

**EFFECT OF SECRETARIAL COMMUNICATION
STYLE ON CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS AND
TRUST**

BY

AMBALI ADAM

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APPROVAL PAGE

This research work has been read and approved by the undersigned on behalf of the Department of Office Technology and Management, Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of National Diploma in Office Technology and Management.

DR. OYINLOYE O.T

(Project Supervisor)

DATE

MRS. E.M ASONIBARE

(Head of Department)

DATE

MRS. E.M ASONIBARE

(Chairman Project Committee)

DATE

MRS BALOGUN E.B

(External Examiner)

DATE

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Allah and my Parent.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the modern business environment, effective communication is pivotal in fostering strong relationships between organizations and their customers. Secretaries, as key figures in administrative and operational roles, are often the first point of contact for clients and customers. Their communication style plays an essential part in shaping customers' perceptions and influencing their trust in the organization. Secretarial communication styles encompass various elements, including verbal and non-verbal cues, tone, formality, clarity, and responsiveness, which collectively determine the quality of interaction between a company and its clientele.

The style and manner in which a secretary communicates can significantly affect customer satisfaction, loyalty, and the overall reputation of the organization. Several studies have highlighted that trust is a foundational element in customer relationships, influencing their purchasing behavior, retention, and long-term loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In this context, secretarial communication acts as a bridge, either enhancing or damaging the trust that customers place in an organization (Men, 2014). For instance, a secretary who demonstrates professionalism, empathy, and clear communication is more likely to foster a positive relationship with the customer, thereby enhancing trust and satisfaction.

Despite the recognized importance of secretarial roles, limited research has specifically explored how the communication style of secretaries impacts customer relationships and trust. Most existing studies have focused on broader organizational communication strategies, neglecting the significant influence of front-line staff in customer relationship management. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how secretarial communication style influences customer trust and the strength of

customer relationships, providing insights that can inform organizational communication strategies and training programs.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective communication plays a critical role in the development and maintenance of strong customer relationships, particularly within service-oriented industries. Secretaries, as key administrative personnel, are often the first point of contact for customers and therefore play an essential role in shaping customers' perceptions of the organization. However, despite the growing importance of communication in customer relationship management, there is limited research focused on how the communication style of secretaries specifically impacts customer trust and the overall quality of customer relationships.

The problem arises from the lack of a comprehensive understanding of how secretarial communication, including verbal and non-verbal cues, tone, responsiveness, and formality, influences customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Although studies have addressed the broader role of communication in organizational trust and customer relationships (Men, 2014; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), few have directly examined the relationship between secretarial communication styles and customer trust. This gap leaves a critical question unanswered: How does the communication style of secretaries affect the trust customers place in an organization, and how does it influence the strength of customer relationships?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The primary Objective of this study is to explore the effect of secretarial communication style on customer relationships and trust. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To analyze the relationship between secretarial communication style and customer trust
2. To examine how secretarial communication style influences customer satisfaction and loyalty
3. To determine the impact of non-verbal communication in secretarial interactions with customers
4. To assess the role of responsiveness and timeliness in secretarial communication on customer relationship development
5. To provide strategies for improving secretarial communication practices to enhance customer relationships and trust

1.4 Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the effect of secretarial communication style on customer relationships and trust. The key research questions guiding this study are:

1. What is the influence of secretarial communication style on the level of trust that customers place in an organization?
2. What is the relationship between secretarial communication style and customer satisfaction and loyalty?
3. To what extent does non-verbal communication by secretary's impact customer perceptions of trustworthiness and professionalism?
4. What is the role of responsiveness of secretaries influence on the development of customer relationships?
5. What are the best practices in secretarial communication that can strengthen customer trust and improve relationship quality?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to highlight the critical role that secretarial communication plays in shaping customer relationships and trust. In many organizations, secretaries are often the first point of contact for customers, acting as the gateway to the company. Their communication style—whether verbal or non-verbal—can substantially influence how customers perceive the organization and how much trust they are willing to place in it. As trust is a foundational element in building long-term business relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), understanding how secretarial communication can foster or hinder this trust is essential for organizations seeking to improve customer retention and satisfaction.

