
COMMUNICATION AND PERSONNEL SELECTION IN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ADENUGA, F. Titilola, PhD.

ADESINA, I. Dolapo

ETTU, Y. Oluwatosin

Department of English Studies, College of Humanities,
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria.
adenugaft@tasued.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Communication is not simply a channel through which organisational information is transmitted; it is a constitutive resource through which organisations recruit people, evaluate candidates, establish employment relationships, coordinate work, and develop organisational capability. This critical integrative review examines the relationship between communication and personnel selection in the context of organisational development, with particular attention to digital human resource management (HRM) and artificial intelligence (AI)-supported recruitment. The literature was identified through searches of major scholarly databases and academic search systems using combinations of terms relating to organisational communication, recruitment and selection, communication competence, digital HRM, algorithmic hiring, artificial intelligence, employee engagement, and organisational development. Recent literature was prioritised, while foundational theoretical works were retained where they remain central to the argument. The review synthesises the literature thematically and critically rather than merely describing individual studies. The synthesis indicates that communication operates across the entire personnel cycle: recruitment communication shapes applicant understanding and attraction; screening depends on the quality and interpretation of communicated evidence; interviewing makes communication competence observable; placement and promotion depend on accurate personnel information; and employee relations require continuing upward, downward, horizontal, and digital communication. The review further finds that AI can improve the speed, scale, consistency, and administrative efficiency of recruitment, but these benefits do not establish that algorithmic decisions are automatically fair or objective. Bias in training data, opacity, privacy risks, unequal access to digital systems, automation bias, and weak accountability can undermine legitimate selection. The manuscript therefore proposes an integrated communication-selection-development framework in which technology augments rather than replaces responsible human judgement. The paper contributes a conceptual bridge between organisational communication, personnel selection, communication competence, and digital HRM, and identifies implications for HR practitioners, managers, policy makers, and researchers.

Keywords: communication, personnel selection, recruitment, artificial intelligence, employee relations

INTRODUCTION

Organisations achieve their objectives through people, but people can only coordinate their knowledge, responsibilities and activities when information is exchanged in ways that are intelligible, timely and appropriate to context. Communication is therefore embedded in virtually every organisational process. It is involved in establishing objectives, allocating responsibilities, recruiting employees, evaluating applicants, providing feedback, resolving disagreements, developing employees and communicating organisational change. Personnel selection, similarly, is not an isolated administrative event. It is a sequence of information exchanges through which organisations communicate opportunities and requirements, applicants present evidence of their qualifications, assessors interpret that evidence, and decisions are communicated to successful and unsuccessful candidates.

The contemporary personnel environment has become more complex because digital technologies have altered how communication and selection are conducted. Email, applicant-tracking systems, online application portals, video interviews, digital assessments, data analytics, chatbots and artificial intelligence (AI) now operate alongside conventional human interactions. Recent scholarship shows rapid growth in digital HRM and algorithmic HRM research, but it also points to conceptual ambiguity concerning what counts as digital HRM and how algorithmic technologies relate to human decision-making (Cameron et al., 2024; Fayyaz & Qureshi, 2024). The distinction between automated decisions and augmented human decisions is especially important because technology can either displace human judgement or provide

information that improves it.

The relationship between communication and personnel selection therefore requires reconsideration. Earlier accounts tend to treat communication as a general managerial function and selection as a separate HRM activity. Recent evidence, however, indicates that internal communication is associated with engagement, performance, employee loyalty and strategic employee attributes (Imam et al., 2023; Nguyen & Ha, 2023; Sinitsyna et al., 2024). At the same time, AI recruitment literature increasingly emphasises efficiency alongside justice, rights, transparency and fairness (Hunkenschroer & Luetge, 2022; Mori et al., 2025). These developments suggest that communication should be positioned at the centre of the personnel system rather than at its margins.

This paper consequently examines communication as an integrating mechanism connecting recruitment, screening, interviewing, placement, promotion, employee relations and organisational development. It also considers communication competence as a job-related selection construct rather than a vague synonym for employability, and critically evaluates the opportunities and risks of AI-supported recruitment. The central argument is that sustainable organisational development requires a personnel system in which communication quality, job-related selection criteria, technological capability, ethical safeguards and human accountability are mutually reinforcing.

