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Communication Strategies Used To Improve Employee Performance in a Diverse Workforce

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Ineffective communication strategies can negatively affect employee performance in a diverse workforce, which may hinder business growth. Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector who struggle to improve employee performance are at high risk of their businesses failing. Grounded in organizational information theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communication strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The participants were 5 top-level managers in 2 telecommunication companies in St. Maarten, who effectively used communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Sources for data collection were semistructured interviews, company documents, observations, and field notes. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Four themes emerged: training and coaching, job description and performance management, meetings and feedback, and change agents and consultants. A key recommendation is for top-level managers to implement a blend of effective communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce and sustain the business. The implications for positive social change include the potential for top-level managers in the telecommunication sector to create job opportunities, provide social amenities and welfare, and support the economic development of regional communities.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I dedicate my doctoral study to God Almighty, my Creator and my strong pillar. For He has been the source of my strength throughout this venture.

My utmost appreciation goes to my parents, Violette C. Gumbs (aka Mommy) and the late Danny Douglas Daniel (aka Daddy) who have meant and continue to mean so much to me. My parents from an early age instill in me a desire to learn and made sacrifices so I would have access to a high quality education. Their support, encouragement, and constant love have sustained me throughout my life.

Unfortunately my father passed away in 2008 whose love for me knew no bounds. Although, he is no longer of this world, his memories continue to regulate my life. I do hope that this achievement will complete the dream that you both had for me all those many years ago when you chose to give me the best education you could. Daddy, I did it. I know he is in heaven smiling down on his baby girl. This one is for you Dad.

I would like to give a special thank you to my doctoral Committee, Dr. Gregory Uche, Dr. Diane Dusick, and Dr. Tim Truitt. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Gregory Uche for his time and careful attention to detail. Thank you for your untiring support and guidance throughout my journey. To my friends and colleagues Unimke Ugbong, Veronique Richardson, Asha Uche Roosberg, Urla Granger, Catherine Carbon, Heidi Kramers and Noreen Labega, in particular my best friend Adinia President Roosberg, thank you for listening and offering me advice and supporting me through this entire process. You guys were my best cheer leaders ever.

Lastly to a dear friend of mine with whom I have shared moments of deep anxiety but also of big excitement who prefers to remain anonymous. Your presence was very important in the process that is often felt as tremendously solitaire. You were a major source of support. I truly wish there was room on my diploma to write the names of all my supporting cast. Thank you Lord for always being there for me! This doctoral study is only the beginning of my journey.

Finally, I would like to leave the remaining space in memory of my dad (1943-2008), my everything.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Diversity in a workplace presents challenges to business managers, especially with regard to communication strategies to use to improve employee performance (Olusegun, Abdulraheem, & Nassir, 2018). Business leaders should identify and provide effective communication strategies in a diverse workforce to enhance the performance of all categories of employees and increase productivity and profitability (Javidmehr & Ebrahimpour, 2015). In the second decade of the 21st century, managers face many obstacles to effective communication within the organization, which could affect organizational output and employee performance (Kang & Sung, 2017). The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communications strategies that top-level managers in the telecommunication sector in St. Maarten use to improve employee performance.

Background of the Problem

Business sustainability in a diverse workforce depends mostly on the ability of the managers to use appropriate communication skills to manage employee diversity and implement increasingly complex business strategies (Gitonga, Kamaara, & Orwa, 2016). Top-level managers face challenges with formulating strategies to communicate effectively to a diverse workforce (Alexander, Havercome, & Muitaba, 2015). Managers and employees in a diverse workplace bring in some degree of experience, perceptions, and skills, which could strengthen a company's communication framework and boost the level of employee performance to enhance productivity (Asefa & Kerga, 2018).

To assist business managers in maintaining a competitive edge within their respective industries, top-level managers need to invest effort and time in improving and redefining the communication strategies in their respective organizations (Manciagli, 2016). With emerging global business trends and its significant changes in the internal and external work environment, business leaders in telecommunication companies are adopting new communication strategies to survive within the industrial sector (Raguz & Zekan, 2015). A business leader should have a useful communication framework to assist in understanding the complex effects of a diverse workforce (Olusegun et al., 2018). Gitonga et al. (2016) stated that top-level managers are facing a wide range of communication challenges in a diverse and changing workforce. Therefore, managers in a diverse workforce should make efforts to identify and acquire new communication skills and strategies that could enable them to communicate effectively with staff and improve employee performance.

Problem Statement

Business managers face communication challenges in diverse and multicultural workforce organizations (Tavakoli, 2015). In the United States, managers spend 60% to 80% of their time on staff communications, and only 17% communicated expertly to their staff (Odine, 2015). The general business problem that I addressed in this study was that communication challenges within a diverse workforce could result in a decrease in employee performance that could adversely affect productivity. The specific business problem that I addressed in this study was that some top-level managers in the

telecommunications sector lack communication strategies to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communications strategies that top-level managers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. The target case study population consisted of chief executive officer, chief financial officer, and chief operational officer in telecommunication companies. Six top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten, who had successfully used effective communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce, participated in this study. The findings from this study could contribute to positive social change by providing business leaders with effective communication strategies that might enhance the sharing of information from bottom to up and from employees to management, thereby improving employee performance. The communities could benefit from a sufficient level of mutual understanding, and the ability to solve mutual problems and agreement to engage in collective action, which may boost the local economy. Effective communication could foster mutually beneficial relationships among communities, citizens, groups, and businesses through the payment of taxes and corporate social responsibilities, which may improve the social amenities and welfare for the residents.

Nature of the Study

Researchers may use qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed methods approach in conducting research (Zoellner & Harris, 2017). I used the qualitative method for this study. In the qualitative method, the researcher achieves more significant insights and understanding of an underlying problem under study (Hammarberg, de Lacey, & Kirkman, 2016). A researcher can identify underlying trends, patterns, and relationships through the qualitative method (Albers, 2017). The quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of this study was not to examine variables, relationships, or group differences. A researcher uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis to enrich the general findings of a study through the methods (Bester, Moll, & Simons, 2017). The mixed methods approach was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of this study was not to collect and analyze empirical data.

Some of the qualitative designs that researchers use in a qualitative study include case study, phenomenology, or ethnography (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). I used a qualitative case study design for this study. With a case study approach, I explored the experiences and perceptions of participants regarding communications in a diverse workforce. Researchers use ethnographic designs to study cultural or social groups in their natural setting to gain a deeper understanding of the design research (Canevacci, 2017). I did not use an ethnological design for this study because the focus on this study was not on shared patterns of behaviors, beliefs, and languages of top-level telecommunication managers.

Researchers use a phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences of individuals (Korcuska & Flynn, 2018). Phenomenology was not appropriate for this study because the purpose of this study was to explore the communication strategies that top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The multiple case study design was suitable for this study because I intend to explore the communication strategies top-level managers from two telecommunication companies use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

<div align="center">**Research Question**</div>

What communication strategies do top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce?

Interview Questions

1. What communication strategies did you use to improve the performance of your employees in a diverse workforce?

2. How did your organization assess the effectiveness of the strategies?

3. What key challenges did you face in using the communication strategies within the diverse workforce?

4. What steps did your organization take to meet the key challenges?

5. What specific improvements did you notice in employee performance as the result of the communication strategies you used in the diverse workforce?

6.   What additional information can you provide related to communication strategies your organization's managers used to improve employee performance in its diverse workforce?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was organizational information theory (OIT). Karl Weick proposed the OIT in 1969. The OIT was formulated in The Social Psychology of Organizing (Weick, 1969). The basic tenets of the OIT are that organizations evolve through constant streams of organized human communications activities. Communication is a process performed by managers and employees to enable an organization to function optimally. According to Weick (1969), the theory of organizational information focuses on information communication that is important in shaping an organization's performance. Weick concluded that one of the leading challenges for organizations is the management of multiple types of knowledge and information.

The three major constructs of the OIT are (a) information environment, (b) information equivocality, and (c) the cycle of communication or double interactions (Weick, 1969). The information environment comprises the rules that are within the organization to guide the managers' responses. Information equivocality involves several interpretations of a message among members within an organization. Cycle of communication equivocality is reduced when employees and top-level managers discourse more about a specific topic as understanding is reached.

Weick's (1969) theory of organizational information is a relevant tool in guiding the telecommunication sector to harness effective communication strategies, which can ultimately boost employee performance. As applied to this study, managers may have

been able to improve internal communication practices using OIT to increase employee engagement and performance.

Definition of Terms

Communication diversity: Communication diversity refers to the interaction of individuals of different cultures in the workplace promoting the exchange of new knowledge and concepts, authority and responsibility within the organizational hierarchy, which is attainable by embracing the different entities within the workplace (Almutairi, Alhaddad, & Alqahtani, 2015).

Communication skills: Communication skills include observing, speaking, empathizing, and listening through different means such as face-to-face interactions, digital communications example social media, and phone conversations (Finlay, Tsou, & Sugimoto, 2015).

Communication strategy: A communication strategy involves a designated plan to assist managers and employees to communicate effectively and to meet core organizational goals (Ayub, Manaf, & Hamzah, 2014).

Effective business communication: Effective business communication entails building strong relationships based on a proficient exchange of information between business leaders, employees, other businesses or clients, which can, in turn, improve efficiency (Murphy, 2014; Queensland Government, 2016).

Employee performance: Employee performance refers to an individual's work accomplishment after applying the required effort on the job in getting meaningful work completed (Pradhan & Jena, 2017).

Workplace diversity: Workplace diversity refers to a workforce comprising of individuals with a wide array of experiences, beliefs, and characteristics (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2015). Some of the key characteristics of workforce diversity include race, ability, gender, and age.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

An assumption is an information that is factual and verifiable (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first assumption in this study was that both men and women would answer the questions based on their real-life experiences in the workplace because the questions are not gender-based. All participants would answer all questions truthfully, honestly, and with integrity. Participants would have sufficient time to provide detailed answers. The second assumption was that the respondents would be top-level managers of telecommunication companies in St. Maarten who have developed and organized successful strategies to communicate in a diverse workforce. The third assumption was that top-level managers in the telecommunications sector lack communication strategies to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. I assumed that using multiple case study would provide an opportunity to investigate challenges, top-level managers, in the telecommunication sector face with a view of finding solutions to their lack of communication strategies to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. The final assumption was that the sample size would be sufficient to answer the research questions.

Limitations

Limitations are conditions or shortcomings that hinder a study and its findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first limitation of this qualitative descriptive case study was the honesty and thoroughness of the participants' responses. The participants' knowledge of the subject may limit the results of the study. Another limitation was selecting six top-level managers from telecommunication companies when there are only two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten. The final limitation was the limited choice of the organizational case to two telecommunication companies located in St. Maarten.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to the limits of a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Delimitations in this study include the geographical location, sample size, and the population. The purpose of this study was to explore communications strategies chief executive officers, chief operations officers, and chief financial officers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. The first delimitation of this study was solely concentrating on top-level managers of telecommunication companies in St. Maarten considering that effective change of communication within a diverse workforce is predominant in many other countries. Although there are only two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten, concerning the population, the scope of this study is a sample size of six managers in two companies in St. Maarten. Furthermore, another delimitation was the exclusive selection

of top-level managers from businesses with more than 50 employees and eliminating

managers from small- or medium-sized businesses.

Significance of the Study

Top-level managers identify improvements for managing and communicating

effectively within a diverse workforce, which could assist managers and employees to

achieve better business outcomes (Verghese, 2017). The findings of this study might

recommend new strategies for communicating effectively within a diverse workforce,

thereby assisting managers and employees to achieve better business outcomes. By

implementing the recommended strategies, managers might gain new knowledge to

identify improvements for managing and communicating effectively within a diverse

workforce.

Contribution to Business Practice

Managers who do not communicate effectively within a business could face

challenges of increased employee turnover rates and weak interpersonal interaction

within the diverse workforces (Alexander et al., 2015). Furthermore, effective

communication could improve the communication structure and foster a positive work

environment within the organization. Effective communication practices are the core of

every successful business (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015). The findings from this study could

provide useful information to top-level managers in the telecommunication sector on the

communication strategies for improving employee performance within a diverse

workforce. According to Luthra and Dahiya, the distribution of crucial information that

managers need to build effective relationships based on open communication and trust

can improve operations and productivity. Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector could use the findings of this study to apply flexibility in the implementation of communication strategies that align with their firms' internal cultures to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce and accomplish organizational objectives.

Implications for Social Change

This study could contribute to positive social change if managers adopt the findings by creating a better understanding of the values, attitudes, and beliefs of a diverse workforce among employees. The better understanding among the diverse workforce could, in turn, enhance the flow of communication between managers, employees, and business communities. Business leaders within the telecommunications sector may use the results from this study to create a more robust culture of diversity and inclusivity. A more influential culture of diversity and inclusivity could fully engage its workforce and create an environment that supports increased connected culture and teamwork (Tavakoli, 2015). The findings from this study could contribute to social change as communities could benefit from improved employee performance leading to job creation. Effective communication could foster mutually beneficial relationships among communities, citizens, groups, and businesses through the payment of taxes and corporate social responsibilities, which may improve the social amenities and welfare for the residents.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communication strategies that top-level managers in telecommunication companies use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. The exploration of values, communication strategies, employee differences, work ethics, and diversity in the workplace constitute the focus of this literature review. A diverse workforce creates challenges for top-level managers to communicate effectively. Managers should foster a work environment where different groups of employees with diverse skills can work together and contribute to productivity and profitability in the business organization.

The resources I used in this review of professional and academic literature consist of peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, books, and government websites. I searched the literature using the following sources: ScienceDirect, Emerald, Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, Thoreau Multi-Database Search, EBSCO, Academic Search Complete/Premier, and databases. The majority of my sources came from Walden University Library resources. I used specific search terms: *diverse workforce, employee performance, communication strategies for managers in organizations, effective communication, communication and its effects on workforce productivity,* and *organizational leadership.* Table 1 presents a summary of the type and date of the sources that I used for this literature review. Of the 95 resources, 84 articles (88%) were peer reviewed and published between 2014 and 2020.

Table 1

Literature Review Sources

Reference type	> 5 years	< 5 years	Total
Peer-reviewed journals	0	84	84
Dissertations	0	1	1
Non-peer reviewed journals			
Books	2	8	10
Government or corporate sites			
Total	2	93	95

Organizational Information Theory

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore communications strategies that top-level managers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance. The conceptual framework of the study was the OIT developed by Weick in 1969. Weick established this approach to describe the process by which organizations collect, manage, and use the information that they receive. Weick advised leaders to focus more on the organizing process and less on the organizational structure in terms of the roles and rules that guide its employees. Managers using OIT seek interventions to eliminate the causes of poor performance with minimal cost to the organization (Cappelli & Travis, 2016).

Without understanding messages by managers and employees, the circulation of information within the organization diminishes as the exchange of information that circulates within the organizations (Ali, Ali Talpur, Alamgir, & Javed, 2015). The

essential functions of management are planning, managing, controlling, and organizing,

which aid in ensuring effective communication within an organization (Ali et al., 2015).

Planning and organizing are the critical elements of OIT (Weick, 1969). To make the

necessary adjustments toward reaching a common goal, managers must depend on

combined information. As a new means of communication emerge, the amount of

messages business organizations send out and receive, and the speed of communicating

those messages also increase. Weick's OIT could be applied to manage the concerns and

communication problems of telecommunications managers. With effective

communication as the highest priority, an organization can continue to run smoothly

(Finlay et al., 2015).

Weick (1969) stated that it is necessary for managers and employees to engage in

productive exchanges and to build stable relationships in social and organizational life.

