

The Impact of Internal Communication on Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance in a selected Social Enterprise Organization: A Managerial Perspective.

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Abstract

Communication is a key and important component of every organization because it is required for promoting employee collaboration and allowing the company to operate properly. Internal communication has its own effects on employee performance and decision-making; therefore, an investigation into the impact of internal Communication on employee engagement and organizational performance is thus essential. The study sought to ascertain the impact of internal communication on employee engagement and organizational performance from a managerial perspective in a selected social enterprise organization in Zambia. The research method used in this study was a semi structured interview with open-ended questions. The data collected from 11 respondents out of a sample group of 15 participants was described and analyzed using a qualitative approach. The findings revealed that effective internal communication played a critical role in employee engagement and organizational performance and that Internal communication, employee engagement, and organizational performance are all positively linked. The results of the study can be useful to managers and human resources when

interventions for enhancing employee engagement and organizational performance are developed. The study recommends that employee engagement and organizational performance can only be achieved via effective internal communication as such management should aim at enhancing internal communication systems and enhanced employee engagement strategies which will in turn lead to organizational performance. it was also suggested internal communication and employee engagement is a strategic issue which management and HR professional should invest more resources enhancing internal communication systems and ensuring that management and workers have open lines of communication and that departments do not function in silos.

Keywords- *Communication, internal communication, employee engagement, organizational performance.*

INTRODUCTION

Businesses are looking to improve organizational performance to thrive and adapt to the various problems that they face in today's competitive world. To achieve better results and higher profit margins, organizations are implementing a wide range of developing business tools and management philosophies. Among these tools is internal communication. Internal communication is the foundation of all organizational strategies because it entails not only management and employees, but also good communication within an organization (Ikiseh, 2020) and has recently been identified as a method of communicating within businesses, according to recent research (Linjuan, 2014; Odine, 2015; Omilion-Hodges & Baker, 2014).

Employee engagement is facilitated through effective corporate communication. Employees feel more valued by the organization if they are allowed to participate in the decision-making process. Inadequate or limited employee involvement in decision-making results in low job satisfaction, organizational engagement, and employee engagement, which can also lead to a strong desire to resign (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). According to Roy (2020), one of the most crucial factors in reaching high levels of organizational success is clear and effective communication because of its direct impact on an organization's success. This is accomplished by bringing an organization's employees' behaviors following its mission and objectives (Dolphin, 2005; Yates, 2006) and also by fostering healthy connections between an organization and its employees (Hume, 2010; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1998). Strategic internal communication plays a significant role in engaging employees in the achievement of business objectives by promoting transparency and trust between management and employees. One of the most significant benefits of internal communication is its ability to

effectively communicate organizational values to all employees and encourage them to participate more actively in organizational goals (Welch, 2011). Internal communication is a technique used within an organization to provide and share information among personnel to develop a sense of community and trust (Karanges, Beatson, Johnston, & Lings, 2014). It has a duty of developing and nourishing employee relations, providing the timely and trustworthy information, and contributes to overall motivation, particularly in times of transition and stress," according to Chimielecki (2015). This leads to increased employee engagement, devotion to, and growth of corporate reputation and organizational prestige.

Employee engagement and internal communication are critical for maintaining a successful working relationship (Siddiqui & Sahar, 2019) as well as making a major contribution to the organization's efficiency, performance, and external customer orientation (Tkalac & Vokic', 2017; Downs & Adrian, 2004). Consulting firms and survey administrators have connected it to lower turnover, higher shareholder value, and as a motivator for outperforming the competition (Hayase, 2009). According to research, internal communication is a crucial driver of employee engagement, and companies that communicate effectively with their staff have higher levels of engagement (Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, & Lings, 2015). Employees with high levels of engagement are mentally and physically involved in their work and duties, they create an emotional connection with their work when they disclose this feature and when they perform the task (Meswantri & Awaludin, 2018). Additionally, having a highly engaged workforce not only maximizes an organization's investment in human capital and improves productivity, but significantly reduces costs, such as turnover, that have a direct impact on the bottom line (Harvard Business Review, 2013). As a result, to achieve

superior organizational results, firms must build a culture and atmosphere that supports employee engagement, as well as adopt numerous ways that enable employees to sustain their engagement. Among these dimensions, the influence of internal communication on employee engagement and organizational performance still requires more in-depth collaborations and dialogues. However, poor internal communication drastically impacts the conduct of the organization and most importantly affects employee engagement (Vora & Patra, 2017). As a result, this study will look into the influence of internal communication on employee engagement and organizational performance.

