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**THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION AMONG SPORTS  
TEAMS IN NIGERIA PREMIER LEAGUE.**

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## ABSTRACT

*Communication in sports is regarded as a crucial instrument to pass instructions, strategize, and enhance team cohesion. To effectively use communication as a tool in information dissemination, stakeholders must understand what is being communicated and act accordingly. In football which is a sport that requires lots of specialized communication while also involving multilingualistic and multicultural groups which is capable of hindering the proper flow of communication, the impact of these barriers to team performance is striking. This study examines the role of communication in Nigerian professional football teams given these barriers and the effect on team performance.*

**Keywords:** Sports, communication, team performance, language.

## INTRODUCTION

- **Background of the Problem:**

Communication is an integral aspect of organizational success. Particularly for sports teams, communication has been considered a defining factor for individual and team success (Curitianu & Balint, 2015). According to Okenimpkpe (2010), communication is a means of connecting people and places, therefore, it is a key function of management in an organization as it creates an avenue for all key levels of an organization to connect and operate. In essence, the importance of communication is hinged on the comprehension of the message.

Daniel (2013) opined that communication is a two-way process wherein participants must come to a mutual understanding of the content of the information being passed. This implies that communication is not merely the encoding and decoding of information but a true understanding of the meaning of the content because the participants share a context that gives true meaning to the information. For example, in a sports team, the communication between a coach and the teammates regarding a football game is properly received due to the mutual context of football in which the group shares. This also necessitates the expression of a desired response. Without understanding, the performance or response to the message decoded may be skewed, thereby disrupting a full-cycle communication. (Daniel, 2016).

This further alludes to the critical nature of communication as a key factor in sports teams which forms the basis of this paper. For instance, Communication is generally regarded as an interaction within a social context (Fatimayin, 2018), and sports teams are social groups that can be considered a sample area to analyze social issues bothering communication. (Curitianu & Balint, 2015). Therefore, aspects of communication such as language and means of communication are examined in this paper as they relate to sports teams in Nigeria. The import of this is to determine the extent of the role of communication in the face of these factors such as language, and means of communication in a multilingual and diverse society such as Nigeria and its impact on sports teams in such a society. This is because, factors such as language and means of expression are at the foundation of communication (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023).

Nonetheless, language in this context may also be regarded not as merely the linguistics of communication but also the concept of sports language and how it plays out in team communication. For example, using gestures during a football game by a referee or a coach who is out of the players' earshot can constitute sports language as the meaning is found within the context in which it is used. (Sodiq, 2020). This exemplifies the importance and impact of communication regarding the type and mode of communication. However, it also shows the interrelation between the communication of various key stakeholders in sports such as the team manager, coaches, players, sports broadcasters, and spectators, and the impact of their communication in any given context on the team. (Hafiar, Prastowo, et al., 2023).

The implication of this assertion is that modes of communication and changes in style of communication by external stakeholders such as news media and spectators can impact a sports team and its performance as much as communication from internal stakeholders can. For example, communications of sports broadcasters and journalists as external stakeholders have been regarded as a tool for setting the expectations and agenda of a match before play under the agenda-setting theory, thus creating a build-up that gives context to sports teams of what fans hope to see. (Oyedokun, 2021).

Against the backdrop of these crucial aspects of communication in sports, one can deduce that communication plays a significant role in sports teams as a tool for management, camaraderie, and performance of team members individually and collectively, therefore, giving rise to this paper which intends to proffer a wholistic view on the role of communication amongst sport teams in Nigeria, particularly teams within the Nigerian Premier Football League (NPFL).

- **Statement of the Problem:**

Studies surrounding communication in sports for Nigerian teams typically focus on the impact of sports journalism, ICT advancements, and similar concerns. Barriers to communication for teams in a multilingual and culturally diverse society in Nigeria have not been fully examined. In addition, the approach to communication in sports has largely followed a narrow viewpoint. This paper seeks to provide a wider view in response to this gap in research knowledge regarding communication in Nigerian sports.

