

The Influence of Executive Leadership Communication on the Development of Internal Organizational Culture: A Case Study of ICEA LION Group Kenya

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Abstract

Communication styles and practices employed by executive leaders significantly shape the internal communication culture, influencing how information flows, how employees perceive leadership, and the overall effectiveness of internal communication efforts. The research will investigate how leadership communication influences internal organizational culture within ICEA LION Group, Kenya. Communication styles and practices employed by executive leaders significantly shape the internal communication culture, influencing not only how information flows across departments and hierarchical levels but also how employees interpret and respond to leadership directives. These communication behaviors play a critical role in establishing the tone, transparency, and openness of organizational discourse, which in turn affects employee morale, trust, and alignment with corporate goals. Effective leadership communication fosters a culture of collaboration, inclusivity, and responsiveness, while poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, disengagement, and a breakdown in organizational cohesion. In this context, the research will investigate how leadership communication influences internal organizational culture within ICEA LION Group, Kenya, a leading financial services provider in the region. The study seeks to understand the extent to which executive leaders' communication choices—ranging from the channels they use to the tone and frequency of their messaging, impact employee perceptions, engagement, and loyalty. By examining the interplay between leadership communication and organizational culture, the research aims to uncover patterns that either enhance or hinder internal cohesion and performance. The study will be guided by the Media Richness theory and the leader-member exchange theory. The study sample will include 10 executive leaders at the ICEA LION Group head office and 40 employees in the head office. The study will adopt a mixed-methods approach and data will be collected through employee surveys and in-depth interviews of the executive leaders. It is anticipated that the findings of the research study will provide actionable insights for ICEA LION Group and other corporate organizations seeking to enhance their internal organizational culture through strategic leadership communication. By understanding the nuances of executive communication and its impact on employee perceptions and behaviors, organizations can cultivate a more open, collaborative, and engaged workforce, thereby contributing to improved organizational performance and overall success.

Keywords: Leadership Communication, Internal Organizational Culture, Employees, Staff Engagement, Case Study, Internal Communication, Corporate Culture

1.0 Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, executive leadership communication plays a pivotal role in shaping and sustaining organizational culture (Hogan & Coote, 2014). Organizational culture, the shared assumptions, values, and behaviors that characterize an organization, directly influences employee engagement, motivation, and overall organizational

effectiveness (Schein, 2010). Executive leaders, through their communication practices, profoundly impact how these cultural elements are communicated, reinforced, or transformed within the internal environment of organizations.

Recent scholarship emphasizes that communication is not merely a transactional tool but a strategic mechanism that executive leaders use to guide meaning-making processes, align organizational members with vision and goals, and foster a coherent culture that can drive performance and innovation (Men, 2014; Tourish, 2019). Effective leadership communication encompasses clarity, consistency, transparency, and adaptability, which collectively enhance trust and collaboration among employees (Clampitt & Downs, 2017).

The ICEA LION Group Kenya, a leading insurance and financial services conglomerate, offers an illuminating case for exploring the influence of executive leadership communication on internal culture. This study investigates the communication strategies employed by ICEA LION's executive team and examines their effects on cultural cohesion, employee identification with corporate values, and workplace behaviors.

Executive Leadership Communication and Internal Organizational Culture

Executive leadership communication is a critical determinant of internal organizational culture, shaping the environment in which employees operate and interact. Effective communication from the top fosters transparency, trust, and a shared understanding of organizational values, which are cornerstones of a strong internal culture (Hogan & Coote, 2014). Leaders who communicate consistently, openly, and authentically create a culture where employees feel valued, informed, and aligned with the organization's mission (Men, 2014; Tourish, 2019).

Research demonstrates that leadership communication sets the tone for workplace culture by establishing behavioral norms and expectations (Tsai, 2011). Clear communication from executives not only disseminates vital information but also plays an essential role in building employee engagement, reducing uncertainty, and increasing commitment (Davidburkus, 2025). For example, leaders who actively engage with employees through regular updates, feedback mechanisms, and storytelling strengthen emotional connection and cultural cohesion (Clampitt & Downs, 2017).

Conversely, poor leadership communication can undermine organizational culture, breeding mistrust, disengagement, and ambiguity about roles and goals (Cheesman, 2024). Ineffective

communication creates barriers that isolate employees from the corporate vision, leading to reduced morale and productivity.