A range of factors has been shown to help or inhibit employee engagement. According to the Harvard Business Review, recognition of strong performers, a clear knowledge of how positions contribute to strategy, company-wide goal communication, and individual objectives matched with corporate goals, among other things, are all essential drivers of employee engagement. According to Sahoo & Sahu (2009), several important drivers of employee engagement contribute to the development of a road map for achieving organizational excellence. Among these factors is the nature of the job, the line of sight between employee and organizational performance, career advancement opportunities, connection with one's employer, employee growth, and pride in the firm, coworkers, and team members. As a result, firms must be aware of and implement several antecedents that aid and enable workers to become and remain engaged.

Problem Statement

Internal communication is a crucial driver of employee engagement, and companies that communicate effectively with their staff have high levels of engagement (Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, & Lings, 2015). Although employee engagement has gained significant traction in recent years, it is on the decline as the percentage of actively disengaged employees is on the rise (Bao, Arif, Omar, & Shaari, 2020; Gallup, 2013) leading to negative job attitudes, a lack of trust, a lack of teamwork, a high turnover rate, and low productivity, and in turn, it harms organizational performance (Allan, 2017). As a result, employee engagement and organizational performance have risen to the top of the priority list for organizations all over the world. Organizations must address this issue because employee engagement is critical to achieving higher organizational performance (Saxena, Rachna, & Bajpai, 2015). Many studies on employee engagement in organizations have previously been conducted as indicated by the literature review (Davardoost & Javadi, 2019; Lalic', Milic', & Stankovic', 2021; Anitha, 2014; Akanpaadgi & Binpimbu, 2021; Pandu & Sankar, 2020) though the focus is in other countries other than Zambia. Considering the economic weight of Social Enterprise organizations operating in Zambia, it is prudent that this study is undertaken to understand the impact of internal communication on employee engagement and organizational performance in these organizations. Critical literature is scarce on the issue, and little is known about how internal organizational communication influences employee engagement and organizational performance, particularly in the Zambian context. In this context, this study aims to examine how internal communication affects employee engagement and organizational performance in a selected Social Enterprise organization.

Significance of Research

The relevance of this study is that it seeks to improve the effectiveness of internal communications, employee engagement, and organizational performance in an organizational context. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of internal communication as a driver of employee engagement and organizational success. This study will offer insights to Human resources managers, Project managers/supervisors, and top management, who should recognize the significance of internal communication and leverage their internal communication mechanisms to achieve desired employee engagement levels. It also underscored the importance of building an effective internal communication strategy to make the workplace more engaged.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internal Communication

Internal communication is seen as an important factor in establishing and sustaining employee engagement in organizations (Welch, 2011). According to the Corporate Leadership Council, a variety of variables impact employee engagement (2004). It is operationally described as the informal and formal interchange of information between management and employees inside an organization (Balakrishnan & Masthan, 2013). The fundamental purpose of internal communications is to "establish and nurture employee connections, generate trust, offer timely and trustworthy information, and so contribute to overall motivation, especially during times of transition and stress" (Dolphin, 2005). According to Spitzer and Swider (2003), effective internal communication at all levels of a corporation must meet three core goals: The information communicated to the employee audience must be fully understood and accepted in terms of its content, intent, significance, and message quality; the communication's goal of

