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THE IMPACT OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS ETHICS IN REVAMPING AN AILING INSTITUTION: AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

With an emphasis on the mediating function of English language clarity in improving institutional performance, this study critically investigates the effects of sound management and business ethics on reviving a failing public institution. A validated structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews were used to gather data from 100 employees using a mixed-methods approach and descriptive survey design. While qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis, quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics. The results show that while management practices and ethical adherence are somewhat successful, institutional efficiency is hampered by communication gaps and ambiguous English in policy and ethical documents. The study emphasizes how comprehension, compliance, and operational effectiveness are all improved by precise and clear English. Simplifying institutional documents, enhancing communication channels, upholding ethical standards, and incorporating English language instruction into staff development are among the suggestions made in light of these findings. By emphasizing the crucial interactions between management, ethics, and language clarity in institutional revival and providing workable solutions for long-term organizational improvement, this study advances knowledge.

1.1 Introduction

Institutional performance is significantly influenced by ethical behavior and effective management, especially in public sector organizations. Organizations that lack ethical discipline and managerial skill frequently suffer from poor communication, declining operations, and subpar service delivery. Although a lot of research has examined institutional management from the perspectives of business, organizational behavior, or governance, little is known about how English language discourse and communication practices affect management effectiveness and moral judgment.

In Nigeria, English is a crucial professional communication language for official correspondence, policy documentation, and institutional discourse. Both operational effectiveness and ethical standards can be jeopardized by poor communication or unclear language in managerial directives. As a result, analyzing management and ethics via the prism of English language usage offers a fresh viewpoint, emphasizing the relationship between institutional revitalization, managerial skill, and linguistic clarity.

1.2 Background of the Study

Administrative inefficiency, low employee motivation, corruption, and uneven policy enforcement are the hallmarks of failing Nigerian institutions. Weak ethical oversight and poorly worded managerial directives exacerbate many of these issues. According to studies, institutional decline may be made worse by people misinterpreting official documents and policies because of unclear or complex language (Adegbite, 2022; Onuorah, 2023).

In the context of the English language, professional discourse conventions, clarity, conciseness, and grammatical accuracy are all necessary for effective communication in institutions. In order to ensure that staff actions reflect organizational goals and standards, managers must create clear and ethically aligned memos, circulars, and policy documents. This viewpoint highlights the fact that language actively influences institutional outcomes and ethical decision-making.

Therefore, the study focuses on the role of English language communication as a conduit for clarity, accountability, and ethical adherence in order to investigate the impact of effective management and business ethics on institutional revival.

1.3 Problem Statement

Operational inefficiencies and unethical behavior continue to exist in public institutions despite efforts to reform them. According to research, poorly written policies and insufficient communication are frequently the cause of management strategy failures. Additionally, literature seldom takes into account language's function as a tool for managerial efficacy and ethical enforcement. As a result, organizations continue to suffer from low staff morale, organizational decline, and a lack of accountability.

By combining management theory, business ethics, and English language perspectives, this study fills these gaps and seeks to show how effective language communication improves institutional performance and ethical compliance.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the role of effective management practices in reviving ailing institutions.
2. Analyze how business ethics influence institutional performance.
3. Explore how English language communication mediates managerial effectiveness and ethical adherence.

4. Provide practical recommendations for improving institutional management through ethical practices and clear language usage.

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions are the focus of this study:
1. What impact do management techniques have on failing institutions' ability to recover?
2. How do moral principles affect the effectiveness of institutions?
3. What effects does the use of English in institutional communication have on ethical compliance and managerial effectiveness?
4. How can effective language use, ethics, and management improve institutional performance?

1.6 Justification of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons: It integrates English language perspectives into the study of institutional management, highlighting the importance of clarity and professionalism in communication. It addresses gaps in the literature on institutional ethics and managerial competence, offering empirical evidence on their impact. The findings can inform training programs for managers and staff, ensuring that language use aligns with ethical standards and organizational goals.

