

**INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY
OF KRUNG THAI BANK PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED HEAD
OFFICE AND BRANCHES IN THREE SOUTHERN BORDER
PROVINCES OF THAILAND**

Porntikan Promphet

Rajamangala University of Technology Srivijaya (RMUTSV),

Rattaphum College, Songkhla 90180, Thailand

Corresponding author: porntikanp@gmail.com

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Abstract

The research was to study the relationship between internal communications and the efficiency of staff operations in three southern border provinces of Thailand, namely Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. The sample consisted of 150 staff members from branches in the aforementioned provinces using multi-stage sampling method. Questionnaires were taken with the sample group and statistical information was gathered, including percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The sample subjects were mostly female, aged between 21-30 years, had 1-5 years of working experience, had bachelor degrees, had an average monthly income of 20,000 - 30,000 baht, and worked as customer services officers. The data means showed that the staff strongly agreed about the importance of cooperation and teamwork-related behaviors. The participants considered operational efficiency to be the most important factor, followed by operational achievement, time management, and statement of expenditure, respectively. The internal communications management in a vertical direction had a moderate relationship with staff operation efficiency, with a statistical significance of 0.05. Moreover, the internal communications management in a horizontal direction had a strong relationship with staff operation efficiency, with a statistical significance of 0.05.

Keywords: Internal communications; Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited; operational efficiency

Introduction

Current global economic fluctuations has impacted on Thailand's national economy, which has clearly affected the role of savings and investment in Thailand. Competition between banks has become increasingly intense, and banks must create new strategies and marketing plans to gain an advantage and survive. Internal communication efficiency within an organization is a central factor that affects organizational success. Large organizations must ensure that its disparate departments work effectively, and internal communication is considered to be a significant factor for efficient and effective operations. Organizations have different internal communication problems and the correct solutions must be found for their continued success (Schermerhorn et al., 2003). Communication is a basic but necessary process for organizations, since every activity is connected by strong processes to increase their efficacy. Organizations use teamwork and require the separation of tasks, decentralization, and responsibility consisting of good resource management, appropriate cooperative working, and must work effectively to achieve organizational goals (Kaetkeaw, 2011). Communication is related to all parts of organization to share knowledge, coordinate, exchange messages, and build good relationships between staff members. Communication is therefore very important to build good relationships, while it is also crucial for staff members to understand each other and achieve organizational success (Deeprom, 2011).

Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited's internal communication utilizes a vertical communication line from its head office to its branches. The information communicated typically concerns standard procedures, instructions, product management and information, sales targets, reports, and returns. During each important meeting between the head office and branches, misunderstandings between staff affects the meeting quality and results in them being unable to reach their set expectations. This is especially true for communication, which resulted in each team having a different understanding of policies and decisions (Katekaew, 2011). Moreover, the staff lacked the confidence to ask questions during the meetings which resulted in them hiding their opinions and discouraging them from publicly sharing their opinions (Thaisanamet, 2010). It can be difficult to get all staff members to develop an identical understanding of the same issue due to their limited knowledge,

comprehension skills, perception, and work experience. Resolving this issue by allowing everyone to ask questions during a meeting is difficult since time is limited. Branch managers should therefore play a key role in correctly obtaining new information before passing it to branch staff members. If a branch manager receives incorrect ideas or information, the branch staff members would misunderstand the information and act incorrectly. Branch managers should contact the head office directly to gain the correct information, which takes time and may slow branch operations.

Despite head office attempts to resolve these communication issues, they continue to occur and unclear communication is still found on occasion (Chantavorarak, 2010). According to staff observations, good internal communications result in organizational success. Conversely, ineffective internal communication can lead to an organization moving in the wrong direction and leave it unable to progress (Sangsriiraphat, 2007). Solving issues of complicated internal communication and delayed work processes is a high priority for company directors (Nanapoolsin, 2003).

Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited is a large organization in Thailand with many staff members. Internal communication is vital between the company's departments and branches so that the organization can be lead in the correct direction. Miscommunication problems that typically occur at Krung Thai Bank are found due to gaps between the different teams, especially between the head office and branches in other provinces, such as in Thailand's three southern provinces.

This study therefore shows the importance of solving internal communication issues between the head office and the branches in Thailand's three southern provinces by examining how internal communication affects staff members. This research suggests methods that directors can use to resolve ineffective communication in order to achieve organizational business goals.