encouraging, guiding, updating, or gaining participation among the employee audience must be achieved by the majority of employees; and the outcomes of an effective internal communication must result in improving one or more of the key success factors, i.e. Argenti, (1998) (cited in Gondal and Shahbaz, 2012) the main objectives of internal communication with regard to its important role in an organization are: to develop a mutual feeling that employees are the vital resource for the organization; increase employee morale and promote goodwill among workers and management; make workers aware of internal changes; inform compensation and benefit plans; increase employee understanding of the firm and its products, the organization, ethics, culture, and the external environment; and inspire workers to become more productive, quality-oriented, and innovative. It serves as a powerful tool for providing information to employees and becomes one of the most important aspects in retaining personnel inside firms (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). Employee engagement, involvement, and commitment to achieving organizational business goals are currently one of the most important functions of internal communication, which heavily relies on two-way participative communication (Vora & Patra, 2017). Internal communications not only allow the firm to communicate information and knowledge among employees but also allow the leadership to meet and commit to the workforce. It also allows people to express themselves more freely. According to Davadoost and Javadi (2019), the contents of internal communications include: 1) the impact of employees, 2) individual influences, 3) group information, 4) project information, and 5) organizational issues. According to Cox (2014), the main focus of internal communications can be categorized as;

- Corporate strategy: Communicating the company's vision and principles, as well as ensuring that staff is informed of the

company's strategic direction taking and comprehending its future priorities.

- **Business development:** entails informing workers about what is going on around the business, conveying successes, identifying issues, and generally keeping the workforce up to date on industry news and enhancing internal brand awareness.
- **Change Management:** Keeping staff informed of any changes or restructures to the organization, such as new acquisitions, business integration, downsizing, and redundancies.
- **Employee Focus:** publicizing new staff changes, recruits, and promotions; encouraging cultural diversity, and increasing employee involvement
- **Communicating to employees:** Employee policy changes are distributed and explained, the communication process is streamlined, education and training are provided, and the problem of information overload is addressed.
- **Technological advancement:** Improving intranet functionality and features to increase employee engagement, as well as investigating collaborative and social platforms and how they might improve the internal communications experience.

There are various impediments to effective communication. Ikiseh (2017) states in a recent study that communication is a multifaceted and usually tough process for managers and employees. Communication barriers, on the other hand, are produced by both managers and employees and block or divert from the genuine meaning of a message, hindering clear, open, and appropriate workplace communication. A communication barrier is a factor that prevents an employee or employer from successfully receiving or interpreting a message sent to transmit information, ideas, or messages (Rani, 2016).

Employee Engagement

The term engagement has several meanings, but it is most generally described as how a person feels about the organization. The amount of discretionary effort that an employee is willing to put in is often referred to as engagement. Employee engagement is a relatively new concept that is gaining momentum in the corporate world (Hayase, 2009). stated that engagement is more than being satisfied with the job, it is about being innovative, creating, and being able to take personal responsibility to make things happen and not just work within the job needs (Phillips, 2014). Thus, the engagement of employees is an extent to which the employees of an organization feel passionate regarding their jobs (Anitha, 2014), become committed to their organization as well as put their discretionary efforts into the work they are assigned within the organization (Abukhalifeh & Som, 2013). According to Rich et al. (2010), employees that are engaged are often high performers, highly motivated, self-improvement-oriented, and productive. Employee engagement may be divided into three categories: engaged, disengaged, and actively disengaged (Akanpaadgi & Binpimbu, 2021). Employees who are engaged are considered the backbone of the organization, they are prepared to go to considerable lengths to ensure its success (Kataria, Garg, & Rastogi, 2013). They show better performance and competitiveness, increase customer satisfaction and participate in the organization's good reputation and managerial self-efficacy. Employees that are disengaged, on the other hand, wait to be told what to do before doing it, according to Gallup Consulting (2008). They are typically more focused on the task at hand than on the larger goals of the company. They are regularly made to feel uncomfortable, disrespected, and unappreciated. They intend to maintain senior management at a safe distance. Employees who are actively disengaged are critics; they act as hidden labels within an

organization, emerging to launch an attack against management or the organization as a whole, then withdrawing (Yuan & Lee, 2011). They hinder organizational progress. Increased operating costs due to waste, poor customer service resulting in customer dissatisfaction, high maintenance costs due to frequent equipment breakdowns, production of low-quality goods and services resulting in high returns inwards, high staff turnover, and absenteeism are just a few of the negative consequences of actively disengaged employees.

