

# Evaluating Communication Systems at BPSU: Policy Recommendation for Effective Collaboration and Efficiency

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## Abstract

Bataan Peninsula State University (BPSU) has a fully developed communication system that supports the achievement of institutional goals. However, there are some factors that hinder its full effectiveness, particularly in the way the university communicates and fosters relationships among employees, faculty and students. This study examined BPSU's communication processes and systems to identify obstacles and propose strategies for improvement. A mixed-method research design was employed, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative interviews of faculty and staff across various university units. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses underwent thematic analysis. Findings revealed that communication tools such as email, meetings and internal messaging platforms are generally effective and teamwork across departments is highly valued. Despite this, challenges remain, including insufficient leadership support, weak interdepartmental communication and the absence of formal conflict resolution structures. Conflict management strategies such as assertiveness, compromise and collaboration were employed, while avoidance proved least effective. Existing training and protocols for conflict management require enhancement. Effective people management was found to promote communication, teamwork, credibility and organizational alignment within BPSU. Based on these findings, the study recommends the adoption of an integrated communication approach, the introduction of a common communication platform, regular feedback mechanisms and the establishment of institutional policies to strengthen communication and employee engagement. These measures aim to create a collaborative environment that supports growth, organizational coherence and overall institutional effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Collaboration, Conflict Resolution, Higher Education, Institutional Efficiency, Leadership Support, Organizational Communication.

## Introduction

An effective communication strategy is vital to the success of the institutions and to sustaining that success over time. Specifically, academic institutions are challenging in nature and they consist of various academic and administrative departments that need to communicate with each other in a unified manner to accomplish common goals and objectives. Hence, a strong internal communication strategy helps in increasing operational effectiveness on both administrative and teaching operations and also enhancing transparency, community cohesion and shared governance in universities (1).

In addition, the high rate of information and communication technologies, as well as the globalization forces, have impacted the communication practices in higher education to a great extent. The use of electronic platforms like email, instant messaging, learning management systems and collaboration tools has mostly

replaced the interaction between two people, as was initially the case. On the one hand, these tools can be used to disseminate information more rapidly, but they simultaneously cause difficulties in the process of ensuring consistency and coordination between institutional units (2). Therefore, highly inadequately managed communication systems can weaken information flow, slow down decision-making and have detrimental effects on employee morale and responsiveness on the administrative side (3).

Empirical literature also shows that well-established organizational communication networks create trust among employees and enable them to solve problems and make decisions based on mutual knowledge. Transparent communication environments foster clarity, coordination and shared responsibility, hence enhancing teamwork and performance of an institution (4, 5). Organizational communication

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in higher education offers a structural basis for the idea of institutional values and promotes cooperation between faculty, administrative personnel and leadership. Strategically, institutions that have well-crafted communication systems are in a better position to realize their strategic objectives, enhance the interdepartmental networks and develop collaborative cultures (1, 4). Moreover, participatory communication strategies contribute to the diminishing of organizational hierarchies, encourage feedback and dialogue and settle the conflict through having the members involved in open deliberations about the issues and institutional decisions (5).

Regardless of these developments, the scholarly sources show that there is a disparity in the research on internal communication systems within the state universities, especially in developing nations such as the Philippines. The current research has not recorded many investigations on the effect of internal communications in the performance of small or private institutions, which is important since there is little research evidence on the impact of internal communications on organizational performance in regional public universities.

In Bataan Peninsula State University (BPSU), there exists an assortment of communication tools that include email, instant messaging systems, official memoranda and learning management systems that are utilized in the domain of both academic and administrative activities. Nevertheless, preliminaries and unofficial interviews have revealed the challenges, such as slow relay of information, overlaps among several communication channels and inconsistent relaying of vital updates. These problems pose important questions of the most effective communication channels, how the university can maximize these communication channels to achieve institutional performance and how the current systems can facilitate cooperation between the staff.

