

Workplace Communication Barriers: Types, Effects, and Minimisation Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Workplace communication hinges on the ability for employees and employers to navigate through countless barriers and find methods to ensure messages are delivered successfully. Failure to do so can result in serious repercussions to the companies and their employees. This small-scale study aims to identify the types of communication barriers within the workplaces, the effects of communication barriers, and the strategies for minimising communication barriers. Using a qualitative research design, the data were collected via interviews with three participants from various workplaces with varying degrees of experience. The responses were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The data were analysed thematically using Nvivo software. The themes that emerged for communication barriers were language, physical, personal, and hierarchical. Meanwhile, the effects of communication barriers were reduced work efficiency, low employee morale, and misaligned interpretations. Finally, it was discovered that the strategies employed to cope with communication barriers were to encourage open dialogue, implement team-building exercises, and conduct regular reviews of workplace progress. Companies need to consider various steps to ensure clear communication is maintained in the workplaces to reduce the risk of losses.

Keywords: Communication barriers; Workplace communication; Effects; Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an important medium for delivering information and exchanging ideas across all levels of an organisation. Communication is an essential strategic tool that strengthens organisational unity, corporate alignment, and shared goals (Reidhead, 2021). Open communication acts as a dynamic bridge that effectively connects individuals from different departments and positions in the workplace. This interconnected network ensures a culture of collaboration and mutual understanding among employees. When employees understand how their respective roles interweave with the work of others, they can put better efforts towards achieving the organisational purposes and objectives.

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a productive and successful workplace. Reidhead (2021) highlights that workplace communication is a primary instrument to foster social and professional relations within an organisation. He further states that communication should not be considered a passive or optional activity because corporate values, alignment, and strategies are dependent on continuous dialogue. Meanwhile, Bahrain et al. (2023) emphasise the role of leaders in streamlining the communication pathways to uplift the employees' morale and maximise productivity. According to Mahapatro and Chatterjee (2024), both verbal and non-verbal communication are paramount for workplace dynamics and conflict resolution. They are often more critical to career progression than academic or technical qualifications alone. Thus, cultivating clear, barrier-free communication can transform dysfunctional operations into a coherent, high-performing organisational ecosystem.

However, communication barriers often arise in the workplace, which can cause ineffective communication within an organization, and due to that, it will lead to reduced morale and lower job satisfaction. This will ultimately affect employee performance and organisational success (Gomathy, 2022). Aside from that, barriers can also interfere with the exchange of ideas, which is important for innovation and resolving issues within the team (Bahrain et al., 2023). Furthermore, the impacts can range from minor misunderstandings between the employees to major workplace disruptions. Malaysia's multicultural workforce often leads to language misunderstandings, particularly in English, which is essential for communication in the workplace (Sholih, 2022).

While existing literature frequently documents communication barriers (eg. Bahrain et al., 2023; Jelani & Nordin, 2019; Yusof & Rahmat, 2020) or their effects (eg. Bahrain et al., 2023; Gomathy, 2022; Sholih, 2022) or the strategies to minimise them (eg. Cobello & Milli, 2024; Sihombing & Piay, 2022; Verčič et al., 2022) in isolation, research integrating these dimensions is still underexplored. To address this fragmented landscape, the present study will bridge the gap by examining all three dimensions holistically rather than in silos. Deploying an integrated three-dimensional model through a qualitative lens offers a unique contribution to the organisational communication domain. Consequently, the objectives guiding the present research are:

to explore the types of communication barriers that exist within the workplace settings

to examine the effects of communication barriers

to identify the strategies to minimise communication barriers in the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The “Noise” Concept in the Transmission Model