This study also addresses a gap in the existing literature, which has primarily focused on organizational-level communication but has paid less attention to the role of front-line staff, like secretaries, in customer relationship management. By focusing on secretaries' communication styles, the research provides insights into the specific ways in which individual interactions can have a profound impact on broader business outcomes. This is particularly important in industries where customer service and personal interaction are key to organizational success.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to investigating the effect of secretarial communication style on customer relationships and trust within a specific organizational context. The research will focus on secretaries working in customer-facing roles in service-oriented industries, such as hospitality, banking, and retail, where communication plays a critical role in customer interaction and relationship building. The study does not include secretarial communication in non-customer-facing roles or in industries where communication with customers is limited, such as manufacturing or technical sectors.

Additionally, the research will be confined to a selected sample of customers within these industries, limiting the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. The study will not explore other organizational communication factors, such as management communication or team communication, but will focus solely on the secretarial communication style and its direct effect on customer trust and relationship development.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study is subject to several limitations that may affect the interpretation and generalization of the results. One key limitation is the reliance on self-reported data from customers and secretaries. Participants' responses may be influenced by personal biases or subjective perceptions, potentially leading to inaccuracies in assessing the true effect of secretarial communication style on customer trust and relationships.

Another limitation is the sample size and scope of the study. The research will be conducted within a limited geographic area and focus on specific industries, such as hospitality, banking, and retail. This narrow scope may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or regions where customer interactions differ significantly in nature or scale.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examines the effect of secretarial communication style on customer relationship and trust. It explores how different communication styles, including verbal, non-verbal, and responsive communication, impact customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. The review highlights key factors that contribute to building strong customer relationships through effective communication by secretaries. The review will be carried out under the listed sub headings.

2.1 Introduction to Secretarial Communication

2.2 Communication Styles in Customer Service

2.3 The Role of Trust in Customer Relationships

2.4 Impact of Verbal Communication on Trust and Relationships

2.5 Non-Verbal Communication in Building Customer Relationships

2.1 Introduction to Secretarial Communication

Effective communication within an organization is essential for shaping positive customer relationships, influencing customer loyalty, and contributing to the overall success of the business. Secretaries, as pivotal players in the organization's communication structure, often serve as the first point of contact for clients, customers, and visitors (Men, 2014). They act as the "face" of the organization and frequently manage key touchpoints that can influence customer perceptions and the broader organizational reputation. The manner in which secretaries communicate, whether verbally, non-verbally, or through written forms, can significantly impact the development of trust and the quality of customer relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Verbal communication, which involves the use of language to convey messages, is crucial in ensuring that customers feel heard, understood, and valued. According to Hargie (2011), effective verbal communication includes clarity, tone, and the ability to actively listen, all of which contribute to a sense of trust and understanding between the secretary and the customer. Non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, also plays an integral role in shaping customer experiences and perceptions of professionalism (Burgoon, Guerrero, & Floyd, 2016). Non-verbal cues can either reinforce or contradict the messages being communicated verbally, and thus significantly affect the emotional impact of the interaction (Mehrabian, 1972).

Written communication, while often more formal, is also a critical component of secretarial communication. Written messages such as emails, memos, and letters provide a more structured form of communication that allows for clarity and documentation. When executed correctly, written communication can establish credibility, provide a record of communication, and ensure that key information is conveyed with precision (Koskela & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014).

2.2 Communication Styles in Customer Service

Communication style refers to the manner in which information is conveyed, including factors such as tone, formality, clarity, and responsiveness (Zhao & Hwang, 2013). In customer service, communication style plays a crucial role in shaping customer experiences, as it directly influences how customers perceive the service and the organization. The style of communication employed by secretaries can significantly impact customer satisfaction, trust, and overall relationship quality (Barker, 2014). Secretaries' communication styles can be broadly categorized into three types: formal, informal, and adaptive communication styles.