Moreover, the problem of communication between employees and the administration can reduce cooperation and conflict resolution in the academic and administrative setting. Therefore, institutional improvement can be achieved by knowing how communication practices affect collaboration and organizational performance. The paper investigates the internal communication

practices of BPSU through the analysis of the existing channels, the obstacles to successful information transmission and the influence of communication on team cooperation, decision-making and conflict resolution. Through the examination of the present situation in communication throughout BPSU, the research will help inform evidence-based policies to encourage collaboration, enhance efficiency and reinforce transparency within academic and administrative departments.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical concepts behind this study include Collaborative Communication Theory and Systems Theory that can be used as complementary theories in analyzing the effectiveness of communication, collaboration, conflict resolution and improvement of organizational performance in higher education institutions. Combining these points of view, it is possible to analyze both the relationship and structural features of communication systems within the Bataan Peninsula State University (BPSU).

Collaborative Communication Theory is centered on communication competence, dialogue, shared meaning and mutual engagement as a foundation of obtaining successful collaboration. The recent research highlights the notion that when collaborative communication exists, trusts, psychological safety and problem-solving in the organization can exist (6). Specifically, the same dimension includes communication competence of faculty, administrators and employees in higher education institutions, which results in coordination, innovativeness and conflict resolution (7).

Better still, the theory assists in comprehending the impacts of various types of communication, like digital communications, hybrid conferences and face-to-face communication, on relation dynamics and institutional culture. The results of the higher education environments are possible to show that the digital collaborative tools have an influence on the interactions, involvement and group decision-making (8). The Collaborative Communication Theory will be applicable in this respect to examine how the communication practices of the BPSU affect its teamwork, conflict management and the establishment of an institutional climate of collaboration. Systems Theory, in its turn, assumes a university as a

complex and flexible system which is comprised of interrelated subsystems in which communication is the connecting engine that helps to ensure coherence and the overall performance. The existing systems-based research points to the fact that the networks of communication within the organizations define the flow of information, the system alignment and the flexibility of the system. Communication patterns in the networks dictate how decisions flow, how units interact and the degree of effectiveness in which the institutional objectives are fulfilled (9). On this basis, it is observable that there is a possibility that the inefficiencies or failures in one or more subsystems will be propagated to the larger organization. Like that, to measure the communication entities of the institutions of higher learning, both formal and informal network processes that determine performance results must be taken into account.

Moreover, the issues of communication in a single unit can lead to an increase in the number of organization-wide inefficiencies (10). It has been found that the quality of the internal communication system in the institutions of higher learning has been associated with enhanced cross-department coordination, consistency in the execution of the policies and enhanced administrative responsiveness (11).

Within the context of the present study, the Systems Theory can provide the exploration of the formal communication patterns applicable in the industry of BPSU, including formal communication channels (e.g., memoranda, formal email systems and learning management) and informal networks. It enables the consideration of the effect of information flow and redundancy in communications and structural barriers on working with each other and efficiency.

The Collaborative Communication Theory and the Systems Theory combined provide one and the same approach to analysis. Though Collaborative Communication theory explains the interpersonal and group level processes that help in the cooperation and management of conflicts, the Systems theory explains coordination at the institutional level, as well as systemic coherence. The combination of all these approaches enables the study to recognize that effective communication in any institution of higher learning is not always founded on the level of

technology infrastructure or the rigid hierarchy, but on the relationship skills and unity within the entire system.

This two-fold theoretical framework fits better the state universities with their pyramidal structures of governance, constraints of resources and multiplicity of multiple stakeholder interests that require not only relational sensitivity but also cohesiveness in the system. With the help of this framework, the paper evaluates the BPSU according to the relational scale (collaborative culture, conflict resolution, shared understanding) and structural scale (information flow, media effectiveness, system reliability).

This theoretical framework, in the end, offers a background to uncover the strengths, gaps and hindrances in the communication system of BPSU. It also helps to come up with policy recommendations that can be used to make collaborative practices stronger, conflict-resolution mechanisms effective and increase the efficiency of the institution by having connected and inclusive communication structures.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The research design adopted in this study was an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where data in the form of quantitative data were collected and analyzed, followed by a qualitative inquiry to give a further explanation and context to the quantitative data findings. The combined quantitative and qualitative design helped the researcher measure how well the university communicates within the organization and provided a more in-depth explanation of these results through participants' personal experiences.