The transmission model (Shannon & Weaver, 1948; cited by Sapienza et al., 2016) is a framework that identifies communication barriers by positioning the “noise concept” to indicate communication failures. The noise refers to any unintended interference that distorts the messages during the transmission stage (Mulder, 2026). The concept illustrates that communication breakdowns are clear misunderstandings when noise changes the signal that prevents the receiver from reconstructing the sender's original messages accurately. Mulder (2026) further explains that noise can be divided into external and internal categories. External noise includes physical and environmental noise such as poor internet connectivity and disruptive loud office acoustics. Meanwhile, internal noise focuses on language and semantic frictions, which include using jargon, ambiguous phrases, or culturally specific words that lead to a breakdown in mutual understanding (Main, 2024). Other internal noise categories are personal and psychological ones such as stress, frustration, and fatigue due to overloaded information, continuous WhatsApp and email notifications, and overlapping tasks that overwhelm an employee's processing capacity. Consequently, recent communication frameworks assert that actively managing these layers of noise is a critical responsibility for leadership to ensure organisational efficiency and improve workplace productivity (Miller & Poole, 2024).

Communication Barriers and Their Effects in the Workplace

The “noise” concept can be considered the communication barriers, which manifest in various forms, such as language, physical, personal, and cultural barriers. They are the obstacles or challenges that prevent the effective exchange of information between individuals or groups (Reidhead, 2021). These barriers can hinder understanding, lead to misunderstandings, or disrupt collaboration. Language barriers can hinder effective communication within the workplace environment. Inefficient communication can lead to errors and delays, eventually affecting project outcomes, productivity, and organisational growth (Bahrain et al., 2023; Daramola et al., 2024). They also disallow effective communication, as it was found that code-switching and jargon were the main barriers that disrupt employee engagement in daily communications (Bullock & Bisbey, 2025). Moreover, language barriers can also lead to misunderstandings, which can occur due to unclear verbal communication or misinterpretation of non-verbal cues, leading to conflicts and reduced cooperation among team members (Ghani et al., 2022).

Physical barriers include poor office layouts, noisy work environments, limited access to communication technologies, lack of privacy, and geographical and time differences for remote or hybrid teams, which can also hinder employee communication and disrupt the communication process in the workplace (Bahrain et al., 2023; Jelani & Nordin, 2019). The heavy reliance on digital communication can lead to delayed decision-making and ineffective collaboration as it lacks face-to-face interaction (Yusof & Rahmat, 2020). The physical setting and the circumstances in which the conversation occurs can hinder messages from being delivered effectively. According to Jelani and Nordin (2019), lighting, acoustic environment, humidity, and temperature are some of the factors that play a role in communication.

In addition, personal barriers such as emotional state, individual judgements, and interpersonal distrust can prevent employees from giving valuable feedback and asking for clarification that could have improved their synergy (Omar & Ngui, 2024). Personal stress and frustration can also lead to communication failures that prevent employees from giving their honest perspectives or engaging professionally (Jelani & Nordin, 2019). Moreover, cultural barriers are one of the most common communication barriers that are faced by multicultural organisations or workplaces (Bahrain et al., 2023). It can be challenging for employees from different cultures to understand one another since they may have different communication styles, values, and expectations. Certain employees may find it hard to adjust themselves to the company's culture, as different cultures have their own communication styles, which can result in misunderstandings if not understood. Employees might also assume that their cultural norms are understood universally, which will then cause miscommunication within an organisation (Gašpar et al., 2023).

Strategies to Overcome Communication Barriers

Communication barriers need to be addressed to ensure smooth communication between employees and improve workplace efficiency. One of the most effective approaches to overcoming communication barriers is promoting open, clear, and honest communication (Bahrain et al., 2023; Cobello & Milli, 2024). When workers feel comfortable and safe when expressing their thoughts and opinions without worrying about criticism, they are more likely to engage in important conversations and also be a good listener (Reidhead, 2021). Aside from that, code-switching and code-mixing strategies have also been utilised in organisations to fill up language gaps and to assist employees of different backgrounds in having mutual understanding (Sihombing & Piay, 2022).