A formal communication style is often characterized by professionalism, politeness, and structured responses. This type of communication is typically used in more official or corporate settings, where clear and precise language is essential. Secretaries using formal communication tend to avoid casual language and may adhere to established organizational protocols in both verbal and written interactions. According to Webster (2015), formal communication is associated with creating an air of professionalism and credibility, which can positively influence customer trust, especially in highly professional or legal sectors.

On the other hand, an informal communication style involves more relaxed, casual interactions, often using colloquial language and a less rigid tone. Informal communication can foster a friendly and approachable atmosphere, which might be more conducive to building rapport with customers. Studies have shown that informal communication can reduce psychological barriers, making customers feel more comfortable and valued (Barker, 2014). This style can be particularly effective in industries where customer relationships are more personalized, and a sense of familiarity is desired. However, excessive informality may be perceived as unprofessional in certain contexts, potentially damaging the organization's image.

2.3 The Role of Trust in Customer Relationships

Trust is a critical and foundational element in any business relationship, particularly in customer service, where it significantly influences customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term engagement with the organization (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In the context of secretarial communication, trust is primarily built through consistent, clear, and responsive interactions between the secretary and the customer. A trusted secretary is one who conveys messages with clarity and transparency, fostering an environment

where customers feel comfortable and valued (Berry, 1995). As a result, trust becomes an essential factor in creating and maintaining successful customer relationships.

Research highlights that trust in customer relationships is a key determinant in how customers assess the credibility and reliability of an organization as a whole (Barker, 2014). Secretaries, often serving as the first point of contact for customers, play a vital role in shaping initial perceptions of the company. When secretaries use consistent and clear communication, they reassure customers that they can rely on the organization to meet their needs and expectations. This reliability builds a sense of security and confidence, essential components of trust (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpandé, 1992).

Furthermore, trust is fostered when secretaries demonstrate empathy and understanding in their communication. Transparent communication, where expectations are clearly outlined and followed through, also plays a significant role in building trust. When customers perceive that secretaries are not only delivering information but are also genuinely interested in their concerns, trust in the organization deepens. Empathy is central to relationship-building as it makes customers feel understood and valued, which leads to increased satisfaction and loyalty (Grönroos, 2000). Secretaries who show empathy in their interactions help to humanize the business relationship, which is particularly important in service industries where customer satisfaction and emotional connection can drive repeat business (Men, 2014). When a secretary actively listens, shows understanding, and validates the customer's feelings, it promotes a sense of care and respect, which fosters deeper trust in the organization.

Men (2014) emphasized that trust is not only established through factual accuracy but also through the emotional tone set by the secretary, as empathy in communication reinforces the customer's belief that their needs are taken seriously. Empathetic communication builds emotional bonds that transcend transactional exchanges, encouraging customers to engage with the company on a deeper, more personal level

(Berry, 1995). This approach aligns with findings by Barker (2014), who indicated that a customer's perception of a company is shaped significantly by the way their concerns are addressed by employees, especially in positions that involve direct customer interaction.

According to Hall (2010), transparent communication involves not only the clear transmission of information but also ensuring that any promises or expectations set during the conversation are consistently met. When secretaries are transparent, they are seen as trustworthy, and this consistency leads to the establishment of a stable and reliable relationship with the customer. Furthermore, as Mayer et al. (1995) argue, when organizations and their representatives, such as secretaries, align their actions with the communication shared with customers, it establishes credibility, which is a crucial component of trust.