### **Study Locale and Participants**

The research was carried out at the Bataan Peninsula State University, Main Campus, among the permanent teaching and non-teaching staff who are actively involved in the process of internal communication. A stratified random sampling method was applied in the quantitative stage, with 90 employees selected from the total population of permanent employees on the Main Campus (366 in total, both teaching and non-teaching). Representation was done by stratification of colleges, administrative offices and support departments. The sample size of 90 was deemed adequate for descriptive and pattern analysis, as it

allowed the researcher to represent communication experiences across various subgroups and retain diversity in staff types. Purposive sampling in the qualitative stage involved the selection of five employees who had great involvement and experience in organizational communication. The respondents were considered to be actively involved in communication when their occupation required them to coordinate, exchange information, or work with multiple departments or units (e.g., administrative coordination, academic leadership, committee work, or cross-unit projects) as a routine. These respondents belonged to both academic and administrative units and were chosen because the units were always in need of communication and interaction. The qualitative data collection process also went on until it could not provide any more thematic data when conducting the interview, which meant that the collection had acquired enough information to explain and elaborate greatly on the quantitative results, particularly in regions that were related to communication barriers, teamwork and how conflicts were resolved. The decreased number of interviews was also applicable as the criteria were the depth of experience and certain views instead of the scope.

### **Data Collection**

In the quantitative dimension, a modified questionnaire was developed in a structured manner in line with the research objectives, as well as models of communication that exist. The instrument was comprised of Likert-type questions, which were designed to examine the frequency and the effectiveness of the communication channels, obstacles encountered, the perceived impact of the collaboration and decision making, to mention a few aspects of the effectiveness of the operations. The questionnaire was validated by the experts in organizational communication and higher education administration so as to achieve content validity. A pilot test was carried out on a small group of permanent employees who were not involved in the actual study to ensure that items were understandable and pertinent.

The quantitative reliability was measured by calculating Cronbach's alpha that was acceptable in reference to the internal consistency of the scales. Higher values were an indication that the

items in constructs had been effective in the measurement of the same underlying concepts. The entire statistical operations, descriptive statistics and reliability calculations were conducted using the IBM SPSS Statistics (version 28).

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, which would enable the participants to explain their experiences, their challenges and their perceptions of internal communication, teamwork and how conflicts are resolved using their own words. The interview questions were formulated in a way that they would examine the areas in which quantitative findings revealed significant trends or issues.

### **Data Analysis**

The descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, were used to analyze the quantitative data to describe practices in communication, perceived effectiveness, frequency of interaction and barriers. The analyses presented the general image of communication patterns in the organization, which created strong and problematic areas in BPSU.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data in a way that interprets it by the use of codes of the transcripts of the interviews to determine the patterns and themes of communication processes, collaboration and experience of conflict resolution. The thematic analysis assisted in the interpretation of the quantitative results and the reasons why some patterns could be present and clarified the staff's views concerning the impact of the communication systems on teamwork and the efficiency of the institution.

### **Ethical Considerations**

All research procedures were guided by ethical standards approved by the Peninsulares Research Ethics Committee (PREC). The informed consent forms were issued to the participants that stated the intention of the study, the voluntary nature of participation and steps that would be taken to ensure confidentiality. The participants were aware that they were free to withdraw at any time. Anonymization of data and elimination of identifiers were done in order to uphold privacy. All collected information was stored securely and was accessible only to the researcher for analysis and reporting purposes. Participants were assured that results would be reported in aggregate form

and that individual identities would not be disclosed.

## Results

As the table below explains the organization communication system of the university relative to the information flow, sharing of knowledge, communicated barriers, accuracy of communication, reliability, timeliness, media effectiveness and the frequency of interaction.

### Organizational Communication Systems

Table 1 contains the respondents' perceptions regarding the communication systems of BPSU. The overall analysis shows that the communication systems are functional, supportive and are rated as Agree with a total mean of 2.80 and standard deviation of 0.51, meaning professional and constructive, but there are still areas that could use improvement as far as being timely, consistent and reliable.