It is important for the management of an organisation to take note of certain strategies and employ them in order to achieve mutual understanding within an organisation. To do so, the management should first feature key issues and then identify the basic areas for improvement (Verčič et al., 2022). The management should also show responsibility for change since if an organisation shows determination in making communication better in a workplace as well as showcasing the progress of implementation, it will serve as an improvement, and that will make employees value and appreciate the organisation's efforts (Jelani & Nordin, 2019). Lastly, the current internal communication system must be evaluated. When arranging future communication ventures, the management should evaluate the present techniques, procedures, and innovations to decide whether they require updating (Verčič & Einwiller, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study adapted Yusof and Rahmat's (2020) research on workplace communication barriers using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is contextualised and interpretive, emphasizing the process of development rather than the outcome of the research. In this study, the primary objective of conducting qualitative research involves an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, experiences, and attitudes for purposes such as discovering new hypotheses or theories (Ahmad et al., 2019; Pyo et al., 2023). Therefore, a qualitative method is the most suitable approach.

This study used a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used in qualitative research to select participants based on specific qualities that are relevant to the study's objectives (Andrade, 2020). This sampling technique is used with the aim of ensuring that the sample chosen represents the characteristics or experiences sought, thereby improving the validity, dependability, and confirmability of the study (Campbell et al., 2020). The sample of this study consisted of three working participants from different

types of organisations, such as healthcare (female), education (male), and business (female). Since this was small-scale research, the sample size was considered adequate, given the emphasis was on understanding contextual narrative enough to achieve the objectives of this study. According to Malterud et al. (2016), to have more information power from the sample, fewer participants are required. Furthermore, when the sample shares unique and specific profiles, their insights will be more focused and concentrated.

The instrument used in this study was an interview. The interview consisted of 10 semi-structured questions to answer the research objectives effectively. Additionally, follow-up questions were employed to clarify and probe deeper into the participants' answers, making sure that they aligned with the study's thematic focus. The interviews conducted with the three participants were the primary source of data collection for this study.

The data collection process began with all participants taking part in virtual semi-structured interview sessions. The interview sessions were recorded and transcribed verbatim following the participants' consent. The transcripts were uploaded to NVivo software and read line-by-line to identify any utterances related to answering the study's research questions. Then, codes were assigned to significant words and phrases, and initial codes were generated during this process. The initial codes were then sorted into labels and grouped together to identify the themes emerging from related codes within each participant's transcript and then across transcripts to best represent shared participant experiences (Dawadi, 2020). Once the coding process was completed, the finalised data were exported into a codebook. Findings from the codebook were reviewed by an expert to ensure the reliability and validity of the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Types of Communication Barriers that Exist within the Workplace Settings

Based on the findings, the communication barriers can be categorised into six barriers, which are language, personal, physical, cultural, and hierarchical barriers.

Language barriers

Language barriers seemed to be a multi-layered issue in the workplace, as the participants mentioned the use of jargon, lack of fluency in English, and lack of English language use.

Participant 1

"I would say it is the usage of the jargon because it is my first time working in the healthcare industry. I still find it difficult to communicate with some people because we have different understanding and usage in terms of the jargon."

Participant 2

"The common communication barrier that I have noticed in my workplace is the language use at the workplace. I'm working at a government organisation, and most of them cannot speak English very well, and most of them are using the Malay language."

Participant 3

"Sometimes when I work with people from, like, Vietnam or the Philippines, they don't really understand English that well when you speak to someone who has poor English. Fluency is kind of hard, you know."

Jargon usage was mentioned by Participant 1 as well as a difference of understanding behind the meaning of jargon within a workplace. This shows that when a workplace requires a degree of knowledge regarding any technical terminology, employees can become confused, thus leading to misunderstandings, which will impact workplace performance. This could prove to be an issue for new employees, as they would need prior experience

or knowledge to tackle jargon in the workplace. The finding aligns with Bullock and Bisbey's (2025) study, which revealed that employees could not process information effectively when specialised professional jargons were heavily used in the workplace. This caused the employees to feel insecure and less confident in carrying out their tasks. Participant 2 mentioned how uneven language proficiency among international team members affected workplace communication. This cross-border fluency gap could have created operational frictions and passive participants in teamwork (Tenzer et al., 2021). Meanwhile, Participant 3 emphasised a lack of English language use in localised public organisations as local language hinders the adoption of English in their daily communication. Narzoles and Palermo (2021) indicated that employees in non-English speaking environments usually faced challenges due to limited exposure to English. Furthermore, Jaffree et al. (2025) stated that limited English proficiency in communicating could reduce productivity, strain workplace relationships, and impede decision-making processes.