According to Markos & Srindev (2010) The main drivers of employee engagement, according to most research, include feeling appreciated by management, two-way communication between management and workers, management's concern for employees' well-being, and providing more possibilities for people to improve. Additionally, Swaminathan & Aramvalathan (2013) pointed out effective communication, work-life balance, organizational support and recognitions, good leadership, and professional advancement opportunities as drivers of employee engagement. However, Bao et al (2020) concluded that among all the factors, the effect of internal communication within an organization in influencing employee engagement still demands discussions and collaborations which are deeper. Several studies and practitioners have highlighted the beneficial relationship between internal communication and employee engagement. Internal communication, according to Welch (2011), is thought to be a significant aspect in building and maintaining employee engagement in the organization. According to researchers and academics, effective internal communication has a positive impact on developing and maintaining employee engagement, as well as making a significant contribution to the organization's productivity, performance, and external customer orientation (Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, & Lings, 2015; Welch, 2011). Internal

communication has been proven to be particularly crucial to highly engaged workers and has been highlighted as a precondition for employee engagement (Tkalac & Vokic', 2017).

Organizational Performance

In many research, organizational performance has emerged as a crucial element in predicting employee success (Wall, et al., 2004). Several companies believe that their staff give a substantial competitive advantage, and as a consequence, they contribute to the organization's success (Brewster, et al., 2003). employees are crucial to organizational success and the quality of employees at all levels of the organization has a substantial influence on organizational performance (Gondal & Shahbaz, 2012; Akanpaadgi & Binpimbu, 2021; Gallup Consulting, 2008; Abu Khalifeh & Som, 2013). Good employee engagement practices, according to Bakker and Schaufeli (2008), create a positive working environment for employees by providing them with various opportunities to share their ideas, suggestions, and development opportunities. These Employees are motivated to offer their best by these methods, which have a good impact on them. These findings are consistent with Gallup Consulting (2008), Sundaray (2011), Kazimoto (2016), Bhatla (2011), and Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014) findings from a comprehensive study on the link between employee engagement and organizational performance, which indicated that a very significant positive association between employee engagement and organizational success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

a) *Procedure*

The researcher followed a qualitative research approach which allowed the researcher to choose between a better grasp of the problem and gaining greater insight into the study as a means of determining the study's authenticity and goals. All study participants received a study synopsis and gave verbal consent to participate in the study. In-depth input was obtained through face-face interviews and Google meet in instances where participants were out of station.

b) *Interview Participants*

Full time employees in managerial positions/roles were the study's target group. Purposive sampling was utilized to recruit participants. Managers working in a selected social enterprise organization served as the study's unit of analysis. Purposive sampling made it easier to recruit information rich individuals on the subject. The participant's organizational roles were Department managers, project managers, site managers etc. who are constantly engaged with employees.

c) *Data Quality and integrity*

Ethical concerns were strictly followed and a pilot study was done. In a pre-test, the researcher looked for signs of ambiguous questions and respondent misunderstandings. In other words, it attempted to determine whether all respondents understood the questions in the same way. The pilot study was crucial because this was an exploratory study. To ensure the study's significance, feedback on the study and the type and structure of the questions was required, in addition to testing the formulated questions for the interview.

d) *Ethical considerations*

The research ethical codes employed in this study were confidentiality, anonymity, respect, integrity, and responsibility. The inquiry

uncovered ethical concerns concerning concealment, which was the study's primary concern. Verbal consent was obtained for the organization and research participants involved in the study. This was due to the request by management of the organization to keep the name of the organization, participants, and locations be changed/withheld to protect the strategic and private information of the company. The purpose of this study was disclosed to participants at their location before data collection, and participation was entirely voluntary, with confidentiality and anonymity maintained. All published and unpublished materials that were used were appropriately credited.