Leadership communication is thus a strategic lever by which culture is cultivated. By carefully choosing communication channels, styles, and strategies, executives can influence not only what messages get delivered but also how they are perceived and internalized, ultimately impacting organizational identity and effectiveness (Hogan & Coote, 2014; Loeb Leadership, 2024).

2.0 Research Objectives

The study adopted the following objectives to guide its investigation into the role of executive leadership communication in shaping internal organizational culture at ICEA LION Group, Kenya:

- 1. To investigate the communication channels used by ICEA LION Group's executive leaders and their influence on employee organizational commitment.** This objective seeks to identify the various formal and informal communication platforms, such as emails, meetings, memos, digital collaboration tools, and face-to-face interactions, utilized by top leadership. It aims to assess how these channels affect employees' sense of belonging, motivation, and alignment with the organization's mission and values. Understanding the effectiveness and accessibility of these channels will provide insights into how communication infrastructure supports or hinders employee commitment.
- 2. To find out the dominant communication styles used by leaders at ICEA LION Group Kenya and their influence on employee engagement on company matters with customers.** This objective focuses on exploring whether leaders predominantly use assertive, participative, directive, or supportive communication styles, and how these styles impact employees' willingness and ability to engage with organizational initiatives, especially those involving customer service and client relations. The study will examine how leadership tone, clarity, empathy, and responsiveness contribute to employees' active involvement in representing the company externally.
- 3. To analyse the communication strategies employed by ICEA LION Group leaders and their role in building employee trust and loyalty to the brand.** This objective aims to evaluate the strategic approaches leaders take in their messaging, such as transparency, consistency, storytelling, and feedback mechanisms, and how these strategies foster a culture of trust. It will also explore how such communication influences employees'

emotional connection to the brand, their advocacy for the organization, and their long-term loyalty.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