Physical barriers

Physical barriers reported by the participants were channel, technical, and geographical limitations.

Participant 1

"One thing that I think is a big impact of barriers is misinterpretation of emails or my WhatsApp messages because of lack of tone."

"She replied to me with a message sounding like this. Consultation fee standard: telemedicine fee RM 10. So, without any coma, any full stop."

Participant 2

"...misinterpretation of written communication due to lack of tone or clarity. Since the message was delivered without any details... Because we did not mention which teachers or which people were involved in that situation."

"...one of my friends had an internet problem. So, he, you know, when we have an internet problem, so the Google Meet is really disconnected, will be in and out."

Participant 3

"...because my company has like two to three branches. So, we all don't meet each other that often..."

"And then when I was communicating with her through text, because we were like both working from home, I told her I found a candidate for it... So, I assumed she meant that she would also send the offer letter..."

Participant 1 highlighted that text-based platforms such as email and WhatsApp caused physical communication barriers due to limited vocal feedback and text clarity. Similarly, Participant 2 also mentioned that ambiguous and superficial texts, together with technical issues during virtual meetings, led to communication failures. Meanwhile, Participant 3 expressed geographical separation and remote working mode hindered effective communication among colleagues. These findings are supported by Bahrain et al. (2023) and Yusof and Rahmat (2020), who revealed that physical barriers stemming from technological, technical, and geographical factors were common in workplace settings.

Personal barriers

Several personal barriers discovered from the analysed transcripts were poor active listening, psychological factors, and interpersonal rigidity.

Participant 1

"... this is the barrier that I see, which is the interruptions and lack of active listening..."

"But then I assumed that she gave it to our boss for approval... because both of us thought that each of them would be sharing the poster with our boss for approval..."

Participant 2

" They didn't want to understand the situation."

Participant 3

"Sometimes when she tells me something in an angry tone and it's not clear, we recruiters are afraid to even ask her anything for confirmation."

"...she would never listen to the end. She would interrupt us and attack us with more questions."

"Then when she got in trouble, she got mad back at me, saying, like, 'Why did you snitch on me and stuff?'"

All participants mentioned poor active listening in work settings impeded effective communication. According to Weger et al. (2010), non-listening behaviour in workplaces indicates a lack of empathy and respect, which reduces employees' motivation to speak in any discussions. Participant 1 also faced misunderstanding in coordinating tasks caused by psychological assumptions. Mohammed and Nadkrani (2011) discovered that employees often experienced severe communication failures when they relied on implicit psychological assumptions rather than explicit instructions. Participant 2 and Participant 3 described interpersonal rigidity, which included a biased personal mindset, a toxic superior, and blaming games among colleagues that occurred in their workplaces. These personal barriers severed healthy working relationships and increased frustrations that led to communication barriers (Jelani & Nordin, 2019; Omar & Ngui, 2024).

Cultural barriers

Local dialects and regional diversity were the cultural barriers gathered from the present study. The findings for these barriers were prominently noted by Participant 2 and Participant 3.

Participant 2

"We as Malaysians have a lot of races and a lot of culture, like how Kelantanese speak and how Kedahans speak. So, there's a lot of contrast when we speak. And some of us cannot receive the information very well due to slang."

"Sometimes the words for them are mean; for them it's normal, but for us it's something like, are you serious? You are saying this to me? We don't have knowledge due to their dialect."

Participant 3

"...because I have to consult or like communicate with team leaders from all across the world... And my job involves me consulting them on like what type of employees they want on their team."