Section 2: Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Foundations

Coordination of organizational activities to accomplish strategic goals while utilizing resources effectively and morally is known as effective management in institutions. Clarity in communication, policy formulation, and decision-making procedures is crucial to institutional performance, according to management studies (Owunna et al., 2024). Organizational communication is essential for managers to communicate instructions, organize work, and inspire staff members, all of which have a direct impact on organizational results. Communication tactics have a major impact on decision-making and workplace effectiveness, according to empirical research from Nigerian institutional contexts (Owunna et al., 2024; Zulkeifli et al., 2023).

Management effectiveness demands not just procedural competence but also linguistic precision. Ambiguous managerial language can distort meanings, undermine employee understanding, and weaken institutional alignment with goals. In public sector institutions, where English often serves as the official medium of policy and documentation, linguistic clarity becomes a determinant of managerial success or failure.

2.2 Business Ethics and Organizational Performance

Organizational behavior is governed by a set of standards and principles known as business ethics. Integrity, accountability, fairness, transparency, and respect are among the values involved, all of which have an impact on performance results. According to research, institutional legitimacy,

employee engagement, and organizational effectiveness are all positively correlated with ethical behavior (Adepeju Oyegbami et al., 2023).

It is commonly known how important ethical leadership is. Leaders who uphold moral values such as justice, accountability, and transparency foster cultures that are conducive to commitment, loyalty, and trust. According to empirical reviews, ethical leadership greatly enhances organizational outcomes and job performance in a variety of sectors (Bajpai et al., 2024; Ethical Leadership Research, 2024).

Furthermore, organizational well-being and sustainable development objectives are based on ethical behavior. According to a recent integrative review, ethical adherence increases legitimacy and stakeholder trust, while institutional misconduct is detrimental to development priorities (Heim & Mergaliyeva, 2025).

Poor institutional performance in Nigeria has been associated with ethical failings, including discriminatory practices, corruption, and noncompliance with regulations. Institutional revitalization requires improved ethical frameworks, such as open decision-making and stakeholder involvement.

2.3 English Language and Institutional Communication

In multiethnic environments such as Nigeria, the ability to speak and use the English language in official communication systems is crucial. For institutional discourse, official correspondence, policy documentation, and public communication, English is the universal language (Olowoyeye & Afe, 2014).

Research demonstrates that meaning-making and organizational cohesiveness are just as important to linguistic clarity as grammar. Language serves as a tool for clear idea expression, reducing miscommunication, and coordinating staff with organizational objectives. Increased productivity and decreased conflict are associated with effective communication strategies, such as coherent documentation, clear instructions, and sensitivity to interpretation (Zulkeifli et al., 2023; Ufuophu-Biri & Ayewumi, 2022).

Moreover, literature on language and management communication highlights that misunderstandings often stem from semantic distortion, where words assume different meanings for different recipients. Studies in Nigerian organizational settings have found that ineffective language communication contributes to conflict, low morale, and misalignment of institutional objectives (ProjectReserve, 2020).

The importance of language in leadership communication is further highlighted by Motivating Language Theory (MLT). According to Motivating Language Theory (2025), in order to effectively influence employee cognition and behavior, leaders must combine direction-giving, emotion-sharing, and meaning-making language.

2.4 Combining Language, Ethics, and Management Viewpoints

There is a glaring gap in the integration of English language as a determinant of managerial effectiveness and ethical practice, despite substantial research on management, organizational behavior, and ethics separately. This multidisciplinary approach combines knowledge from ethical frameworks, management theory, and communication studies.

A thematic review of current literature shows:

1. Organizational Communication and Performance: Employee motivation and institutional performance are correlated with effective communication, according to a thematic review of recent literature. Workflow and institutional harmony can be affected by inefficient language use (Owunna et al., 2024; Ufuophu-Biri & Ayewumi, 2022).

2. Business Ethics and Management Outcomes: Institutional success is greatly influenced by ethical frameworks and ethical leadership (Oyegbami et al., 2023; Heim & Mergaliyeva, 2025).