2.4 Impact of Verbal Communication on Trust and Relationships

Verbal communication is one of the most direct and immediate means through which secretaries interact with customers, playing a crucial role in shaping the quality of the customer relationship. The tone, clarity, and professionalism of verbal exchanges significantly impact customer perceptions of the organization (Men, 2014). As secretaries often serve as the first point of contact, their verbal communication sets the tone for the customer's entire experience with the organization. A friendly, polite, and professional tone can help establish rapport, fostering a positive initial impression and creating a sense of trust between the customer and the organization (Zhao & Hwang, 2013). This can lead to stronger customer satisfaction and more robust, lasting relationships.

Research by Zhao and Hwang (2013) highlighted that clear, positive verbal communication enhances customer trust, as customers tend to feel more comfortable

and confident when interactions are handled in a clear, concise, and polite manner. Customers interpret the secretary's tone not just as an exchange of information but also as an indication of the company's values, professionalism, and concern for their needs. Verbal communication, therefore, functions as both an information delivery tool and a means of emotional engagement, establishing a foundation for future trust and cooperation (Barker, 2014).

On the other hand, unclear, curt, or rude communication can undermine the relationship by creating confusion, frustration, and a lack of confidence in the organization. Such communication styles often lead to misunderstandings, which can reduce the perceived professionalism and reliability of the organization (Men, 2014). Furthermore, as Grönroos (2000) argues, communication that is not professional or clear can damage customer relationships, leading to dissatisfaction and eroding trust over time.

2.5 Non-Verbal Communication in Building Customer Relationships

Non-verbal communication is an essential aspect of human interaction, particularly in face-to-face communication. It encompasses a wide range of behaviors, including body language, facial expressions, and eye contact, which play a significant role in building trust and rapport between secretaries and customers. Research has shown that non-verbal cues account for a substantial portion of communication, often conveying more than verbal messages alone. According to Mehrabian (1972), non-verbal cues contribute to more than 55% of interpersonal communication, emphasizing their importance in establishing meaningful and trust-based customer relationships.

Secretaries, as the first point of contact for many customers, have the opportunity to utilize positive non-verbal communication to enhance customer experiences. Behaviors such as maintaining eye contact, offering genuine smiles, and using open

body language signal warmth, attentiveness, and approachability, making customers feel more comfortable and valued (Zhao & Hwang, 2013). These positive non-verbal signals can contribute significantly to the development of trust and can often help to compensate for any miscommunication that may occur in verbal exchanges. For instance, smiling while speaking can make a secretary appear more friendly and trustworthy, thereby increasing the likelihood that the customer feels comfortable and willing to engage further (Mehrabian, 1972).

Non-verbal communication is not just about positive signals, but also about being mindful of negative body language that may undermine trust. Crossed arms, lack of eye contact, or closed-off posture can give the impression of disinterest, defensiveness, or unapproachability, which could negatively impact customer perceptions and trust. Secretaries who are mindful of their non-verbal cues can strengthen their relationships with customers by ensuring that their body language supports and enhances the verbal messages being communicated (Zhao & Hwang, 2013).

In addition to building trust, non-verbal communication can also improve the overall quality of customer interactions. According to research by Burgoon et al. (2016), effective non-verbal communication fosters greater understanding between parties, helping customers feel heard and valued. This can lead to a more satisfying experience, increased customer satisfaction, and ultimately, higher levels of loyalty and retention. A positive emotional connection can be established when a secretary conveys empathy and attentiveness through non-verbal cues, which often leads to more engaged and meaningful interactions (Zhao & Hwang, 2013).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlined the research methodology used to examine effect of secretarial communication styles on customer relationships and trust. The methodology will be discussed under the following sub titles.