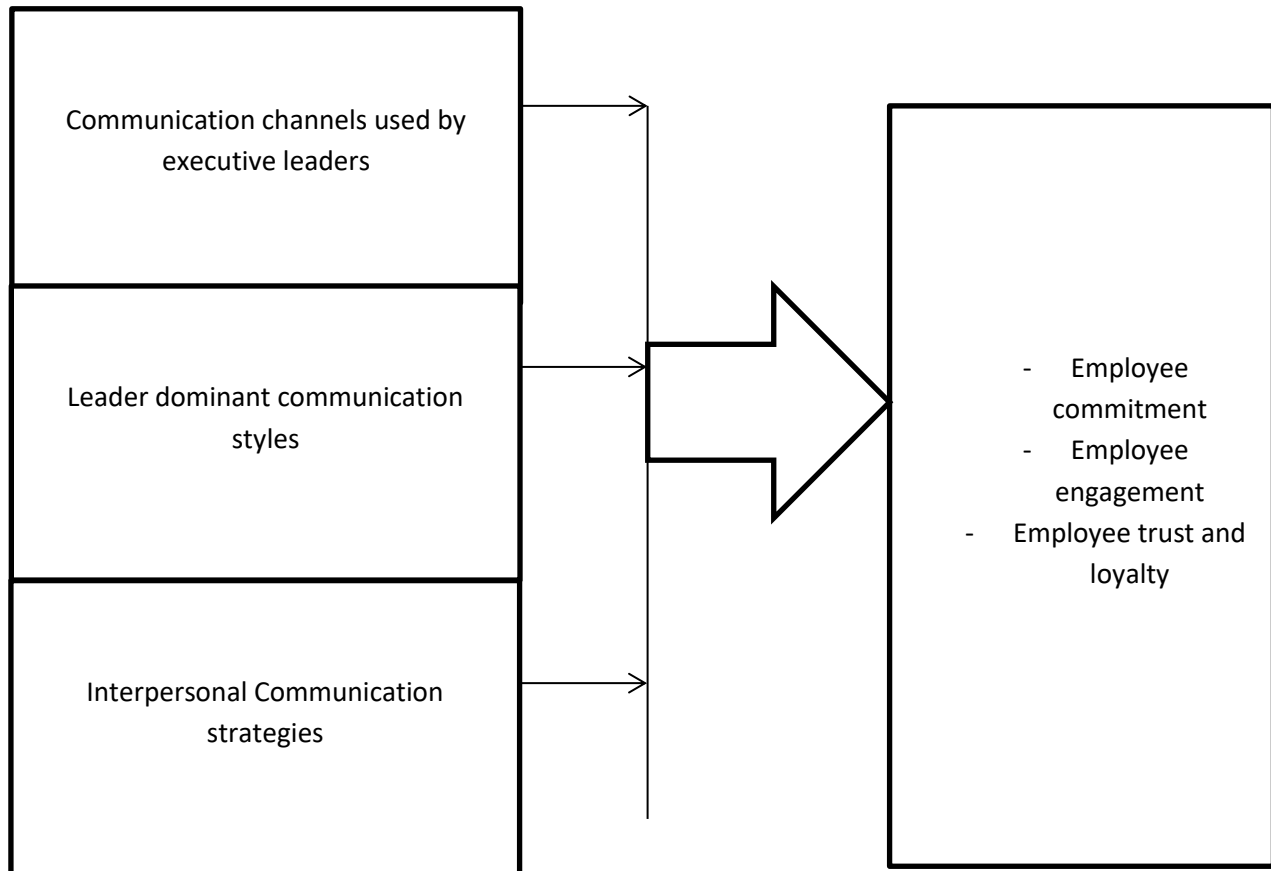
The study was guided by two theories: Media Richness Theory, developed by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel, in 1980s posits that communication channels differ in their capacity to convey information and ranks communication channels from the richest to the lean. A "rich" medium is one that allows for multiple cues (e.g., verbal, non-verbal), immediate feedback, language variety, and personal focus. Examples include face-to-face conversations. A "lean" medium, conversely, offers fewer cues and less immediate feedback, such as a formal memo or email. The theory suggests that for complex, ambiguous, or sensitive messages (such as strategic changes, performance feedback, or messages intended to foster emotional connection and commitment), richer media are more effective. If ICEA LION's executive leaders primarily rely on lean channels (e.g., mass emails, formal newsletters) for critical information or messages meant to inspire commitment, MRT would predict a potential deficiency in comprehension, emotional resonance, and subsequently, lower employee commitment. Conversely, the strategic use of rich channels (e.g. one-on-one meetings, live Q&A sessions) for such messages could significantly enhance understanding, build rapport, and strengthen employees' bond with the organization. This theory helps explain why certain channel choices might lead to specific commitment levels to employees. The second theory is the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory developed in 1995, initially proposed by George Graen and Fred Dansereau, focuses on the unique, dyadic relationships that leaders develop with individual members of their team. It suggests that leaders do not treat all subordinates uniformly; instead, they form different types of relationships, ranging from high-quality "in-group" relationships characterized by trust, respect, and mutual obligation, to low-quality "out-group" relationships based more on formal roles and contractual obligations. High-quality LMX relationships involve more communication, mutual support, and broader responsibilities. LMX theory provides a powerful framework for dissecting the second and third objectives, which explore dominant communication styles, employee engagement, trust, and loyalty. The theory states that the "dominant communication styles" of leaders directly influence the quality of the LMX relationships they form. Leaders who employ open, supportive, participative, and empowering communication styles are more likely to foster high-quality LMXs. Employees in these high-quality relationships receive more information, support, and feel more

valued, leading to higher levels of intrinsic motivation and engagement. When employees feel a strong, trusting bond with their leaders (a high LMX), they are more likely to be proactive, take initiative, and be highly engaged in company matters, including their interactions with customers, as they see their work as contributing to a shared vision rather than just a duty. Also, building employee trust and loyalty, as per the third objective, is a natural outcome of consistent, high-quality LMX relationships. Leaders who demonstrate integrity, provide clear communication, offer support, and involve employees in decision-making (all elements of communication strategies that foster high LMX) cultivate deeper trust. This trust, in turn, translates into greater loyalty to the brand, as employees feel respected, understood, and a meaningful part of the organization. LMX theory illuminates how the daily communication patterns and relational dynamics between leaders and employees directly contribute to these crucial outcomes.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

I.V Executive Leadership Communication

D.V Internal organizational Culture



3.2 Empirical Review

Communication Channels Used by Executive Leaders and Their Influence on Employee Organizational Commitment

Effective communication channels utilized by executive leaders significantly impact employee organizational commitment. Studies highlight that transparent, open, and multidirectional communication promotes higher levels of affective commitment, which is the emotional attachment that employees feel towards their organization (Afolabi & Akinbo, 2021). Digital and face-to-face channels both play vital roles; however, the clarity and consistency of messages across these mediums strengthen trust and reduce uncertainty among employees (Boss & Harvey, 2017). Bosco and Harvey (2017) reveal that innovative communication tools coupled with inspirational leadership enhance employees' psychological attachment, reinforcing their loyalty and continuance commitment. Transparency in communication is also found to mediate the

relationship between leadership communication and employee commitment, underscoring the importance of clear and honest messaging (Kwame & Amissah, 2024).