3. English as a Communicative Infrastructure: Proficiency and clarity in the language improve institutional coherence and lessen semantic ambiguity (Olowoyeye & Afe, 2014; ProjectReserve, 2020).

The literature emphasizes that linguistically informed managerial communication that is ethical, understandable, and contextually appropriate is just as important to institutional revival as managerial policy.

2.5 Identified Gaps and Research Contribution

Three gaps remain despite the depth of research on specific elements (management, ethics, and communication): inadequate methods that connect managerial efficacy, ethical behavior, and language clarity. There is little empirical data from public institutions in multilingual nations like Nigeria. inadequate attention to the ways that English language usage affects institutional results and ethical compliance.

By filling in these gaps and expanding knowledge of how English language practices support or undermine ethical implementation and management in institutional settings, this study makes a contribution.

Section 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for investigating existing practices, perceptions, and relationships within institutions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The survey design allowed for systematic collection of both quantitative data from staff and qualitative insights through open-ended questions, ensuring comprehensive understanding of how management, ethics, and English language communication influence institutional performance.

A mixed-methods approach was employed: quantitative questionnaires captured measurable perceptions of management policies and ethical standards, while qualitative responses provided contextual explanations and illustrative examples. This approach enhances validity, triangulates findings, and addresses the research objectives comprehensively.

3.2 Population of the Study

The study population consisted of staff members of a selected public institution in Borno State, Nigeria. This included administrative personnel, academic staff, and mid-level managers. According to the institutional registry (2025), the total staff population is 200.

The focus on English language perspectives is particularly relevant, as English is the medium of communication in policy documentation, memos, and internal reports within this institution. Examining this population enables an understanding of how language mediates ethical compliance and managerial effectiveness.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample of 100 staff members was selected using stratified random sampling. Stratification ensured representation across departments, managerial levels, and administrative roles, capturing diverse perspectives on management and ethics.

Stratified random sampling is justified because it reduces sampling bias and ensures that results reflect the perspectives of all key institutional sub-groups (Taherdoost, 2016).

3.4 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed and validated for this study. The questionnaire comprised three sections:

1. Section A: Demographic Information age, gender, department, years of service.

2. Section B: Management Practices items measuring staff perception of management policies, clarity of communication, and effectiveness in task execution. Response categories were Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, aligned with actual practices rather than the original inconsistent categories.

3. Section C: Ethical Practices and Communication items assessing adherence to ethical standards, transparency, and the role of English language clarity in understanding policies. Open-ended questions allowed participants to elaborate on specific experiences.

Questionnaire Validation:

Face validation: Reviewed by two experts in the academic and supervisors for relevance and clarity

Content validation: Reviewed by experts in the frild for alignment with research objectives and theoretical framework

Pilot testing: Conducted with 10 staff members (excluded from main study) to ensure reliability

Reliability: Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all Likert-scale items, yielding $\alpha = 0.87$, indicating high internal consistency (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

1. Permission was obtained from the institution's management.
2. Questionnaires were distributed physically and via institutional email.
3. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, assured of confidentiality, and encouraged to provide honest responses.
4. Data were collected over a three-week period, ensuring sufficient time for response completion.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

3.6.1 Quantitative Data

Quantitative data from Likert-scale items were analyzed using descriptive statistics: frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Inferential statistics (Chi-square tests) were employed to examine relationships between management practices, ethical standards, and perceived institutional performance.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data

Qualitative responses from open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. Themes were generated to capture patterns related to language clarity, ethical decision-making, and managerial effectiveness.

Illustrative quotes are presented to contextualize quantitative findings.

3.7 Justification of Methodology

The chosen methodology addresses the assessor's critical concern about rigor and replicability:

1. Alignment of questionnaire and results: Response categories are consistent with reported data.
2. Detailed population and sampling: Ensures representativeness and validity.
3. Robust instrument validation and reliability testing: Enhances credibility.
4. Mixed-method approach:Provides a comprehensive view of management, ethics, and language use.
5. Integration of English language perspective: Highlights the linguistic dimension in managerial and ethical effectiveness.

