

NETIQUETTE AND INFORMATION MANAGERS EFFECTIVENESS IN OIL AND GAS COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between netiquette and information managers effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers State. A cross section exploratory research design was adopted for the survey. The target population consisted of 360 managers from 20 oil and gas companies in Rivers state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 120 study participants. A research instrument titled: Netiquette and information Managers Effectiveness (NIME) was used for data collection. The instrument has two parts; the first part addressed the demographic variables while the second dwelt on the questionnaire items. The instrument was dully validated by experts from the Department of Business Education, Ignatius Ajuru University, while the reliability was ascertained using Cronbach alpha statistics, which gave a reliability index of 0.768. The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using men and standard deviation for the research questions and Spearmen's rank Order Coefficient for the null hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed a strong and significant relationship between netiquette and information manager's effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers state. It was recommended amongst others that oil and gas companies should inculcate a culture of decency in their managers.

Keywords: Netiquette, digital decency, digital privacy, digital competence, digital response

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, effective communication is pivotal for the success of any organization, particularly in industries as dynamic and competitive as the oil and gas sector. Information managers play a critical role in ensuring the seamless flow of communication, data management, and decision-making processes within organizations. In such roles, adherence to proper online communication practices, commonly referred to as netiquette, has become increasingly significant. Netiquette encompasses the norms and principles guiding professional and respectful communication in digital interactions, ranging from email correspondence to virtual meetings and online forums.

In the oil and gas industry, especially in Rivers State, Nigeria, where operations are often complex and high-stakes, the effectiveness of information managers is directly tied to their ability to communicate clearly, manage sensitive information, and coordinate activities across multiple stakeholders. A lack of proper netiquette can lead to communication breakdowns, misinterpretations, and inefficiencies, ultimately affecting organizational productivity and reputation.

Despite the recognized importance of netiquette, limited attention has been given to its impact on the effectiveness of information managers within the oil and gas sector. This gap underscores the need to explore the level of netiquette awareness and its influence on professional performance in this context. By examining the interplay between netiquette and information manager effectiveness, this study aims to provide insights into how communication standards can enhance organizational outcomes and offer recommendations

for fostering better digital communication practices in the oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Statement of the problem:

In the modern workplace, the increasing reliance on digital communication tools has highlighted the critical role of netiquette—the practice of polite and effective online communication. Information managers, who are responsible for the collection, organization, and dissemination of information, face challenges in maintaining communication clarity, professionalism, and workflow efficiency in a digital environment.

Despite the availability of advanced communication technologies, miscommunication, delayed responses, and inappropriate online behavior often hinder the effectiveness of information managers. These issues can lead to misunderstandings, reduced productivity, and strained workplace relationships. Furthermore, the lack of adherence to netiquette principles may damage professional credibility and impede the seamless flow of information, which is essential for organizational success. It is against the backdrop that the researcher intend to find out the relationship between netiquette and information manager effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to find out the relationship between netiquette and information managers effectiveness. Specifically the study sought to find at the following:

1. The relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness.
2. The relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness.
3. The relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness?
4. The moderating role of digital competence in netiquette and information managers effectiveness.

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness?
2. What is the relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness?
3. What is the relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness?
4. What is the moderating role of digital competence in netiquette and information managers effectiveness?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance tested in the study

1. There is no significant relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness.
2. There is no significant relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness.
3. There is no significant relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness?
4. Digital competence does not significantly moderate the relationship between netiquette and information managers effectiveness.

Theory of Netiquette and Its Application to Office Manager Effectiveness

The theory that best supports netiquette and the effectiveness of information managers is Media Richness Theory, developed by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel in 1986. This theory provides a framework for understanding how the appropriate selection and use of communication media, guided by principles like netiquette, can enhance managerial effectiveness.

This theory suggests that different communication media vary in their ability to convey information richness (the ability to reproduce the information sent by a sender clearly and accurately to a receiver). Richer media (e.g., face-to-face communication) are better suited for ambiguous, emotional, or complex messages, while leaner media (e.g., email, memos) are ideal for straightforward and routine communication.

Relevance to Netiquette:

Netiquette principles align with Media Richness Theory by emphasizing the appropriate use of each medium. For instance: Use of polite, clear language in lean media (emails, text messages) to avoid misunderstandings. Selecting richer media for sensitive or complex discussions, ensuring professionalism and adherence to netiquette.

Relevance to Information Managers:

Information managers must decide the best medium for communication and ensure effective transmission of messages. By adhering to netiquette, they enhance message clarity, reduce misunderstandings, and foster positive working relationships.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIGITAL DECENCY AND INFORMATION MANAGER EFFECTIVENESS

Digital decency, which refers to the practice of maintaining respectful, professional, and ethical behavior in digital interactions, has gained prominence in organizational communication. Its relationship with information manager effectiveness has been explored in various empirical studies, highlighting its significance in fostering clear communication, reducing conflicts, and enhancing productivity in corporate environments.