Research also indicates that multiple communication channels such as face-to-face meetings, emails, mobile messaging apps, intranet, and video conferencing are widely utilized by leadership to engage employees (Miheo, 2020). Multi-channel communication enhances message dissemination, enabling consistent and timely updates that foster organizational integration (Ma et al., 2022). For instance, mobile messaging apps like WhatsApp allow instant updates and two-way communication, especially effective during crises or urgent matters (Afolabi & Akinbo, 2021).

The quality and satisfaction derived from communication channels have a positive correlation with employee affective commitment—the emotional attachment to the organization (Afolabi & Akinbo, 2021; Bosco & Harvey, 2017). Open channels that encourage dialogue and feedback empower employees, making them feel valued, which increases commitment levels (Bosco & Harvey, 2017).

Moreover, research emphasizes that internal communication quality, including information flow, adequacy, and feedback, significantly predicts organizational commitment. Feedback mechanisms are vital, as they offer employees opportunities to influence organizational processes, enhancing their normative and continuance commitment (Ma et al., 2022). However, overreliance on one-way channels, inconsistent communication, and jargon use can hinder engagement and reduce commitment (Miheo, 2020).

Effective leadership communication channels thus serve not only as conduits of information but as platforms for cultivating trust, belonging, and long-term commitment, underscoring the strategic importance of channel selection and management (Afolabi & Akinbo, 2021; Ma et al., 2022).

Dominant Communication Styles Used by Organizational Leaders and Their Influence on Employee Engagement on Company Matters

Leadership communication style profoundly affects employee engagement, defined as the level of an employee's emotional and cognitive involvement with their work and organization. Inspirational and transformational leadership styles characterized by open dialogue, active listening, and empathetic messaging foster higher engagement (Toseef et al., 2022). Studies show that leaders who use consultative and participative communication styles empower employees to contribute ideas and feel valued, which boosts their intrinsic motivation and engagement levels

(Men, 2014). Conversely, autocratic communication is linked to diminished engagement and lower trust in management (Clampitt & Downs, 2017).

Research shows transformational leadership, characterized by inspirational, visionary, and motivational communication, has the strongest positive impact on employee engagement. It fosters a sense of purpose, belonging, and intrinsic motivation, contributing to sustained high performance and organizational commitment (Ahmad et al., 2023; Bosco & Harvey, 2017).

Transactional leadership, emphasizing directive and task-oriented communication, demonstrates moderate positive effects on employee engagement. While it clarifies expectations and incentivizes performance, its influence on long-term engagement is less profound than transformational styles (Srivastava et al., 2025). Conversely, laissez-faire leadership, which lacks active communication and guidance, negatively correlates with engagement, often leading to disengagement and higher turnover (Srivastava et al., 2025).

Literature also highlights the positive effect of participative and coaching communication styles, which encourage inclusiveness, feedback, and employee development. Such styles elevate engagement by making employees feel valued and involved in decision-making processes (Jillo, 2023; Zanabazar, 2023). Autocratic or top-down communication styles tend to reduce engagement by limiting dialogue and employee voice (Jillo, 2023).

Further empirical evidence shows that effective leadership communication improves not only engagement but also outcomes such as job satisfaction, innovation behavior, and loyalty (Mphaluwa, 2025; Gameda, 2020). Leadership styles that balance directive clarity with emotional support, best foster a culture of enthusiastic employee participation (Yan et al., 2021).

The Communication Strategies Employed by Organization Leaders and their Role in Building Employee Trust and Loyalty to the Brand

Strategic communication by organization leaders is essential in cultivating employee trust and brand loyalty. Effective internal communication that consistently aligns leadership vision with employee values enhances transparency and reduces ambiguity about organizational goals (Men, 2014). Communication strategies that emphasize narrative storytelling, frequent updates, and recognition of employee contributions strengthen identification with the corporate brand, fostering loyalty (Tourish, 2019). Moreover, reciprocal communication that enables feedback mechanisms reinforces trust, demonstrating leadership's commitment to employee perspectives and well-being (Hogan & Coote, 2014).