- **Purpose of the Study:**

The overall aim of this paper is to provide an understanding of the role of communication in Nigerian professional football teams, the barriers to communication as a tool for team performance, and its impact.

- **Objectives of the study:**

To achieve the goal of this study, the following objectives are established to provide a clear focus for the study, namely:

1. To understand how communication is used as a vital tool in Nigerian football.
2. To provide insights on the impact of communication on the performance of Nigerian football teams.
3. To examine the barriers in communication faced by football teams in Nigeria.

- **Research Questions:**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the key ways communication is expressed in Nigerian football?
2. Does communication function as a tool that influences the performance of Nigerian football teams?
3. What are the barriers that affect the role of communication in Nigerian football teams?

- **Hypotheses:**

**Ho1:** Nigerian football teams rely on more than just linguistic expressions to understand sports communication.

**Ho2:** There is a significant relationship between communication and team performance for Nigerian football teams.

**Ho3:** Barriers in communication can affect the performance of professional Nigerian football teams.

- **Scope of the Study:**

This study focuses on the role of communication in professional Nigerian football teams, in so far as it pertains to the forms of communication used, the impact of communication on team performance, and the communication barriers. The study is limited to the Nigerian football scene for its analysis. This is because the multilingual, cultural, and religious diversity of Nigerian football teams and stakeholders constitute a viable basis analysis, amongst other considerations.

- **Significance of the Study:**

Communication is important for the success of any organization. This study is particularly necessary because it seeks to examine the correlation between communication and team success for Nigerian football teams which is a topic largely relegated by researchers. Through this research, key stakeholders in Nigerian football can draw insights to direct their decision-making as it relates to improving communication for the benefit of teams. In addition, this study can be used as a vital resource material for future studies by researchers on the subject matter as it bridges the current knowledge gaps on the topic.



Some of the body of work done on the topic of communication as it relates to sports focuses on the various forms of communication such as verbal and non-verbal communication and the tools with which these forms of communication are expressed such as language. According to Ezeh & Ezeh (2023), language is at the core of communication in sports. They explored the concept of language and its effect on sportsmanship as it relates to team performance, administration, and sports activity. The examination of language as a tool for communication in sports, particularly football is conducted under the theme of various forms of sports language and the role they play.

For example, Ezeh & Ezeh (2023) identify the difference between the language of sportsmen and the language of supporters. The language of sportsmen involves the communication between referees, coaches, and players within the context of a match. This may involve the wave of hands or other symbolic communications to direct parties. On the other hand, the language of supporters specifically functions as a morale booster for teams and it often involves chants to charge players.

They present the position that sports language such as football language is not merely verbal and non-verbal linguistic expressions, but that the three contexts of language which include text-linguistics view, pragmatic view, and cognitive view of language converge to form the totality of sports communication in various ways such as media communication, sportsmen and supporters communication, and structure or morphological processes in sports activities respectively. (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023, Sodiq, 2020).

Also, language is considered important in building team spirit, team morale, and team culture, as well as setting the rules of engagement, expressing commentary, and administering functions within the team, therefore, a misunderstanding or language barrier resulting in a multilingual team can hinder the progress of sports activities and performance of the team. (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023). However, whilst providing strong positions, the study does not provide sufficient insight into the other communication dynamics and barriers faced by Nigerian teams, rather it adopts a generalistic approach to the discourse.

Other positions on the issue of sports communication tend to focus on the relationship between media broadcasting communications and sports in driving the direction of performance for teams. (Oyedokun & Oyedokun, 2021, Yar'adua, et.al., 2023). As key stakeholders, communications from sports broadcasters have been instrumental in educating supporters over the years, as well as directing the course of the career of many team members in football. For example, sports observers attribute the discovery and growth of Sunday Oliseh's national football career to the famous article "Westerhoff, here is your Destroyer" on Complete Sport (1994), written by sports journalist Mumuni Alao. Alao had found Oliseh playing in Belgium and wrote an article highlighting his interview which directed the then-Nigerian Coach Clemence Westerhoff to the new talent as a viable option to fill the position of midfielder. (Yar'adua, et.al., 2023).