Digital Decency and Communication Efficiency

Digital decency significantly impacts communication efficiency among information managers. For instance, Ngugi and Omondi (2022) found that organizations that promote digital etiquette reported fewer instances of communication breakdowns and misunderstandings among team members. The study, conducted in Kenyan multinational companies, revealed that adherence to professional digital communication standards improved the clarity of information dissemination, thus enhancing the performance of information managers.

Silva, et al. (2017) examined digital decency within public relations, a field closely related to information management. Their findings emphasized that ethical communication practices, such as transparency, respect, and professionalism, are essential for fostering trust and organizational credibility. These principles align with the role of information managers, who must ensure the accurate and ethical dissemination of organizational information (Silva et al., 2017).

Divayana et al. (2021) explored how adherence to digital decency guidelines enhances workplace communication. Their research highlighted that managers who follow principles of

netiquette, such as clarity, politeness, and timeliness, reduce conflicts and improve team collaboration. This directly supports the effectiveness of information managers in ensuring seamless communication across digital platforms.

Digital Privacy and Ethical Practices

The emphasis on digital decency extends to digital privacy and ethical practices, crucial for information managers tasked with handling sensitive data. A study by Zhang and Wei (2020) on Chinese tech firms revealed that managers who prioritize ethical digital interactions, such as obtaining consent before sharing information, maintained better organizational integrity and achieved higher performance ratings. These findings underscore the role of digital decency in ensuring compliance with corporate and legal standards.

Prompt Digital Response and Records Accuracy

Studies have highlighted the critical role of prompt digital responses in ensuring records accuracy. For example, Adeyemo and Eze (2021) investigated Nigerian public sector organizations and found that delayed responses to digital records inquiries often led to errors and inconsistencies in record updates. Their findings suggested that timely responses facilitated real-time updates and reduced discrepancies in record-keeping processes.

Customer Service and Records Management

In a study of records management systems in the banking sector, Ochieng and Mutua (2020) demonstrated that prompt digital responses to customer queries enhanced the quality and accessibility of customer records. The research showed that organizations with a faster turnaround time in digital communication had more organized and reliable records due to consistent updates and data synchronization.

Technological Integration and Prompt Response

Technological advancements have made it easier for organizations to implement systems that support prompt digital responses. Ibrahim and Sani (2022) explored the use of automated response systems in records management within Nigerian oil and gas firms. The study found that such systems significantly improved record retrieval time and minimized human errors in record updates, enhancing overall organizational efficiency.

Impact on Accountability and Transparency

Prompt digital responses also play a crucial role in ensuring accountability and transparency in records management. A study by Gupta and Sharma (2021) in Indian multinational corporations highlighted that prompt responses to digital audits and compliance checks helped maintain accurate and up-to-date records. This contributed to greater organizational accountability and compliance with legal standards.

Challenges in Achieving Prompt Response

Despite its benefits, achieving prompt digital responses in records management comes with challenges. Omotayo and Akintunde (2023) identified inadequate training and poor infrastructure as barriers to prompt digital communication in Nigerian public institutions. They recommended capacity-building programs to address these challenges and improve response times.

Enhancing Records Accessibility

Ochieng and Mutua (2020) investigated the impact of response time on records accessibility in Kenyan banking institutions. They found that organizations with quicker digital response systems had better-organized records and higher customer satisfaction. The study concluded that timely responses to record-related queries ensured that records were updated and easily retrievable when needed.

Real-Time Updates and Accuracy

Adeyemo and Eze (2021) studied public sector organizations in Nigeria, focusing on the effects of delayed digital responses on record accuracy. Their findings showed that timely responses minimized discrepancies in records, as real-time updates allowed for immediate corrections and confirmations. The researchers emphasized that responsiveness in digital communication enhances the reliability of records over time.

Impact of Automated Systems

A study by Ibrahim and Sani (2022) explored the adoption of automated digital response systems in records management within Nigerian oil and gas firms. The research revealed that automated systems significantly reduced the time taken to retrieve and update records, contributing to improved operational efficiency. The study underscored the importance of integrating technology into records management processes to enable prompt digital responses.

Accountability and Compliance

Gupta and Sharma (2021) examined how prompt digital responses to audit inquiries influenced accountability in records management within Indian multinational corporations. The study highlighted that quicker response times allowed organizations to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements by ensuring that records were accurate and up-to-date during inspections or audits.

Challenges in Achieving Prompt Responses

Omotayo and Akintunde (2023) analyzed barriers to prompt digital responses in Nigerian public institutions. They identified insufficient technological infrastructure and a lack of staff training as key challenges. Their study recommended targeted capacity-building initiatives to improve response times and the overall efficiency of records management systems.