RESEARCH GAP

The literature on organisational communication has established relationships between communication and employee attitudes, engagement, commitment and performance. Recruitment and selection research, in turn, has developed sophisticated approaches to assessment, person–job fit and staffing. A rapidly expanding third stream examines AI and digital HRM. Yet these literatures are often insufficiently integrated. Communication research may stop at employee outcomes after recruitment; selection research may focus on assessment validity without examining communication as a continuous organisational process; and AI-HRM studies may concentrate on technological efficiency or ethical risks without fully connecting them to the communicative architecture of personnel management.

The specific gap addressed by this manuscript is therefore integrative. There is a need for a framework that explains how communication functions across the personnel cycle and how the movement from human to digital communication changes, rather than removes, the requirements for fair selection and organisational development. The manuscript addresses this gap by bringing together organisational communication, personnel selection, communication competence, digital HRM and organisational development within one conceptual argument.

The contribution is threefold. First, the paper conceptualises communication as a connective mechanism running through recruitment, screening, interviewing, placement, promotion and employee relations. Second, it distinguishes communication competence from general employability and argues that communication should be assessed only when it is demonstrably relevant to the job and through consistent, defensible criteria. Third, it extends the communication–selection relationship into digital HRM by arguing that AI should be treated as an augmenting technology subject to transparency, privacy, fairness, accountability and meaningful human oversight. In this sense, the paper moves beyond the proposition that “communication is important” towards a framework specifying where, why and under what conditions communication contributes to responsible personnel selection and organisational development.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a critical integrative review design. An integrative review is appropriate for the present purpose because the research question crosses disciplinary boundaries and requires the combination of empirical studies, systematic reviews, conceptual papers and foundational theoretical works. The purpose was not to calculate a pooled effect size, but to identify converging and competing explanations, evaluate limitations in the existing literature, and synthesise the evidence into an integrated conceptual framework.

The literature search focused on Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, Google Scholar and ScienceDirect. Search terms were combined using Boolean operators and included “organisational communication”, “internal communication”, “personnel selection”, “recruitment”, “selection”, “communication competence”, “digital HRM”, “artificial intelligence in recruitment”, “algorithmic hiring”, “AI-supported selection”, “employee engagement” and “organisational development”. Reference lists of relevant review articles were also examined to identify foundational studies and influential sources not captured through keyword searches.

Recent peer-reviewed literature published principally between 2021 and 2026 was prioritised, especially for digital HRM, AI recruitment and organisational communication. Older publications were retained where they provided foundational theories or concepts that remain directly relevant, including human capital theory, social exchange theory, organisational communication theory and resource-based perspectives. Sources were included when they directly addressed one or more of the following: communication in organisations; recruitment or selection; employee relations and engagement; communication competence; digital HRM; AI or algorithmic selection; fairness and ethics in automated decision-making; or organisational development. Sources were excluded when their subject matter was only tangentially related, when the publication duplicated a stronger source, or when claims could not be adequately evaluated from the available scholarly record.

The literature was evaluated on four dimensions: conceptual relevance, methodological credibility, currency and contribution to the central argument. Greater weight was given to peer-reviewed empirical studies and systematic or integrative reviews, while foundational books and classic theoretical works were used to establish conceptual foundations. Particular attention was paid to differences in research setting, sample, methodological design and outcome measures because findings from one national or organisational context cannot automatically be generalised to another.

The selected literature was organised into six analytical themes: (1) communication as an organisational resource; (2) communication across the personnel-selection cycle; (3) communication competence and job-related assessment; (4) internal communication, employee relations and organisational development; (5) digital HRM and AI-supported recruitment; and (6) ethical and governance requirements for algorithmic selection. Within each theme, studies were compared for areas of agreement, disagreement, methodological limitations and implications. The final synthesis was used to construct the communication–selection–development framework presented below.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The manuscript draws on complementary theoretical perspectives rather than treating communication as a self-explanatory variable. Four perspectives are particularly useful: human capital theory, social exchange theory, the resource-based view and socio-technical systems theory. Together, they explain why communication matters to selection and development, how communication affects relationships, why communication capability can constitute an organisational resource, and why digital technologies should be evaluated as components of a wider human–technology system.