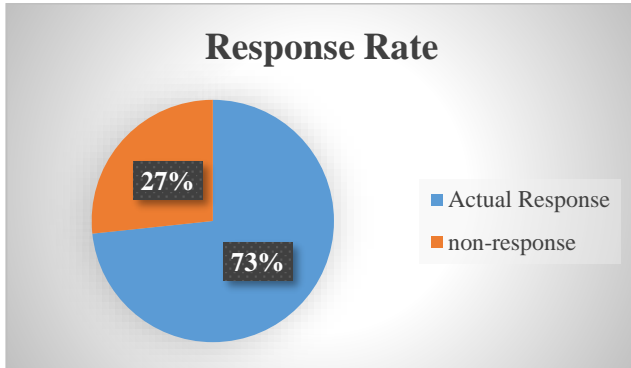
e) *Analysis*

The goal of this study was to gain a better understanding of the influence of internal communication on employee engagement and organizational performance. Managers' perspectives on internal communication and how it affects employee engagement and organizational performance were gathered. All interviews with participants were recorded and carefully analysed to ensure that the rich information from participants has been extracted, transcribed, and coded. This investigation took a content analysis approach. It was used to examine the data gathered from research participants, and various units emerged as themes or units of analysis based on common traits identified during the participant's interviews. Thematic connections established through content analysis as part of a research plan were used to provide a comprehensive review of the subjects that emerged. From content and thematic analysis, six themes emerged: 1) Communication within the organization, 2) the barriers to effective internal communication, 3) employee commitment to organizational development, 4) Contribution to performance, 5) Opportunity to learn and grow, 6) impact on the organizational image.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

a) Response Rate

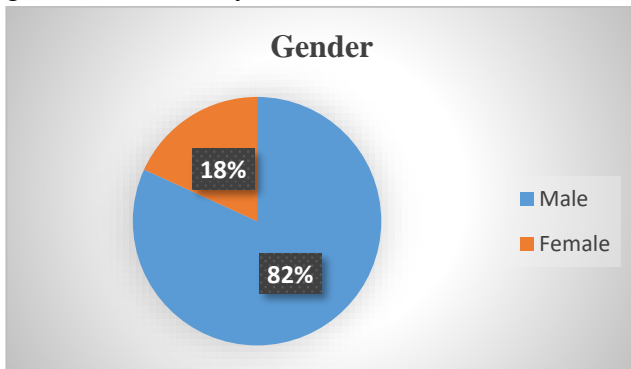
The following table shows the response rate from the interview guide administered to respondents who agreed to take part in the study.



From this study, only 11 participants managed to participate in the study representing 73% response rate.

b) Gender

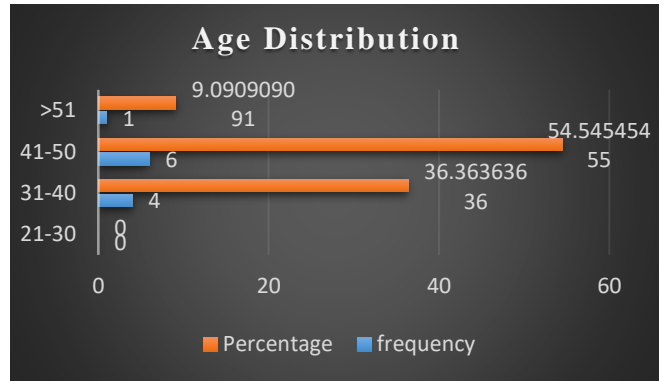
The table below shows research participants gender in the study



Males outnumbered females among Managers. Throughout data collection, male dominance stressed their eagerness, if not drive, to complete this study properly. The low proportion of female Managers reflected, to some extent, the organization's commitment to specific critical projects at the time of the survey. Only a few women-led the organization, with the great majority of men working as custodians in their many departments. The eleven people who responded were around 81.8% male and 18.2% female. This had a substantial impact on the study

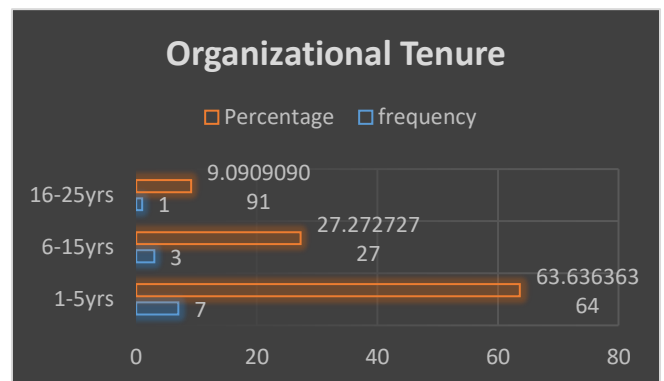
because just a small number of females were available to participate.

c) Age distribution



Participants ranged in age from 41 to 50 years old (54.6%), 31 to 40 years old (36.4%), and more than 51 years old (9.1%), implying that they were the only people in these age groups who could take participate. The age difference between the phrases also reflected the level of experience.