Constant adaptation and learning are essential to minimize falsified information, which

may seem like a severe force of change that continually threatens the stability of effective

communication. Reasoning and illustration sometimes create simplified editions of fact

or information that could distort the communication process (Chia, 2017). People, in

general, base their learning and actions on representations rather than reality (Chia,

2017). Consequently, there is a gap between theory and practice. In other words, people

will respond to information communicated to them based on their back-up reality rather

than the reality of lived experiences (Weick, 1969). Practitioners can consistently and

effectively use information as a tool to improve employee performance in a diverse

workforce. Researchers can rely on the tenets of OIT as a stable platform to explore the communication process.

Managers can utilize the theoretical perspectives contained in the OIT to improve communication flow with employees. Weick (1969) stated that communication within the organization controls the environment, which influences the behavior of the people and enhances or reduces productivity. Employee performance is essential in an organization. Therefore, managers and employees can use the OIT to lessen uncertainty in the work environment and accept only the relevant information and reject irrelevant excesses. With this in mind, employees and managers within the organization may understand the objectives more clearly and achieve the desired employee performance goals.

Information comes from external and internal sources. Weick (1969) examined the information environment as one of the tenets of the OIT. According to Weick, instead of focusing on the physical environment, the OIT should focus on the amount of information available to organizations. Managers depend on the available information to achieve their targets and goals. Therefore, managers and employees, when uncertain about a message, must gather additional information to reduce uncertainty. By minimizing uncertainties in a diverse workplace, managers may improve employee work performance. When goals and ideas are clear, managers and employees act in one accord to achieve sustainable progress and success concerning company goals and objectives.

The clarity in the communication process is fundamental to decoding the message conveyed. Weick (1969) stated that managers and employees might have multiple interpretations of messages referred to as information equivocality. Managers and

employees must decide which multiple interpretation best reflects the information provided in a message. According to Weick, one way to reduce equivocality is to rely on rules. Rules refer to behavioral guidelines. The rules are developed within the organization to make processes more efficient and are derivatives of the company's past successes (Weick, 1969). Weick's OIT is grounded in system principles.

Weick (1969) stated that there must be greater involvement among managers and employees to produce more exceptional results in reducing equivocality. Managers and employees may engage in communication cycles known as binary interactions as another way to combat equivocality. Weick examined cycles of communication. The information received by managers and employees within an organization can be unclear and to reduce uncertainty and avoid misinformation, managers should rely on the expertise of translators to gain the full meaning of the information conveyed. Business managers in telecommunication organizations should design guidelines to make sense of the information they receive.

A double interact has a combination of an act, response, and adjustment (Weick, 1969). Double interact circles are the building wedges of every organization and should focus on relationships within the organization rather than individual performance. An employee uncertainty comes from the communication behaviors due to the information received referred to as the act. Weick (1969) stated that the response is clarifying information provided because of the act. When the information is understood, the listener adjusts. Business managers should utilize Weick's OIT to draw a correlation between the accuracy of the information and the ability of organizations to adapt to change. Weick's

model of organizing could play a role in improving communication within the telecommunication sector in St. Maarten. The OIT could enable managers and employees to reduce equivocality when they face complex issues such as ineffective communication.

Related and Contrasting Theories to OIT

Several theories related to the OIT and postulated by Weick (1969). Such theories include Shannon and Weaver's (1949) information theory (IT) and the uncertainty reduction theory proposed by C. R. Berger and Calabrese (1975). In the subsequent review, I examined both theories about how telecommunication managers can apply the tenets of these theories to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Information Theory

A related theory to Weick's (1969) OIT is Shannon and Weaver's (1949) information theory (IT). The basis of IT is in information that focuses on accuracy and efficiency of transmitting messages by illumining noise and smart coding without concepts (Li & Wang, 2017). IT is similar to Weick's OIT because Weaver applied the model to various kinds of communication to develop effective communication. Researchers developed both theories to explain effective communication between a sender and receiver in telecommunication. Communication occurs between managers and employees within a business organization.

Shannon and Weaver (1949) stated that a communication system has five parts: (a) information source, (b) a transmitter, (c) a channel, (d) a receiver, and (e) a destination. Based on Shannon and Weaver's information theory, the communication process between managers and employees can consist of components mentioned

previously. When managers receive information serving as the source and transmit the

information to employees as recipients without interruption, communication becomes

effective (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Effective communication occurs when the receiver

has received and understood the message sent by the sender in the proposed way.

Telecommunications managers should ensure there is clarity when communicating with

employees, especially in a diverse workforce. According to van Ruler (2018), based on

the IT model, communication is successful when an individual sends a message to

receivers by illuminating the meaning contained in the message. When the information is

objective, the focus is then on the flow of information (van Ruler, 2018). The implication

is that with time, manages and employees within this theory, would focus on the

effectiveness of transmitting information within the organization, which would ultimately

enhance the interaction between those who are involved in the communication process

(van Ruler, 2018).

Managers and employees can achieve effective communication by eliminating the

noise, causing the disturbance within the communication process based on Shannon and

Weaver's IT. Jones, George, and Barrett (2016) stated that physical barriers such as

noise, thunder, and sea waves within the organization, which prevent the message from

getting to the receiver, could constitute a form of disturbance. As the volume of

environmental noise increases, the amount of information transmitted will decrease

(Jones et al., 2016). The barriers could quickly become media for ineffective

communication within the workplace. Therefore, managers and employees should

minimize barriers to effective communication by focusing not solely on immediate

results but seek deeper patterns of constant success that will improve employee work performance.

IT by Shannon and Weaver (1949) contains useful outlines on how individuals could communicate at a greater quantity at a faster speed (Jones et al., 2016). Shannon and Weaver were able to quantify information as a process that allows the sender to compress messages by excluding redundancies. For example, managers could process a 20-letter sentence to an employee. The sentence may contain letters such as M and A, which the manager can omit to make the sentence shorter. These characters are generally indicated by 0 and 1, according to Shannon and Weaver. Managers should use shorter codes for more recurring characters to ensure efficiency when communicating information to employees in a diverse workforce. Based on the tenets of IT, managers could pass on information effectively within the organization to employees to improve work performance. I did not choose the IT because the theory places more emphasis on the fullness or effectiveness of the manager's message to employees rather than managers emphasizing themselves. The purpose of this study is to explore the communications strategies top-level managers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory

Berger and Calabrese proposed an uncertainty reduction theory (URT) in 1975. The optimal goal of the interactions between two individuals should be to motivate and acquire knowledge about each other and create an orderly and predictable relationship (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Like Weick's OIT, the goal in URT is for communicators to

reduce uncertainty by increasing the predictability of the performances of individuals (Montoya, 2015). Managers and employees should engage in honest and direct communication to build employee confidence and improve work performance (Jackson, 2018). When managers and employees are encouraged to participate or engage in effective communication, the organizational performance level is enhanced, and avoid the uncertainty caused by the lack of information that triggers low performance. Berger and Calabrese stated that when managers minimize uncertainty, people can gain knowledge and harness understanding.

One of the tenets of the URT is that there are two types of uncertainties a person may encounter when communicating with another individual for the first time. The first act of uncertainty deals with behavioral questions, whereas the second is about thoughtful questions. The aim of both uncertainties is for individuals to discover each other (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Business communication interactions between a manager and employees should involve clarity when workers ask questions to reduce uncertainty and harness effective communication. Telecommunications managers should avoid uncertainties when asking behavioral and mental questions to enhance employees' work performance in a diverse workforce.

Managers and employees who stay longer in an organization tend to gather more information about their environment and organization, which reduces the level of uncertainty and increase job satisfaction (Son & Ok, 2019). According to Berger (2015), when employees and managers follow the trend of effective communication, with the URT, they are better informed and have a higher authority to control their work. Better

control of work could positively influence employee performance because employees and managers do not have restricted access to information. Furthermore, managers and employees engage in proactive strategies to decrease the level of uncertainty and facilitate prediction of future business trends. Berger stated that an individual's primary concern should be to decrease uncertainty and increase predictable behavior in the communicative process. The primary purpose of the URT is to increase effective verbal communication by ensuring clarity leading to a decrease in uncertainty.

Top-level telecommunication managers should benefit from the tenets of the URT by utilizing all available information for their decision-making process to reduce uncertainty and to make well-informed and effective business decisions. Many business leaders enter an organization with a great deal of uncertainty regarding both industrial and organizational norms, rules, and behaviors (Guillaume, Dawson, Otaye-Ebede, Woods, & West, 2017). URT contains a framework that managers can use to understand how feelings of cognitive and behavioral uncertainty could ultimately illuminate employees' motivation for information seeking strategies in a diverse workforce (Berger, 2015). Information-seeking is comparable with uncertainty reduction. In any relationship, a person has no information initially about the relationship until much later. Therefore, individuals need some type of primary information in the initial interaction.

When a manager and employees communicate, they tend to learn the reason for their attitudes towards each other. Mai (2016) defined information seeking as an effort to gather information about the gaps in people's knowledge. If the knowledge gaps are open, the first interaction with strangers tends to be difficult, which creates numerous

uncertainties. Berger (2015) stated that business leaders gather information during the

initial interaction phase to minimize the level of uncertainties. Conversely, a continuous

relationship between individuals could diminish interactions if they do not know each

other (Berger, 2015). URT was not chosen for this study because the objective of this

research was not to acquire knowledge about employees and managers or to create an

orderly and predictable relationship.

Ludwig von Bertalanffy's General System Theory

General system theory (GST) was proposed in 1930 by Ludwig von Bertalanffy

(Tretter, 2019). The GST is useful to individuals seeking to recognize the completeness

of human involvement through scientific investigation (von Bertalanffy, 1950).

Researchers use the Ludwig's GST to explain problems in science, both social and

physical interactions, relative to the parts and interconnectedness of a phenomenon to an

entity as a whole (Tretter, 2019). The basic tenet of GST consists of interacting

subsystems defined by renowned boundaries which can serve as a tool to monitor and

control the rate of flow of outputs between the environment and the system (Rani &

Merga, 2016). von Bertalanffy's GST is a way of looking at things rather than an end in

itself.

von Bertalanffy (1950) stated that the organization and society are open

subsystems. An open system is generally a system of exchange with a well-defined

environment consisting of the input transformation process, output, feedback, and

environment (Rani & Merga, 2016; von Bertalanffy, 1950). Furthermore, the

environment, organization, and society are interrelated, and a change in the environment

can have a profound impact on the open system (von Bertalanffy, 1950). The health of any organization is strongly dependent on how managers and employees adapt to environmental change. Boundaries guard each subsystem. Boundaries define who is a member of the organization and who is not and how each member could contribute to the overall success of the organization (Bridgen, 2017).

In the traditional approach of management, managers evaluate structures based on discussions, planning, organizing, and controlling as separate activities. IT involves roles and rules as separate activities (Weick, 1969). However, von Bertalanffy (1950) stated that problems, policies, and programs are considered and evaluated as interdependent components of a total system and not separate activities.

One perception of the GST is that management is an interrelated component of the organization (Bridgen, 2017). Individuals view each department within the organization as an overall system, contrary to Weick's OIT tenet which presents departments are broken down in special categories when information is received (Bridgen, 2017; Weick, 1969). In Weick's (1969) OIT, when an organization receives information, it is distributed to different departments to decease equivocality in the messages received. By reducing ambiguity, individuals will record only the essential information and discard excess information. With GST, management must support goals and the flow of processes that serve the overall health of the organization. An organization must depend on combined information to reach a common goal.

The two tenets of GST are relevant to clearing up any misconception about the purpose of effective communication within a telecommunication sector, especially in a

diverse workforce. Bridgen (2017) explained that a system within the GST could serve more than one purpose. In a diverse workforce, the points of views of employees will differ as to why effective communication is valid within an organization. For example, a manager may think that effective communication will ensure a meeting of company goals, while a supervisor may think that effective communication helps the organization run more smoothly. Within the telecommunication industry, many organizations provide services and products simultaneously.

A system disconnect would automatically lead to self-adjustment to restore stability, making it whole again (Bridgen, 2017). Therefore, the system has a feedback cycle. von Bertalanffy (1950) stated that the flow of information might not always correspond with the flow of energy. Consequently, information transmitted within a system could be distorted and therefore, information transmitted should not be expressed in terms of energy (von Bertalanffy, 1950). In the case of Weick's (1969) OIT, when the sender transmits a message, it is often distorted by noise interference. This trend sometimes affects the way employees within an organization perceive and understand the messages. Therefore, managers should be aware of the effect of noise interference when communicating with employees.

Rani and Merga (2016) stated that the primary purpose of the GST is to improve organizational behavior for effective management. Consequently, managers should create a system within the organization to enable employees could work in a conducive atmosphere. Based on the tenants of the GST, the workforce is diverse, and there are

different types of organizations. However, there is no particular framework for

understanding problems that arise within an organization (Rani & Merga, 2016).

According to Kereri and Harper (2019), Weick's OIT is a traditional linear theory

which focuses on cause and effect of parts while von Bertalanffy's (1950) GST

emphasizes more on the modern approach where principles are applied to a system to

form a whole. A good example is applying the dynamics of effective communication

within the organization to explore possible ways to illuminate employee behavior and

resolve communication problems using Weick's OIT. Contrarily, the application of the

same principle to von Bertalanffy's GST could result in the establishment of recurring

themes and collective attributes, emerging principles on how communication affects the

external organization, and how to send feedback from the environment to the

organization. Business leaders could use emerging principles and universal themes to

construct a framework where change is present (Yurtsevena & Buchanan, 2016). I did not

choose the GST for this study because the main of the study was not to improve

organizational behavior for active management but to explore the communication

strategies managers use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce.

Communication Skills and Strategies

The ability for managers and employees to communicate effectively within the

telecommunication sector is critical to the improvement of employee performance.

Managers should cultivate excellent communication skills and strategies to ensure

effective communication system prevails throughout the organization (Luthra & Dahiya,

2015). By speeding up access to information, managers can make better decisions,

thereby reducing unproductive time within the organization (Al-Mamary, Shamsuddin, Hami, & Al-Maamari, 2015). Effective communication is an essential skill that managers use to improve employee performance.

Communication skills. Business leaders communicate their vision to inspire workers to effect change for the benefit of those around them and within the organization (Valiga, 2019). Managers often communicate expectations and policies established by the leadership of the organization for agreement (Oyebola, 2018). Employees may choose to follow instructions from leadership because of the way of communicating an idea or the manner of establishing the vision and values. Managers who communicate effectively with employees pay attention to the entire communication process, not just the content of the message (Shimizu, 2017). Managers should have excellent communications skills to share information that could improve employees' performance.

A manager may consider the attitude, knowledge, emotions and credibility of the receiver that could impede or alter how a message is received (van Kleef, van den Berg, & Heerdink, 2015). Managers in the digital age should understand the best strategies to effectively receive and convey messages in person, via email, or on social media to employees within an organization to improve their performance, especially in a diverse workforce. Communication skills include observing, speaking, empathizing, and listening through different means, such as face-to-face interactions, digital communications example social media, and phone conversations (Finlay et al., 2015). Communication skills constitute tools a manager could use to ensure the success and efficiency of the business organization.

According to Oyebola (2018), a manager with excellent communication skills is well-equipped to lead employees in the organization effectively, which ultimately could result in enhanced self-confidence and job satisfaction. There is a direct relationship between a manager's communication skills and employee performance (Dewydar, 2015). To improve the commitment and performance of the employees, a leader should display excellent communication skills (Sousa & Rocha, 2019). Lack of communication skills leads to poor employee performance and a decrease in a company's success (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). Zulch (2014) stated that it is vital for business managers to identify the skills needed to communicate effectively within an organization. The three types of communications that occur in an organization are horizontal, vertical, and diagonal communications (Zulch, 2014). Horizontal communication involves communication with peers, vertical communication reflects the up and down flow of communication based on managers and subordinates' relationships, and diagonal communication refers to the upward relationships with managers and employees.