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory conceptualises employees' knowledge, skills and capabilities as resources that contribute to productive activity (Becker, 1964). From this perspective, personnel selection is an investment decision: organisations seek people whose capabilities are relevant to present or future work requirements. Communication has two roles within this process. First, it communicates information about the organisation and the job to prospective employees. Second, it provides evidence through which aspects of candidates' human capital can be evaluated. Communication competence therefore becomes relevant where the job itself requires effective speaking, listening, writing, interaction or information management. The theory supports job-related assessment but does not justify treating polished communication as a universal proxy for

competence.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory proposes that relationships develop through reciprocal exchanges of valued resources and signals (Blau, 1964). In organisations, communication is one such resource. Managers who communicate support, information and recognition can create perceptions of organisational support, while employees reciprocate through engagement and performance. Imam et al. (2023), for example, explicitly apply social exchange theory to the relationships among supervisor support, internal communication, engagement and performance. This perspective extends the argument beyond recruitment: the communicative quality experienced during selection may influence candidates' perceptions of organisational fairness and attractiveness, while communication after appointment helps establish the relational conditions for engagement.

Resource-Based View

The resource-based view argues that sustained organisational advantage can arise from valuable, rare, difficult-to-imitate and appropriately organised resources (Barney, 1991). Communication capability may meet some of these conditions when it is embedded in organisational routines, leadership practices, knowledge-sharing systems and relationships. A competent employee is therefore not simply an individual asset; the value of that competence depends partly on whether organisational structures enable it to be used. This explains why selection alone cannot produce organisational development. The organisation must also create communicative conditions in which employee capabilities can be coordinated and developed.

Socio-Technical Systems Theory

Socio-technical systems theory emphasises the interdependence of social and technical components of work systems (Trist & Bamforth, 1951). This perspective is particularly relevant to digital HRM because recruitment platforms, algorithms and AI tools do not operate independently of recruiters, managers, candidates, organisational policies and legal requirements. A technically efficient system can still produce poor outcomes if its social context is weak. Conversely, human oversight without adequate technological understanding may fail to detect systematic errors. The socio-technical perspective therefore supports the manuscript's central proposition that AI should augment responsible human decision-making rather than be treated as a substitute for it.

Integrating the Theories

Taken together, these theories establish a coherent chain of reasoning. Human capital theory explains why organisations seek and evaluate employee capabilities; social exchange theory explains how communication shapes relational outcomes; the resource-based view explains why communication and human capabilities can contribute to organisational value; and socio-technical systems theory explains how people, communication practices and digital technologies must be jointly designed. The resulting framework positions communication as the mechanism through which individual capability is identified, interpreted, coordinated and converted into organisational performance.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE PERSONNEL CYCLE

The central conceptual proposition is that communication is a continuous process connecting the major stages of personnel management. Rather than viewing recruitment, selection, placement and development as independent HR functions, the framework treats them as interconnected stages in an information and relationship system.