The import of media communication in sports also functions to direct internal team management. With the growth of sports entertainment as more than just a sporting activity but also an inclusion of sponsorships and brand building for teams and individual players, teams and players rely on the communication available on the media to drive their performance. Football scandals in foreign premier leagues involving famous players have resulted in changes in teams and structures to manage the situation in some instances. However, the idea of sports communication through broadcasting mediums and its impact on teams limits the scope of communication to external stakeholder involvement rather than an inclusive approach that covers internal and external stakeholder communications. (Yar'adua, et.al., 2023, Oyedokun & Oyedokun, 2021, Iheanacho, et.al., 2013, Oyedokun, 2021).

In addition, sports communication in teams is viewed from the perspective of its impact on team cohesion as a major determinant of team performance, whereby poor team cohesion equates to poor team performance. Team cohesion is regarded as the ability of teammates to stay connected and work together towards the common goal of the team which is team success. It molds each team member to form a collective team culture and purpose. However, team cohesion is subject to team factors and personal factors that determine how individuals assess the team and understand what is expected of them.

These factors are hinged on the context of communication and orientation. Such that for there to be team cohesion, each team member must clearly understand and accept their role in achieving team success. Barriers such as diversity in personal cultural, lingual, and even religious orientations can influence the understanding of what is being communicated and affect performance. (Tikon, et.al., 2019).

Similar to the other works reviewed, this study by Tikon, et.al., (2019), emphasizes a particular aspect of the discourse - team cohesion and team performance, while giving very little insight into the scope of communication that plays a part in achieving team cohesion which impacts team performance. Therefore, the gaps in these studies suggest the need for a holistic study that addresses the topic in toto.

## METHODOLOGY

- **Design:**

This study uses a mixed-methods research design to collate and examine the data. This method includes the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches concurrently in a convergent design method, by administering surveys and quick interviews on the sample size used. This design approach is suitable for providing integrated insights (Hassan, 2024) which this study seeks to achieve in its analysis.

- **Area of Study:**

The study focuses on the role of communication among sports teams in Nigeria's premier football league. This covers professional football teams in Nigeria as the key interest group of this research to understand how communication influences performance and challenges in communication that affect team dynamics and performance.

- **Population:**

The target population includes coaches, players, management staff of Nigerian premier league football teams, and seasoned sports observers such as sports broadcasters in Nigeria. These participants were chosen due to their significant involvement in team communication and influence on decision-making processes.

- **Sample and Sampling Technique:**

A sample size of 50 participants was used. The study surveyed 45 participants using questionnaires and conducted a semi-structured interview with 5 participants. A stratified random sampling technique was used for the survey to ensure a proper representation of the different perspectives within the team such as the coaches, players, and managers. For the interview sample, a purposive sampling technique was used to draw insights from individuals with professional observatory knowledge of sports communication.

- **Instrument:**

The study uses two primary instruments: a structured questionnaire to collect quantitative data and some qualitative data on communication practices and their impact on teams. Also, an interview schedule is used through a semi-structured interview guide developed to explore qualitative insights on communication for teams. The study instruments are contained in appendix A and B.

- **Method of Data Collection:**

The study collected data using questionnaires and interview schedules. The questionnaires were administered to participants electronically. The interviews were conducted via voice calls, with each interview lasting between 10 to 15 minutes.

- **Method of Data Analysis**

The quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics analysis which involves frequencies to identify trends in communication practices.

The qualitative data from the interviews and parts of the questionnaire were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret recurring themes about the subject matter.