Managers who possess excellent communication or social skills can interact effectively with employees and other professionals (Zulch, 2014). Managers adapt to appropriate leadership styles to promote a pleasant climate for communication, which may increase employee commitment and work performance (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015). There are core skills needed in communication for managers and leaders. Managerial communication skills include listening, written communication, emotional awareness, and verbal and nonverbal communication (Uslu, 2015). Without effective communication, a manager accomplishes little. Managers with proper communication

skills assist employees in understanding each other and work together towards the

realization of organizational goals (Thomas, Tendai, Zororo, & Obert, 2018).

Asamu (2014) posited that it would be difficult to convey a message without

having the communication skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing. By

listening, a manager can access a problem and diagnose a solution process to resolve the

problem. Managers may solve problems faster when they provide an explanation, which

could lead to an increase in confidence and a boost to employee work performance.

According to Kourkouta and Papathanasiou (2014), listening is a very vital skill a

manager must possess. Business leaders should offer employees the opportunity to use

their communication skills to work out solutions to a problem before managers could get

involved (Asamu, 2014). Active listening generates mutual respect and trust among

managers and employees. A manager with active listening skills helps to minimize

mistakes within the organization.

A business leader should demonstrate personal characteristics such as

accountability, trust, and concern for others (Sfantou et al., 2017), which could serve as

useful tools to facilitate better communication. Business leaders should exhibit excellent

communication skills and a passion for others both outside and within the organization.

Excellent leadership skills could have a positive effect on employees' performance (Le &

Ko, 2019). The promotion of employees' performance and work attitudes are highly

dependent on the leadership capabilities and communication skills of a leader (Barrick,

Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015; Tafvelin, Stenling, Lundmark, & Westerberg,

2018). Top-level managers in the telecommunication companies should possess excellent communication skills to improve employee performance.

The communication skills of a business manager may differ from one person to another (Jahromi, Tabatabaee, Abdar, & Rajabi, 2016). However, the communication process should be transparent so that the message is conveyed effectively to the employees (Shonubi & Akintaro, 2016). Expert communicators assess an excellent communication skill in terms of when a manager communicates with an employee, and that employee understands the message (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015). Managers ought to know how to incorporate communication planning to drive and fulfil employee behavior, achieve better business outcomes, and disperse information to a target workforce (Asamu, 2014). Top-level telecommunication managers should understand that employees are different and use appropriate communication skills for each person.

Managers should communicate regularly with employees to keep them on par with the affairs of the organization. Frequent communication instils confidence within employees and builds an open channel of communication among managers and employees (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015). The ultimate objective within the organization should be to include all categories of employees in the communication process, thereby, avoiding mix messages. To develop and sustain a competitive advantage for organizational performance and improvement, a business leader must display effective communication skills, especially in the telecommunication industry.

Strategies. Business leaders need to validate strategies to improve communication and employee performance in a diverse workforce. Business leaders

should create strategies to improve lapses and connectivity in communication to enhance employee performance and productivity. Communication strategy involves a designated plan to assist managers and employees to interact effectively and to meet core organizational goals (Ayub et al., 2014). According to Adua-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang (2014), business leaders can create an environment where plans, issues, opinions, and ideas are discussed and handled proficiently through effective communication. Managers who communicate effectively boost employees' performance.

A manager may implement several strategies to break communication barriers and create active communication environment within an organization. Communication barriers can emerge at any stage of the communication process and have the potential to create confusion and misunderstanding in the business environment (Norouzinia, Aghabarari, Shiri, Karimi, & Samami, 2015). A manager's goal should be to lessen the occurrence of communication barriers at each stage of the communication process with accurate, precise, effective, and concise communication strategies (Norouzinia et al., 2015). Adua-Oppon and Agyin-Birikorang (2014) listed guidelines for overcoming communication barriers:

1. The free flow of communication is constructive and should be encouraged by management.

2. Misunderstandings could decrease by implementing multiple channels to reinforce complex messages.

3. Both employee and manager can tailor symbols and words so that the message becomes clear and understandable.

4. Sender and receivers should reduce environment barriers by giving attention to the message expressed and devoting adequate time to listening to the communication.

5. Efforts to understand beliefs and values must be taken into consideration by the sender and receiver to reduce personal barriers to effective communication.

6. Use management processes to solve conflicts in an equitable fashion that will promote effective communication.

Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector should explore and utilize Adua-Oppon and Agyin-Birikorang's (2014) guidelines to improve communication strategies they use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Managers knowing how to cope and nurture diversity differences may empower employees to address strategic business challenges. Furthermore, managers and employees who communicate effectively may enhance their negotiation and planning skills, which in turn can support the current and future success of the organization.

Diversity in the Workplace

Workplace diversity refers to a workforce that comprises of individuals with a wide array of experiences, beliefs, and characteristics (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2015). A company must adapt strategies to fuse people with different backgrounds, perceptions, attitudes, and ages within an organization. Managing diversity within the workforce is a challenge for any organization (Saxena, 2014). According to Saxena, diverse people think differently, and they may come together at the same place with different ideas and many

individuals would not agree on issues related to company policies and procedures. Managers should understand workplace diversity and adopt appropriate strategies to improve employee performance.

In a global context, it is a challenge for managers to manage diversity effectively in a workforce (Makhdoomi & Nika, 2017). Managers should acquire managerial skills to prepare themselves for the task of communicating with diverse employees within the organization. Managerial skills include communication, problem-solving, planning, and delegating (Al-Qassab, Paucar-Caceres, Wright, & Pagano, 2019). To effectively manage diversity in the workplace, the manager must understand the employee's background, beliefs, and values; and how these factors can affect the decision-making process within a diverse workforce.

The concept of workplace diversity may differ from company to company. Communicating within a diverse workforce may require managers to change their viewpoint to promote better collaboration and achieve favorable successes (Wullert, Gilmartin, & Simard, 2019). Employees interacting with each other within the diverse workforce can lead to increased customer satisfaction within the telecommunications industry (Davis, Frolova, & Callahan, 2016). In a diverse workforce, cultural mentoring plays an important role. When leaders share employees' ideas throughout the company, it helps managers to discover employees' talents (Chin, Desormeaux, & Sawyer, 2016). Furthermore, cultural mentoring also encourages employees to create a work environment of equal opportunities where all employees feel energized to perform better.

Within the telecommunications sector, managers may be able to track and measure results as well as create informal relationships to accomplish organizational objectives.

Workplace diversity has contributed to high productivity within an organization (Saxena, 2014). Because of the differences in employees' educational background, managers should treat each employee independently instead of in a collective manner (Shaban, 2016). A diverse workforce requires a manager to guide the aligned employees in such a way that leads to a standard and productive direction. A telecommunications company can benefit from a different pool of ideas from diverse employees (Guillaume et al., 2017). A diverse pool of employees can benefit from problem-solving and critical thinking skills (Cletus, Asiah, Abubakar, & Doko, 2018). Employees within the diverse workforce can derive from each other possible solutions to the problems of the organization, which could set the organization apart from its competitors. Using the resources and the different views and approaches in a diverse workforce, the business organization could draw from the culture and talents of employees to enhance corporate and individual performance (Cletus et al., 2018).

Diversity within a workforce could result in disagreements and misconceptions derived from different beliefs and attitudes of the employees (Shaban, 2016). Weak interaction may cause numerous communication problems within the telecommunications sector, which ultimately may result in targets not easily reached. Shaban highlighted an example, some employees may be conservative, and hence, it will be risker in planning the organization's growth path. In contrast, some employees are willing to take risks and

to adopt an aggressive growth strategy. Often, the scenarios regarding different beliefs and attitudes among diverse workforce may lead to endless conflicts (Shaban, 2018).

Flexible working arrangements are a leading factor to encourage a more diverse labor pool, including gender participation and age differences within a workforce (Sharma, 2016). In the workforce, there is a demand for more flexibility, especially from the diverse generation (Chung & van der Lippe, 2018). Chung (2019) stated that managers should introduce flexible working arrangements as a means of providing employees with the ability to alternate their schedules and to complete assigned tasks promptly. While flexible schedules may increase the choices of employees within the diverse workforce, it could also serve as a tool for creating a balanced work-life among employees leading to performance improvement and increase in participation and productivity (Chung, 2019). Managers should encourage work-life balance to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

The recruitment of people with different characteristics, values, and diverse backgrounds can create challenges for organizational managers (Cletus et al., 2018). Some challenges within a diverse workforce include (a) a generational gap, (b) gender and lifestyle choices, (c) workplace communication, and (d) ethnic and cultural differences (Cletus et al., 2018). Managers within an organization need to implement the necessary programs and strategies to manage diversity and to tap into the various talents. Organizations worldwide, such as government agencies and professional bodies, are dynamically collaborating to increase workforce diversity (O'Brien, Scheffer, van Nes, & van der Lee, 2015). Hiring employees with a diverse background could increase the level

of commitment and job satisfaction among staff. Therefore, managers should be cautious in the ways they manage a diverse workforce, especially when the workforce is experiencing an immense change (Sharma, 2016). O'Brien et al. (2015) opined that diversity has increased in many industries, such as telecommunications, but the change is restricted. Telecommunication managers should develop strategies to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce.

Diversity in the workforce can provide superior services, productive ideas and practices, which can enhance innovation and customer satisfaction (Vohra et al., 2015). Employees with excellent communication skills are more likely to understand customers' needs and communicate effectively, which could result in improved employee performance and productivity (Vohra et al., 2015). A good example is Vodafone India, a telecommunications provider for voice and mobile data. Vohra et al. (2015) stated that women accounted for 20% of Vodafone diverse workforce from different cities in India who have contributed significantly to the success of the organization and has enhanced engagement with customers.

Business managers in a diverse workforce should develop strategies for communicating with employees in a multicultural setting which could enhance openness and trust (Hofhuis, van der Rijt, & Vlug, 2016). Managers and employees should be able to understand how cultural and ethnic differences shape the conflict resolution process and to come up with strategies to resolve such conflicts (Haumschild, Hertig, & Weber, 2015). With cultural differences in mind, employees will be able to negotiate outcomes.

Communication in a Diverse Work Environment

There has been a rise in diversity in the workforce since many organizational leaders have sought practical ways to harness diverse perspectives of employees to enhance workplace performance (Wong, Selvadurai, Saxena, & Okal, 2017). Adverse effects of diversity in communication and employees' performance may exist in a work environment (Wong et al., 2017). Communication diversity refers to the interaction of individuals of different cultures in the workplace promoting the exchange of new knowledge, concepts, authority, and responsibility within the organizational hierarchy (Almutairi et al., 2015).

The cultural and social system shapes a person's values, beliefs, and attitudes; hence, the level of productivity may differ in the way workers communicate within an organization. Gould, Krymkowski, and Ardoin (2018) stated that working habits and cultural background among workers could influence productivity. Similarly, business leaders who communicate and mingle within an organization with significant lived experiences and events growing up can shape worldviews, values, attitudes, and beliefs (Ertas, 2015). Because business managers tend to face challenges in a diverse work environment, new communication strategies and management skills are crucial for business leaders in a diverse workplace (Asefa & Kerga, 2018). Workplace diversity can negatively impact communication in a company. Diversity can constitute an obstacle to effective communication resulting in a decrease in productivity, employee performance, as well as dampen the cohesiveness among workers and leaders (Asefa & Kerga, 2018).

In a diverse workforce, business managers encounter socioeconomic and cultural conflicts and challenges resulting from communication misunderstandings (Browne, Dreitlein, Ha, Manzoni, & Mere, 2016). Managers may require learning new ways of behaving and thinking in order to have a significant impact on how to resolve and address those cultural issues and conflicts (Browne et al., 2016). According to Browne et al. (2016), to achieve optimal performance in a diverse workforce, managers must understand how various issues affect the behavior of the workers within an organization.

Understanding what affects employee behaviors will assist managers to overcome all barriers of intercultural communication among members. Therefore, business leaders must establish personal relationships and networks with team members within the organization (Browne et al., 2016). Furthermore, managers need to understand cross-cultural differences and adapt them to maintain a successful diversified team.

Luthra and Dahiya (2015) posited that a manager could not become an effective leader if he or she is not an active role model and communicator who uses his or her ability for a diverse team to follow suit. Managers who communicate effectively with employees tend to develop a good understanding of working productively in a diverse work environment (Ayub et al., 2014). Effective communicators in a business setting often encourage good business leaders and managers who have a set of clear values to promote those values in the diverse workforce (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015).

Employee Performance

Many organizational leaders strive to maintain a competitive advantage by fostering excellent employee performance in the telecommunication sector (Al-Mamary

et al., 2015). With increased competition in the telecommunication industry, managers

can boost employee performance in order to enhance their profitability (Pradhan & Jena,

2017). Managers should create a conducive business environment where employees

function in harmony to enhance employee performance (Wiedmer, 2015). Every

employee should make a positive individual contribution to the performance of the

organization.

Wier (2016) opined that one of the most challenging tasks facing managers is to

talk to an employee about poor performance issues such as attitudes and skill level. Many

managers avoid such a topic because it feels confrontational, and there is no simple

format to follow. When a manager holds an employee accountable for poor job

performance, the employee who is performing up to par may lose respect for that

manager. Contrarily, when managers hold employees responsible for poor performance,

it encourages the workers to improve their performances toward the realization of the

vision and goals of the company (Wier, 2016). Business leaders should discuss job

performance with employees.

In the telecommunications industry, the primary issue managers should consider

is the level of satisfaction of the employees (Al-Mamary et al., 2015). Companies that

engage in appropriate training programs for employees can enhance skills, competencies,

and employee performance. A company will reach its optimal goals when employees

have the relevant skills, high-level competencies and knowledge required for improved

performance. Managers should provide adequate training programs to employees to

minimize job errors and enable them to gain full command of the skills required to

perform a particular function (Al-Mamary et al., 2015). Training could be a useful tool for improving employee performance.

Equity, better pay, motivation, and remuneration are some ways managers in the telecommunication industry can use to improve employee performance (Wamwayi, Amuhaya, Elegwa, Mukulu, &Waititu, 2016). A business owner can improve employee performance by pay satisfaction, which could serve as a source of incentives for employees to fulfill their financial obligations (Sule, 2017). Financial benefits, when applied to employees, serve as a reward for their performances. Employees who do not get their fringe benefits would not be happy, thereby, causing a decrease in their performance (Omonijo, Oludayo, Eche, Uche, & Ohunakin, 2015). An employee level of performance is related to his or her level of commitment towards the organization (Selvarasu & Sastry, 2014). To get the best out of employees, managers and employers within the telecommunication sector should practice the principles of equity, motivation, and reasonable remuneration.

The three dimensions of employee performance are (a) mainly as a task, (b) adaptive, and (c) contextual performance (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Business leaders link behaviors to job responsibilities assigned to a particular job description and constitute the task performance (Pradhan& Jena, 2017). According to Baard, Rench, and Kozlowski (2014), adaptive performance is the employees 'ability to handle unstable work circumstances effectively. Contextual performance refers to behaviors expected of an employee, but it not mentioned on that employee's job description (Pradhan & Jena,

2017). Employees within an organization should adjust their interpersonal behavior in such a way that it promotes success in the work environment.