Theory

Internal communication within the organization

Communication is the imparting or exchange of information and news through different channels between the sender and receiver (Jamchomroon, 2015; Joijensin, 2007). Additionally, communication may also involve the

exchange of feelings, perspectives, and understanding between two or more persons. However, the communication process can be interrupted which negatively affects the communication or negatively reflects back on the sender. Communication can be socially started by many methods (Jedipang, 2008), including verbal, written, or body language. Internal communication within an organization can be either formal or informal activities between staff members to manage, create, and maintain relationships, as well as to coordinate and cooperate to achieve the same business goals (Huseman and Freshley, 1973; Wilson et al., 1986). Moreover, communication is a tool to pass on an organization's culture so that staff and management are able to live and work together peacefully, as well to ensure they have the same understanding and maintain relationships (Deeprom, 2011; Prawichai, 1999). In summary, internal communication within an organization is highly important and plays a key part in driving the business in the right direction to achieve the organization's long term objectives (Deeprom, 2011).

Some organizations are able to reach the top of their field because due to organizational harmony, conformity, and uniqueness. The following points describe the value of good internal communication as a basic organizational foundation:

- 1) Communicate to reach the same goal and perspective to achieve organizational goals set by the directors.
- 2) Communicate to be a united organization and work well together.
- 3) Communicate to maintain good relationships within the organization and allow staff to successfully support the business.
- 4) Communicate to make the correct decisions after discussions within the organization.

Internal organizational communication can be categorized by the pattern of communication, as follows (Francis, 1987):

Form 1: Classified by the direction of communication: One-Way Communication; and Two-Way Communication.

One-Way Communication is a form of communication in which one party sends information to other parties. The parties receiving the information are unable to reply or ask questions. This form of communication can be an order, rule, regulation, or policy which is officially announced without any conditions.

Two-Way Communication is a form of communication with two or more parties exchanging information back and forth. This type of communication can be official or unofficial and conducted informally or in formal settings such as during a meeting or a convention.

Form 2: Classified by usage patterns: Formal Communication; and Informal Communication.

Formal Communication is a form of communication that is designated by job title or position. It follows the organization's structure which is set under clear and strict conditions. Rules and regulations use this communication form.

Information Communication is a type of communication between persons that does not consider job position or title. This kind of communication typically happens due to close relationships between colleagues as and a desire for attention from other staff members.

Form 3: Classified by usage category: Verbal Communication; and Nonverbal Communication.

Verbal Communication is oral communication, as opposed to written communication. Verbal communication is fast and convenient to conduct, meaning that the exchange process of this type of communication is easily understood and works well for two-way communication.

Nonverbal Communication has no oral communication involved and it instead can consist of written communication or body language.

Form 4: Classified by the communication channel: Downward Communication; Upward Communication; and Horizontal Communication or Cross-Channel Communication.

Downward Communication is passed from the top level of staff to lower levels, or from senior to junior positions.

Upward Communication is passed from junior staff to more senior staff, which could include discussions, feedback, or meetings.

Horizontal Communication or Cross-Channel Communication is passed between people on the same level or between people from different levels who work within a different scope of work.

Work Efficiency

Work efficiency refers to the ability of staff to work effectively and produce good results for the company by using reasonable resources. Efficient staff are happy to work and ready to improve their work quality, while they also seek new solutions to improve and develop the business (Laksana, 2003). Quality performance will generate profit and efficiency for the organization (Millet, 1954).

Work Efficiency Measurement

The measurement of work efficiency or performance is completed by directors or managers and the results are used to determine whether staff or management performance can be improved upon. Human resource management assist the company to instruct staff to coordinate and cooperate with one another. This evaluation is the responsibility of the human resource department to maintain organizational standards (Santiwong, 1996). Work performance can be difficult to measure and requires various skills and factors, including product quality, passion, work satisfaction, flexibility, stability, self-adaptation, and organizational unity.

Methodology

Population

A total of 240 Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited staff members from branches in Thailand's three southern border provinces were included in the study.

Representative Sample

The representative sample consisted of 151 staff, based upon the formula of Yamane (1973) with a confidence level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$), giving a 5% deviation based on the following calculation.

$$\text{Equation} \quad n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Set as N = number of population
 n = representative Sample Size
 e = dislocation of random sampling

We will find
$$n = \frac{240}{1+(240)(0.05)^2}$$
$$n = 150 \text{ people}$$

Therefore, the number of sampling group was determined to be 150 people.

Random Sampling

The researcher selected Multi-stage sampling with a questionnaire using the following methods. Multi-stage sampling is random sampling calculated by dividing the population from large groups to small groups until reaching the desired group.