Amongst the indicators previously mentioned, the indicator for interaction frequency received the highest mean score of 3.21 and was rated as Agree, with a standard deviation of 0.38. This leads to the conclusion that the majority of employees feel that they have the opportunity for frequent interaction, both formally and informally, with their organizational communication representatives, which aids in strengthening the bonds between the two entities. Other means of communication, such as communication flow and the effectiveness of

communication media, received mean scores of 2.85 with standard deviations of 0.32 and 0.67. The survey has shown that the communication channels adopted are well-structured, but there is a possibility to advance technological infrastructures that sustain the channels of communication, thereby enabling users of communication channels/contacts to be more consistent regarding the use of different media outlets.

Lastly, the sharing of knowledge was greatly averaged with a mean of 2.73 and a standard deviation of 0.56. This is an indication that there is knowledge sharing, but it can be further refined in accessing and organizing information and resources, which would then contribute to better sharing of information and resources. To conclude, the data show that communication is viewed positively in BPSU, especially regarding the frequency of interaction and the efficiency of the media. Nonetheless, it is still facing difficulty in ensuring a smooth and regular flow of communications. These results demonstrate that the university is capable of using various communication tools, which are formal and informal, backed by different media tools. However, the timeliness, responsiveness and coordination across departments could use additional enhancement to enhance the overall situation in the communication system within the institution.

**Table 1:** Organizational Communication Systems

Statements	M	SD	DE	Remarks
Communication Flow	2.85	0.32	Agree	Overall communication is effective but can be improved in timeliness, consistency and flow.
Knowledge Sharing	2.73	0.56	Agree	Knowledge sharing in the organization is functional and generally effective, yet some inconsistencies in accessibility, structure and flow suggest areas for improvement.
Communication Barriers	2.67	0.70	Agree	Communication barriers are generally minimal, but some inefficiencies and obstacles persist that require organizational attention.
Communication Accuracy	2.76	0.49	Agree	Communication across different forms and levels is generally accurate, but improvements are needed in cross-departmental and verbal clarity.
Reliability	2.76	0.66	Agree	Overall reliability is high, but intermittent inconsistencies and timing issues suggest room for procedural and monitoring improvements.
Timeliness	2.60	0.67	Agree	Communication timeliness is moderate, with recurring delays that highlight the need for greater consistency and responsiveness in information flow.
Media Effectiveness	2.85	0.67	Agree	Overall media effectiveness is positive, yet infrastructure gaps (e.g., university internet) and varying media practices reduce the full potential.

Statements	M	SD	DE	Remarks
Interaction Frequency	3.21	0.38	Agree	Overall, interaction frequency is positively perceived, with a balance of formal and informal exchanges.
Grand Mean	2.80	0.51	Agree	Organizational communication is functional and supportive overall, though improvements in timeliness, consistency and reliability are needed.

M=Mean SD-Standard Deviation DE=Descriptive Equivalent

Table 2 shows how communication systems influence collaboration among employees of the university.

### Collaboration Effectiveness

Table 2 shows that collaboration within the university is perceived as highly effective, with a grand mean score of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 0.39, interpreted as Strongly Agree. Mean scores for collaboration were in the mid-range, from 3.14 to 3.64, showing that most aspects of collaboration are working well. The most highly rated category was how the department/office supports goals and initiatives for the university as a whole; the mean score for this item was 3.64. The second-highest rated item was how the department/office values diversity in the decision process; the mean score for this item was 3.47. The third highest rated item was how the department/office supports employees' professional development; the mean score for this item was 3.43. The fourth highest rated

item was how clear the department's roles and responsibilities are and how well employees' strengths are utilized; the mean score for this item was 3.41. There were also very strong ratings given to both effective conflict resolution methods and evaluation of the collaboration processes, indicating a well-organized and flexible internal collaboration infrastructure.

However, interdepartmental collaboration received relatively low mean scores of 3.17, indicating that while teams within each individual unit work together very effectively, inter-unit coordination and ongoing initiating capacitance building remains an area that will need further enhancement.

Therefore, the data support an overall high level of effectiveness of all aspects of collaboration across the university, but interdepartmental collaboration and regular professional development will provide an even stronger, cohesive environment in the future.