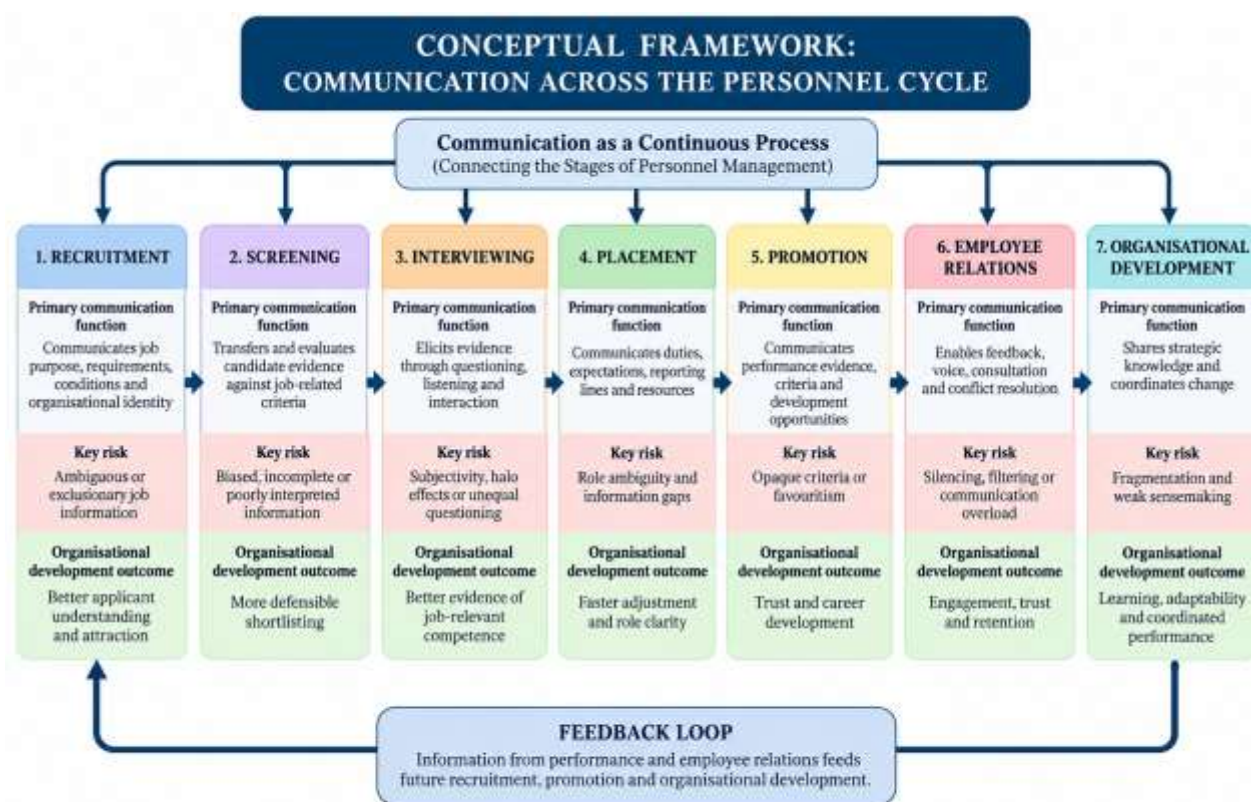


Figure 1. Communication across the Personnel Cycle

The framework in Figure 1 implies a feedback loop rather than a linear chain. Recruitment communication shapes who enters the applicant pool; selection communication determines what evidence becomes visible; placement communication influences early role understanding; continuing internal communication affects engagement and performance; and information generated through performance and employee relations feeds future recruitment, promotion and organisational development. Digital technologies operate across these stages, but their legitimacy depends on the quality of the underlying criteria and communication processes.

Concept of Organisational Communication

Organisational communication refers to the processes through which information, meaning, expectations, feedback and relational signals are created and exchanged within and around an organisation. It includes verbal, non-verbal, written and digital communication and occurs through formal and informal networks. Downward communication conveys instructions, objectives, procedures and feedback; upward communication provides management with employee concerns, suggestions and operational knowledge; and horizontal communication supports coordination among colleagues and departments.

These channels are not equally effective in all circumstances. Downward communication can clarify expectations, but it can also become one-way and suppress employee voice. Upward communication can provide valuable operational knowledge, but information filtering may occur when employees fear negative consequences. Horizontal communication can improve coordination, yet it can also generate duplication or conflicting interpretations when responsibilities are unclear. Communication effectiveness therefore depends not simply on the existence of channels but on credibility, accessibility, feedback and the organisational climate in which communication takes place.

Contemporary evidence supports this more relational understanding. Lee et al. (2023) found that satisfaction with internal communication was positively related to employee engagement, with employer

attractiveness and perceived organisational support helping explain the relationship. Imam et al. (2023) likewise linked supervisor support, internal communication, engagement and performance. Sinitsyna et al. (2024) show that the effects of internal communication are shaped by contexts such as organisational culture, change, crises and managerial roles. These studies broadly agree that communication matters, but they differ in emphasis: some focus on satisfaction and engagement, others on performance or broader employee outcomes. The collective implication is that communication should be treated as a multidimensional organisational capability rather than a single message-transmission variable.