Measurement of Employee Performance in a Diverse Workforce

Measuring employee performance in a diverse workforce depends on setting realistic aims, which will determine prior performance while providing feedback to employees after completing assigned tasks (Araki, Kawaguchi, & Onozuka, 2016). A manager can evaluate the effectiveness and achievements of employees, thereby making the necessary adjustments to increase overall performance (Saxena, 2014). Employee performance is associated with an individual's work accomplishment after applying the required effort on the job in getting meaningful work completed (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Managers should give performance feedback to employees to improve their job performance.

Managers who seek performance feedback distribute peer performance evaluations to employees (Kramer, Mass, & van Rinsum, 2016). Organizations, both private and public, measure performance by the quality of activities and service. The activities involve the collection of regular data such as performance processes and the desired results achieved (Deepa, Palaniswamy, & Kuppusamy, 2014). According to Huang, Lee, Chiu, and Yen (2015), managers can improve employee performance by the collaboration of process performance measurement along with the reduction of costs. Improving employee performance is a crucial responsibility for managers.

The concept of employee performance originated from the accessibility of different tactics and models for measuring the performance of employees (Bish &

Kabanoff, 2014). According to Mustafa, Glavee-Geo, Gronhaug, and Almazrouei (2019),

employees who believe in their abilities to execute target behavior and endure all

challenges as they strive to achieve organizational goals may sustain proper performance

levels. Mustafa et al. posited that an employee believing in oneself and one's ability to

accomplish a particular task can improve work performance. Furthermore, self-efficacy

can be a means of encouraging active work behavior, which can lead to higher employee

performance.

Managers may highlight each employee's role in meeting organizational goals. A

task is better managed when managers can determine what the company wishes to

measure before setting performance targets (Wamwayi et al., 2016). A manager may

notice a decrease in the effort to reach a goal and may choose to advise the employee on

suitable strategies to attain the company goals. Organizations use performance appraisals

to record behaviors and activity of an employee towards attaining desired goals and

providing feedback based on the quality of employee performance (Sarak & Sen, 2019).

Performance appraisals help to build teamwork and cooperation among employees and to

understand how employee performance affects the ability of others to perform their jobs

and the overall success of an organization (Mwema & Gachunga, 2014). Managers

should ensure that employee performance aligns with organizational goals.

Mwema and Gachunga (2014) stated that performance appraisals aid

identification of employees' rewards. By contrast, Dusterhoff, Cunningham, and

MacGregor (2014) argued that employees see the performance appraisal system as

punishment or reward. When managers' goals are unclear, employee performance

appraisals are a dissatisfaction to employees, which consequently could reduce employee performance and organizational commitment (Idowu, 2017). Managers should create employee reward systems to recognize employees' work using the performance appraisals, which should serve as a critical incentive for employees (Idowu, 2017). Business leaders use non-monetary rewards such as a certificate of achievements and compliments to aid in reinforcing desired behavior that an employee depicts.

Managers use the performance elevation system to determine the success or failure of employees in a diverse organization (Deepa et al., 2014). Bagul (2014) conducted a performance appraisal on a sample size of 50 employees and demonstrated that both the appraiser and employee could benefit from the appraisal conducted. Mwema and Gachunga (2014) stated that the appraiser could identify the fundamental needs and expectations of staff improves. In contrast, employees can remain motivated and improve their productivity because they manage their time better, acquire feedback on their responsibilities, and seek to improve their performance (Mwema and Gachunga, 2014).

Bagul (2014) stated that researchers design the performance appraisal system to enable the organization to analyze the contribution of each employee to the organization periodically. When an employee is showing no growth within the organization, the manager or the appraisal system could motivate that employee. By motivating an employee, the performance appraisal system serves as a tool for employee development (Bagul, 2014). Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector should use performance appraisal to promote employee development, thereby improving employee performance.

Idowu (2017) described three types of performance appraisal to include (a) 360 degree or multi-rater performance appraisal, (b) management by objectives, and (c) graphical rating scales. The 360-degree feedback method provides feedback on the employees' behavior and the impact of such behavior on the organization (Kanaslan & Iyem, 2016). With the 360-degree performance appraisal, the employees can contribute by providing opinions about individual performance in acknowledgement as a multi-source and full-circle performance system (Idowu, 2017).

Conversely, the management by objectives performance appraisal system includes a step-by-step result-based system. The management by objective process includes (a) setting clear objectives for the employee, (b) providing a detailed action plan for achieving objectives, (c) allowing employees to set up their action plan, and (d) taking corrective measures in the form of new objectives (Idowu, 2017). The graphical rating scale is ranked by a rating scale that lists each trait an employee should have along with a numbered scale for each trait (de Nisi & Murphy, 2017). The rating scales are useful tool managers use to determine promotions and salary adjustments in terms of employee performance level.

Managers can improve performance by implementing performance and management programs. However, researchers have not shown any evidence to prove that improving employee (individual) level performance will eventually lead to company-level performance (de Nisi & Smith, 2014). The appraisal system should provide value to an organization as well as the managers and employees. However, even if an organization succeeds in using the performance appraisal system and provides feedback, it is unclear if

all of the appraisal components could lead to an operative organization (de Nisi & Smith, 2014).

Balcioglu and Nihinlola (2014) opined that to begin a conversation between supervisors and employees, managers should use a performance evaluation system. The conversation should highlight how to use the best features of an employee's performance to motivate and inspire them to improve their performance. Indicating that an employee is performing optimally, for example, is a useful tool for making salary adjustments. Managers could focus on what drove employees to try to improve their performance (de Nisi & Smith, 2014). Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector should understand what drives an employee to improve job performance.

To perform effectively within a diverse organization, employees need the appropriate facilities and atmosphere (Bragard, Dupuis, & Fleet, 2015). An attractive work environment can improve employee commitment and performance (Nzewi, Augustine, Mohammed, & Godson, 2018). An organization will prosper or fail based on the workplace environment in which employees operate. When employees are satisfied with their work environment, it deprives them of feeling dissatisfied. Therefore, employee performance improves with an increase in the level of job satisfaction.

Employees may transform into higher performance when the workplace environment is favorable and guarantee the wellbeing of the workforce (Nzewi et al., 2018). During the administration of performance appraisals, excessive moral tensions exist between managers and employees (Almatrooshi, Sing, & Fraouk, 2016). Consequently, some employees may feel that managers are not making ethical decisions

during the performance appraisal process. The result of performance appraisal may hamper employee promotion because the unfavorable decision made during the performance appraisal, resulting in unhappiness by the employee (Fu, 2014). Top-level managers in the telecommunication sector should strive to use performance appraisal to improve job performance.

Summary

Top-level managers within the telecommunication sector face communication challenges within the diverse workforce. Weick (1969) proposed the organizational informational theory, which contains information on ways an organization collects, manages, and uses the information it receives. Researchers have recognized the importance of effectively communicate between top-level managers and workers to ensure effective employee performance.

Shannon and Weaver's (1949) information theory and Berger's uncertainty theory are alternative theories to the organizational informational theory. Both theories exposed the need to build employee confidence and improve work performance. Telecommunication managers should avoid uncertainty when asking behavioral questions to reduce any misunderstanding between employees and managers. By contrast, von Bertalanffy's (1950) general system theory deviates from the regular traditional theories. The general system theory presents management as an interrelated component of the organization where information is transferred from the organization to the environment and then back to the organization (Kereri & Harper, 2019).

An essential duty of the top-level managers is to assess the vital skills employees need to communicate effectively within a diverse workforce. An employee's possession of some skills could lead to improved work performance. Managers should implement communication strategies to break communication barriers and enhance effective communication within an organization (Norouzinia et al., 2014).

Although managing diversity in a workplace could pose a challenge for top-level managers within the telecommunications sector, managers need to acquire managerial skills to enable them to teach employees the value of diversity and how to harness diversity for productivity. Top-level managers must critically evaluate the benefits of workforce diversity within the telecommunication industry and to use the benefits of diversity as a competitive advantage. Many organizational leaders strive to maintain a competitive advantage by fostering excellent employee performance (Al-Mamary et al., 2015).

An employee who has a high commitment to work should also have a high work performance level. A manager may use various ways to evaluate employee performance, such as employee appraisals in the form of multi-rater, graphical rating scales, and management by objectives (Idowu, 2017). In today's fast-paced work environment, an organization's success depends on effective communication, and the ability of management to carefully evaluate employees' performance and apply the right measures to harness the benefits of workplace diversity within the telecommunication sector.

Transition and Summary

Section 1 of this study contains the background of the study, problem statement, purpose statement, nature of the study, research question and interview questions, conceptual framework, the definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, and significance of the study. Section 1 also contains an extensive review of professional and academic literature, which covers themes such as communication strategies, workplace diversity, employee performance, and the conceptual analysis of the OIT. In Section 2, I discuss my role as the researcher, describe the participants of the study, explain the research method and design, the population and sampling technique, as well as ethical issues associated with the study. Section 2 also contains narratives on data collection, data analysis, and reliability and validity of the study. In Section 3, I will present the findings of the study, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further study, as well as my reflections and conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

The purpose of this study was to explore the communication strategies that top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Section 1 contains information on the background of the study, the problem and purpose statements, the nature of the study, research question and interview questions, the conceptual framework, assumptions, limitations and delimitations, as well as review of the literature. In Section 2, I discuss the role of the researcher, participants, research methods and designs, ethical issues, population and sampling techniques, data collection technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communications strategies that top-level managers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. The target case study population consisted of chief executive officer, chief financial officer, and chief operational officer in telecommunication companies. Six top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten, who had successfully used effective communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce, participated in this study. The findings from this study could contribute to positive social change by providing business leaders with effective communication strategies that might enhance the sharing of information from bottom to up and from employees to management, thereby improving employee performance. The communities could benefit from a sufficient level of mutual understanding, and the ability to solve mutual problems

and agreement to engage in collective action, which may boost the local economy. Effective communication could foster mutually beneficial relationships among communities, citizens, groups, and businesses through the payment of taxes and corporate social responsibilities, which may improve the social amenities and welfare for the residents.

Role of the Researcher

In a qualitative study, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Fusch & Ness, 2015). As the researcher in this qualitative multiple case study, my primary role was to serve as the instrument for data collection to accomplish the purpose of this study. Yin (2017) identified seven roles of a qualitative researcher: (a) data collection, (b) data organization, (c) data analysis, (d) data interpretation, (e) a review of the literature to gather relevant information, (f) identification and engagement of participants, and (g) data storage and security. In this study, I conducted an extensive review of the literature, identified and selected the study participants, used interview questions to collect data, and analyzed and interpreted the data.

As the chief audit executive (CAE) of a large government-owned company in the Caribbean Island of St Maarten, I have experienced the effects and challenges of ineffective communication within an organization with a diverse workforce. My personal experience was the primary motivation to conduct this study on the communication strategies top-level managers could use to improve the performance of employees in a

diverse work environment. I did not have any direct relationship with the participants of this study.

Lewis (2015) stated that personal beliefs and experience with the topic are unavoidably bound to the research being the center of the study in data collection and analysis. I chose not to conduct the doctoral study within the organization that I work for but rather use participants from other large companies in St. Maarten for my research. The results of this study could help managers to understand the best communication strategies to use to improve the performance of employees in their companies.

The role of the researcher includes adhering to the ethical research issues outlined in the Belmont Report. The Belmont Report, produced in 1978 by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects, contains ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects from abuse. The Belmont Report aims to ensure that researchers adhere to the following three principles: (a) respect for participants, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (National Institute of Health, 2015). I adhered to the Belmont Report principles and guidelines by respecting participants' beliefs and feelings, minimizing risks, and avoiding bias in the selection of participants.

Researchers should attend the National Institute of Health (NIH) training to gain knowledge and understanding on what measures to protect participants, implementation of the informed consent process, and how to address ethical concerns of participants (Resnik, Miller, Kwok, Engel, & Sandler, 2015). I attended the NIH training course on the protection of human participants and obtained the NIH Certificate (see Appendix A)

before collecting data from study participants. I also applied for and obtained the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before contacting participants.

Qualitative researchers use various strategies to mitigate bias and avoid viewing data through a personal lens. Some of the strategies include (a) use of an interview protocol, (b) member checking, (c) construction of appropriate interview questions, (d) transcript validation, and (e) reaching data saturation (Berger, 2015; Roulston, 2016). I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B) as a guide to assist in collecting reliable data from participants and used the process of member checking to ensure accuracy of data collected and validate the interview data. To ensure data saturation, researchers continue to interview participants until no new information is emerging, and themes remain the same (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I ensured data saturation during the interview process as a means to mitigate personal bias.

Qualitative researchers use the interview process to collect data to answer the research question (Graue, 2015; Rosenthal, 2016) and to obtain useful information on the experiences of participants (Galloway, Kapasi, & Whittam, 2015). I used the semistructured interview questions contained in the interview protocol (see Appendix B) to collect data from participants. According to Kevill, Trehan, Easterby-Smith, and Higgins (2015), researchers use the interview protocol to provide an understanding of the research phenomenon from participants' perspectives and experiences. Therefore, I used the interview protocol to obtain data from participants to understand their perspectives on the research question and to mitigate personal bias.

Participants

The participants for this study consisted of six top-level managers of the categories of chief executive officer, chief financial officer, and chief operational officer, working in two telecommunication companies in the Caribbean Island of St. Maarten. St. Maarten is a small 37-square-mile island with a population of approximately 69,000 inhabitants, which is a melting pot of people from 70 or more different countries (Central Bureau of Statistics St. Maarten, 2014). Researchers select participants for a study based on their level of competence in understanding the complexity, depth, and the full context of the phenomenon under study (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014; Ladhari & Tchetgna, 2015; Pelosi, 2015). I selected three participants from each of the two companies based on three eligibility criteria. Each participant must (a) have served as a top-level manager in a telecommunication company in St. Maarten for at least 5 years; (b) have developed and used communication strategies successfully in a diverse workforce; and (c) hold the title of chief executive officer, chief financial officer, or chief operational officer.

Researchers use several strategies to gain access to participants including telephone calls, personal contacts, business directory, emailing, and face-to-face techniques (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015; Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016; Scott, Cavana, & Cameron, 2014). To gain access to the top-level managers of the targeted telecommunication companies in St. Maarten, I used personal and business networking strategies such as phone calls, emails, social media outlets, and personal visits. The human resources personnel of the respective telecommunication companies provided the contact information for each of the participants. After I have received approval from

Walden University IRB, I sent to the participants a letter of invitation to participate voluntarily in the research study. The letter of invitation contained information on the purpose of the study, the criteria for participation, and the interview process. Also, I e-mailed the participants a copy of the informed consent form, which they had to sign before participating in the study.

In a qualitative study, the researcher must establish a good working relationship with the participants by building trust, creating rapport, and cultivating an atmosphere of understanding devoid of bias (Halcomb & Peters, 2016; Harvey, 2015; van Antwerpen & Curtis, 2016). I used an open communication technique to build trust and create a conducive environment with the participants. The informed consent form was a valuable tool for establishing a good working relationship with research participants. The information contained in the informed consent form includes the purpose of the study, voluntary nature of the study, freedom to withdraw at any stage in the research process, and assurance of confidentiality and anonymity of the process. I used the information contained in the informed consent form to establish a relationship with the participants.

Researchers could develop a valuable working relationship with participants by interacting and listening patiently to them while sharing their experience and expertise during the interview process, and maintaining confidentiality (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Petrova, Dewing, & Camillieri, 2016). I listened to participants and gave them time to share their expertise and experiences on the phenomenon associated with communication strategies in a diverse workplace. I assured the respondents of

confidentiality of the research process. The interviews took place in a secured and quiet conference room at each of the telecommunication companies.

Research Method and Design

Researchers use qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach in conducting research (Abutabenjeh, 2018). I used the qualitative method for this study. Some qualitative designs include case study, phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative designs (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Yin, 2017). I used the qualitative case study approach to explore the communication strategies top-level managers in the telecommunication companies in St. Maarten uses to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce.