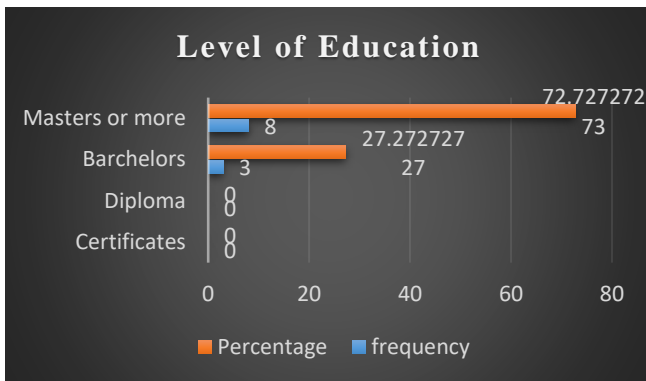
d) Organizational tenure



In terms of organizational tenure, 63.6 % of Respondents had been with the organization for 1-5 years. 27.3% of respondents have been with the company for 6-15 years, while 9.1 % have been with the company for 16-25 years.

e) Level of education

The table below shows the highest level of education attained by the respondents



Master's degree or above was held by 74.5%, while a bachelor's degree was held by 35.5%.

f) Communication within the organization

Communication within the organization and among personnel was the first subject that arose from the interview. This subject was significant as it demonstrated the respondents' degree of awareness of internal communication as a foundation for excellence and successful communication at work. Participants had a high-level awareness of internal communication and they were able to define it in various ways and had a shared understanding of internal communication through their various definitions and ideas. For example, here are two of many responses noted from participants:

“Internal communication is information sharing within an organization. how information is shared in and among employees within an organization. How information flows from top management to employees and back up within an organization”. “it is the collective effort of an organization's members to gather and share information. This means that management is engaged in the process of communicating to the workforce either downward or upward from the employees”.

The empirical findings of this study indicate that participants viewed internal communication as a strategic function that facilitated the flow of information across all levels of an organization. The literature supported the empirical findings, revealing that there are numerous definitions of internal communication, making it difficult for organizations to understand the impact and influence of internal communication (Jackson and Welch, 2007).

A majority (Over 90%) claimed that internal communication played a critical role in the dissemination of information including offering feedback, keeping information flowing, creating a common understanding within the team, keeping employees informed, maintaining information flow, fostering cooperation and coordination among team members, and facilitates communicating the company's strategies/milestones/updates/accolades in various forms, as well as improving open information flow across departments.

As one respondent mentioned

“Internal communication aids open and transparent communication ensuring that there is clarity of expectations from both management and staff and creates an enabling and good work environment which boost employee engagement as it fosters cooperation and coordination among team members”.

Additionally, participants indicated that internal communication “helped keep employees informed while building a shared understanding of the company's goals, objectives, and processes”. Participants viewed internal communication as a tool for informing employees about current business operations, offering a voice of authority and trust to fight rumours, and fostering efficient, clear communication among departments. This is supported by the works of Dortok (2006) who discovered that internal

communication has strategic role in motivating employees to add value to the organization's reputation.

From the above statements from respondents, it shows that respondents had a high awareness of internal communication and the role it played in enhancing employee engagement within the organization.

g) The barriers to effective communication

respondents were asked to identify barriers to effective internal communication that they encounter within the organization. the biggest barriers to delivering effective internal communication identified were lack of communication from top management, too many communication channels, an overreliance on one communication channel, information overload, technology change, the formation of toxic cliques between managers and close employees, and withholding information (graph 1).

Four of the most common barriers which respondent related to were lack of top-down, suppression of information, lack of accessibility to communication platforms and information overload. The biggest barrier noted by all participants was the lack of communication

coming down from top management. This was evident as a few respondents were noted:

"The lack of communication coming down from management had a huge impact on the effectiveness of internal communication as it created bottlenecks and blockages which results in departments working in silos, coursing duplication of work or work being done is not necessary or work is being rushed, and missed deadlines".