## RESULTS and FINDINGS:

**Research Question 1:** What are the key ways communication is expressed in Nigerian football?

**Ho1:** Nigerian football teams rely on more than just linguistic expressions to understand sports communication.

**Table 1:** Communication Channels and Effectiveness

This table presents data on the communication channels most commonly used within Nigerian football teams (NPFL), their frequency of use, and the perceived effectiveness of these channels.

Communication Channel	Frequency of Use (%)	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)	Average Rating (1-5)
Face-to-Face Meetings	89%	4.5	4.5
Team WhatsApp/Other Messaging Platforms	67%	4.0	4.0
Phone Calls	56%	4.2	4.2
Video Calls	22%	3.5	3.5
Visual Cues (Gestures/Body Language)	100%	4.8	4.8
Other (Football Symbols/Hand Signals)	44%	4.3	4.3

Effectiveness Rating (1-5): Players, coaches, and management rate the effectiveness of each communication channel, with 1 being ineffective and 5 being very effective.

The average rating shows the overall perceived effectiveness of each channel.

**Research Question 2:** Does communication function as a tool that influences the performance of Nigerian football teams?

**Ho2:** There is a significant relationship between communication and team performance for Nigerian football teams.

**Table 2:** Impact of Communication on Team Performance

This table focuses on how communication affects different elements of team performance, such as match preparation, teamwork during games, and team cohesion (including social interactions outside of games).



Performance Element	Influence Rating (1-5)	% Rating 4-5	Overall Impact on Team Performance (%)
Match Preparation	4.6	78%	85%
Teamwork During Games	4.8	85%	90%
Team Cohesion (Outside of Games)	4.3	70%	75%

Influence Rating (1-5): Respondents rated the impact of communication on performance in each area.

The % Rating 4-5 column shows the percentage of respondents who rated the impact as 4 or 5, indicating significant or very significant influence.

Overall Impact on Team Performance (%) reflects the consensus that communication plays a positive and significant role in team performance.

**Research Question 3:** What are the barriers that affect the role of communication in Nigerian football teams?

**Ho3:** Barriers in communication can affect the performance of professional Nigerian football teams.

**Table 3:** Communication Barriers

This table highlights the barriers that respondents believe hinder effective communication within NPFL teams, including language and cultural differences, misunderstandings, technological challenges, and lack of time or structure.

Communication Barrier	Frequency (%)	Impact on Team Performance (%)	Most Commonly Experienced by
Language Barriers	78%	70%	Players (48%), Coaches (22%)
Misunderstanding of Instructions	67%	60%	Players (42%), Coaches (25%)
Lack of Trust Between Players/Coaches	44%	50%	Coaches (40%), Management (10%)
Technological Barriers (e.g., poor internet)	40%	45%	Management (22%), Coaches (18%)
Lack of Time for Effective Communication	62%	55%	Coaches (35%), Players (27%)
Cultural Differences	56%	50%	Players (37%), Coaches (19%)
Lack of Clear Communication Structure	49%	40%	Coaches (28%), Management (21%)

Frequency (%): The percentage of respondents who reported experiencing each barrier.

Impact on Team Performance (%): The percentage of respondents who indicated that the barrier has a moderate or significant impact on the team's performance.

Most Commonly Experienced by: This column reflects the primary group affected by each barrier (e.g., players, coaches, or management).

- **Findings:**

**Research Question 1:** What are the key ways communication is expressed in Nigerian football?

**Ho1:** Nigerian football teams rely on more than just linguistic expressions to understand sports communication.

The most frequently used communication methods are face-to-face meetings (89%) and visual cues (100%), with visual cues being rated the most effective (4.8/5). This aligns with the idea that non-verbal communication plays a key role in effective teamwork and performance, supporting Hypothesis 1: "Nigerian football teams rely on more than just linguistic expressions to understand sports communication."

**Research Question 2:** Does communication function as a tool that influences the performance of Nigerian football teams?