Method

A qualitative researcher seeks to explore a phenomenon in a real-life situation to understand the meaning and proper context in line with the experiences of the participants (Austin & Sutton, 2015; Hadi & Close, 2016; Yin, 2017). Researchers use the qualitative method to assess the research phenomenon in the natural setting (Astin & Long, 2014; Castle & Nolen, 2018; Delost & Nadder, 2014). I used the qualitative method for this study because of the exploratory nature of the research question: What communication strategies do top-level managers use to improve the performance of their employees in a diverse workforce? The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the intent was to explore and understand the full meaning of the phenomenon through the experiences and perceptions of the participants.

In a quantitative research study, researchers collect numerical data to test a hypothesis and predict a trend (Babones, 2015; Daneault, 2018; Zoellner & Harris, 2017). Quantitative researchers use close-ended questions to examine relationships among variables (Green & Salkind, 2017; Yazan, 2015). The quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because the intent was not to collect numerical data and test hypothesis. Therefore, I did not use the quantitative method for the study.

The mixed-methods approach consists of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Brown, Sullivan, & Venkatesh, 2016). Researchers use the mixed-methods to collect both numeric and open-ended data to answer the research question when the study requires the use of one method to inform or clarify the other method (Abro, Khurshid, & Aamir, 2015; Almeida, 2018; Molina-Azorin, 2016). The mixed methods approach was not appropriate for this study because the quantitative component will serve no useful purpose, and my intent was not to collect numeric data and test a hypothesis. Furthermore, using both the qualitative and quantitative methods will be time-consuming and financially expensive.

Research Design

In qualitative research, researchers have the option of using any of the following designs: (a) case study, (b) phenomenology, (c) ethnography, and (d) narrative approach (Bengtsson, 2016; Lewis, 2015; Sutton & Austin, 2015). I used a multiple case study design for this study. Researchers use the case study design to collect rich data by exploring the research question through multiple sources. Common sources of qualitative data include interviews, observations, and archival data to provide a holistic, in-depth

analysis of real-life situations based on the phenomenon under study (Cairney &
St.Denny, 2015; Henry & Foss, 2015; Yin, 2017).

According to Yin (2017), researchers may use the multiple case study design in
circumstances where evidence of the boundaries between the context and the
phenomenon are unclear to accommodate the diverse settings of the phenomenon. The
multiple case study design was appropriate for this study because it allowed me to
explore extensively the communication strategies top-level managers from two different
telecommunications companies use to improve the performance of employees in a
diverse workforce. Morgan, Pullon, Macdonald, McKinlay, and Gra (2017) stated that a
case study involves incorporating multiple sources of data to provide a detailed account
of complex research phenomena in real-life contexts. Therefore, the case study was the
most appropriate research method for this study.

Qualitative researchers use the phenomenological design to provide an in-depth
description of a phenomenon based on the lived experiences and perceptions of the
individuals (Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Yin, 2017). Phenomenology, as a research
design, was not appropriate for this study because the intent was not to explore the lived
experiences of the participants. Researchers use the ethnographic design to explore the
cultural beliefs of participants as well as interpret patterns of beliefs and behaviors
(Atkinson & Morris, 2017; Lopez-Dicastillo & Belintxon, 2014). The ethnography
researcher collects data through in-depth interview and prolonged observation of
participants (Zilber, 2014). The ethnographic design was not appropriate for this study

because the purpose of the study was not to explore the cultural beliefs and behavior of participants.

Researchers use the narrative design to explore the life experiences of individuals as narrated by the individuals (Wang & Geale, 2015). The narrative design was not appropriate for this study because the intent was not to explore the life experiences of individuals or group of individuals. I selected the multiple case study design for the study because it provided me with the opportunity to explore in greater depth the communication strategies top-level managers in the telecommunication companies in St. Maarten use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study comprised managers of telecommunication companies in St. Maarten. The target population for this study consisted of top-level managers from two major telecommunication companies in St. Maarten. According to Guetterman (2015), the success of a research study depends mainly on the sampling technique the researcher uses to determine the number of participants and to select a sample size from the population.

Qualitative researchers use the purposive sampling technique to select participants and collect data from the sample population (Yin, 2017). Purposeful sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique that researchers that use to identify participants with expert knowledge of the phenomenon under study, and select participants based on their knowledge and professional judgment (Martinez-Mesa, González-Chica, Duquia,

Bonamigo, & Bastos, 2016). I selected a sample of six top-level telecommunication managers in St. Maarten.

Robinson (2014) identified the four-point approach to sampling in qualitative interview-based research to include (a) defining the sample universe, (b) deciding on sample size, (c) selecting the sample size, and (d) sample sourcing. I followed Robinson's step-by-step procedure during sampling of participants for this study. Qualitative researchers use the purposeful sampling technique to select participants who can provide accurate and adequate information to answer the research question of the study (Dishad & Latif, 2014; Kegler et al., 2019). I used the purposeful sampling technique to select the participants for this study. Using the purposeful sampling technique was the most appropriate sampling approach for obtaining information from experts who have in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon of communication strategies managers use in a diverse workforce. Other sampling methods, such as snowball and quota sampling techniques, were not appropriate for this study.

I selected six top-level managers of the categories of chief executive officers, chief financial officers, and chief operational officers from two major telecommunication companies in the Dutch Caribbean Island of St. Maarten. Top-level managers are most suitable as participants for this study because they are knowledgeable and have experience in using communication strategies to improve employee performance in the telecommunication industry. In a qualitative case study, six to 10 participants with in-depth knowledge of the research problem are adequate sample size for the study (Guetterman, 2015; Palinkas et al., 2015; Yin, 2017). The eligibility criteria for selecting

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the six participants are (a) have served as a top-level manager in a telecommunication company in St. Maarten for at least 5 years; (b) have developed and used communication strategies successfully in a diverse workforce; and (c) hold the title of chief executive officer, chief financial officer, or chief operational officer.

The setting for a researcher to conduct interviews must be private and comfortable, and interview sessions conducted at the convenience of the participants (Oltmann, 2016). In this study, participants determined a time for interviews as stipulated in the informed consent form. Consequently, I conducted a semistructured interview at participants' convenient date, time, and place. Qualitative researchers should ensure that they reach data saturation during the data collection process (Roy, Zvonkovic, Goldberg, Sharp, & La Rossa, 2015). Researchers reach data saturation when no new information or themes are emerging from the interview process (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I conducted face-to-face interviews with top-level telecommunications managers to collect data until no new information and themes were emerging.

Ethical Research

Researchers must address ethical issues by ensuring the protection of all research participants and adhering to the principles of the Belmont Report of 1979 (Jeanes, 2017; Petrova et al., 2016; Tomkinson, 2016). The three basic ethical principles of research involving human subjects are (a) respect for participants, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice (US Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). I conducted the study strictly observing the ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report after receiving the Walden University IRB approval to proceed with the research study.

An informed consent form is a vital tool that researchers use to establish a working relationship with participants (Tram et al., 2015). A researcher must seek and obtain the consent of participants by providing full disclosure and creating awareness of the purpose and scope of the study. Researches should provide participants with copies of the informed consent form to sign before the commencement of the research process (Ferreira, Buttell, & Ferreira, 2015; Newington & Metcalfe, 2014). Researchers use the informed consent form to ensure adherence to ethical standards, protection of participants, and respecting respondents' rights (Chiumento, Khan, Rahman, & Frith, 2016). I explained the contents of the informed consent form, which include the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of the study, the withdrawal process, the disclosure on incentives, and the confidentiality and anonymity of the study. Participants in this study understood the contents of the informed consent form and signed the form before the commencement of data collection.

Participation in this research study was voluntary and was clearly stated in the informed consent form. Participants were free to withdraw from the research process at any time by informing me of their wish to discontinue participation in the study. In this study, participants received information that they could withdraw from the research study at any stage of the research process, including before interview session, during the interview process, or during the period of member checking. Participants can inform me of their intention to withdraw by telephone, face-to-face verbal contact, email, or text message. No participant will suffer any penalty for withdrawing from the research process. I conducted interviews with participants at their preferred convenient date and

time, and under strict compliance with the stipulations in the interview protocol (see Appendix B).

Some researchers offer incentives to participants to increase the response rate and turnout of the respondents (Chen, Lei, Li, Huang, & Mu, 2014). Individual may construe the provision of incentives to participants in research as bribery to participants to provide inaccurate data (Guetterman, 2015). Some researchers do not give incentives to participants due to ethical concerns and financial constraints (Chen et al., 2014). I did not give any incentives to participants in this study. The decision regarding the lack of incentives to participants was made clear in the informed consent form, which participants read and signed before the start of the data collection process.

Researchers should protect participants from risks and potentially harmful situations that may occur during the research process (Gomes & Duarte, 2018; Killawi et al., 2014). I protected the participants by ensuring the confidentiality of the information they provided and kept their identities anonymous. Researchers apply the principles of the Belmont Report on the protection of human subjects to ensure that research participants receive maximum benefits and protection from any harm during the research study (Roberts, 2015). I obtained the Walden IRB approval to commence data collection and took the CITI certification training before collecting data to ensure I understood the principles of justice, beneficence, and respect for persons as contained in the Belmont principles.

Yin (2017) stated that coding of participants with letters and numbers helps to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the participants. I used letters and numbers such

as P1, P2, and P3 to describe study participants on transcripts and research logs. In the letter of invitation, I assured the participants of the confidentiality and protection of the data they will provide for the study, and the anonymity of the interview recordings, transcripts, and notes collected during the research process. Researchers use pseudonyms such as EPC1, EPC2, and EPC3 to identify organizations in a case study (Roberts, 2015). I used the pseudonyms TELC1 and TELC2 to identify the telecommunications companies in St. Maarten I used for my study to maintain their anonymity. I treated the archival information the companies provided with the utmost confidentiality.

Researchers must safeguard the entrusted information of the study participants, protect respondents' privacy, and handle personal information in a confidential manner (Boulos et al., 2016). I will maintain the electronic data collected in a password-protected file and stored in my laptop and will store all hard copies in a secured file cabinet. After 5 years, I will destroy all data by permanently deleting electronic files and burning all paper documents.

<div align="center">

Data Collection

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Instruments

Lewis (2015) explained that the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research is the researcher. I used semistructured face-to-face interviews to collect data from study participants. Researchers use interviews to engage in an extendable conversation with the participants to gain a better understanding of a given event or phenomenon (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Lewis distinguished between unstructured, structured, and semistructured interviews.

For unstructured interviews, participants receive one overall high-level question about the phenomenon under study on which participants can expound (Jamshed, 2014). In the structured interviews, the researcher asks every participant the same question using the same terminology (Jamshed, 2014). Jamshed explained the importance of the researcher asking open-ended questions that is predefined so that the participant is open to elaborate.

I used open-ended questions in its entirety for this study. By using open-ended questions, I had much flexibility to ask further questions for clarification. With the semistructured interview, the researcher uses predefined questions as a structured interview (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Researchers use semistructured interview to control the topic and format of the interview, reduce prejudice and bias, and save time (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The semistructured interview was appropriate for this study.

The data collection technique for this study involved conducting semistructured interviews with six top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten. Researchers use the semistructured technique to ensure validation and reliability of the data collection process, thereby providing much accuracy (Jamshed, 2014). An interview protocol enhances transparency and the quality of the research, which is a detailed plan of the data collection process (Sarma, 2015). I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B) that contain detailed steps of the data collection process. To assist in the interpretation of the data gathered, researchers perform member checking which ensures reliability and validity of the data collection process (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014; Yin, 2017). I performed member checking to enhance

the validity of the transcription of participants' responses to the interview questions, thereby adding accuracy, rich thickness, and rigor to the study findings.

Data Collection Technique

The data collection techniques qualitative researchers use to collect data include (a) face-to-face interviews, (b) focus group interviews, (c) observing participants, (d) review of archival or documentary information (Quieros et al., 2017; Yin, 2017). I used semistructured face-to-face interviews, observation, and archival documentary review techniques to collect data from top-level telecommunications managers. Before commencing the process of data collection, I sought the approval of Walden University IRB department (Walden University, 2016). After the IRB approval, I began to contact and recruit the top-level managers of telecommunication companies and to schedule interviews. All participants read and signed the informed consent form before the commencement of semistructured interviews.

Alshenqeeti (2014) suggested that researchers select a time and location of convenience that is private and free from distractions for the interview process. McDermid, Peters, Jackson, and Daly (2014) stated that participants should be recruited in a noncoercive manner and should not feel pressured to participate in a research study. I selected participants for this study purposively from top-level managers of the case telecommunications companies. I ensured that the data collection process was devoid of perceived coercion to participate or conflict of interest. I contacted each participant via telephone to schedule the interview two weeks in advance, and a follow up with time,

date, and location three days before the scheduled interview. Three days before the interview, I hand-delivered the consent form to the participants for their sign off.

A competent researcher connects with the participants through the interview process as this could enhance the flow of the study (Alshenqeeti, 2014). A significant advantage of the audio-recorded interview is the assurance of obtaining accurate information because the researcher has the opportunity to listen to the data after the collection process (Sutton &Austin, 2015; Yin, 2017). I recorded the interviews with the participants on my digital recorder and laptop. Before commencing the interviews, I performed a sound check on both the recorder and laptop to ensure the devices are working appropriately.

I followed the interview protocol (see Appendix B) and took hand-written notes of my observations, feelings, and thoughts of participants, facial expressions, body language, and voice tones. Yin (2017) stated that researchers could gather much information using field notes from interviews, observations, or company documents. I took notes during my interviews with the participants.

Data collection from participants using a face-to-face interview technique has advantages and disadvantages. McIntosh and Morse (2015) stated that a researcher could collect abundant data in support of the phenomenon by using a semistructured interview process. Furthermore, Malagon-Maldonado (2014) opined that a researcher is free to guide the interview process and explore new themes that may arise using semistructured interviews as a data collection tool. Another advantage of a semistructured interview is

that the researcher can probe for additional questions and explore the participant's interpretation as deemed necessary (McIntosh & Morse, 2015; Yin, 2017).

One disadvantage of using a semistructured interview is that a researcher may influence the responses of the participants (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). The researcher faces the dilemma of determining when best to probe or ask follow-up questions as an inexperienced researcher using a semistructured interview (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Another disadvantage of a semistructured interview as a technique for data collection is that it can be very time consuming and costly (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

Yin (2017) stated that an advantage of documentation in the data collection includes the ability of the researcher to use methodological triangulation for crosschecking data gathered to reach data saturation. A common strategy that researchers use to validate data in qualitative research and to enhance trustworthiness is known as methodological triangulation (Hadi & Closs, 2016). A researcher can obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study by conducting documentation analysis (Carter et al., 2014).

On the contrary, a researcher must avoid misinterpretation of documentary data during the interview process (Yin, 2017). A researcher should ensure the quality of the data collected from semistructured interviews and archival documents by carrying out methodological triangulation (Carter et al., 2014). I conducted methodological triangulation of data collected in this study to ensure validity and reliability of data, and to mitigate bias.

A researcher should decide early in the research process whether or not to conduct a pilot study of the interview questions (Awiagah, Kang, & Lim, 2016). A pilot study is a technique that quantitative researchers use to validate survey questions (Cleary et al., 2014). Qualitative researchers tend to use subject-matter experts to validate interview questions. I did not conduct a pilot study but used subject-matter experts such as my degree committee members to validate the interview questions for this study.