Another respondent noted:

"In our organization, technology change in my opinion is one of the challenges of internal communication because when new technologies are introduced into the company it takes time for staff to adapt to the new change in the technology employed to facilitate internal communication. For example, the use of cloud technology as a data storage medium".

Suppression of information and lack of access to communication platforms were also identified as barriers to effective internal communication. Participants felt that it was a hindrance to effective internal communication. A few respondents noted;

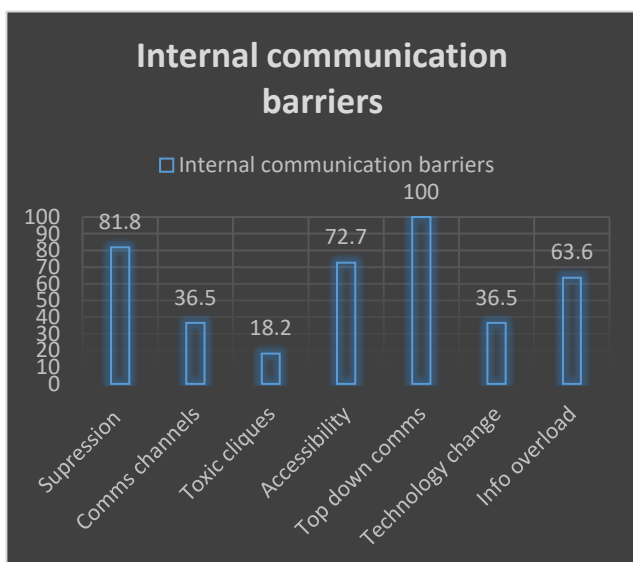
"It creates a gap in information flow leaving employees uninformed".

"Causes delayed information flow making employees miss out on essential information".

In summary, various barriers were found to inhibit effective internal communication within the organization.

h) Employees committed to organizational development

Participants asserted numerous beliefs and notions concerning employee contribution to the organizational development, communication processes, and level of engagement. This theme was also crucial and significant in terms of employee engagement because it sought to



examine whether or not employees were engaged. The empirical findings from this subject were relevant and valuable in terms of the state of employee engagement since they gave insight into employee engagement. According to the findings, most employees were committed to their daily responsibilities and felt a sense of belonging to the organization. Respondents attributed this to organizational involvement and efficient internal communication, such as employee participation in planning meetings as it installs interest and dedication to work. Few respondents noted few factors which contributed to employee commitment to organizational development and these were:

“By actively participating inefficient internal communication, employee engagement is enhanced”.

“Commitment was related to personal development/progression, personal wellbeing in the organization, and how people felt they were treated.”

“Planning activities as a team with other departments such as weekly and monthly planning and review meetings improve their commitment to work, motivated them to be more organized and dedicated”.

Various activities to promote employee engagement and participation were implemented by the organization as noted by the study findings. participants indicated several activities/programs utilized by the organization to ensure that employees are reminded and appraised of their role in achieving corporate goals by sticking of company goals, vision, and mission in visible areas within and around offices (talking walls). Additionally, holding in house workshops periodically to reaffirm the company's goals and ensure that *“employees know them by heart and can apply them to their daily work.*

One respondent noted that:

“That the company has put in deliberate measure to ensure that the employees can define what the company wants to achieve and at the same time their role in it. The company has provided an elaborate boarding system that ensures that new employee is run through and strategic plan shared with each employee for reference to ensure they are informed of the organization's goals and objectives.”

In a nutshell, this them revealed various strategies employed by the organization to ensure that employees were fully engaged within the organization such as employee participation in planning meetings, staff development plans, employee straining and skill development programs. This allowed employee calibration and career growth and motivated them to be more organized and dedicated to achieving organizational goals.

i) Contribution to organizational performance

This theme revealed the recognition of employee contribution to organizational success and performance. all participants highlighted that employees were at the heart of organizational performance and were the basis upon which the firm grew and that the organization would never succeed without their continuing enthusiasm, support, and drive.