Conversely, lack of transparency, inconsistent messaging, and neglect of feedback channels damage trust and reduce loyalty, negatively impacting retention and brand advocacy (Loeb Leadership, 2024; Ivey Business Journal, 2017). Hence, strategic leadership communication that is authentic, adaptive, and achievement-oriented creates a culture conducive to trust, loyalty, and high performance (AMA, 2024).

4.0 Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach to examine the relationship between executive leadership communication and internal organizational culture at ICEA LION Group Kenya. The quantitative design allowed for statistical analysis to determine the strength and direction of associations between communication variables and cultural outcomes such as employee commitment, engagement, trust, and loyalty (Creswell, 2014).

Population and Sampling

The study population comprised 40 employees at all levels within ICEA LION Group Kenya. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across departments and hierarchical levels, improving the generalizability of results.

Data Collection Instrument

Data was collected using a structured online questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale items adapted from validated instruments measuring aspects in the study objectives. The questionnaires were administered electronically via the organization's internal communication systems, with anonymity assured to improve response honesty. Data collection is scheduled over a four-week period in the month of July 2024.

Data Analysis

The Collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize respondent demographics and communication behaviors.

5.0 Study Findings

Demographics

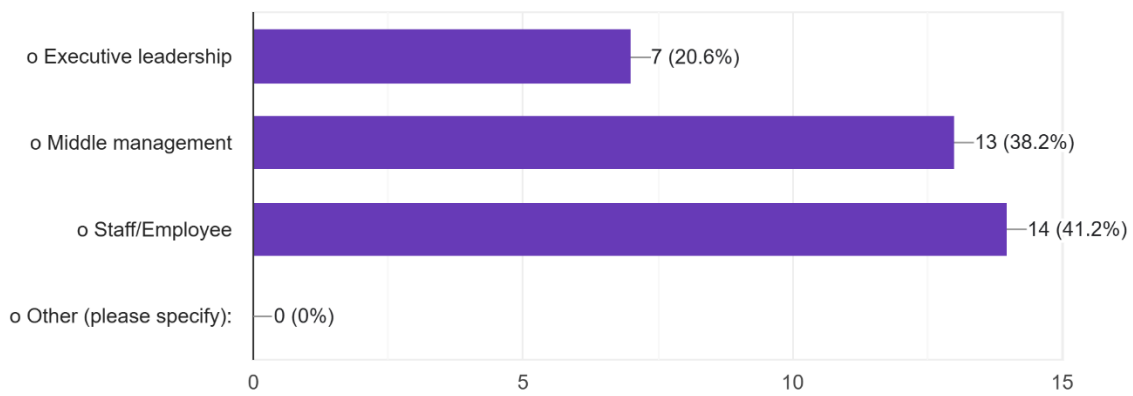
The study sought to establish the profile of the respondents in the survey in terms of their roles in the organization.

20.6% of respondents identified as part of the executive leadership. This group includes senior leaders responsible for strategic communication and decision-making within the organization. The Middle Management had 38.2% of respondents represent middle management roles. These

individuals typically act as intermediaries between senior leadership and staff, playing a crucial role in communicating executive messages and fostering organizational culture, 7% of respondents hold leadership roles outside of the executive and middle management tiers, contributing to operational management and team leadership and the largest group, constituting 41.2% of respondents, were staff or employees who engage with leadership communication and organizational culture from the frontline perspective. This is presented in the figure below:

Section A: Respondent Profile What is your role in the organization?