Member checking is an essential process that qualitative researchers use to verify and clarify information and data collected from participants to improve the credibility and validity of the study (Cope, 2014; Jones & Sherr, 2014). Researchers use member checking to verify data accuracy and resonance with the experiences of the participants to ensure the credibility of the study (Darawshed, 2014; Harvey, 2014; Simpson & Quigley, 2016). After the interview, I produced a word-for-word document of the information participants provided during the interviews within 48 hours of completing interviews. Next, I interpreted the information that the participants shared with me. Finally, I shared the interpretation of the information the participants provided with them for validation. After the participants have completed the member checking process, I sent a confirmatory email to each participant. The participants carried out the validation of the interpretation of the information they've provided.

Data Organization Techniques

Researchers use different techniques to organize data collected from participants, including coding, transcribing, analyzing, and interpreting data (Graue, 2015; Soares & de Oliveira, 2016). The focus of data organization is to identify patterns, trends, and

emerging themes from interview transcripts (Yin, 2017). To keep track of data,

qualitative researchers use such computer-assisted data analysis software (CAQDAS) as

ATLAS.ti and NVivo to organize data (Thomas, 2015; Woods, Paulus, Atkins, &

Macklin, 2016). I used the NVivo software for data organization, storage, and analysis.

Because of the advantages of NVivo software, many qualitative researchers use the

software for data organization. Some of the benefits of NVivo software include (a) easier

and better management of data, (b) proper arrangement of emerging themes, (c) less

time-consuming, and (d) providing accurate and quick access to data records (Dollah &

Abduh, 2017).

Researchers use data coding to identify themes emerging from the information

presented by participants during the data collection process (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

According to Javadi and Zarea (2016), researchers use data coding to simplify and

organize the data collection process by comparing and identifying patterns. I used coding

to organize and simplify raw data from interviews conducted with each participant, notes

taken during observations, and company archival documents. Each participant was

assigned a code consisting of a unique symbol and number such as P1 to P5 to ensure

confidentiality and anonymity.

I kept a research log, reflective journals, and catalogue. Researchers use case

study database, electronic notes, reflective journals, catalogues, and research logs to track

and organize data (Yin, 2017). I used a case study database, research logs, and reflective

journal system to organize data collected from top-level managers in the

telecommunication companies. During the interviews, I used a research log to record vital

information and meaning from each participant. The reflective journal was useful in collecting rich qualitative information and exploring the participants' experiences about the study.

I collected data from participants personally and ensured the confidentiality of the raw data collected. I ensured that all participants read and signed the informed consent form before data collection, and I secured the interview recordings, transcripts, and notes to protect the participants. I will store all raw physical data in a locked cabinet and safeguard all electronic data in files in a password-protected folder for 5 years from the expected completion date of this study. After 5 years, I will permanently delete all electronic data from my computer and burn all raw physical data.

Data Analysis Technique

The purpose of this multiple qualitative descriptive case study was to explore communications strategies top-level managers in the telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Qualitative data analysis involves the thematic exploration of the data the researcher collected through interview, observation, and documents (Graue, 2015; Yin, 2017). According to Colorafi and Evans (2016), researchers conduct qualitative data analysis by organizing and classifying data to generate patterns and trends of related data for interpretation. I arranged and classified the data collected from participants to provide trends and patterns during data analysis.

Researchers use the process of triangulation to analyze data primarily in a case study (Yin, 2017). Four types of triangulation researchers could use to analyze data include: (a) method triangulation, (b) theory triangulation, (c) investigator triangulation,

and (d) data source triangulation (Campbell et al., 2018). Method triangulation involves

the use of different methods in data collection, including interviews, observation, and

document review (Carter et al., 2014; Cope, 2014; Yin, 2017). I used method

triangulation approach to collect data through semistructured interviews, review of

company documents, and observation of participants.

Theory triangulation involves the use of different theories to analyze data (Carter

et al., 2014). I did not use the theory triangulation method in this study because it was not

appropriate. After all, the basis of this study was not on theories. Investigator

triangulation involving the participation of two or more researchers in a study, providing

multiple observations and conclusions (Carter et al., 2014) was not suitable for this study.

Finally, data source triangulation method involves the researcher collecting data from

different individuals or groups of individuals to gain multiple perspectives on the

phenomenon to validate data (Jentoft & Olsen, 2017; Yin, 2017). I used a data source

triangulation approach to validate data from different sources.

Researchers could follow a logical four-step data analysis process, including data

collection, data reduction, data presentation, and presentation of findings (Graue, 2015).

Yin (2017) outlined the following data analysis sequence: (a) transcribe interviews, (b)

review transcript notes, (c) arrange data into themes, (d) interpret data based on related

themes. After the collection of data, I followed the data analysis sequence to produce

interview transcripts, reviewed transcripts to ensure data made sense, arranged data into

related themes, and presented findings and results of the data analysis. I used the thematic

analysis approach to apply and give meaning to the recorded interview transcript, observation notes, and archival company documents.

Researchers use NVivo software to analyze qualitative data (Gibson, Webb, & Lehn, 2014; Sutton &Austin, 2015). A qualitative researcher could use the NVivo software to sort, organize, and classify data to find answers to the research question (Sedlander et al., 2018). In a qualitative case study, a researcher could use the NVivo software to engage in data coding and organizing to identify related themes (Whitmore, Baxter, Kaasalainen, & Ploeg, 2018). I used NVivo software to organize data.

Digital coding using NVivo software could enable a researcher to automatically keep track of new codes (Thomas, 2015). I used the NVivo software for coding of the data collected during interviews. During the data analysis, I uploaded interview transcripts of participants and information gathered from company documents into the NVivo software to obtain themes, trends, and patterns to generate research results and findings.

In a qualitative study, the researcher should make connections between the conceptual framework, the research methodology, and the findings of the study during data analysis (Borrego, Foster, & Froyd, 2014; Graue, 2015). Establishing connections between emerging themes in a qualitative case study and the conceptual framework of the study is essential during data analysis (Yin, 2017). The conceptual framework of this study was the OIT proposed by Weick (1969). Using NVivo software, I identified emerging themes during data analysis and aligned the themes with the literature review themes and the conceptual framework of the study. I analyzed data in connection with the

OIT as a process by which telecommunications managers collect, manage, and use communication strategies to improve the performance of employees in a diverse workforce.

Reliability and Validity

Researchers should evaluate the reliability and validity of a research study to ensure that instruments for data collection contain minimal errors to mitigate bias (Leung, 2015). Reliability and validity provide indicators to the rigor and acceptance of the trustworthiness of a research outcome (Dikko, 2016). The critical elements considered in establishing the reliability and validity of a qualitative case study are (a) dependability, (b) credibility, (c) confirmability, and (d) transferability (Noble & Smith, 2015). In this section, I discussed the criteria for minimizing researcher bias and improving the level of reliability, validity, and replicability of this study.

Reliability

Reliability is a critical yardstick for determining the quality of research design, trustworthiness, and dependability of findings (Cope, 2014; Noble & Smith, 2015). Researchers establish reliability in a qualitative study to ensure the consistency of the data analysis process with the research results when repeated (Dikko, 2017; Yin, 2017). Qualitative researchers use the term dependability to explain the process of establishing reliability in a study (Carter et al., 2014). The researcher is responsible for ensuring that any approach chosen will enhance the reliability of the study findings (Annum, 2016). I adopted a comprehensive data approach to establish the reliability of the research findings, which involved the collection of data from sources, member checking,

verification of the accuracy of data relative to form and context, and application of methodological data triangulation.

Dependability. Dependability refers to the consistency of the data over similar conditions (Cope, 2014). Researchers use dependability criterion to assess the reliability of a study by demonstrating the research findings are consistent over time among researchers (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins, 2016). The strategies researchers use to determine dependability include audit trail and reflexivity (Squires & Dorsen, 2018; Yin, 2017). To establish dependability in this study, I used the audit trail and reflexivity.

Audit trial involves researchers establishing reliability by outlining the basis for the data collection process, data interpretation, and assessment consistently; and providing a detailed description of the decision made throughout the research process (Shaban, Considine, Fry, & Curtis, 2017). I used the audit trail process to establish dependability. Researchers use reflective journal strategy to achieve reflexivity (Yin, 2017). To ensure dependability, I used reflexivity and audit trail strategies to explain in details the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. By applying member checking, I ensured the dependability or auditability of the study results. I also used data triangulation strategies to enhance dependability.

Validity

The purpose of validity in qualitative research is to minimize errors, eliminate bias, and establish truthfulness, integrity, and accuracy of data (Noble & Smith, 2015). Most researchers use validity to ensure data collection instruments relate correctly to the

research question and findings reflect the participants' accurate perceptions and experiences (Leung, 2015). To establish validity, qualitative researchers pay particular attention to the trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity of data collected and the research process (Carter et al., 2014; Yin, 2017). In the subsequent narratives, I discussed credibility, confirmability, and transferability as the key ways I used to ensure the validity of this study.

Credibility. Credibility refers to how believable, data collected by the researcher is, and the extent to which the research process and findings are accurate (Cope, 2014; Hays et al., 2016). The credibility of a study depends on the accuracy of the procedure the researcher followed throughout the research process (Yin, 2017). Methodological strategies qualitative researchers use to ensure credibility include: (a) select sample which adequately represents the research phenomenon, (b) reflexivity, (c) achieving audit ability, and (d) applying conclusions of the study to different contexts (Noble & Smith, 2015). A researcher could ensure credibility of a research study by (a) using appropriate research method in conducting the study, (b) applying peer scrutiny, (c) conducting member checking, and (d) triangulation (Maree, Parker, Kaplan, & Oosthuizen, 2016).

Member checking and triangulation are key strategies qualitative researchers use to establish the credibility of a study (Abalkhail, 2018; Smith & McGannon, 2018). In member checking, the researcher checks the results or data returned from the participants for accuracy and relevance with their experiences (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Through the process of member checking, a researcher offers participants the opportunity to review the responses they provided for accuracy (Birt et al., 2016).

Triangulation refers to the researcher using different sources to obtain data and to ensure data are adequate to support the accuracy of findings (Yin, 2017). By collecting data from different sources such as interviews, observation, and company documents, researchers ensure data triangulation. I used member checking and triangulation strategies to ensure the credibility of this study.

Confirmability. Confirmability is a process that researchers use to ensure data truly represents the responses participants provided and are devoid of the researcher's personal opinion and bias (Cope, 2014; Squires & Dorsen, 2018). The strategies researchers use to determine confirmability include audit trail and reflexivity (Hays et al., 2016). Audit trail strategy involves a detailed description of the decisions the researcher made throughout the study. Researchers achieve reflexivity by keeping reflective diary notes. To establish confirmability, the researcher should demonstrate the connection between research findings and data collected from participants (Kiln & Ihantola, 2015). I used the audit trail, methodological data triangulation, and reflexive journal strategies to ensure the confirmability of this study.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the ability of the qualitative researcher to apply the findings of the study to other research contexts and settings (Cope, 2014; Sutton & Austin, 2015). The foremost strategy researchers use to determine transferability is a detailed verbatim description of the research process (Maree et al., 2016). Researchers use triangulation and purposive sampling method to enhance transferability (Cope, 2014; Maree et al., 2016; Yin, 2017). The readers and users are responsible for the transferability of study findings (Parker & Northcott, 2016). By

providing a full and detailed description of the phenomenon under study, the readers

could determine the transferability of peculiar findings to other settings. In this study, I

presented a detailed and thick verbatim description of the responses the participants

provided in the narratives of the research findings to ensure transferability. I also used a

purposive sampling method to collect data and the data triangulation strategy to establish

transferability.

      Data saturation. Data saturation occurs when no new information or themes are

emerging from participants during the data collection process (Fusch & Ness, 2015;

Morse, 2015). Qualitative researchers use data saturation process to enhance the

reliability of results obtained from a research study and to assure content validity

(Kornbluh, 2015; Yin, 2017). Researchers can achieve data saturation through methods

triangulation using multiple sources for data collection and utilizing member checking

approach to verify the accuracy of data (Hays et al., 2016). I ensured data saturation

within the broader scope of achieving the validity and credibility of the qualitative data.

      Data saturation could lead to data adequacy and increase the rigor of a qualitative

case study (Lowe, Norris, Farris, & Babbage, 2018; Saunders et al., 2018). The guiding

principles researchers use to reach data saturation include: (a) no new information

emerging, (b) stop the coding process, (c) no new themes, and (d) ability to replicate the

study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). To reach data saturation in this study, I continued to collect

data through semistructured interviews, observation, and archival company documents

until no new themes are emerging. Furthermore, I used method triangulation and member

checking approaches to attain data saturation.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 of this study contains the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, participants, research method and design, population and sampling techniques, and ethical research. Section 2 also contains a justification for using an exploratory multiple case study design for this research, discussions on data collection, organization, and analysis process, and reliability and validity of the study. In Section 3, I will present the findings of this study, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further research, a reflection of my experience with the research process, and finally, the concluding statement.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

 In this section, I provide an overview of the study, and present the findings on the communication strategies that some top-level managers in telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Using the illustrations from the research participants, I linked the study findings with the conceptual framework regarding OIT. Also, in this section, I discuss the applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and summary and conclusions.

Overview of Study

 The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the communication strategies some top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The conceptual framework was the OIT, and the overarching research question was: What communication strategies do top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce? 5 top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten who have successfully implemented communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce participated in this study. The participants provided me with the primary data to answer the overarching research question, and the sources of my secondary data were company archival documents, observations, and field notes. I achieved data saturation when no new information emerged from the interview process and document review. Based on the participants' responses to the interview questions, I identified four themes: (a) training and coaching, (b) job description and performance

management, (c) meetings and feedback, and (d) change agents and consultants. By relating the OIT to the study findings, I developed a better understanding of the communication strategies that some top-level managers in telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The study findings demonstrate that some top-level managers in telecommunication sector use a combination of communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Presentation of the Findings

One overarching research question guided this study: What communication strategies do top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce? Managers face many challenges to effective communication, which could affect organizational output and employee performance (Kang & Sung, 2017). Top-level managers lack strategies to communicate effectively to a diverse workforce (Alexander et al., 2015). Top-level managers are facing a wide range of communication challenges in a diverse and changing workforce (Gitonga et al., 2016).

I collected and combined the data from many sources including interviews, company archival documents such as annual and semiannual employee appraisal reports and management reports, as well as publications that outline the organization's yearly training records and observation of participants. I used method triangulation. Hence, I collected and combined the data from many sources including interviews, annual and semiannual employee appraisal reports, and management reports, as well as publications that outline the organization's yearly training records. Subsequently completing the interview with the fifth participant, I noticed that I reached data saturation and there was

no new information and no new themes emerged. I used NVivo 12 computer software

program for qualitative data analyses. Yin (2017) presented a five-step approach for data

analysis (data compilation, data disassembly, data reassembly, data interpretation, and

conclusion), which I used to conduct a thematic analysis.

According to Javidmehr and Ebrahimpour (2015), business leaders should

identify and provide effective communication strategies in a diverse workforce to

improve employee performance. I identified four themes in this study: (a) training and

coaching, (b) job description and performance management, (c) meetings and feedback,

and (d) change agents and consultants.

Theme 1: Training and Coaching

A significant factor that influences employee performance is training and

development (Camisón & Villar-López, 2014). Managers should provide adequate

training programs to employees to minimize job errors and enable them to gain full

command of the skills required to perform a particular function (Al-Mamary et al., 2015).

Durgin, Mahoney, Cox, Weetjens, and Poling (2014) demonstrated that managers could

use training to improve employee performance. The first theme to emerge from all the

interview questions was the importance of training and coaching to improve employee

performance in a diverse workforce. In Table 2, I present the number of responses by the

5 participants' responses to the training and coaching strategy.