Personnel and Personnel Selection

Personnel refers to the people employed by an organisation, whereas personnel management encompasses the processes through which human resources are planned, recruited, selected, deployed, developed, evaluated and supported. Personnel selection is narrower: it concerns the systematic identification and appointment of candidates whose qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience and other legitimate attributes fit the requirements of a particular role.

Selection normally includes several information-generating stages. Recruitment communicates an opportunity and attracts applicants. Application screening identifies candidates who appear to satisfy specified requirements. Tests, work samples or other assessments provide additional evidence. Interviews permit direct interaction and clarification. References or background checks may provide supplementary information, subject to legal and ethical constraints. Finally, the organisation communicates decisions and begins placement or onboarding. Communication is therefore not an accessory to selection; it is the means through which much of the evidence is produced, transferred and interpreted.

Communication and the Personnel-Selection Process

Recruitment

Recruitment communication performs both informational and symbolic functions. A vacancy announcement communicates duties, qualifications, working conditions, application procedures and deadlines. At the same time, it communicates something about organisational identity, professionalism and inclusiveness. Poorly written or unnecessarily restrictive advertisements can reduce the quality and diversity of the applicant pool. Clear, accurate and accessible recruitment communication is consequently part of selection quality itself.

Digital recruitment has widened the reach of recruitment communication through organisational websites, employment platforms, social media and automated applicant systems. This expansion increases speed and access but also creates a risk of scale without quality: a poorly designed message can reach thousands of potential applicants more rapidly than a well-designed conventional advertisement. Digital reach should therefore not be confused with recruitment effectiveness.

Application and Screening

Applicants communicate their qualifications through CVs, application forms, statements, certificates, portfolios and assessment responses. Recruiters interpret this information against predefined criteria. The quality of the selection decision therefore depends on the relevance and reliability of the information requested as well as on the consistency with which it is evaluated.

AI-supported screening can process large numbers of applications quickly and can classify information according to predefined or learned patterns. However, efficiency is not equivalent to validity. If historical recruitment data reflect unequal access, discriminatory practices or narrow definitions of successful candidates, a model may reproduce those patterns. Mori et al. (2025) show that AI recruitment literature is organised around efficiency, justice and rights concerns, while Cameron et al. (2024) distinguish automated from augmented algorithmic HRM. The implication is that organisations should ask not only whether an AI tool predicts an outcome efficiently, but also whether the outcome is job-related, explainable, contestable and fair.

Interviewing

Interviews create a direct communicative encounter between candidate and organisation. Candidates may demonstrate listening, explanation, questioning, professional interaction and the ability to communicate job-relevant information. Interviewers, in turn, communicate expectations and obtain information that may not be evident from documents.

The communicative nature of interviews creates both value and risk. Unstructured interaction can reveal useful information but also permits interviewer subjectivity, similarity bias, halo effects and inconsistent questioning. Structured interviews, standardised scoring criteria and job-related questions can improve comparability. Communication competence should therefore be assessed through observable behaviours tied to the actual role rather than through vague impressions such as whether a candidate appears “articulate” or “confident”.

Placement and Promotion

Communication remains central after appointment. Placement requires the organisation to communicate responsibilities, reporting relationships, performance standards, resources and procedures. Where these are unclear, even a technically competent employee may experience role ambiguity. Promotion similarly depends on communication of criteria, performance evidence, development opportunities and decisions. Transparent communication can strengthen perceptions of procedural fairness, whereas opaque decisions can weaken trust regardless of the quality of the underlying employee.

Employee Relations

Employee relations depend on continuing communication rather than on isolated announcements. Employees require channels through which they can ask questions, raise concerns, provide suggestions and receive feedback. Managers require mechanisms for explaining organisational decisions and understanding employee experiences. The review evidence indicates that internal communication is associated with engagement, loyalty, commitment and other employee outcomes, although the strength and direction of these relationships vary across contexts (Nguyen & Ha, 2023; Sinitsyna et al., 2024).