PROMPT DIGITAL RESPONSE AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Prompt Digital Response: Responsiveness in digital communication is linked to faster decision-making and team alignment, enhancing managerial performance. Empirical findings suggest managers who address queries promptly create more cohesive teams (Jing et al., 2023).

The relationship between prompt digital responses and effective records management has been explored in various empirical studies, highlighting its significance in improving organizational efficiency, ensuring accuracy, and fostering accountability. Below are some studies examining this relationship:

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MODERATING ROLE OF DIGITAL COMPETENCE ON NETIQUETTE AND INFORMATION MANAGERS' EFFECTIVENESS

Digital competence plays a significant role in moderating the relationship between netiquette adherence and the effectiveness of information managers. Digital competence refers to the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to effectively use digital tools and platforms in professional environments.

1. Netiquette and Managerial Effectiveness

Netiquette, or online etiquette, is crucial for clear and professional communication in digital workspaces. Information managers must maintain professionalism, clarity, and respect in all communications to ensure seamless information flow and positive workplace interactions. However, the application of netiquette often depends on the individual's ability to navigate digital tools efficiently (Divayana et al., 2021).

2. Digital Competence as a Moderator

Digital competence strengthens the impact of netiquette on effectiveness by:

Enhancing Communication: Managers with high digital competence can better utilize communication platforms, such as email, video conferencing, or collaborative tools, to apply netiquette principles effectively (Van Laar et al., 2017).

Reducing Misunderstandings: Digital skills, such as formatting, using appropriate tone, and leveraging automation tools, minimize errors and improve message clarity.

Promoting Efficiency: Digital competence allows managers to quickly adapt to new tools and features, making it easier to manage records and respond promptly while adhering to netiquette norms (European Commission, 2020).

Van Laar et al. (2017) conducted a study on digital skills and professional success. They found that individuals with higher digital literacy demonstrated better communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, making them more effective in managing organizational information.

European Commission (2020) outlined the Digital Competence Framework (DigComp), which emphasizes digital communication as a critical competence area. Adhering to netiquette while maintaining efficiency depends heavily on proficiency with tools and platforms.

Divayana et al. (2021) highlighted how managerial effectiveness is influenced by the ability to integrate professional etiquette with digital capabilities in collaborative and hybrid workspaces.

METHODOLOGY

The procedure in which the research was conducted include; research design, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, administration of the instrument and the method of data analysis

Research Design: A cross section exploratory survey research design was adopted for the study.

Population of the study: The population of the study consisted of 360 managers from 20 oil and gas companies in Rivers state.

Sample and sampling technique: The simple random sampling technique was used to select the study sample. 6 oil and gas managers were randomly selected from each of the 20 oil and gas companies. Thos gave a sample size of 120 managers used for the study.

Research instrument: The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Netiquette and information manager Effectiveness in oil and gas companies (NIME). The instrument consisted of two parts. Part A sought personal and demographic data such as professional status or rank, educational attainment and years of working experience. Part B consisted of the 4 point rating scale consisting of 12 items. Each item had 4 options ranging from strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of the Instrument: The research instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Business Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers state.

Reliability of the instrument: The reliability coefficient of the research instrument was ascertained using Cronbouch Alpha. The coefficient index was 0.768 which was deemed appropriate for the study.

Administration of the instrument: A total of 120 copies of the research instrument was administered to respondents and retrieved and used for data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the filled work were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while Spearman Rank order correlation coefficient with the aid of SPSS version 22 were used to test the hypothesis.

RESULT

Research question 1: What is the relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of respondents on the relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Sum	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Digital decency guidelines enhances workplace communication	335	2.792	1.671	Agreed
2.	It supports effectiveness of information managers in ensuring seamless communication	360	3.000	1.732	Agreed
3.	Organization that promote digital decency have few cases of communication breakdown	355	2.958	1.719	Agreed
4.	Adherence to digital decency improves clarity in information dissemination	378	3.152	1.775	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.969	1.723	

Data analysis on table 1 revealed that items 1 – 4 had all the mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.5, indicating that respondent agreed that digital decency guidelines enhances work place communication and that it supports effectiveness of information managers in ensuring seamless communication, it also promotes clarity in information dissemination.

Research question 2: What is the relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of respondents on the relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Sum	Mean	SD	Remarks
5.	Digital privacy prioritizes ethical interaction before sharing information	401	3.342	1.828	Agreed
6.	It maintains a better organizational integrity	345	2.875	1.695	Agreed
7.	Higher performance rating is achieved using digital privacy	335	2.958	1.719	Agreed
8.	It enhances that individual consent is obtained before sharing information	375	3.125	1.767	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.573	1.604	

The data analysis on table 2 showed that items 5 – 8 had all the mean scores above the criterion man of 2.5, which reveals that digital privacy prioritizes ethical interaction before

sharing information, achieves high performance rating and maintains a better organizational integrity.