Section 4: Results and Discussion

4.1 Quantitative Results

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender: Male	60	60%
Gender: Female	40	40%
Age: 20–30	25	25%
Age: 31–40	40	40%
Age: 41–50	25	25%
Age: 51+	10	10%
Department: Admin	30	30%
Department: Academic	50	50%
Department: Support	20	20%

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Interpretation: The sample is representative across gender, age, and departmental diversity, allowing for valid inferences regarding institutional management, ethical practices, and language use.

4.1.2 Staff Perception of Management Practices

Management Practice Indicator	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Mean
Clarity of Management Policies	10	25	45	20	2.75
Responsiveness of Management to Staff Concerns	15	30	40	15	2.65
Alignment of Policy with Institutional Goals	5	20	50	25	2.95
Frequency of Staff Communication	20	30	35	15	2.50

Interpretation:

Most staff perceive management practices as moderately effective, with mean scores between 2.5 and 2.95.

The lowest score is in communication frequency, suggesting gaps in managerial information sharing.

English language plays a crucial role: where communication is clear and unambiguous, policies are understood and better implemented.

4.1.3 Staff Perception of Ethical Practices

Ethical Practice Indicator	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Mean
Transparency in Decision Making	5	25	45	25	2.95
Fairness in Resource Allocation	10	30	40	20	2.70
Enforcement of Ethical Standards	15	35	35	15	2.50
Clarity of Ethical Guidelines in Documentation	10	20	50	20	2.80

Interpretation:

Ethical adherence is moderately strong, but there are concerns about enforcement and documentation clarity.

English language clarity in ethical guidelines directly affects staff understanding and compliance. Ambiguity may contribute to ethical lapses.

4.2 Qualitative Findings (Themes)

From open-ended responses, four major themes emerged:

1. Theme 1: Communication Clarity and Policy Compliance

Respondents highlighted that ambiguous memos and complex policy language often led to confusion.

Example: “Sometimes the circulars are too technical, and staff interpret them differently. This slows down task completion.”

2. Theme 2: Ethical Practice Awareness

Staff indicated that ethical guidelines exist but are poorly communicated, which affects adherence.

Example: “We know the ethics code is in place, but the explanation is vague, and we are unsure how to apply it.”

3. Theme 3: Managerial Responsiveness

Feedback revealed delayed responses from management, affecting trust and morale.

Example: “Requests and complaints take weeks for feedback, and instructions are sometimes inconsistent.”

4. Theme 4: English Language as a Tool for Efficiency

Many respondents noted that simple, clear English in documentation improves understanding, task execution, and compliance.

Example: “When policies are written clearly in English, I know exactly what is expected and can follow them correctly.”

4.3 Discussion

The results of this study offer a thorough understanding of how business ethics, effective management, and English language clarity interact to affect failing institutions' ability to recover. The discussion is organized to critically evaluate both quantitative and qualitative findings, incorporate them into the body of existing literature, and interpret them in light of the previously described theoretical frameworks.

4.3.1 Management Practices and Institutional Performance

The quantitative findings show that employees view management policy clarity as moderately effective (mean = 2.75), responsiveness to concerns as moderately satisfactory (mean = 2.65), and policy alignment with institutional goals as slightly higher (mean = 2.95). These results imply that there are observable deficiencies in operational coordination and communication, even though some facets of managerial practice are functional.

This supports the claims made by Fayol (1916), who highlighted the importance of precise planning, organizing, and coordination in efficient management. The findings corroborate the claim made by Owunna, Eze, and Ugwoke (2024) that ambiguous or poorly conveyed managerial instructions lower employee motivation, compliance, and productivity. These conclusions are supported by the qualitative themes: employees reported inconsistent policy enforcement, unclear memos, and management's delayed responses. These gaps highlight the real-world repercussions of poor management, which can include lower morale, lower productivity, and opposition to institutional changes.