**Ho2:** There is a significant relationship between communication and team performance for Nigerian football teams

Communication was found to have a strong influence on match preparation (4.6/5), teamwork during games (4.8/5), and team cohesion (4.3/5), indicating that effective communication directly enhances performance. This supports Hypothesis 2: "There is a significant relationship between communication and team performance for Nigerian football teams."

**Research Question 3:** What are the barriers that affect the role of communication in Nigerian football teams?

**Ho3:** Barriers in communication can affect the performance of professional Nigerian football teams.

The most common barriers were language differences (78%), misunderstandings of instructions (67%), and lack of time for communication (62%), all of which significantly impacted performance. This supports Hypothesis 3: "Barriers in communication can affect the performance of professional Nigerian football teams."

## DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION, and RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Discussions:**

**Research Question 1:** What are the key ways communication is expressed in Nigerian football?

**Ho1:** Nigerian football teams rely on more than just linguistic expressions to understand sports communication.

While linguistic expressions such as written or spoken words are considered key means of communication, in sports, language can go beyond words to include the suggestive acts attached to specific sports. In football, the whistle, red and yellow card, or the lines man's flag are acceptable unique means of communicating during the game. This is partly in line with the position that sports language can be categorized in the pragmatic view even as it also includes text linguistics. (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023). According to the findings, the largest percentile of participants considered the use of visual cues and other football symbols as a frequent and very effective means of communication. Considering the level of reliance on such pragmatic communication methods as gestures, it is not out of place to expect that it holds much significance and effect for the team. For example, violation of a symbol during a game may result in further infractions and undesirable consequences for the team, which can affect their overall performance. (Sodiq, 2020).



**Research Question 2:** Does communication function as a tool that influences the performance of Nigerian football teams?

**Ho2:** There is a significant relationship between communication and team performance for Nigerian football teams

Table 2 used in examining the impact of communication on team performance shows that communication significantly affects team performance. In some artistic expressions, football itself has been regarded as a means of communicating, therefore communication is the whole measure of performance (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023). However, the core of its impact on team performance is a matter of understanding; whether or not the communication is understood enough to elicit the desired response that achieves the team's common goal of success.

As Daniel (2016) puts it, for there to be full-cycle communication, what is communicated must be understood and a response must be given by the recipient. In this instance, where a coach or teammate is communicating to the player taking a corner kick to direct it towards a certain direction which gives the team an advantage to score, if the player does not understand this communication, the opportunity can be lost due to the wrong play thereby affecting the success and performance of the team. Therefore, the impact of communication for teams is hinged on understanding and the ability to coordinate team cohesion as a result. (Tikon, et.al., 2019).

**Research Question 3:** What are the barriers that affect the role of communication in Nigerian football teams?

**Ho3:** Barriers in communication can affect the performance of professional Nigerian football teams.

Whilst team cohesion leads to team success as an outcome of effective communication, dissonance resulting from barriers to communication amounts to the undesirable effects of communication on team performance. However, the idea of dissonance in communication about poor team cohesion is mainly regarded as a matter of individual orientation. Here, personal factors such as the cultural background of the team members which affect their perspective on communications may result in misunderstandings that impact team cohesion (Tikon, et.al., 2019). This is because language in communication is construed as a creation of culture or as a cultural expression. (Ezeh & Ezeh, 2023). This is why, a player from a different ethnicity may interpret a hand gesture or tonality of words differently from others and will respond according to their understanding.

Based on the findings represented in Table 3, these communication barriers do impact performance, and the results regarding the factors that constitute communication barriers are expected where team members are a diverse group.

- **Conclusion:**

Communication in Nigerian football premier league teams is a key component of team success, however, there are barriers to the various forms of communication relied on by teams which is capable of impacting performance. It behooves key stakeholders to implement strategies to mitigate these barriers.

- **Recommendations:**

1. Football stakeholders should invest in communication improvement training programs to address communication barriers that affect understanding. For example, cultural sensitivity programs can be introduced to improve understanding for better team cohesion.
2. Further research on the subject matter may focus on a comparative analysis of communication practices and their effectiveness across African countries, including Nigerian football teams, and the long-term impact of these practices.