**Table 2:** Collaboration Effectiveness

Statements	M	SD	DE	Remarks
We understand how our individual roles contribute to achieving our university's vision, mission and strategic goals.	3.50	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Our office/department is committed to supporting university-wide initiatives and goals.	3.64	0.48	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Role assignments are made to best utilize each member's strengths and expertise.	3.41	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Our team follows efficient processes for handling administrative tasks and/or academic planning.	3.38	0.65	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
We regularly evaluate and improve our processes to meet university standards.	3.38	0.49	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Decision-making processes in our office/department are clear and involve all relevant faculty/staff members.	3.47	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
The team communicates and shares progress effectively during planning/management meetings.	3.32	0.63	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
We promote an inclusive environment where everyone's contributions are valued.	3.40	0.49	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Our office/department collaborates effectively with other offices/departments and units within the university.	3.17	0.38	Agree	Effective
Our office/department is good at identifying potential issues before they become major problems.	3.23	0.43	Agree	Effective
Team members are motivated to exceed expectations in both teaching and/or administrative roles.	3.23	0.60	Agree	Effective
Conflicts among team members are resolved effectively without impacting performance.	3.41	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
Professional development is encouraged and supported within our office/department.	3.43	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Effective
We share knowledge and expertise within the team to improve performance.	3.17	0.38	Agree	Effective
Training opportunities are available for staff and faculty to enhance their skills.	3.14	0.55	Agree	Effective
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>

Note: M=Mean SD-Standard Deviation, DE=Descriptive Equivalent.

The combination of qualitative data presented with the quantitative results brings in more insight into collaboration in BPSU. According to the qualitative findings, the university has used email, memos and chat groups to communicate mostly. Although the tools can be used to disseminate information quickly, interactivity was also lacking, as observed by the participants. As an example, P1 responded that it was mostly by email and once in a while by meeting and P4 added that it was most often by memo and by email but not by real-time feedback. This is in line with the reduced ratings in sharing knowledge and interdepartmental collaboration and indicates that more interactive and responsive communication systems are required. Another fact involved in the report of employees is that clear roles and responsibilities increase collaboration which is also in line with the high ratings of understanding individual contribution and decision-making processes. According to P2 and P3, who said, respectively, that there were no misunderstandings as we had clear roles and there was no overlap, responsibilities and alignment of the roles is one of the factors that lead to effective collaboration at the departmental level. Obstacles to collaboration were also brought to light, though, among them hierarchical bottlenecks, lack of clarity in expectations and information overload. P4 observed conflict of schedules and decentralized decisions slow down actions and P1 mentioned that hierarchy slows feedback and creates confusion. Such obstacles are applicable to the reduced scores of cross-unit cooperation, where it is necessary to have formal communication systems between departments. Moreover, the participants stated that the leadership support of collaboration could be reactive and not proactive. P3 replied by saying that does not necessarily provide the follow-through and P4 followed by saying that the only assistance they provide is during the time of crisis, implying that irregular leadership support can have a negative impact on the interdepartmental cooperation and motivation in the team. In order to deal with these issues, the respondents proposed a common communication platform, common calendars and a coordinator to oversee communication between departments. P5 suggested, "that a common platform should be used since they are not working on the same schedule and P4 mentioned that a shared calendar

is proposed to allow them to coordinate with the schedules. Altogether, the synthesized results indicate that the nationwide collaboration in individual offices or departments is high, the better coordination between departments, interactive communication devices, the stable support of leadership and systematic capacity-building programs should enhance collaboration in BPSU further.

## **Discussion**

### **Organizational Communication Systems**

The findings reveal that communication in the organization at the Bataan Peninsula State University (BPSU) is primarily functional and supportive and the degree of interaction is high [3.21] and communication channels are moderately effective. The results are in line with the previous research that indicates that the formal and open internal communication systems increase employee involvement, institutional alignment and organizational effectiveness in institutions of higher education (12-15). Communication practices such as clarity, frequency and feedback mechanisms founded on enhanced collaboration and organizational performance have been in a steady association (10, 14, 16).