100% of Respondents admitted that employees contributed considerably to the company's performance because they work relentlessly to ensure its success and that the organization has been investing significantly in enhancing employee engagement to improve work quality, productivity, and retention of top performers. As one of the participants described:

“There can be no success without workers since it needs a concentrated effort and organized coordination among employees who all know what they are expected to do”.

All of the respondents claimed that their organization acknowledges and honours employees' efforts by conferring various prizes, promotions, and bonuses based on outstanding performance. According to one respondent, *“the organization holds annual events to celebrate employees who have excelled”*.

One respondent indicated that:

“Recognizing employees' efforts and contributions drive other employees to work harder and accomplish even better, as well as ensuring that staff remain devoted and feel a part of the team”.

The results in this them indicated that engaged employees were considered as the foundation on which organizational performance was based and the organization recognized their contributions. This was attributed to effective internal communication as employees were well informed.

j) Opportunity to Learn and Grow

Opportunity to learn and grow was another theme which emerged in the interviews. All participants (100%) indicated that their organization provided in-house training and scholarships for employees to advance their skills. The empirical findings revealed that the organization provides opportunities for personal growth and development, as well as new abilities, to assist employees to become top achievers. It the findings revealed that providing such opportunities for worker advancement is advantageous to the organization. In order to promote opportunities for employees to grow within the organization, key performance indicators (KPIs) according to the respondents were set for each employee and used to assess training requirements, targeted training developed to increase skill development for employees. as one of the respondents noted:

“The organization provides opportunities for growth and opportunities for personal development within the organization. It has put in place deliberate measures to ensure that every employee has a skill/career development plan. if there is an opening within the organization, internal staff are encouraged to apply for such position and if their qualifications meet minimum requirements of that position are considered and that is a way of providing opportunities for staff to grow and develop. Education-wise, the organization has put in place a fund to support employees who want to advance their career can tap in.”

Employee engagement and organizational performance were mentioned as advantages of providing opportunities to employees. Respondents believed that investing in employee development was essential as it worked both ways, the company gets the best out of it and the employee gets the best out of it as well because they feel more confident about what they are delivering to the organization. In a nutshell, this theme revealed that the organization offered opportunities for employee growth and development as a strategy to promote employee engagement will lead to organization performance and reputation.

k) Impact on Organizational image

Another major finding from the analysis of participants' responses was the significance of internal communication's contributions to the organization's image and engagement. Participants claimed that internal communication played a vital role in building and promoting the organization's image. Few respondents were noted:

“Employees are the company's ambassadors to the outside world, and the better the employee experience is as a result of adequate communication and involvement internally,

the more favourable external assessments the organization receives”.

“Internal communication enables employees to be well-informed and well-informed employees produces results and improved organizational performance and in turn organizational reputation.

“well-informed employees as brand ambassadors because they spread positive ideas about the company through word of mouth or social media, which helps to boost the image of an organization”.

In all, the last theme showed that employees contributed significantly to the image of the organization and internal communication played a primary role in contributing to this. This is consistent with Dortok (2006)'s observation that internal communication is crucial in inspiring employees to bring value to the company image, hence driving it ahead. Employees can either directly or indirectly contribute to enhance the company's Image and financial performance. Investing in internal communication benefits the company's reputation.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study's findings revealed that respondents had a deeper understanding of internal communication and had a high level of understanding of the role of internal communication as a strategic function that improves employee engagement and how it affects the organization's image and success.

The findings revealed that employee participation and involvement in organizational activities increased employee contribution, level of engagement, and understanding of the organization's mission, objectives, and goals. The data also suggested that employees were the cornerstone and driving force of the organization and their contributions to organizational success were acknowledged. The findings also revealed that a variety of programs were put in place to

empower employees' careers by establishing development plans and a fund to promote employee career development and progress. This contributed to organizational image externally as it in turn lead to organizational performance. Overall, the findings demonstrate the importance of efficient internal communication for employee engagement and organizational effectiveness. There is a favorable correlation between internal communication, employee engagement, and organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to look at the role of internal communication as a driver of employee engagement and organizational performance. The study relied heavily on the respondents' views, perceptions, ideas, and experiences as primary contributors to data acquired. The research also reviewed the literature to identify common fundamentals between the results and the literature.

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