Table 2

Training and Coaching (N = 5)

Participants	Number of responses
P1	10
P2	9
P3	5
P4	11
P5	13

A positive relationship exists between managerial communication and employee performance (Michael, 2014). Responding to Interview Question 1, P1 used training and coaching 10 times, said,

> Improving my employees, I believe one of the things we had to do was training …
> offering them training and creating opportunities to be able to better themselves
> when it comes to doing their functions and their roles within the organization.

In response to Interview Question 1, P2 mentioned training and coaching nine times. P2 stated, "We coach them, we train them, … we give people coaching and guidance training." and P5 with the majority of 13 responses, explained, "Employees lacked proper knowledge and needed training."

Researchers have demonstrated that managers can improve employee performance through training and coaching (Durgin et al., 2014; Rekalde, Landeta, &

Albizu, 2015). In response to Interview Question 2, P5 noted the need for employees to

do much of the training by themselves and concluded, "Employees were responsible for

their training." P5 further stated that employees would arrange with consultants or take e-

learning, or classroom training sessions that would be administered off company

premises and paid for by the employees. Responding to a follow-up question, P5

explained, "The company was transitioned from government to private, hence, no

training to employees over the last years." The responses of P2 and P4 to Interview

Question 3 attested that they face tremendous difficulty in identifying what types of

training their employees need. P2 stated that consultants are hired to conduct an analysis

of each employee learning styles and the skills lacking; thereby making recommendations

on what training is required for each employee. P4, who used training and coaching 11

times, remarked, "A challenge for us is to be able to use more than just one aspect of

training for the staff to perform."

Responding to Interview Question 4, some participants said,

- "We had training sessions regularly scheduled … Educate your people." (P2)

- "We also train employees to improve on those weaknesses." (P3)

- "Right now, we "are busy with manager training for all the managers and
  staff. I think that training will give us insight on how to deal with things much
  better for us to be able to perform on a higher level." (P4)

- "The biggest problem here right now is training, and lack of knowledge but
  training can be offered to employees. A thorough needs analysis is conducted
  to identify skills and learning preferences of employees." (P5)

In response to Interview Question 5, P3 mentioned training and coaching 5 times, stated, "Outside of a coach and trainer, I believe if I want a certain mindset brought over to the employees, it should be me that assists with doing that." P4 said, "When we communicated with each other, certain things that still reflect based on that training." Responding to Interview Question 6, P1 noted, "It has been a big push into the area of training … We have a lot of coaching and training." P2 mentioned that the types of training given to employees were personal, skills, and performance coaching. These training sessions took place during working hours not on the company's premises for 3 days to 1 week by means of questionnaires, for example. P2 further stated that employees complete questionnaires off company premises so that they are more comfortable and not reluctant to discuss and show their true feelings about their job for the fear of being reprimanded. The perception of an employee can be gauged by using surveys and questionnaires (Anthony & Weide, 2015). According to P2, "Administering the training sessions away from the regular work premises gives employees a sense of security, confidentiality and a comfortable environment to express themselves."

The cost of training and coaching annually was obtained from P2 company archival documents mainly the annual budgeting report. P2 spent approximately $145,000 in training in 2018 based on company documents that showed a return of investment of 58%. This return reflects an increase in hourly production by the employee performance. The cost of training and coaching for each department was estimated by each manager. The cost of training annually was calculated by taking the salary of all employees per year and then multiplying it by 1%. For each department, the cost of

training and coaching would be the total number of employees in that specific department by 1%.

Participants' responses to all the interview questions demonstrated that training and coaching constitute an essential strategy for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. All the top-level managers of telecommunication sector who participated in this study confirmed using training and coaching as a strategy to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. As applied in this study, the responses from the participants aligned with Al-Mamary et al.'s (2015), Camisón and Villar-López's (2014), and Durgin et al.'s (2014) assertions that business leaders use training and coaching to improve employee performance. P4 established that training and coaching are done via an amplified classroom experience which includes demonstrations and interactions of facilitator and trainee. Training and coaching plays a crucial role in enhancing employees confidence and knowledge in respect to performing their tasks within the diverse workforce, stated P4. Increased job satisfaction and morale among employees, skills developments, enhanced communication skills as well as increased capacity to adapt to new communication technologies are some of the benefits employees acquire from training (Jha, 2016).

Based on the three major tenets of the OIT information environment, information equivocality, and the cycle of communication, effective communication occurs when the receiver has received and understood the message sent by the sender in the proposed way. Hence, as employees are trained and coached, there is increased communication, interaction and feedback within the diverse workforce (Jha, 2016). Jha (2016) noted that,

when candid communication flow within the diverse workforce, communication is open

across all levels within the organization which gives way to the relevant feedback from

employees to managers, managers to employees and employees to customers.

One of the key advantages to OD is increased communication, feedback, and

interaction within the organization. The goal of improving communication is to align all

employees to shared company goals and values. Candid communication also leads to

increased understanding of the need for change within the organization. Communication

is open across all levels of the organization and relevant feedback is recurrently shared

for improvement.

Theme 2: Job Description and Performance Management

The 5 participants mentioned the need for job description and performance

management to measure employee performance within the diverse workforce. When

managers hold employees responsible for poor performance, it encourages the workers to

improve their performances (Wier, 2016). By evaluating the effectiveness and

achievements of employees, managers can make necessary adjustments to increase

overall employee performance (Saxena, 2014). Researchers' link performance with work

that an individual accomplished after applying required effort on the job in getting

meaningful work completed (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Business leaders use performance

appraisals as a tool to implement goals and increase employee performance (Ayers,

2015). Table 3 reveals that P1 and P4 had the least number of responses ($n = 1$) each for

the theme job description and performance management that emerged from Interview

Questions 1 through 5. A total use of 18 times of the participants affirmed using the job

description and performance management as a strategy for improving employee

performance in a diverse workforce. The highest number of responses were P1 and P5

(six responses each).

Table 3

Job Description and Performance Management (N = 5)

Participants	Number of responses
P1	1
P2	6
P3	4
P4	1
P5	6

P3 mentioned job description and performance management six times, which is

the second highest number of responses. Managers distribute peer performance

evaluations to employees to improve their performance (Kramer et al., 2016). According

to Huang et al. (2015), managers can improve employee performance through a

performance measurement process. Managers determine what the company wishes to

measure before setting performance targets (Wamwayi et al., 2016). A performance

appraisal system is a tool which managers use to improve employee performance (Bagul,

2014). In response to Interview Question 1, P2, stated,

You have your job description. You set goals with the employees at the beginning of the year in writing, discuss the goals with them, and if they agree, they sign a form; and they are assessed in the middle of the year.

I reviewed two job descriptions from P2 supervisors, and one each from the technical department and customer service. The three reports were very detailed and were specific about the tasks to be accomplished against the department's goals and even the company's goals. Information included the main job duties and responsibilities, skills and experiences, and also competencies. For example, supervisor customers' service at P2's company were given written job descriptions which entailed investigating customer's problems and find solutions. In this case, the superior will review, memorize and investigate possible problems such as a telephone outage. Furthermore, the supervisor realized that the telephone line was faulty and needed changing. The telecommunication technicians find solutions to the telephone line problem by replacing the telephone line and providing backup plan to ensure sound and line quality are tested every quarter for proper functionality.

P2's management report for September 2019 showed each quarter prior where a goal is established, accessed, and finalized, for example, executing fiber to the home project. "Each manager will report quarterly or monthly the progress they have made" (P2). The technical department reported that ground work was laid and was awaiting approval of a government department to place the fiber. Unfortunately, customer service department did not create a trouble ticket to report the next step which is to call the customer. In this case, the direct manager of customer service will inform her staff of the

issue and the necessary means, the creation of a new trouble ticket and calling the customer, is done to finalize that step, stated P2. Responding to Interview Question 1, P5, said, "I was in charge of the performance management. The first step to improving employee performance was to conduct a SWOT analysis to see their weakness and how to assist them to do their jobs." P5 also mentioned as employees weaknesses are showcased during given tasks, open communication is established individually to provide employees access to resources. "When weaknesses are shown, immediately one on one coaching sessions are set up during office hours to assist that employee and to strengthen where one is weak," noted P5.

Managers within the organization use performance appraisals to record behaviors and activity of an employee towards attaining desired goals and providing feedback based on the quality of employee performance (Sarak & Sen, 2019). Managers use the appraisals process to understand how employee performance affects the ability of others to perform their jobs (Mwema & Gachunga, 2014). According to Browne et al. (2016), to achieve optimal performance in a diverse workforce, managers must understand how various issues affect the behavior of the workers within an organization. In response to Interview Question 2, P2 stated, "We measure the strategies by looking at assessments every year, ... those assessments you will have communication as a guide." Responding to Interview Question 2, P3, said, "If you set performance target and that target is not met, basically it tells you if you are successful or not." P3 further stated that, if a target is not met, both manager and employee have a meeting to review the bottlenecks as to why the target was not met. Additional resources are given to employee to reestablish new

ways to acquire the target. Management of human capital focusing on performance of employees and managers working together will ensure each resource will provide value and excellence which will drive future improvements in employee performance (Browne et al., 2016). In response to Interview Question 2, P5, explained, "The new performance evaluation is based on setting goals at the beginning of the year. We have a mid-year evaluation and the final evaluation, which happens in the first week of December." Based on company documents from P5, each employee is rewarded based on their final evaluation. An employee who performs poorly is compensated based on his or her score and later, a meeting is set up to review the causes of any problems achieving goals, work together on proposed resolutions that employee will use on future tasks, stated P5. New goals are set for the next year and the process starts again. P2, P3, and P5's responses to Interview Question 2 indicated that they used job descriptions and performance management to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Mwema and Gachunga (2014) stated that performance appraisals aid identification of employees' rewards. Dusterhoff et al. (2014) argued that employees see the performance appraisal system as a punishment or reward process. When managers' goals are unclear, employee performance appraisals are a dissatisfaction to employees, which consequently could reduce employee performance and organizational commitment (Idowu, 2017). My review of the company documents revealed that management had implemented some achievement programs such as profit sharing rewards and employee events and milestones, to encourage employees to improve their job performance. Some of the achievement programs include recognition and a team building activity with top

management. Team building events are quarterly and each department along with their

manager is given an allowance to complete a bolding activity. From this team building

activity will emerge trust and collaboration skills within the team. In response to

Interview Question 3, P1, stated, "What we do now is to hold managers accountable for

the performance of their staff. In the performance evaluation template, we have a

Personnel Development Plan (PDP), which is based on mutual discussions with the

employee." Responding to Interview Question 3, P4 mentioned job description and

performance management four times, including, "If you cannot get the staff to understand

where you are going or to walk along with you, it becomes very difficult for you to be

able to manage their performance." Company goals and objectives are brought forth

during town hall meetings by management, which ensures transparency, and help to build

trust and encourage employees' growth, stated P4. Town Hall meetings are hosted once

every two months to ensure the department goals are in sync with the company's goals

and vision mentioned P4.

Managers use the performance elevation system to determine the success or

failure of employees in a diverse organization (Deepa et al., 2014). Bagul (2014)

conducted a performance appraisal on a sample size of 50 employees and demonstrated

that both the appraiser and employee could benefit from the appraisal conducted. Mwema

and Gachunga (2014) stated that the appraiser who can identify the exact needs and

expectations of staff would take actions to improve employee performance. P2 stated that

"employees, especially within the customer service department, need a constant reminder

to promote old and new products and services." A review of the company documents

indicated that management had an integrated performance management framework involving each employee's job description, performance agreement at the beginning of the year, performance monitoring at mid-year, and performance evaluation at the end of the year. In response to Interview Question 4, P3 stated, "We set targets at the beginning of the year. I evaluate the employees on 80% of what they do on a day-to-day basis. The other 20% is to think out of the box." Responding to Interview Question 5, P4, said, "Well, the system that we have for performance appraisal is for you to challenge a particular staff to perform much better every year." P4 further stated that, based on the employee performance appraisals done throughout the year, each of the three stages shows progress made by the employee compared to the set objectives. When this is completed, employees' awareness would have increased of how they have performed in the organization and the impact their work performance have on organizations goals.

Balcioglu and Nihinlola (2014) opined that to begin a conversation between supervisors and employees, managers should use a performance evaluation system. A manager may use various ways to evaluate employee performance, such as employee appraisals in the form of multi-rater, graphical rating scales, and management by objectives (Idowu, 2017). Employee evaluation contributes to improving worker performance (Balcioglu & Nihinlola, 2014). Measuring employee performance in a diverse workforce depends on setting realistic aims, which will determine prior performance (Araki et al., 2016). The study findings indicated that 100% of the participants acknowledged using the job description and performance management to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. T2 mentioned that performance

operates as a cycle which provides feedback and appreciation throughout the year. "This cycle includes, a clear definition of expectations for every position, train managers for performance management and the necessary resources are provided for growth to employees" (T2). As applied in this study, the participants' responses aligned with Balcioglu and Nihinlola's (2014), Mwema and Gachunga's (2014), and Sarak and Sen's (2019) assertions that managers use the job description and performance management to improve employee performance.

The theme job description and performance management collectively shape how the roles and patterns of employees within an organization assist in attaining the organization's goals. Further, this theme goes hand in hand with Weick's information theory. In the three steps of Weick's cycle of communication, act, response and adjustment, objectives are shared in sustaining relationships and connections within the diverse workforce (Weick, 1969). When employees are familiar with their job descriptions, they respect each other and acknowledge each other's role and contribution within the organization which increases performance and effective communication.

Theme 3: Meetings and Feedback

"Meetings and feedback give employees a sense of trust which grows over time," stated T3. Meanwhile, T2 mentioned that, "good meetings can boost employee morale and build leadership influence." According to Adua-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang (2014), business leaders can create an environment to discuss plans, issues, opinions and ideas with employees. By sharing employees' ideas throughout the company, managers can discover employees' talents (Chin et al., 2016). Managers should provide feedback to

employees after completing assigned tasks (Araki et al., 2016). The theme meeting and

feedback emerged from Interview Questions 1-6 (see Table 5). There was a total of 21

responses from participants who attested to using meetings and feedback as a strategy to

improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Table 4

Meeting and Feedback (N = 5)

Participants	Number of responses
P1	1
P2	8
P3	5
P4	2
P5	5

The 360-degree feedback method provides feedback on the employees' behavior

and the impact of such behavior on employee performance (Kanaslan & Iyem, 2016). In

response to Interview Question 3, P5, stated, "We have our meetings, they get their goals,

we set targets, and people report back." Responding to Interview Question 4, some of the

participants noted,

- "I try to get them to give me feedback on what they think they need to be able

  to do their job more effectively and to be able to deal with the customers in a

  more effective manner." (P1)

- "A few times a year, in general meeting, I would speak to the employees myself also, … You have to speak to your union and your staff; together we make choices." (P2)

- "So, once the whole team is formed, I will start having my management team meetings with the employees." (P3)

In response to Interview Question 5, P4 who had responded two times, attested, "The feedback that I got from the last training that we did, it was about the coaching." Coaching consistently improves employees' way of communicating, boosts their performance, and increases employees' morale, mentioned P4. Responding to Interview Question 6, P3, stated, "I have also seen the town hall meeting, … So, I think frequent meetings with the staff, we can do in the house, because we know that the town halls are huge, 400 staff members." "In house meetings are smaller and preferably since we get to make that closer contact with our employees," which increase concentration and focus among our staff, P3 mentioned. "Not only that but town halls are effective to inform us generally what is happening in both locations," stated P3. P3 further mentioned that town hall meetings are held once every quarter with the chief financial officer, chief executive officer, managers and employees from both St. Maarten and Curacao offices. In response to Interview Question 6, P5, affirmed, "We met every week on a Wednesday, for two to three hours, management meetings … I think that we have to do with a minimal amount of meetings." Here on St. Maarten, as chief executive officer and chief financial officer, frequent meetings will be held when have comprised a full team of executives on St. Maarten, reinforced P3.