### **Limitations for the Study:**

Some of the challenges faced in the course of completing this study include the insufficiency of existing resource materials covering the topic, as well as the difficulty in accessing participants and then administering research instruments to team members with minimal understanding of the text language. However, these limitations were surmounted and it did not affect the accuracy or integrity of the study.

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### Appendix A: Questionnaire for Players, Coaches, and Management Staff

This section presents the full questionnaire administered to players, coaches, and management staff of Nigerian Premier League teams to gather data on communication practices and their impact on team performance.

#### Section 1: Demographic Information

- 1) **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) **Role in the Team** (Please tick one):
  - a) ☐ Player
  - b) ☐ Coach
  - c) ☐ Management
- 4) **Team Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) **Gender:**
  - a) ☐ Male
  - b) ☐ Female
  - c) ☐ Other
- 6) **Years of Experience in Professional Football:** \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) **Highest Level of Education Completed:**
  - a) ☐ High School
  - b) ☐ University Degree
  - c) ☐ Postgraduate Degree
  - d) ☐ Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 2: Communication Preferences and Practices

1. **How often do you communicate with your teammates/coaching staff?**
  - a. ☐ Never
  - b. ☐ Rarely
  - c. ☐ Sometimes
  - d. ☐ Often
  - e. ☐ Always
2. **What communication channels do you typically use to communicate with teammates and coaching staff? (Tick all that apply)**
  - a. ☐ Face-to-Face Meetings
  - b. ☐ Phone Calls
  - c. ☐ Video Calls
  - d. ☐ WhatsApp/Text Messaging
  - e. ☐ Football Symbols/Hand Signals
  - f. ☐ Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)
  - g. ☐ Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
3. **On a scale of 1 to 5, how effective do you find the following communication channels in supporting your role in the team?**
4. **(1 = Very Ineffective, 5 = Very Effective)**
  - a. Face-to-Face Meetings: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
  - b. Phone Calls: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
  - c. Video Calls: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
  - d. WhatsApp/Text Messaging: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
  - e. Football Symbols/Hand Signals: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. **Do you think communication within your team influences overall team performance (e.g., during match preparation, and teamwork during games)?**
  - a. ☐ Yes
  - b. ☐ No
  - c. ☐ Not Sure
6. **What factors do you believe enhance or hinder communication within the team?**
  - a. **Enhance (please tick any that apply):**
    - i. ☐ Regular face-to-face meetings
    - ii. ☐ Clear communication channels
    - iii. ☐ Trust and respect among team members
    - iv. ☐ Effective use of technology
    - v. ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. **Hinder (please tick any that apply):**
    - i. ☐ Language barriers
    - ii. ☐ Cultural differences
    - iii. ☐ Misunderstandings or unclear messages
    - iv. ☐ Lack of time
    - v. ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. **In your opinion, how important is non-verbal communication (e.g., gestures, body language) in the context of football?**
  - a. ☐ Not Important
  - b. ☐ Somewhat Important
  - c. ☐ Very Important
  - d. ☐ Extremely Important

## Appendix B: Interview Guide for Sports Broadcasters

This section presents the interview guide used for in-depth interviews with sports broadcasters. The guide was designed to collect qualitative insights into the role of communication in Nigerian football teams, as observed by broadcasters.