3.1 Instrument Used

3.2 Population of the Study

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

3.4 Distribution and Collection of Data

3.5 Reliability

3.6 Validity

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

3.1 Instrument Used

The primary instrument for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire, designed to assess the impact of secretarial communication styles on customer relationships and trust. The questionnaire consists of closed Likert scale questions that measure variables such as communication style (verbal, non-verbal, and responsiveness), customer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. The instrument has been adapted from existing scales on organizational communication and customer trust (Men, 2014; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises customers who have interacted with secretaries in service-oriented industries such as hospitality, banking, and retail. The target population includes customers who have directly communicated with secretaries within the past six months. In addition, secretaries working in customer-facing roles within these industries are also included in the population. A total population of 112 secretaries and customers were identified for the study.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A stratified random sampling technique will be used to select the sample for this study. The population will be divided into two strata: customers and secretaries. From each stratum, participants will be randomly selected to ensure representation from different customer types and sectors. For the sample size, 12 secretaries working in customer-facing roles across different organizations was selected. Additionally, a sample of 38 customers was chosen to provide insights on how communication from secretaries impacts customer relationships and trust. The sample size of 12 secretaries is considered appropriate for this study, given the specific focus on secretarial communication and its direct effects on customer interactions.

3.4 Distribution and Collection of Data

The data collection process was carried out by the researcher personally. Physical distribution of the questionnaires was conducted to secretaries in their respective organization, while customers questionnaires were distributed to them as they interact with the secretaries in-person at the selected organization for the study.

respondents have two weeks to complete the questionnaire. All participants provided informed consent, and confidentiality were ensured throughout the study.

3.5 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of the measurement instrument. To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study will be conducted with a small sample of 10 secretaries and 5 customers. The responses will be analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A value of 0.70 or higher will be considered acceptable for ensuring reliability. The pilot study will help identify any issues in the questionnaire's wording or structure, which was addressed before full data collection.

3.6 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The validity of the questionnaire was assessed using content validity, which involves expert review. A panel of experts in communication, customer relationship management, and organizational behavior reviewed the instrument to ensure it covers all key aspects of secretarial communication, trust, and relationship-building. Furthermore, face validity was tested by gathering feedback from a small group of participants, and construct validity were ensured by aligning the questionnaire with the f secretarial communication and customer trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Zhao & Hwang, 2013).

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from the questionnaires will be analyzed using quantitative methods. Quantitative data will be analyzed through descriptive statistics, including frequencies, and Percentage (%)s to summarize customer perceptions of secretarial communication styles on customers relationships and trust.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected through the questionnaire, focusing on how secretarial communication styles affect customer relationships and trust. The tables below summarize the responses from 50 participants, highlighting key aspects of verbal, non-verbal, and written communication, and their impact on customer satisfaction and trust.

4.2 Results

Table 4.1: Secretarial communication is clear and understandable

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	20	40
Agree	15	30
Disagree	10	20
Strongly Disagree	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.1 above showed that 20 (40%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that secretarial communication is clear and understandable. However, 10 (20%) respondents disagreed, and 5 (10%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.2: Verbal communication from secretaries is effective

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	18	36
Agree	22	44
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.2 above showed that 18 (36%) respondents strongly agreed and 22 (44%) respondents agreed that verbal communication from secretaries is effective. Meanwhile, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.3: Non-verbal communication is important in customer relationships

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	25	50
Agree	15	30
Disagree	7	14
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.3 above showed that 25 (50%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that non-verbal communication is important in customer relationships. On the other hand, 7 (14%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.4: Responsiveness from secretaries affect your satisfaction

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	30	60
Agree	15	30
Disagree	4	8
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.4 above showed that 30 (60%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that responsiveness from secretaries affects their satisfaction. Meanwhile, 4 (8%) respondents disagreed, and 1 (2%) respondent strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.5: Effective communication by secretaries build trust in the organization

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	18	36
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.5 above showed that 22 (44%) respondents strongly agreed and 18 (36%) respondents agreed that effective communication by secretaries builds trust in the organization. Additionally, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.6: Secretarial communication style impact customer loyalty

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	18	36
Agree	20	40
Disagree	8	16
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.6 above showed that 18 (36%) respondents strongly agreed and 20 (40%) respondents agreed that secretarial communication style impacts customer loyalty. In contrast, 8 (16%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.7: Empathy in secretarial communication strengthens customer relationships