Participant 2 provided detailed descriptions on how regional diversity and domestic state dialects affected emotional state and the meaning of the words. Similarly, Participant 3 stated that cross-cultural negotiation was fundamental in catering to the needs of the international counterparts. The findings revealed that cultural barriers could occur in both local and international workplaces. Therefore, cultural agility is vital in ensuring workplace efficiency (Bahrain et al., 2023; Gašpar et al., 2023).

Hierarchical barriers

Senior-driven dominance and hostile leadership were the hierarchical barriers observed in this small-scale study.

Participant 1

"...I have this one senior colleague who will do this every meeting. He would frequently interrupt others while they were speaking, so this actually prevented some of my team members from, you know, like fully expressing their ideas."

Participant 2

"He did, but he did mention it, but, you know, seniors will always be seniors..."

Participant 3

"My supervisor is a very uptight person, so sometimes it's hard for us, the recruiters, to, you know, approach her or ask questions or clarifications... sometimes when she tells me something in an angry tone and it's not clear, we recruiters are afraid to even ask her anything for confirmation."

Both Participant 1 and Participant 2 described how their seniors imposed their status to dominate conversations and undermined the opinions of the junior staff. According to Anicich et al. (2015), rigid hierarchical practice withholds employees' insights and discourages functional communication in any organisations. Meanwhile, Participant 3 highlighted how unapproachable and aggressive behaviour of her supervisor suppressed open communication that prevented her and other colleagues from seeking clarifications. This aligns with the view of Qiu (2025) who state that hostile verbal behaviour will result in defensive organisational silence which diminishes employees' engagement and motivation to communicate.

The Effects of Communication Barriers

Three effects of communication barriers were discovered in the present study: reduced work efficiency, low employee morale, and misaligned interpretations.

Reduce Work Efficiency

All participants commented that work progression became slow due to communication errors. The following are the relevant responses by the participants:

Participant 1

"So obviously, one of the main things when communication barriers occur, for me, is that it will result in delays. Eventually, in the end, the team will have to revisit the discussion later on, which will be more time-consuming."

Participant 2

"The most disruptive is lack of clarity in communication, like I mentioned before during the message, as it leads to confusion and missed deadlines and inefficiency."

Participant 3

"Well, when things aren't communicated to us clearly, like deadlines or how many candidate headcounts or criteria they're looking for in their candidates, we usually don't get to recruit people on time."

A common theme among all the comments made is the fact that when communication breaks down, work will be delayed. Work being delayed could come in many forms, as Participant 1 stated that his team had to re-discuss work while Participant 2 and Participant 3 had issues with confusions, deadlines, and ultimately the issue of inefficiency caused by these communication barriers. According to Aziz et al. (2023) and Suleiman (2022), delayed projects and operational frictions are the results of communication failures as employees are not coordinated and forced to work redundantly to rectify initial understandings.

Low Employee Morale

All participants commented that communication barriers could lead to demotivation and frustrations within employees, which in turn led to infighting and collaboration failure. The following are the relevant utterances made by the participants:

Participant 1

"...repeated communication can be tiring and demotivate me and reduce my willingness to collaborate."

Participant 2

"And this in conclusion, for us, we have a frustration, and we have a lack of trust among team members since they cannot communicate well."

Participant 3

Of course, I had a dispute with her for getting me in trouble. And after that incident, I never want to work again with her."

A consequence of communication barriers is that morale among employees will drop significantly, which would lead to demotivation, as is evident from Participant 1's comment. Participant 2 further elaborated on the effects of poor communication, as it could harbour distrust within the workplace and lead to frustrations. These hardships could potentially escalate, as shown within Participant 3's experience whereby they had a confrontation with another employee due to the mistrust existing between them. Participant 1 and Participant 3 also showed that when trust was lacking, the motivation to work together also diminished. Ahmad Zawawi (2024) supported these findings, as he also discovered that poor communication directly damaged team morale and discouraged collaborations.