Research question3: what is the relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores of respondents on the relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Sum	Mean	SD	Remarks
9.	Digital response ensures accurate record keeping	350	2.917	1.707	Agreed
10.	It minimizes human errors in records updates	356	2.967	1.722	Agreed
11	It minimizes human errors in records updates	356	2.967	1.722	Agreed
12	Automated response systems in records management improves records retrieval process	375	3.125	1.767	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.969	1.723	

Data analysis on table 3 revealed that items 9 – 12 had all the mean scores above the accepted criterion value of 2.5, showing that responders are in agreement that digital response ensures accurate record keeping, minimizes and enhances overall organizational efficiency.

Test of Hypothesis

Using Spearman’s rank order coefficient of correlation $\rho = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)}$

Table4: Spearman’s rank coefficient between digital decency and information managers

			Digital decency	Information managers
Spearman’s rho	Digital decency	Correlation coefficient	1.000	0.832
		Sig2 tallied		0.000
		N	120	120
	Information managers	Correlation coefficient	0.832	1.000
		Sig 2 tallied	0.000	
		N	120	120

From table 4 above, the rho value is 0.832 using a 2 tailed test P = 0.000 at P – 0.05 level of significance, meaning it is positively corrected, showing a strong and significant relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate accepted, meaning that there is a significant relationship between digital decency and information managers effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers state.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness.

Table 5: Spearman’s rank coefficient between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness.

	Digital Privacy	Information Managers
Spearman’s rho, Digital	1.000	0.765

correlation coefficient	privacy		
Sig (2 tailed)			0.000
N		120	120
Information managers correlation coefficient		0.765	1.000
Sig 2 tailed		0.000	
N		120	120

Data analysis on table 5 revealed that rho value is 0.765 using a 2 tailed test, $P=0.000$ at $P<0.05$ level of significance, meaning it is positively correlated, showing a strong and significant relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate accepted, showing that there is a significant relationship between digital privacy and information managers effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers state.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness.

Table 6: Spearman's rank coefficient between digital response and information managers effectiveness.

	Digital response	Information managers
Spearman's rho, Digital correlation coefficient	1.000	0.692
Sig (2 tailed)		0.000
N	120	120
Information managers correlation coefficient	0.692	1.000
Sig, (2 tailed)	0.000	
N	120	120

Table 6 data analysis showed that rho value is 0.692 using a 2 tailed test $P=0.000$ at $P<0.05$ level of significance, meaning it is positively correlated showing a strong and significant relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate accepted, meaning that there is a significant relationship between digital response and information managers effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 4: Digital competence does not significantly moderate the relationship between etiquette and information managers effectiveness.

Table 7: Spearman's coefficient between etiquette and information managers effectiveness.

Control for the moderating effect of digital competence.

Control	Variables	Etiquette correlation	2 tailed	Df	Information managers Correlation	2 tailed	Df
Digital competence	Etiquette	1.000	0.000		0.751	0.000	117
	Information managers	0.751	0.000	117	1.000	0.000	

Table 7 revealed that rho value is 0.751, using a 2 tailed test, $P=0.000$ at $P<0.05$ level of significance, meaning that it is showing a significant effect of moderating variable digital competence on the relationship between etiquette and information managers effectiveness. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. Hence digital competences significantly moderate the relationship between etiquette and information managers effectiveness in oil and gas companies in Rivers state.

Discussion of results

The findings on research question one and hypothesis one reveals that digital decency significantly relates with information managers effectiveness. This is in agreement with Ngugi and omondi (2022), Divayona et al (2021) who posited that organization that promote digital etiquette have few cases of communication breakdown and misunderstanding among staff and it supports effectiveness of information managers in ensuring seamless communication. Findings on research question two and hypothesis two revealed that digital privacy significantly relates with information managrs effectiveness. This findings is in line with Adeyomo and Eze (2021)who stated that information managers who prioritizes ethical digital interaction such as obtaining consent before sharing information maintain better organizational intergrity and achieve higher performance rating.

Research question three and hypothesis three findings indicates that digital response significantly related with information managers effectiveness. This finding is corroborated by Abraham and Sani (2022) who asserted that automated response system in records management improves record retrieval and minimizes possibility of human errors in record updates which enhances overall organizational efficiently.

CONCLUSION

Netiquette is crucial for clear and professional communication in digital workplace. The study concluded that there is a strong and significant relationship between netiquette and information managers effectiveness especially in oil and gas companies in Rivers state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended as follows:

1. Oil and gas companies should inculcate a culture of decency in their managers
2. Efforts should be made to use office social media and sms to help improve inter personal relations and information effectiveness.
3. Appropriate professional and ethical behaviors in digital interaction should be followed to achieve information effectiveness

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