### Introduction

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your insights are valuable in understanding the role of communication in Nigerian football teams. Please answer the following questions based on your observations and experiences.*

1. **Can you describe the role of communication in the performance of Nigerian football teams?**
  - a. *Probe:* How does communication on the field affect the outcome of matches?
2. **What types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, symbolic) do you most frequently observe between coaches and players during a match?**
  - a. *Probe:* Can you give an example of how non-verbal communication, like gestures or football symbols, has been used in a game?
3. **In your experience, do players and coaches in Nigerian football teams use more linguistic or non-linguistic forms of communication?**
  - a. *Probe:* Are there specific moments during a match when non-verbal communication takes precedence?
4. **How do you think communication between the coaching staff and players influences the overall teamwork and performance of a team, both during the game and outside the game (e.g., in training or social situations)?**
5. **What are some of the barriers you have observed in communication within Nigerian football teams?**
  - a. *Probe:* Have language barriers, misunderstandings, or cultural differences ever affected the outcome of a match or the team's performance?



6. In your opinion, do cultural or linguistic differences between players and coaching staff impact the flow of communication? How can these challenges be addressed to improve performance?
7. Do you think sports media (television, radio, social media) plays a role in shaping the communication practices of Nigerian football teams? If yes, how?
8. How important is it for players and coaches to maintain open lines of communication in high-pressure situations (e.g., during a match, in the locker room, or during training)?
9. Finally, what improvements do you think could be made in terms of communication within Nigerian football teams, based on your observations as a broadcaster?

## Appendix C: Survey Data Tables

**Table 1: Communication Channels and Effectiveness**

Communication Channel	No. of Respondents (N=45)	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)	Comments/Summary
Face-to-Face Meetings	40	4.6	Highly rated for detailed tactical discussions, team bonding, and ensuring clarity.
Phone Calls	35	4.2	Effective for urgent or quick communications, but lacks depth for complex discussions.
WhatsApp (Text Messaging)	42	4.1	Useful for logistical updates, scheduling, and informal communication.
Video Calls	30	4.0	Effective for team meetings and strategy discussions, though not as personal as face-to-face interactions.
Football Symbols/Hand Signals	38	4.3	Crucial for in-game communication, allowing for quick tactical adjustments.
Social Media (e.g., Twitter)	10	3.5	Not commonly used for internal team communication, but more for external engagement.
Other (Non-verbal cues)	20	4.0	Includes gestures, body language, and other visual signals. Important during live matches, but not universally understood.



**Table 2: Perceived Impact of Communication on Team Performance**

Performance Element	No. of Respondents (N=45)	Impact Rating (1-5)	Summary of Responses
Match Preparation	45	4.7	Communication ensures everyone is aligned on strategy, roles, and expectations, leading to better preparation.
Teamwork During Games	42	4.5	Effective communication enhances coordination, understanding, and quick decision-making during matches.
Team Cohesion (Social/Off-Field)	40	4.2	Strong communication helps maintain unity, understanding, and morale both during and outside of games.
Crisis/Pressure Situations	38	4.3	Clear communication under pressure keeps the team focused, minimizes confusion, and maintains tactical discipline.
Post-Match Review & Feedback	30	4.1	Constructive feedback fosters improvement, although it is sometimes difficult due to language barriers.

**Table 3: Barriers to Effective Communication**

Communication Barrier	No. of Respondents (N=45)	Severity Rating (1-5)	Summary of Responses
Language Barriers	38	4.4	Foreign players often struggle with instructions or feedback, especially when they are not fluent in the dominant language.
Cultural Differences	36	4.2	Misinterpretation of verbal and non-verbal cues due to differing cultural backgrounds, leading to confusion.
Time Constraints	34	4.1	Time pressures before matches or during training sessions limit the ability for thorough communication.
Lack of Trust/Team Dynamics	30	3.8	Inadequate trust and openness between players and coaching staff can hinder clear communication.
Technology Issues (e.g., internet)	20	3.6	Connectivity problems, especially during video calls or remote communication, disrupt the flow of communication.
Misunderstandings of Non-Verbal Cues	25	3.9	Hand signals and body language can be misinterpreted, especially in multilingual teams.

These three tables present responses from 45 participants, summarizing communication channels, their perceived impact on team performance, and barriers faced. The tables categorize the data to highlight key trends, such as the effectiveness of various communication methods and the challenges encountered within the Nigerian football teams.