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	48
Agree	16	32
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.7 above showed that 24 (48%) respondents strongly agreed and 16 (32%) respondents agreed that empathy in secretarial communication strengthens customer relationships. Meanwhile, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.8: Clear communication from secretaries improve trust in services provided

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	20	40
Agree	18	36
Disagree	9	18
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.8 above showed that 20 (40%) respondents strongly agreed and 18 (36%) respondents agreed that clear communication from secretaries improves trust in the services provided. Additionally, 9 (18%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.9: Clear communication affect customer retention

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	23	46
Agree	17	34
Disagree	7	14
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.9 above showed that 23 (46%) respondents strongly agreed and 17 (34%) respondents agreed that clear communication from secretaries positively affects customer retention. Meanwhile, 7 (14%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.10: Secretary's attitude influence the quality of customer relationships

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	25	50
Agree	15	30
Disagree	7	14
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.10 above showed that 25 (50%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that the secretary's attitude influences the quality of customer relationships. Meanwhile, 7 (14%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.11: The clarity of communication improve customer experience with the company

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	26	52
Agree	15	30
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.11 above showed that 26 (52%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that clarity of communication improves customer experience with the company. Meanwhile, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.12: Active listening by secretaries enhance customers trust in the business

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	21	42
Agree	20	40
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.12 above showed that 21 (42%) respondents strongly agreed and 20 (40%) respondents agreed that active listening by secretaries enhances customers trust in the business. In contrast, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.13: Secretaries' tone of voice affect customers satisfaction in secretarial communication

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	18	36
Disagree	7	14
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.13 above showed that 22 (44%) respondents strongly agreed and 18 (36%) respondents agreed that secretary's tone of voice affects customers satisfaction in secretarial communication. Meanwhile, 7 (14%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.14: Secretarial communication fosters a positive image of the company

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	48
Agree	17	34
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.14 above showed that 24 (48%) respondents strongly agreed and 17 (34%) respondents agreed that secretarial communication fosters a positive image of the company. Meanwhile, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.15: Body language is important for effective secretarial communication

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	23	46
Agree	17	34
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.15 above showed that 23 (46%) respondents strongly agreed and 17 (34%) respondents agreed that body language is important for effective secretarial communication. Additionally, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.16: Good communication style contribute to positive customer feedback

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	28	56
Agree	15	30
Disagree	5	10
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.16 above showed that 28 (56%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that a good communication style contributes to positive customer feedback. Meanwhile, 5 (10%) respondents disagreed, and 2 (4%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.17: Secretarial communication style influences customer decision-making

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	20	40
Agree	18	36
Disagree	8	16
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.17 above showed that 20 (40%) respondents strongly agreed and 18 (36%) respondents agreed that secretarial communication style influences customer decision-making. Meanwhile, 8 (16%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.18: A secretary's communication style affect your trust in their professionalism

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	20	40
Disagree	5	10
Strongly Disagree	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.18 above showed that 22 (44%) respondents strongly agreed and 20 (40%) respondents agreed that a secretary's communication style affects their trust in the secretary's professionalism. Meanwhile, 5 (10%) respondents disagreed, and 3 (6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.19: Written communication by secretaries' impact customer satisfaction

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	19	38
Agree	24	48
Disagree	5	10
Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.19 above showed that 19 (38%) respondents strongly agreed and 24 (48%) respondents agreed that written communication by secretaries impacts customer satisfaction. In contrast, 5 (10%) respondents disagreed, and 2 (4%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.20: Secretarial communication style enhances the overall customer experience

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	25	50
Agree	15	30
Disagree	6	12
Strongly Disagree	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2025

Table 4.20 above showed that 25 (50%) respondents strongly agreed and 15 (30%) respondents agreed that secretarial communication style enhances the overall customer experience. Meanwhile, 6 (12%) respondents disagreed, and 4 (8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study explored the effect of secretarial communication style on customer relationships and trust. The research focused on how verbal, non-verbal, and written communication styles of secretaries influence customer perceptions of the organization. A sample of 12 secretaries was surveyed, and data was collected to assess the effectiveness of communication on various aspects, including trust, loyalty, satisfaction, and customer retention.