Communication Competence and Fair Selection

Communication competence should be distinguished from the broader concept of employability or general job competence. Employability may include a broad collection of knowledge, transferable skills, adaptability, digital literacy and personal attributes. Communication competence is more specific: it concerns the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a given context. Its meaning therefore depends partly on task and role requirements. For a customer-service role, for example, listening, explanation, interaction and conflict-management communication may be central. For a technical role, written reporting, procedural communication or the ability to explain technical information may be more relevant. A role involving limited interpersonal interaction should not require an unnecessarily elaborate communication performance merely because communication is generally valued. The principle is job relevance.

Fair assessment requires explicit behavioural indicators. Depending on the job, these may include clarity of explanation, listening accuracy, appropriate questioning, audience adaptation, written organisation, turn-taking, professional tone or accurate transmission of information. Assessors should use the same criteria for candidates, provide structured scoring rubrics, document evidence and distinguish communication problems that affect job performance from differences in accent, dialect, personality, cultural style or socioeconomic background that are not themselves evidence of poor competence. This is particularly important in multilingual and multicultural labour markets.

AI-based assessment introduces additional caution. Automated analysis of speech, facial behaviour, language patterns or written responses may appear objective because it produces numerical scores, but the construct being measured may be uncertain. A model may detect linguistic or behavioural patterns that correlate with prior training data without establishing that those patterns predict job performance. Therefore, validation against job requirements and human review are essential. A numerical output should be treated as

evidence to be evaluated, not as an unquestionable judgement.

Digital HRM and AI-Supported Recruitment

Digital HRM encompasses the use of digital technologies to support or transform HR activities. Recent literature notes that the field is conceptually broad and sometimes inconsistently defined (Fayyaz & Qureshi, 2024). It can include HR information systems, analytics, online recruitment, digital employee services and AI-enabled decision support. Algorithmic HRM is a related but more specific domain involving algorithmic systems in HR decision-making (Cameron et al., 2024). This distinction matters because not every digital HR tool makes consequential automated decisions.

AI can support job-advertising, candidate matching, CV screening, interview scheduling, assessment, candidate communication and other administrative activities. Large-scale reviews indicate substantial growth in research on AI technologies in HRM (Arora et al., 2024) and systematic reviews identify recruitment and selection as an especially important ethical application area (Mori et al., 2025). The principal organisational benefits include processing speed, scalability, and consistency of repetitive procedures, reduction of administrative workload and the ability to identify patterns in large datasets.

However, the claim that AI makes selection objective requires qualification. An algorithm learns from data, rules or model specifications that reflect choices made by humans and institutions. Bias can enter through the definition of the target variable, the selection of training data, the representation of groups, the features used, the design of the assessment and the interpretation of outputs. Even a model that performs similarly across groups on a technical metric may be perceived as unfair if applicants cannot understand or challenge its decisions. Ochmann et al. (2024), using an experimental study with 801 participants, found that algorithmic fairness perceptions are shaped by multiple dimensions of organisational justice and that transparency interventions can influence perceptions of interpersonal and informational justice.

Transparency, however, should not be reduced to simply disclosing that AI is being used. Meaningful transparency may require information about the purpose of the system, the categories of data used, the role of the algorithm in the decision process, the limits of its output and the available route for human review. Chen et al. (2025) similarly report that transparency can reduce differences between AI and human perceptions of person-job fit. These findings reinforce the communicative dimension of AI governance: candidates need understandable information about how technology participates in a consequential decision.

Privacy is another major concern. Recruitment systems can process CVs, employment histories, assessment responses, video, voice, contact details and other personal information. The fact that data are technically available does not establish that their collection and reuse are ethically justified. Organisations should therefore apply data minimisation, purpose limitation, secure storage, controlled access and appropriate retention practices. Candidates should receive clear information about relevant data practices and, where applicable, avenues for correction or challenge.