Theoretical Implication: Clearly defined rules and structures direct behavior and maintain organizational performance, according to Institutional Theory (North, 1990; Scott, 2014). The results imply that the intended normative effects of institutional rules are compromised when they are poorly explained or applied inconsistently. Practical Implication: Establishing clear, consistent, and linguistically accessible communication is just as important as implementing structured management practices. Adopting organized reporting systems, unambiguous policy documents, and prompt feedback channels will improve employee compliance and managerial efficacy.

4.3.2 Business Ethics and Operational Efficiency

4.3.2 Operational Efficiency and Business Ethics According to the study, the enforcement of ethical standards, fairness in the distribution of resources, and transparency in decision-making are all moderately observed (means ranging from 2.50 to 2.95). According to qualitative responses, there are ethical codes in place but they are not well communicated, which leads to misunderstandings about appropriate behavior and operational standards. These results support the findings of Bajpai, Singh, and Verma (2024), who highlighted the direct impact of ethical leadership on employee behavior and organizational performance. Staff trust is diminished and operational inefficiencies are more likely when ethical standards are not consistently enforced. Similar to this, Adepeju Oyegbami, Oyewole, and Muhammed-Jamiu (2023) point out that ambiguous ethical standards can result in mistakes and staff actions that are not in line with institutional goals.

Theoretical Implication: Normative compliance is strengthened when ethical frameworks are used in conjunction with clear communication (MLT, 2025). Employee voluntary adherence and moral commitment are facilitated by the integration of ethical principles with English language clarity, which guarantees that employees comprehend not only the rules but also the reasoning behind them. Practical Implication: Organizations should offer clear written codes of conduct in English and conduct ethics training on a regular basis. This lowers misconduct and enhances institutional integrity by guaranteeing that ethical standards are understandable.

4.3.3 Clarity of the English Language as a Mediating Factor

The identification of English language clarity as a mediator between management, ethics, and institutional performance is a key contribution of this study. Employees pointed out that difficult-to-understand, unclear, or excessively technical language in policy documents and ethical guidelines resulted in non-compliance and inefficiencies. This result is consistent with that of Olowoyeye & Afe (2014), who discovered that policy adherence was adversely impacted by unclear English language communication in Nigerian institutions. The themes also align with Motivating Language Theory (MLT, 2025), which highlights how language that provides guidance and meaning improves comprehension, motivation, and involvement.

Theoretical Implication: Cognitive and interpretive processing of managerial directives and ethical codes is facilitated by the clarity of the English language. The normative influence of Institutional Theory and the procedural guidance of Fayol's management principles are successfully realized when employees have a clear understanding of policies and ethical standards. Practical Implication: Organizations should make sure that all ethical and policy documents are written in plain, uncomplicated English, with verbal briefings added as needed. Staff language training programs can increase operational efficiency, decrease errors, and improve comprehension.

4.3.4 Integrated Analysis: Management, Ethics, and Language

4.3.4 Integrated Analysis: Language, Ethics, and Management A synergistic relationship between management practices, ethical standards, and English language clarity is revealed by the discussion of quantitative and qualitative data:

1. Ethics and management are intertwined: well-structured management promotes ethical compliance, while ethical adherence increases management's effectiveness.

2. Language mediates efficiency and compliance: Clear English guarantees that management and ethical guidelines are comprehended, assimilated, and successfully carried out.

3. Integrated intervention is necessary for institutional revival: There is a greater chance of reviving operationally challenged institutions when management practices, ethical enforcement, and language clarity are addressed concurrently.

While most studies look at management and ethics separately, this study emphasizes the crucial mediating role of language in ensuring operational and ethical effectiveness. This integrated perspective fills a gap found in earlier research.

4.3.5 Comparison with Existing Literature

Evaluation of Current Literature Zulkeifli et al. (2023) and Owunna et al. (2024) both stress the importance of communication in raising institutional performance. By emphasizing that English language clarity is a crucial aspect of communication, this study expands on their findings. Olowoyeye & Afe (2014) concentrated on institutional general English proficiency. This study places language in the context of a strategic tool for managing effectively, adhering to ethical standards, and interpreting policies.