The findings suggest that effective secretarial communication significantly influences customer satisfaction and trust. A majority of respondents strongly agreed that clear communication, responsiveness, empathy, and active listening by secretaries positively impacted their trust in the organization. Furthermore, non-verbal communication, such as body language and tone of voice, was found to be critical in establishing strong customer relationships. The study also revealed that secretarial communication style played a key role in shaping customer loyalty and retention.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that secretarial communication plays an essential role in building and maintaining strong customer relationships. Effective communication not only fosters trust but also enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. The data indicates that verbal and non-verbal communication styles, such as clarity, empathy, and active listening, are vital to positive customer experiences. The results emphasize the importance of training secretaries in communication skills, as their interactions with customers directly affect the organization's reputation and success.

5.3 Recommendations

1. **Training and Development:** Organizations should invest in continuous communication training for secretaries to enhance their verbal and non-verbal communication skills, ensuring that they effectively engage with customers.
2. **Promote Active Listening:** Encourage secretaries to practice active listening to better understand customer needs, concerns, and expectations, which can significantly enhance trust and satisfaction.
3. **Foster Empathy in Communication:** Secretaries should be trained to express empathy through both verbal and non-verbal cues, as empathetic communication can strengthen customer relationships and increase loyalty.
4. **Monitor and Improve Responsiveness:** Organizations should implement measures to ensure that secretaries respond promptly to customer inquiries and concerns. Responsiveness is a key factor in improving customer satisfaction.
5. **Focus on Non-Verbal Communication:** Given the impact of body language and tone of voice on customer satisfaction, secretaries should be made aware of the significance of their non-verbal cues in customer interactions.

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KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN

INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

Dear Sir/Ma,

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES

This is a research instrument to elicit information relevant to research work titled Effect of Secretarial Communication Style on Customer Relationships and Trust.

The Research is a partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of National Diploma in Office Technology and Management in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

I shall be grateful if this questionnaire can be completed by you. Your anonymity is highly guaranteed. Information gathered through this questionnaire would be used only for Academic purposes.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Secretarial communication is clear and understandable. (a) Strongly Agree ()
(b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
2. Verbal communication from secretaries is effective. (a) Strongly Agree () (b)
Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
3. Non-verbal communication is important in customer relationships. (a) Strongly
Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
4. Responsiveness from secretaries affects your satisfaction. (a) Strongly Agree ()
(b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
5. Effective communication by secretaries builds trust in the organization. (a)
Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
6. Secretarial communication style impacts customer loyalty. (a) Strongly Agree
() (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
7. Empathy in secretarial communication strengthens customer relationships. (a)
Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
8. Clear communication from secretaries improves trust in services provided. (a)
Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
9. Clear communication affects customer retention. (a) Strongly Agree () (b)
Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
10. A secretary's attitude influences the quality of customer relationships. (a)
Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
11. The clarity of communication improves customer experience with the
company. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly
Disagree ()

12. Active listening by secretaries enhances customers' trust in the business. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
13. Secretaries' tone of voice affects customer satisfaction in secretarial communication. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
14. Secretarial communication fosters a positive image of the company. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
15. Body language is important for effective secretarial communication. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
16. A good communication style contributes to positive customer feedback. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
17. Secretarial communication style influences customer decision-making. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
18. A secretary's communication style affects your trust in their professionalism. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
19. Written communication by secretaries impacts customer satisfaction. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()
20. Secretarial communication style enhances the overall customer experience. (a) Strongly Agree () (b) Agree () (c) Disagree () (d) Strongly Disagree ()