Misaligned Interpretations

Another common theme that can be seen from the experiences of all the participants when facing communication barriers is misaligned interpretations. The relevant comments are as follows:

Participant 1

"I think a big impact of barriers is misinterpretation of emails or my messages because of lack of tone. I often make sure that my explanations are thorough because when I type them short, they might seem very demanding or rude."

Participant 2

"Since the message was delivered without any details, it can lead to misunderstanding among us as teachers. Barriers such as unclear messaging or culture differences lead to misaligned expectations."

Participant 3

"She called me saying the security wouldn't let her in because there were no walk-in interviews happening in the building that day, and I told her that it was online, but she said she really didn't really understand my text."

A major element that follows communication errors is misunderstandings, which could seriously impact the workplace. Participant 1 explained further that messages could be misinterpreted due to a lack of tone and communication style. Messages could be seen as rude or demanding if lacking in detail since texts could not properly reflect tone. Participant 2 highlighted that misunderstandings happen due to messages lacking clarity, and differences in background led to misaligned expectations. Participant 3 had a similar case whereby an interviewee did not understand her text regarding an online interview the company held. According to Paxton et al. (2021), when ambiguous messages are delivered, the receivers will depend on the contextual assumptions, and once these assumptions are not aligned with the interpretations, the communication fails.

Strategies for Minimising Communication Barriers

In this study, significant themes that have been identified as strategies to overcome communication barriers in the workplace are encouraging open dialogue, team-building, and regular reviews.

Encourage Open Dialogue

In the case of encouraging open dialogue, it has been observed that employees share the belief that overcoming communication barriers requires efforts to create safe spaces for communication. As Participant 1 and Participant 3 responded:

Participant 1

"My manager also encourages our team to always share if we have a task that we feel like is so burdensome to us and we feel like it should be shared among each of the team members."

Participant 3

"I would say be more confrontational. I learned to just like have an open discussion or like communication with my team members."

Participant 1 emphasises the role of a manager's support in fostering open communication, explaining how their manager actively encouraged team members to share workload concerns. By having a manager who fosters this openness, employees feel more comfortable sharing their struggles without fear of judgement. Furthermore, encouraging a culture where employees can engage in open and sometimes confrontational discussions helps in addressing issues head-on (Edmondson, 2018). Building on this, Participant 1 believed that employees felt heard and valued, which could lead to more innovative solutions and a more cohesive team dynamic. Bahrain et al. (2023) support the findings by discussing how it is important for organisations to share information and provide feedback transparently. The authors assert that open communication such as constructive feedback helps in reducing misunderstandings and clarifying any points of confusion. Similarly, keeping employees informed about changes, challenges, and successes helps maintain engagement and ensures that everyone is aligned with the organisation's objectives.

Team-building

The second emerging theme is for companies to organise team-building. In the workplace setting, communication barriers can affect team morale. When employees' collaboration and trust are affected by communication barriers, team-building plays a crucial role not only in fostering the collaboration but also in improving communication skills.

Participant 1

"I think the management could invest more in team-building activities to improve our communication skills, to build trust and collaboration."

Participant 2

"In my opinion, it's better to organize team-building activities to strengthen the relationship, as we already did in May. I guess we do the team building with different departments and seniors to strengthen our relationship and to get to know each other better."

Participant 3

"I think what we need is more team building because our company has like two to three branches. So, we all don't meet each other that often, even when we work under the same project sometimes."

Participant 1 mentioned that the management could invest in team-building initiatives, as they can be good strategies to refine communication skills and encourage collaboration. Participant 2 described his experience of being placed in mixed groups during team-building activities, which encouraged employees to communicate and engage with each other, regardless of their seniority. Participant 3 stated that for companies with multiple branches, team-building activities provide a platform for employees from different locations to meet and strengthen relationships, promoting a unified company culture despite geographical distances. These responses highlight how management plays a crucial role in initiating and organising team-building activities as a strategy to address communication challenges. This is supported by Salvation (2019), who emphasise management's role in conducting constant training programs to strengthen intra-office relationships. Activities such as informal networking groups and team exercises should be utilised by the management to enable their employees to learn the best ways to work together. When such initiatives are effectively implemented, they create an environment where effective communication is enhanced, thus contributing to a positive team dynamic. Reidhead (2021) asserts that through effective communication, organisations can maintain goodwill among team members and foster social interrelations. This is important for building a cohesive team that works well together and supports each other. He further emphasises how communication affects employee morale and that a well-communicated team is likely to be more motivated and productive.