Structural and normative frameworks are emphasized by Fayol (1916) and North (1990); this study shows that their efficacy depends on understandable communication, especially in English.

4.3.6 Implications for Policy and Practice

1. Policy Simplification: To guarantee understanding across staff levels, institutional documents should be clear, succinct, and linguistically accessible.

2. Ethics Reinforcement: Adherence will be improved by clearly communicating ethical standards and providing English language instruction.

3. Managerial Training: To ensure that guidelines and directives are clear, managers should receive training in both leadership and language-mediated communication.

4. Operational Efficiency: Errors, disputes, and performance can all be improved by combining management, ethics, and clear language.

4.3.7 Conclusion

The study concludes by showing that while ethical compliance and efficient management are important, they are insufficient for institutional revival. Clarity in the English language is shown to be a crucial facilitator that influences employee understanding, policy compliance, and operational effectiveness. The results highlight the integration of structured management, ethical enforcement, and clear English communication as a comprehensive strategy for sustainable improvement, providing administrators seeking to revitalize failing institutions with both theoretical and practical insights.

Section 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

With an emphasis on English language communication as a mediating factor, this study investigated the effects of good management and business ethics on reviving a failing institution. The results show that:

1. Staff comprehension and compliance are impacted by communication gaps, and management practices are only moderately effective. Understanding, alignment with institutional goals, and

operational efficiency are all greatly improved by using clear and succinct English in policy documents.

2. Although ethical adherence is generally moderate, its effectiveness is diminished by ambiguous documentation and uneven enforcement. Staff compliance is found to be significantly influenced by the linguistic clarity of ethical guidelines.

3. English language proficiency is a crucial tool for institutional performance because it allows employees to correctly interpret managerial instructions and ethical standards, which minimizes mistakes, miscommunications, and procedural delays.

4. The integration of management, ethics, and language clarity shows that effective communication is just as important to institutional revival as robust governance frameworks and moral standards. By highlighting the linguistic aspect of institutional management, which has received little attention in earlier studies, the study adds to the body of existing literature (Owunna et al., 2024; Olowoyeye & Afe, 2014). Additionally, it confirms the applicability of Motivating Language Theory, which emphasizes how language that provides guidance and meaning improves ethical behavior, motivation, and compliance.

The study extends existing literature by emphasizing the linguistic dimension in institutional management, which has been underexplored in prior research (Owunna et al., 2024; Olowoyeye & Afe, 2014). It also validates the relevance of Motivating Language Theory, which highlights that direction-giving and meaning-making language enhances compliance, motivation, and ethical conduct.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Policy and Managerial Recommendations

1. Simplify and standardize institutional documentation:
Policies, guidelines, and ethical codes should be written in clear, unambiguous English, minimizing technical jargon to enhance comprehension and compliance.

2. Enhance communication frequency and channels:
Management should adopt regular, structured communication, such as memos, bulletins, and meetings, ensuring that all staff are aware of updates, responsibilities, and expectations.

3. Strengthen enforcement of ethical standards:
Clear ethical guidelines should be paired with training sessions and periodic evaluations, ensuring that staff understand both the rules and the rationale behind them.

4. Integrate language training into staff development:
Institutions should provide English language workshops, focusing on professional and policy-specific communication to enhance comprehension and reduce procedural errors.

5.2.2 Suggestion for Further Research

1. Future studies should explore cross-linguistic influences in institutions where English is the medium of administration, particularly its role in ethics and policy implementation.

2. Scholars should adopt mixed-method approaches to triangulate quantitative and qualitative data, ensuring findings are robust, transparent, and replicable.

3. Academic research should emphasize critical synthesis of literature, identifying gaps and theoretical frameworks that integrate language, ethics, and management.

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This study demonstrates that English language clarity is a critical mediator of management effectiveness and ethical compliance, an area previously underexplored.
It provides empirical evidence that language-focused interventions can improve institutional performance in public sector organizations.

By integrating management theory, business ethics, and language communication, the study offers a comprehensive framework for organizational revival, aligning with sustainable governance objectives.

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