Frequency of interaction was one of the decisive indicators because it shows that there was a high rate of formal and informal interaction among the employees. Teamwork and coordination between units of an organization heavily depend on role clarity and interpersonal trust, which are boosted through interactions on a regular basis (12, 17). The unremitting communication among the members of the faculty in institutions of higher learning, as well as the administrative staff and the The flow of the communication and the effectiveness of the media were rated moderately [2.76] and it is essential to mention that the digital communication platforms and multi-channel communication strategies serve the purpose of making the cross-department collaboration possible (13, 18). According to past studies, communication channels of various types increase the availability and responsiveness of information in the universities, but the successfulness depends on the integration of the same into the institutional practices and work process (13, 18).

The moderation in the mean score [2.73] was a result of informal communication networks that ensured knowledge sharing at BPSU. The outcome of the research can also be supported by the literature that informal knowledge exchange is ubiquitous in organizations and, as a rule, is insufficient to promote cooperation at an institutional level unless it is supported by formal communication systems and managerial involvement (14-16). This is why knowledge management systems in the institutions and communication strategies based on leadership are required in order to develop organizational learning and coordination among the departments. No devastating barriers were found to communication [2.60-2.76], including delays in communication, hierarchical filtering and differences in interpretation by the employees (15). One can do this by mitigating these barriers by engaging in practices that are respectful and relational communication practice which would result in trust, creativity and the ability to work in organizations (16, 17). Unless addressed through the application of relatively low communication barriers that may be imposed and a suffocating information diffusion process, the institutional responsiveness may be dragged.

The average scores on timeliness in communication [2.60] and reliability [2.76] demonstrate that the communication process is not necessarily consistent and reliable, but in certain situations, it can be late and not consistent (19, 20). Such delays may affect negatively the effectiveness of decision-making and the coordination of the operations, particularly in the decentralized institutional setting where cross-unit alignment is required.

The highest effect was the collaboration in the department [3.08] as seen in the clarity of the roles, the incorporation of the decision-making activities and the role in facilitating the growth of the profession, as this has resulted in strong teamwork (18, 20). Interdepartmental cooperation is good and assists in operational performance and leads towards commitment to organizational objectives. However, there was a slight decrease in the score of the interdepartmental cooperation, knowledge exchange and training opportunities [2.54-2.73] that reflect such developmental areas in institutions (21, 22).

The results further revealed that the intra-departmental communication [3.08] was better than interdepartmental communication [2.54], which is consistent with the organizational communication studies that the structural barriers that exist among the departments are likely to limit cross-functional coordination (13). Digital medium of communication and institutional communication system implemented are likely to replicate the shrinkage of information silos and bring about interdisciplinary collaboration among the various units of the university (13, 18).

The average rating was also in the domain of knowledge-sharing practices [2.73], in which the peer-to-peer information exchange [2.98] was prevalent compared to cross-departmental knowledge transfer, where the information transfer was formal. In the case of inadequate formal knowledge management structures, it follows that there is the probability of informal knowledge exchange networks prevailing on the knowledge exchange process (14, 15).

It was found that communication was accurate when transferred with the help of supervisors, but not accurate when cross-departmental communication took place, which reflected some inconsistencies in the information interpretation process by the organizational units (18). Assisted in application, technology in digital communication will expand the organizational connectedness and allow the free flow of information among the workers (18).

The least timeliness was in the average results [2.60], which implied that the slow speed of information transmission can reduce the efficiency of operations and delay the decision-making process (19). Similarly, the communication consistency [2.76] demonstrated the overall reliability and random inconsistencies with the governance of digital communications (20).

General communication frequency [3.21] shows that the communication amongst the employees is high both at a formal and informal level and this is likely to boost trust, understanding and institutional cohesion (12).

Overall, these findings suggest that the utility of the communication media is not the sole antecedent that can promote good communication in institutions of higher education, but also concerns the transparency in the leadership, digital communication system, relational communication

patterns, as well as the quality of the information sharing across departments (10-21).