The participants' responses to all the interview questions demonstrated that meeting and feedback is an essential strategy for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. All top- managers in telecommunications sector who participated in this study confirmed using meetings and feedback as a strategy to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. As applied in this study, the participants' responses aligned with Araki et al.'s (2016), Chin et al.'s (2016), and Mwema and Gachunga's (2014) assertions that managers use meeting and feedback to improve employee performance.

Based on Weick's OIT it is necessary for managers and employees to engage in productive exchanges to build stable relationships in social and organizational life (Weick, 1969). The theme meeting and feedback is similar to that of Weick's traditional liner theory of cause and effect. Meetings among managers and employees help to decrease misinterpretation when employees receive information. Hence, reducing ambiguity in Weick's OIT suggests that employees within the organization would be able to understand the message. If the message is unclear, employees would be able to revert to managers, who give feedback and reduce noise interference.

Theme 4: Change Agents and Consultants

The theme involving the use of change agents and consultants emerged from Interview Questions 1-2, 4, and 6. Four of the participants or 18 of the responses, affirmed using change agents and consultants as a strategy for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce (see Table 5). In response to Interview Question 1, P2 assumed the highest number ($n = 8$) of responses, attested, "We use external

professionals for people that need extra help to make sure you do not just conclude. We also use change agents to know what people want." Employees within the organization who require assistance in attaining their truest potential are assisted and guided by change agents. Change agents bridge the gap between employees and managers. They are the middle person, explained P2. The cost for external professionals is estimated by the industry or market rate and also the budgeted cost for training for example by each departmental manager. The respondent further explained, "We used to have once a year, a formal session, where we would ask an outsider, like a KPMG or Ernst and Young to come." Responding to Interview Question 2, P2, stated, "Where we would, we ask an outsider, like KPMG or Ernst and Young to come on a day I have a general meeting to do a questionnaire and everybody will submit their answers." In response to Interview Question 4, some participants said,

- "We would do employee assessments with professional, … we took experts in that field to help us with communication strategies." (P2)

- "We got assistance from KPMG to help us, and they came with a 360-degree assessment. I was able to understand the employees better and support them to improve their performance." (P4)

- "The way we have been dealing with the solutions was hiring consultants." (P5)

Table 5

Change Agents and Consultants (N = 5)

Participants	Number of responses
P1	3
P2	8
P3	0
P4	2
P5	1

Responding to Interview Question 6, P1, stated, "One of the things that we are busy right now is to engage a consultancy … comes in for two days, every month for eight months. He showed us different techniques in communication with the staff." In response to Interview Question 6, P2, with three responses regarding the theme, use of change agents and consultants, said, "And then you can also speak to an outside person if you wish and we pay for it." The participants' responses indicate that managers use change agents and consultants to improve employee performance. The study findings demonstrated that top-level managers in the communication sector use change agents and consultants to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. As applied in this study, 80% of the participants confirmed using change agents and consultants as a strategy to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce in the communication sector.

Weick's OIT involved the process of the receiver not being able to receive the message clearly due to distortions (Weick, 1969). When managers assign new roles to employees, there are barriers for achieving the desired results such as employees not understanding the instructions to complete that role. Change agents and consultants act as mediator to decrease the amount of conflicts or distortions to employees in order for them to complete roles and maximize employees' performance. Hence, employees are better able to understand and execute roles, thereby, optimizing the flow communication and their performance.

Findings Related to Organization Information Theory

The OIT developed by Karl Weick in 1969 was the conceptual framework for this study. Managers seek ways to eliminate the causes of poor employee performance (Cappelli & Travis, 2016). The information within an organization regulates the environment, which in turn influences the employees' behaviors and thus their performance. The findings indicate that top-level managers in the communication sector could improve employee performance by implementing communication strategies based on OIT. As applied in this study, all the participants attested using a combination of communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Planning and organizing are the critical elements of OIT (Weick, 1969). The focus of OIT is to address crucial problems of information uncertainty, communication, and knowledge sharing in an organization (Ali et al., 2015). The main aim of communications within an organization is for stakeholders, including employees, to understand the company objective clearly to improve their performance and achieve the business goal.

As applied in this study, top-level managers in the communication sector should establish communication strategies for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. Based on the themes presented by participants, Weick's OIT elements were present with regards to the combination of strategies used to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

The essential functions of management are planning, managing, controlling, and organizing which aids in ensuring effective communication within an organization (Ali et al., 2015). Managers use OIT to collect, manage, and use the information within the organization. As applied in this study, top-level managers in the communication sector used communication strategies involving planning, managing, controlling, and organizing to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. All the participants' responses validated the application of OIT to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Applications to Professional Practice

The identification of communication strategies that top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce may help enhance business productivity. Business leaders face challenges of effective communication within a diverse and multicultural workforce (Gitonga et al., 2016; Kang & Sung, 2017; Tavakoli, 2015). Managers should use appropriate communication skills to manage a diverse workforce to enhance business sustainability (Gitonga et al., 2016). All participants affirmed using a combination of communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The results of the study could help top-

level managers in the communication sector to improve their employee performance to achieve business goals. The study findings could contribute to information sharing among top-level managers in the communication sector who are seeking communication strategies to improve performance. Some top-level managers in the communication sector with weak strategies may apply the findings of this study to improve employee performance and enhance business productivity and profitability.

According to Alexander et al. (2015), top-level managers face challenges with formulating strategies to communicate effectively to a diverse workforce. Consequently, top-level managers should invest effort and time in improving and redefining their communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce (Hofhuis et al., 2016; Manciagli, 2016; Thomas et al., 2018). Based on the study findings, the most significant contribution to professional practice may be the identification of potential communication strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Top-level managers could use the results from this study to improve employee performance and enhance their business performance.

Business leaders who have useful communication framework understand clearly the complexity of a diverse workforce (Le & Ko, 2019; Olusegun et al., 2018). An essential leadership competency is the possession of excellent communication skills and strategies (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015; Oyebola, 2018; Sousa & Rocha, 2019). The performance of an employee is highly dependent on their leader's communication skills (Barrick et al., 2015; Tafvelin et al., 2018). The findings from this study could provide

top-level managers in the communication sector with knowledge on how to communicate effectively with employees to improve their performance and achieve business goals. The findings from this study could contribute to the literature on communication strategies in the communication sector. New and upcoming top-level managers in the communication sector may use the study findings to understand the importance of implementing communication strategies to improve employee performance, thereby, enhancing business performance.

Atambo and Momanyi (2016) posited that a lack of communication skills leads to poor employee performance. Therefore, Javidmehr and Ebrahimpour (2015) advised that managers should identify and implement effective communication strategies in a diverse workforce to enhance employee performance and increase productivity and profitability. The ability to gain knowledge of contemporary communication strategies and skills are crucial for business leaders in a diverse workplace (Asefa & Kerga, 2018). The findings from this study could contribute to the literature on employee performance in a diverse workforce. The study findings may help organizational leaders, including governmental and non-governmental agencies, small business owners, and entrepreneurs to gain useful information on communication strategies to improve employee performance and sustain their businesses.

Implications for Social Change

The study findings may contribute to providing top-level managers in the telecommunication sector with communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. A more influential culture of diversity and

inclusivity could fully engage its workforce and create an environment that supports an increasingly connected culture and positive teamwork (Tavakoli, 2015). By implementing excellent communication strategies, top-level managers could improve productivity in their firms. As demonstrated in this study's findings, adapting communication strategies might assist top-level managers in the communication sector to improve employee performance, which may increase productivity, thereby, generating economic growth for local communities. With improved employee and business performance, business leaders in the communication sector will pay more corporate taxes, which municipal government could use to provide social amenities to the local citizens.

The study findings may contribute to positive social change by assisting top-level managers in the communication sector to understand the communication strategies for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce and gain adequate knowledge to establish useful communication model. As illustrated in this study, improving employee performance might assist top-level managers in the communication sector to sustain their firms and continue to provide job opportunities to the local community. If managers model positive communication, employees may adopt these skills in their own lives, thereby promoting better welfare and wellbeing among the employees' families.

Corporate social responsibility is a conscious intention that business leaders use to address poverty and the lack of social amenities in the local communities (Raimi, Akhuemonkhan, & Ogunjirin, 2015). By improving employee performance, business leaders could enhance their firm productivity and performance and fulfil their corporate

social responsibilities to the residents through sponsorship of local events; the building of schools, libraries, and healthcare facilities; and award of scholarships. The general public might learn from the study findings the communication strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

<div align="center">**Recommendations for Action**</div>

An effective communication strategy is crucial to improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. Adopting effective communication strategies is critical to improving employee performance in a diverse workforce (Javidmehr & Ebrahimpour, 2015; Olusegun et al., 2018). I recommend that top-level managers in the communication sector should implement a blend of effective communication strategies to improve employee performance in their diverse workforce.

To improve business profitability and performance, top-level managers in the communication sector should implement communication strategies to improve employee performance. By establishing effective communication in a business setting, business leaders and managers could set clear values and promote those values in the diverse workforce (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015). Business leaders should develop capability in improving and redefining their organizations' communication strategies (Manciagli, 2016). I recommend that top-level managers should adopt effective communication strategies to enhance their employee performance and business growth.

Training is a useful tool that managers use to improve employee performance. By seeking for employees' performance feedback, managers can make an appropriate adjustment to improve employee performance (Kramer et al., 2016). According to Al-

Mamary et al. (2015), managers who provide effective training programs to employees minimize their job errors and empower them with the skills required to perform their function. I recommend that top-level managers in telecommunication sector should implement performance management and training to improve employee performance in their diverse workforce.

Some top-level managers in telecommunication sector lack communication strategies for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. The study findings indicate that top-level managers in the communication sector use a combination of communication strategies to improve employee performance in their diverse workforce. I recommend that top-level managers in the communication sector should have adequate education, experience, and training to adopt appropriate communication strategies for improving employee performance in a diverse workforce. I will disseminate the result of this study to interested stakeholders through publications in business and academic journals; presentation in literature seminars, conferences, and training; and sharing knowledge in my network, social media, and place of employment.

Recommendations for Further Study

The qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore the strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. Many researchers have recognized the need for managers to develop effective communication strategies to improve their employee performance (Alexander et al., 2015; Javidmehr & Ebrahimpour, 2015; Kang & Sung, 2017; Olusegun et al., 2018). This study was limited to a cross-sectional, qualitative multiple case study involving top-level

managers in two communication companies in St. Maarten. I recommend that further studies should involve the use of longitudinal, quantitative or mixed methods on participants selected from varying levels of management in different industrial sectors at various geographical locations.

The study findings provided rich information which future researchers could explore regarding the strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. A significant limitation of this study was the small sample size of 5 top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten. Researchers who use larger or smaller sample size may obtain different themes. Therefore, I recommend that future researchers should consider using a larger size of participants from different levels of management in diverse industrial sectors.

My competency and knowledge of doctoral study are evolving. The study was limited to my subjective evaluation and accurate interpretation of the participants' responses to the interview questions. The study was also limited to my personal beliefs and professional experience with the topic involving the strategies managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. I recommend that future researchers should comprise of experts from related multi-disciplines in employee management to divulge some details I must have omitted in this doctoral study.

Reflections

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the strategies top-level managers in telecommunication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse

workforce. From the study findings, I gained an in-depth knowledge of the research problem from 5 top-level managers in two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten regarding their use of communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. I learnt that top-level managers in telecommunication sector use a blend of communication strategies involving training and coaching, job description and performance management, meetings and feedback, and change agents and consultants to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. My new knowledge and understanding of the research problem positively changed my preconceived ideas and values, personal bias and perceptions, and beliefs on communication strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

In conducting this study, I used purposive sampling technique to select 5 top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten who have over 5 years of experience in top management and successfully used communication strategies to improve employee performance. By using the purposive sampling technique, I selected participants who had the relevant competence, experience, and knowledge to answer the research question. My interactions with the potential participants during the purposive sampling process enabled me to improve my networking, emotional intelligence, inspirational, and interpersonal skills.

The use of the qualitative research method enabled me to conduct semistructured interviews and interacted with the participants, which improved my communication, listening, observant, self-confident, and problem-solving skills. Because I interviewed at

participants' preferred time and location, the respondents expressed themselves freely, which allowed me to gain an in-depth knowledge of the research problem. During the data organization and analysis process, I gained a better understanding of the research problem, which enabled me to identify the themes and patterns and establish the study findings. Consequently, I gained a better understanding of the doctoral study research process, thereby improving my skills in conducting academic research work.

Summary and Study Conclusions

Top-level managers in telecommunication sector face challenges in using effective communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. This qualitative multiple case study aimed to use OIT to explore the strategies that top-level managers in the communication sector use to improve employee performance within a diverse workforce. I administered six open-ended questions through semistructured interviews with 5 top-level managers from two telecommunication companies in St. Maarten to collect the primary data to answer the research question. The sources of secondary data include company archival documents, observations, and field notes. The four themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of data were (a) training and coaching, (b) job description and performance management, (c) meetings and feedback, and (d) change agents and consultants. The study findings indicated that top-level managers in the communication sector used a blend of communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

Adapting communication strategies might assist top-level managers in the communication sector to improve employee performance, which may increase

productivity, thereby generating economic growth for local communities. With improved

employee and business performances, business leaders in the communication sector will

pay more corporate taxes, which municipal government could use to provide social

amenities to the local citizens. Also, improving employee performance might assist top-

level managers in the communication sector to sustain their firms and continue to provide

job opportunities to the residents. The general public might learn from the study findings

the communication strategies top-level managers in the communication sector use to

improve employee performance in a diverse workforce. The use of OIT as a lens for this

study involving top-level managers in the communication sector may fill a gap in the

literature on employee performance in a diverse workforce. The study findings align with

the conclusions by previous scholars regarding the need to implement effective

communication strategies to improve employee performance in a diverse workforce.

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Appendix A: CITI Certificate

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

    I.   Start protocol.

    II.   Introduce myself and the topic of under study.

    III.   Explain content of the consent form and address any concerns of participant may have.

    IV.   Receive consent to start interview.

    V.   Start recording.

    VI.   Introduce participant with code (e.g. Participant 1 through Participant 5), the date, and time.

    VII.   Start interview with the initial probe questions followed by the targeted concept questions, targeted follow-up questions, and ending with the wrap-up question respectively.

    VIII.   End interview section and discuss member checking with participant.

    IX.   Thank participant for participating in the study and restate contact information for concerns or follow-up questions from the participant.

    X.   End protocol.

Interview Questions

Primary Research Phenomenon Under Study

What communication strategies do top-level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse work force?

Primary Research Goals to Achieve from the Interview

The primary research goals are (a) to explore what communication strategies do top level managers use to improve employee performance in a diverse work force in telecommunication companies in St. Maarten and (b) to identify a common ground/ belief under participants on the topic.

Initial Probe Questions

1. What communication strategies did you use to improve the performance of your employees in a diverse workforce?

2. How did your organization assess the effectiveness of the strategies?

Targeted Concept Questions

3. What key challenges did you face in using the communication strategies within the diverse workforce?

4. What steps did your organization take to meet the key challenges?

Targeted Follow-up Question

5. What specific improvements did you notice in employee performance as the result of the communication strategies you used in the diverse workforce

Wrap-up Question

What additional information can you provide related to communication strategies your organization's managers used to improve employee performance in its diverse workforce?