Method 1 - Selection of 10 branches from the 18 branches in the three southern border provinces.

Method 2 - Purposive sampling on information collected from each selected bank branch. Since each branch has a different number of staff members, the researcher chose solid branches as mentioned above to make data collection easier and reduce questionnaire delivery related costs.

Table 1: Selected Sampled Branches

Branches	Number of Staff	Sampling Group
Yala	18	18
Siroros	18	18
Big C Pattani	12	12
Betong	16	16
Pattani	24	24
Main Pattani	20	20
Narathiwat	20	20
Tanyong Mat	12	12
Sungai Kolok	16	10
Total	156	150

A questionnaire was distributed to staff members at the branches in Table 1, which included the following categories:

- 1) Demographic information (gender, age, study level and degrees, work experience, monthly average income, and work position)

- 2) Opinions about internal communication between head office and the branch, consisting of downward communication, upward communication, and horizontal communication or cross-channel communication which was evaluated into five levels

- 3) Opinions about work efficiency based on staff performance.

Parts two and three were evaluated into five levels in intervening classes and then the interpretation level was set according to the level of opinion (Boonnark, 2005).

Data and Statistics Used

The researcher described the results using two types of statistics:

Descriptive Statistics were used to describe and explain the following information.

- 1) Variable personal perspectives of the sampling group in terms of sex, age, education, work experience, average income, and job position. The researcher intended to explain and determine the number of samples categorized by type using frequency and percentage based on suitability.

- 2) Opinion variables affected internal communication between the head office and the branches from three southern border provinces. The most appropriate statistic method were mean and standard deviation.

- 3) Variables affecting work efficiency based on mean and standard deviation.

Inferential Statistics were used to refer to and explain the following information.

- 1) The researcher used statistics to experiment on the relationship of internal communication within Krung Thai Bank Public Company Limited, the head office and three branches from Thailand's southern border provinces. Downward communication, upward communication, and horizontal communication or cross-channel communication were used with the intervening class and staff work efficiency. Pearson Correlation was deemed to be the most suitable statistic to use.

Data analysis found that the results from the analysis program had a level of statistic signification of 0.05.

Results and Discussion

The demographic results show that most of the sample were female (71.33%) against 28.67% male. Most of the sample were aged between 21 - 30 years old (52.00%), 31 - 40 years old (34.00%) and between 41-50 years old (10.67%). Most of the sample had a bachelor degree (75.33%), higher than bachelor degree (21.33%), and 3.33% were educated below bachelor degree level. Most of the sample had 1-5 years of work experience (52.67%), 6 - 10 years (19.33%), and less than 1 year (10.67%). Most of the sample had a monthly average income of between 20,001 - 30,000 baht (52.67%), 30,001 - 40,000 baht (20.00%), and 10,001 - 20,000 baht (14.67%). Finally, most of the sample worked as customer services officers (32.67%), sales supervisors (28.00%), and customer services supervisors (23.33%).

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinion About Internal Communications in Terms of Operations Between Head Office and Branches in Thailand’s Three Southern Border Provinces

No.	Internal Communications	Levels of Satisfaction	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1.	Downward Vertical Communication	4.07	0.446
2.	Upward Communication	3.87	0.525
3.	Horizontal Communication or Cross-Channel Communication	4.19	0.539
Total		4.04	0.429

The results in Table 2 show that for the opinions about internal communications in term of operations between the head office and branches, all three parts were at an agreed level (mean 4.04 and standard deviation 0.429). When considering each part, it is found that each part was in agreement for internal communications, respectively from high to low as follows: Horizontal communication (mean 4.19 and standard deviation 0.539); downward vertical communication (mean 4.07 and standard deviation 0.446); and upward communication (mean 3.87 and standard deviation 0.525).

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinions About Internal Communications in Terms of Operations Between the Head Office and Branches Through Downward Vertical Communication

No.	Description	Levels of Satisfaction	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1.	Information clarity about policies and corporate goals	4.11	0.661
2.	Clarity of operational presentations from head office to branches	4.15	0.659
3.	Ability to convey information of staff from head office	3.96	0.664
4.	Receive sufficient information to use in the operation	4.26	0.660
5.	Amount of information from head office sent to staff at the branches	4.26	0.699
6.	The rapidity to solve problems between head office and branches	4.02	0.650
7.	Attention to problems with the operation of branches and executive from head office	3.87	0.648
8.	Ability of executives to motivate staff to work according to the plan	3.91	0.634
Total		4.07	0.446

The results in Table 3 show the opinions of staff to internal communications. In term of operations between head office and the branches through downward vertical communication was widely agreed as important (mean 4.07 and standard deviation 0.446). When considering each part, it is found that receiving sufficient information to use in operations had the highest opinion level (mean 4.26 and standard deviation 0.660), and the next was the amount of information from head office sent to staff at the branches (mean 4.26 and standard deviation 0.699).