### **Effectiveness of Collaboration Culture within the University**

The mean score on overall collaboration [3.35] shows that there is a positive culture of collaboration in the university. Teamwork, shared responsibility and alignment to institutional goals characterize such environments (14). Studies indicate that the outcomes of organizations that advance trust, meaningful working and cooperative communicational practices have better performance results in the long term (13). When employees sense that the communication environments are open and participatory, then they tend to be more active in collaborative initiatives and institutional activities. Nevertheless, there are slightly lower interdepartmental collaboration and institutional learning capacity scores [3.14-3.17], which indicate the possibility of improvement of the same (22). The collaboration networks across the university could be improved with the help of formal knowledge-sharing systems and interdisciplinary professional development programs.

### **Challenges Encountered in Organizational Communication**

Although the overall communication in the organization was functional, a number of challenges were outlined. The use of formal communication channels was also a major challenge as it at times curtailed the possibilities of interactive communication and feedback between employees (23). It was also observed that there were inconsistent practices in leadership communication, where administrative communication was considered to be reactive and not proactive (24).

Lack of formal feedback systems limited participatory decision-making and minimized space to shared understanding by the members of an organization (25, 26). Besides this, the respondents also cited lack of professional development programs that were oriented towards communication competence that could potentially impair the possibility of the employees to effectively cope with complex organizational communication settings (27).

### **Internal Conflict Resolution Across Departments**

The conflict resolution in BPSU was rather informal and in most cases, the people involved were handling the conflict either by personal communication or avoidance rather than an institutional process (26). In other cases, departmental heads might arrive with authoritative powers and this may deter free communication and restrict flow of information among the teams (26).

The institutional mediation systems deficit indicates the structural gaps in conflict management at the university. Leadership with authenticity, fairness and inclusive styles of decision-making has been found to result in better conflict resolution and reduced power inequality in an organization (28).

In addition, online collaborative tools may facilitate the open exchange of information and productive interaction, especially within hybrid and remote working conditions (29, 30). The adoption of organized systems of resolving conflicts and empowering leadership communication practices can thus improve institutional trust, cooperation and performance. In general, these results indicate that it is necessary to enhance the governance of communication, the consistency of leadership communication and systematic conflict resolution to improve collaboration and institutional effectiveness in higher education institutions (12-30).

### **Conclusion**

Structured interdepartmental meetings and formal communication procedures can help for enhanced communication throughout the university. Centralized information systems (e.g., digital library, standard operating procedures) enable equitable access to resources and provide opportunities for collaboration between departments to promote equality. Also, newly established channels of expedited communication and timely delivery of messages will improve exchanges of information through scheduled updates and appropriate message routing. Enhanced verification processes and improved monitoring systems will enhance the timely, accurate transfer of data. Enhanced training and upgrades to technology infrastructure will also

give better use of email, instant messaging and virtual meeting options.

Conflicts within the organization usually arise informally and are uniquely defined by each individual's perspective; therefore, the way that staff members react to conflict differs widely. In most cases, individuals look to an authority figure for assistance rather than going to Human Resources or a designated neutral person. The majority of conflict resolution methods used in the organization are informal and based on the rank/position of the individuals involved. Attempts to avoid conflict have proven to be unsuccessful more often than not. HR does not provide consistent, neutral mediation in these situations. Psychological safety is nonexistent and therefore, employees do not feel comfortable discussing conflicts openly. Hierarchical barriers prevent effective collaboration due to a lack of clarity of work roles and roles being oversaturated with information. BPSU has multiple forms of communication channels: emails, memos and group chats, yet they are not interactive in nature and seldom prompt responses to a request for information.

### Abbreviation

BPSU- Bataan Peninsula State University.

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### Author Contributions

Sherrilyn B Quintos solely prepared the manuscript from the identification of the problem to the final manuscript.

### Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest. The study was conducted independently, without any financial or personal interests influencing the research process or interpretation of results.

### Data Availability

The data is not available publicly because of the privacy and ethical constraints with the employees of the university. Access can be given on the reasonable request of the author and with the permission of the institution.

### Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

The researcher did not make use of any AI tools.

### Ethics Approval

This study followed the ethical protocol and was subjected to the evaluation of the Peninsulares Research Ethics Committee (PREC) of the institution.

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