Regular Reviews

Participants have shared practices on doing regular team check-ins as key components of clear communication protocols in the workplace.

Participant 1

"So as for my team, I realised what we recently did is we came up with doing regular team check-ins to clarify our tasks and working dates, because in our WhatsApp group, we have a pinned text message in our group, like stating all the dates of our events, the person in charge for that event, and the committee; their job is listed down too so that everybody knows what they should do on the day of the event. So that is one of the ways that my colleagues and I communicate, which is through the text messages, and keep updating each other."

"So be it regular sharing sessions, like, it can be through any platform, be it Microsoft Teams or a physical session at the office. So, I think this will help to ensure that everyone's, you know, concerned with communicating the right thing and being heard and not brushed off."

Participant 2

"I will host a regular feedback session to address misunderstandings that happened, whether during the meeting or in every event. We have a pre-event and post-event for the postmortem. During the postmortem, we will ask them for feedback on which part we can improve or which part we need to calm the situation between us because during the event we know that we're not satisfied with our job or task and something."

Participant 3

"Maybe we have like work-in-progress meetings three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. You would get on an online meeting and just, like, update our supervisors and our colleagues on what we have been working on, any issues, and such."

Participant 1 emphasised that consistent communication routines provide opportunities for other employees to understand their responsibilities. These meetings, whether conducted online or in person, ensure that supervisors and colleagues are informed of progress and ongoing efforts where transparency and collective problem-solving are practiced. Participant 2 expressed how he would organise regular feedback sessions to address any misunderstandings. These sessions were held both pre-event and post-event, allowing teams to identify and resolve issues before they escalated while also reflecting on areas of improvement after tasks were completed. In the context of Participant 3, her company's management would hold work-in-progress (WIP) meetings regularly as a structured way to show effective communication occurred in executing any tasks. Cobello and

Mili (2024) support the findings by stating that regular reviews are not just about collecting feedback but also enhancing communication practices. Furthermore, when having regular review, employees can adapt to each other's communication styles. This strategy ensures clarity and understanding, which are crucial for overcoming communication barriers, especially when dealing with complex or technical information (Yu, 2026).

CONCLUSION

This small-scale qualitative study highlights the importance of identifying and addressing communication barriers within a workplace. Communication is important in an organisation as it ensures the success of a company; therefore, understanding the role of the communication barriers is crucial to avoid miscommunication during the exchanges between members within the organisation. The interviews with three participants across the healthcare, education, and business sectors revealed five main dimensions of communication barriers: language, physical, personal, cultural, and hierarchical. The findings indicate that operating disruptions are triggered by multi-layered issues, such as the use of jargon, misunderstandings on digital platforms like WhatsApp and email, poor active listening, regional dialects, and communication apprehension caused by senior dominance or unapproachable supervisors. When left unaddressed, these barriers lead to severe consequences, such as work inefficiency, low employee morale, and misaligned interpretations that cause major workplace confusion.

In addition, the study discovered some strategies that organisations could implement to minimise these communication barriers and improve productivity. First, open dialogue should be encouraged to create a supportive environment where employees feel comfortable to share heavy workloads and resolve issues without fear of criticism. Second, regular team-building can strengthen professional relationships, close the divide between junior and senior staff, and bridge geographical distances across other companies' branches. Finally, in establishing regular reviews, consistent tracking, transparency, and the employees' adaptability to differing communication styles. Ultimately, organizations must maintain barrier-free, open communication to sustain workforce synergy and effectively prevent costly operational losses.

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