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinion Level About Internal Communications in Terms of Operations Between Head Office and Branches Through Upward Communication

No.	Description	Levels of Satisfaction	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1.	Opportunity to express opinions about operations executive at meetings	3.80	0.666
2.	Participation in solving operational issues with head office at conference meetings	3.87	0.658
3.	To listen to branch staff problems regarding operations by head office	3.79	0.698
4.	Strictness of chain of command to internal communications to the executives at the head office	3.91	0.723
5.	The speed at which problems presented by branches were resolved by the executives	3.95	0.826
6.	For head office to listen to staff requests	3.91	0.704
Total		3.87	0.525

The results in Table 4 show the opinions of staff to internal communications. In term of operations between head office and the branches through upward communication was at an agreed level (mean 3.87 and standard deviation 0.525). When considering each part, it was found that every item of opinion was at an agreed level and found that the speed at which problems presented by branches were resolved by the executives was at a very high opinion level and had the highest mean (mean 3.95 and standard deviation 0.826), and next was head office listening to staff requests (mean 3.91 and standard deviation 0.704).

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinion Level to Internal Communications in Terms of Operations Between Head Office and Branches Through Term of Horizontal Communication or Cross-channel Communication

No.	Description	Levels of Satisfaction	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1.	Formal contact between department of branches and head office	4.02	0.629
2.	Relationships between head office and various departments related to operations	4.13	0.571
3.	Collaboration to operate together with departments at head office	4.23	0.628
4.	Convenience of contacting cross-channel communication between branches and departments at head office	4.20	0.751
5.	The rapidity of information exchange between departments at the head office and branches	4.29	0.789
6.	The collaboration through teamwork	4.29	0.756
Total		4.19	0.539

Table 5 shows the opinions of staff to internal communications. In terms of operations between head office and the branches through horizontal communication or cross-channel communication was overall at an agreed level (mean 4.19 and standard deviation 0.539). When considering each part, it was found that collaboration through teamwork was in high agreement and had the highest mean (mean 4.29 and standard deviation 0.756), next was the rapidity of information exchange between department at head office and branches (mean 4.29 and standard deviation 0.789), followed by collaboration to operate together with department at head office (mean 4.23 and standard deviation 0.628).

Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinions to Work Efficiency Among Branch Staff

No.	Description	Levels of Satisfaction	
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1.	Operations follow organizational standards or plans	4.13	0.620
2.	Capable to work until successful and on time	4.30	0.663
3.	Capable to improve work by reducing working steps	4.20	0.676
4.	Capable of operating to solve problems	4.23	0.625
5.	Flexible to work and achieve success	4.31	0.657
6.	Potential for working development	4.31	0.714
7.	Readiness to coordinate and cooperate	4.35	0.706
8.	To skillfully understand how to use equipment or instruments	4.27	0.766
9.	Can analyze and decide how to solve problems in time	4.21	0.738
10.	Capable of working with others	4.40	0.635
11.	Capable of coordinating with other departments	4.37	0.640
12.	Setting working goals	4.35	0.733
13.	Understanding the importance of time and attempting to work efficiently	4.35	0.696
14.	Operating by following goals on time and on budget	4.46	0.620
15.	Social relations with colleagues	4.43	0.649
Total		4.31	0.529

Table 6 shows the results of opinions about working efficiency which was overall at a high agreed level (mean 4.31 and standard deviation 0.529). When considering each part, it was found that operating by following goals on time and on budget had the highest level of agreement and mean (mean 4.46 and standard deviation 0.620), followed by social relations with colleagues (mean 4.43 and standard deviation 0.649), and then capable of working with others (mean 4.40 and standard deviation 0.635).