Human oversight is equally important. Human involvement should not be merely ceremonial, with recruiters routinely accepting algorithmic recommendations without scrutiny. Effective oversight requires that decision-makers understand the system's purpose and limitations, examine evidence, identify anomalous outcomes, document reasons for consequential decisions and retain authority to override an automated recommendation when justified. Research involving stakeholders in AI-enabled HRM similarly identifies loss of human oversight and excessive reliance on AI recommendations as significant concerns (Köchling et al., 2025).

The appropriate principle is therefore augmentation rather than replacement. AI may perform high-volume information processing, while human professionals remain responsible for contextual interpretation, ethical judgement, candidate communication, accountability and final decisions. Cameron et al. (2024) provide a useful basis for this distinction by differentiating automated and augmented algorithmic HR decision-making.

CRITICAL LITERATURE SYNTHESIS

The reviewed literature demonstrates substantial agreement that communication matters for employee and organisational outcomes, but the evidence does not support a simplistic causal claim that more communication always produces better outcomes. Studies differ in what they mean by communication, how it is measured and which outcomes are examined. Lee et al. (2023) focus on satisfaction with internal communication and employee engagement; Imam et al. (2023) examine communication alongside supervisor support and engagement within a social exchange framework; and Sinitsyna et al. (2024) synthesise evidence across organisational change, culture, crises and managerial roles. The convergence lies in the importance of communication quality and relational context, whereas the differences concern mechanisms, outcomes and research settings.

There is a similar pattern in digital HRM. Reviews agree that AI and algorithmic technologies are expanding across HRM, but they differ in emphasis. Arora et al. (2024) map the growth and technological diversity of AI-HRM research, whereas Cameron et al. (2024) emphasise conceptual clarification and distinguish automated from augmented decision-making. Mori et al. (2025) place ethics at the centre of AI recruitment and organise the literature around utilitarian efficiency, justice and rights. Fayyaz and Qureshi (2024), meanwhile, highlight conceptual ambiguity surrounding digital HRM itself. Taken together, these studies suggest that technological adoption has advanced faster than conceptual and governance consensus.

The fairness literature further complicates the assumption that algorithmic systems are naturally more impartial than people. Ochmann et al. (2024) demonstrate that applicants' fairness perceptions involve procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational dimensions. This is important because an organisation can regard an algorithm as technically neutral while candidates experience the process as opaque or unjust. Fairness therefore has both computational and communicative dimensions. A technically accurate system can still damage organisational legitimacy if affected individuals do not understand or trust the process.

A further limitation across the literature is contextual concentration. Many studies are conducted in Europe, Asia or other technologically advanced environments, and their findings may not transfer automatically to organisations operating under different regulatory, infrastructural and linguistic conditions. This matters for contexts such as Nigeria, where multilingual communication, unequal digital access, organisational resource constraints and developing regulatory arrangements may influence how digital selection systems are experienced. Future empirical research should therefore examine AI-supported selection in African and Nigerian organisations rather than assuming that evidence generated elsewhere is universally applicable.

The collective implication is that communication should be treated as a cross-cutting explanatory construct. It links technological systems with candidates and employees, converts technical outputs into organisational decisions, enables feedback and contestation, and influences whether personnel processes are perceived as legitimate. This perspective provides a more complete account than either a communication-only approach or a technology-only approach.

Communication, Personnel Selection and Organisational Development

Organisational development involves planned processes through which organisations improve their capacity to function, adapt and achieve objectives. Personnel selection contributes to this process by determining who enters the organisation and which capabilities become available. Communication contributes by connecting individual capability to collective action. The relationship can therefore be represented as follows: effective communication improves the quality of personnel information; better personnel information supports more defensible selection; appropriate selection increases the likelihood of capability–role alignment; and continuing communication enables that capability to contribute to collective performance.

The argument also explains why poor recruitment communication can create downstream organisational costs. If a job advertisement is unclear, the applicant pool may be poorly matched. If screening criteria are opaque, potentially suitable candidates may be excluded. If interviews are inconsistent, selection decisions may reflect assessor preference rather than job-related evidence. If placement communication is inadequate, new employees may experience role ambiguity. If promotion communication is opaque, trust may deteriorate. Thus, communication failures can accumulate across the personnel cycle.

