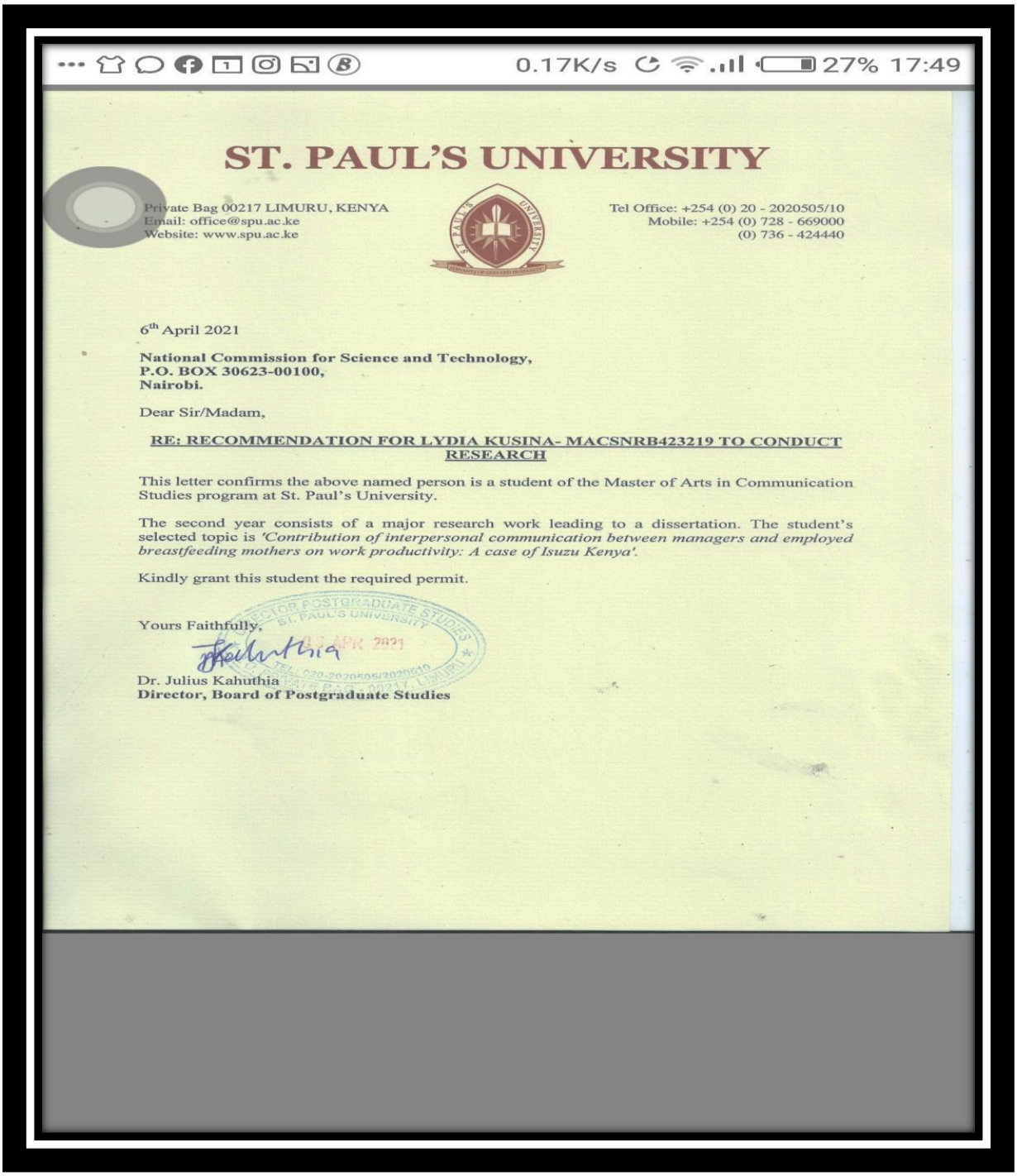
4. What are some of the outcomes of the different types of communication used by employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity?

5. Can you briefly share your personal experience about how interpersonal communication with the employed breastfeeding mother has contributed to work productivity?

6. How productive is the employed breastfeeding mother working under you?

7. How has your interpersonal communication skills affected work productivity?

APPENDIX 5: Recommendation Letter from St. Paul's University



ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Private Bag 00217 LIMURU, KENYA
Email: office@spu.ac.ke
Website: www.spu.ac.ke

Tel Office: +254 (0) 20 - 2020505/10
Mobile: +254 (0) 728 - 669000
(0) 736 - 424440

6th April 2021

National Commission for Science and Technology,
P.O. BOX 30623-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR LYDIA KUSINA- MACSNRB423219 TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter confirms the above named person is a student of the Master of Arts in Communication Studies program at St. Paul's University.

The second year consists of a major research work leading to a dissertation. The student's selected topic is *'Contribution of interpersonal communication between managers and employed breastfeeding mothers on work productivity: A case of Isuzu Kenya'.*

Kindly grant this student the required permit.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Julius Kahuthia
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies

APPENDIX 6: NACOSTI PERMIT

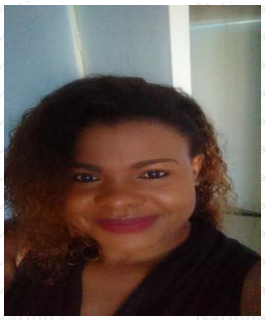
REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **798859**

Date of Issue: **1/April/2021**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms.. Lydia Miati Kusina of St. Paul's University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic :

CONTRIBUTION OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIN ON WORKING BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS AND MANAGERS ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY:
A CASE OF ISUZU KENYA for the period ending : 14/April/2022.

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Director General
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