Table 7: Correlation Coefficient Analysis Results Between Internal Communications Through Downward Vertical Communication and Working Efficiency

No.	Description	Working Efficiency	
		r	Levels of Relation
1.	Information clarity about policies and corporate goals	0.681*	Middle
2.	Clarity of operating presentation from head office to branches	0.647*	Middle
3.	Ability to convey information of staff from head office	0.328*	Low
4.	To receive sufficient information to be used in the operation	0.630*	Middle
5.	Amount of information from head office sent to the staff of branches	0.671*	Middle
6.	The rapidity of solving problems by head office to branches	0.286*	Low
7.	Attention to problems with the operation of the staff in branches and executive from head office	0.249*	Low
8.	Ability of executives to motivate staff to work according to the plan	0.317*	Low
Total		0.709*	Middle

** containing a statistical significance at 0.05.*

The results in Table 7 show the Correlation Coefficient Analysis between internal communications through downward vertical communication and working efficiency by finding Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Overall, it is found that the factor of internal communications through downward vertical communication was related to the same direction with working efficiency of staff that had a statistical significance of 0.05 by Correlation Coefficient (r), overall as 0.709 and the relation was at a middle level.

Table 8: Correlation Coefficient Analysis Result Between Internal Communications on Upward Communication and Working Efficiency

No.	Description	Working Efficiency	
		r	Levels of Relation
1.	Opportunity to express opinions about operations with executives at meetings	0.230*	Low
2.	Participation to solve operational problems with head office at conference meetings	0.417*	Low
3.	To listen to the problems faced by operational branch staff by head office	0.419*	Low
4.	Strictness of chain of command to internal communications by the executive of head office	0.290*	Low
5.	The rapidity of problem presentation of branches to the executive of head office	0.421*	Low
6.	To listen to requests from staff by head office	0.424*	Low
Total		0.500*	Low

* containing a statistical significance at 0.05.

The results in Table 8 show the results of Correlation Coefficient Analysis between the factor of internal communications on upward communication and working efficiency by finding Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Overall, it is found that the factor of internal communications on upward communication was related to the same direction of staff working efficiency which had a statistical significance of 0.05 by Correlation Coefficient (r), overall as 0.500 and the relation was at a low level.

Table 9: Correlation Coefficient Analysis Result Between Internal Communications on Horizontal Communication or Cross-channel Communication and Working Efficiency

No.	Description	Working Efficiency	
		r	Levels of Relation
1.	Formal contact between department of branches and head office	0.567*	Middle
2.	Relationship between various departments at head office related to operations	0.490*	Low
3.	Collaboration to operate together with departments at head office	0.695*	Middle
4.	The convenience of contacting through cross-channel communication between branches and departments at head office	0.690*	Middle
5.	The rapidity of information exchange between head office departments and branches	0.738*	Middle
6.	Collaboration through teamwork	0.774*	Middle
Total		0.854*	High

* containing a statistical significance at 0.05.

The results in Table 9 show the results from the Correlation Coefficient Analysis between the factor of internal communications on horizontal communication or cross-channel communication and working efficiency by finding Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Overall it was found that the factor of internal communications on horizontal communication or cross-channel communication was related in the same direction as working efficiency of staff, which had a statistical significance of 0.05 by Correlation Coefficient (r), overall as 0.854 and the relation was at a high level.

Conclusion

The results from the present study found that the 150 staff who responded to the questionnaire were mostly female (71.33%), aged 21-30 years old, had a bachelor degree, and had 1-5 years of work experience at Krung Thai Bank, earned an average monthly income of 20,000-30,000 baht, and worked as customer services officers. The results of this study on internal communications between the head office and branches in three southern border provinces of Thailand found that downward communication had the highest mean, while upward communication had the lowest mean. After close consideration of each form, internal communication within the organization was found to be adequate for downward communication which was at the highest level, while the rapidness of communication between branches and head office was at the highest level for upward communication. For horizontal communication or cross-channel communication, teamwork had the highest mean. When looking at the work efficiency of the branches from the three southern border provinces, the data shows staff agreement at a high level. The three points that received the highest mean were: Staff ability to accomplish work on time and on budget; social relationships between staff within the organization; and the ability to work with others. The standard of work set by the organization was found to have the lowest mean. For the relationship between staff opinions and internal communication by staff within the organization was analyzed, it was found that this relation was in line with the work efficiency of staff, with a statistical significance level of 0.05, and was at a medium level. Internal communication factors for downward communication had the same relationship with work efficiency by staff at the statistical significance level of 0.05, which was at a low level. Internal communication factors for upward communication had the same relationship with work efficiency by staff at the statistically significant level of 0.05, which was at a high level. Research on internal communications management can affect the work between the head office and branches of Krung Thai Bank in Thailand's three southern border provinces, and it can also help gradually improve and reduce organizational problems. Furthermore, management will subsequently be able to increase efficiency and effectiveness so that all can understand each other through communications (Davis and Newstrom, 1985; Strauss and Sayles, 1980).

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