Conversely, effective communication creates organisational learning. Employees communicate operational problems upward; colleagues exchange knowledge horizontally; managers communicate strategic priorities downward; and HR units use information from performance and employee relations to revise personnel practices. Organisational development is therefore partly a communicative learning process. Digital technologies can accelerate this process, but only when information quality, access, interpretation and accountability are properly managed.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Implications for HR Practitioners

- i. Develop recruitment messages that clearly specify essential and desirable criteria and avoid unnecessarily exclusionary language.
- ii. Use structured, job-related screening and interview criteria, with documented evidence supporting consequential decisions.
- iii. Treat communication competence as a role-specific construct rather than a generic indicator of intelligence, employability or personal worth.
- iv. Audit AI-supported recruitment systems for validity, disparate impact, privacy, transparency and consistency before and during use.
- v. Maintain meaningful human oversight over high-stakes selection decisions and provide procedures for review, correction and candidate feedback.
- vi. Train HR professionals in AI literacy so that they can interpret algorithmic outputs critically rather than accepting automated recommendations uncritically.
- vii. Communicate clearly with applicants about the role of technology in recruitment and the channels available for questions or review.

Implications for Managers

Managers should recognise that communication quality is a leadership responsibility, not merely an HR function. Managers influence whether information flows upward and downward, whether employees feel able to raise concerns, and whether organisational decisions are understood. They should therefore cultivate communication climates characterised by clarity, listening, feedback and psychological safety. In digital environments, managers should also avoid creating unrealistic expectations of constant availability and rapid response; communication effectiveness depends on purpose and quality, not simply frequency.

Implications for Policy and Governance

Organisations adopting AI in recruitment need governance arrangements that allocate responsibility across HR professionals, managers, technology providers and senior leadership. Policies should specify permissible uses, data requirements, and validation procedures, monitoring arrangements, human-oversight responsibilities and candidate-facing communication. Governance should also include mechanisms for documenting and reviewing adverse outcomes. Fairness should be treated as an ongoing organisational process rather than as a one-time technical audit.

Implications for Researchers

Future research should move beyond broad claims that communication or AI is beneficial and identify the mechanisms through which particular communication practices affect particular personnel outcomes. Longitudinal studies could examine whether recruitment communication predicts later engagement or

retention. Experimental research could compare human, automated and hybrid selection processes. Studies in Nigeria and other African contexts could examine multilingual communication, digital inequality, candidate perceptions of algorithmic fairness and the validity of communication-competence assessments. Research should also examine how HR professionals actually interpret AI recommendations, because formal human oversight may differ from oversight in practice.

CONCLUSION

This review establishes communication as a central connective mechanism in personnel selection and organisational development. Its contribution is not simply to reaffirm the importance of communication, but to specify how communication operates across the personnel cycle: it attracts applicants, communicates requirements, generates selection evidence, enables interviewing, supports placement and promotion, sustains employee relations and facilitates organisational learning. Personnel selection is consequently best understood as a communicative and evaluative process rather than as a sequence of isolated administrative procedures.

The review also demonstrates that digitalisation does not reduce the importance of communication. Instead, it changes the channels, actors and risks involved. AI can increase speed, scale and consistency, but these benefits must be distinguished from fairness, validity and legitimacy. Bias, opacity, privacy risks, unequal access, automation bias and weak accountability remain significant concerns. The responsible approach is therefore a socio-technical one in which AI augments human capability while human professionals retain responsibility for interpretation, communication, ethical judgement and consequential decisions.

The principal implication is that organisations seeking sustainable development should integrate communication strategy with personnel strategy and digital HR governance. Recruitment criteria should be job-related; communication competence should be assessed through valid and consistent evidence; internal communication should enable employee voice and learning; and AI systems should be transparent, monitored and subject to meaningful human oversight. Future empirical work should test the proposed framework across sectors and national contexts, with particular attention to African organisations, multilingual workplaces and the rapidly changing use of generative and predictive AI in recruitment. Such research can help determine not merely whether digital personnel systems are efficient, but whether they are fair, communicatively legitimate and capable of supporting long-term organisational development.

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