34 responses

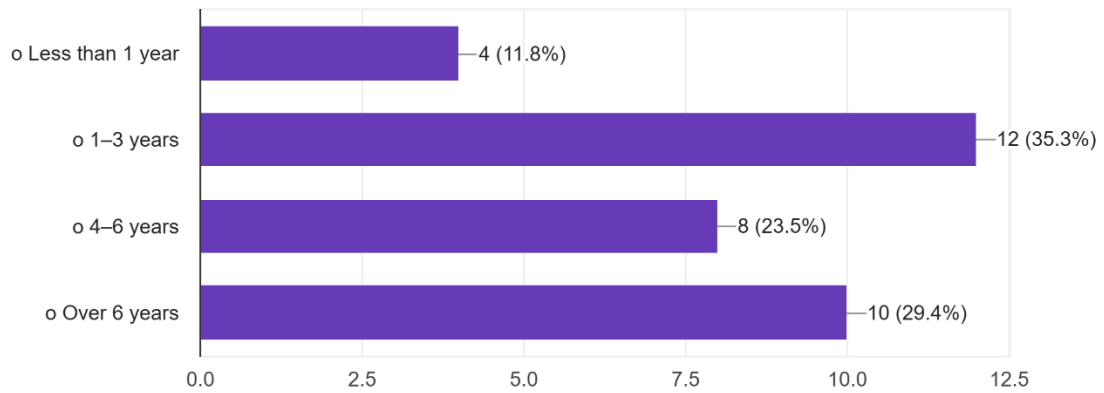


Period of Time Worked in ICEA

The study findings revealed that the organization’s workforce includes a healthy mix of newer employees and those with substantial experience at ICEA LION. Approximately one-third of the respondents have been with the company for more than six years, suggesting a solid core of long-term employees contributing institutional knowledge and stability. Meanwhile, the significant proportion (just over a third) with 1-3 years reflects relatively recent growth and potential for fresh perspectives.

How long have you been with ICEA LION Group?

34 responses

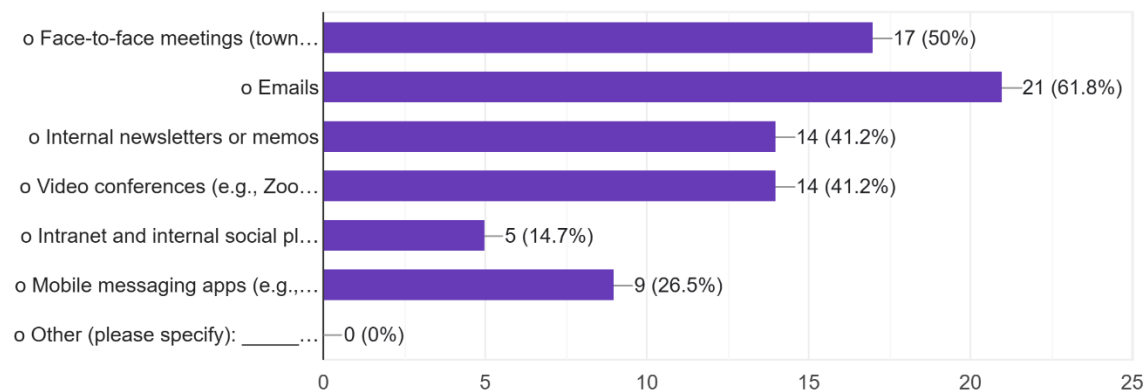


5.1.1. Communication Channels Used by Executive Leaders

The study identified a diverse range of communication channels employed by executive leaders at ICEA LION Group. Employees were given options to select multiple channels through which they receive executive communications. The primary channels identified included face-to face meetings, emails, internal newsletters and memos, video conferences, intranet and internet and mobile messaging apps. Emails are the most frequently used while the intranet and internal social media platforms are the least used. This is presented in the figure below.

Section B: Communication Channels Used by Executive Leaders Which communication channels do executive leaders primarily use to communicate with employees? (Select all that apply)

34 responses



5.1.2. Communication Channels Usage Frequency

Email communication stands out as the most frequent and consistent method through which executive leaders at ICEA LION Group deliver messages to employees. It serves as a reliable and accessible platform for disseminating official updates, strategic directives, and organizational announcements. The structured nature of email allows for clarity, documentation, and broad reach, making it the preferred channel for routine communication across departments and hierarchical levels.

In addition to email, departmental and team meetings play a vital role in cascading information throughout the organization. These meetings, often facilitated by line managers, provide opportunities for contextualizing executive messages, clarifying expectations, and encouraging dialogue. Line managers act as crucial intermediaries, translating high-level communication into actionable insights for their teams and ensuring that employees remain aligned with organizational goals.

Channels such as the company intranet and internal memos are used more selectively, typically serving formal or archival functions. The intranet acts as a repository for policy documents, strategic plans, and performance reports, while internal memos are employed for official notices and procedural updates. Although these platforms are not as frequently accessed as email or meetings, they contribute to maintaining institutional memory and ensuring compliance with organizational standards.

Less frequent but still important are face-to-face executive interactions, mobile messaging apps like WhatsApp, and internal newsletters. These channels are generally reserved for specific announcements, urgent updates, or situational needs such as crisis communication, celebratory messages, or leadership transitions. Face-to-face engagements, though limited in frequency, are highly valued by employees for their personal touch and authenticity. Mobile messaging apps offer speed and immediacy, particularly in time-sensitive scenarios, while newsletters provide curated content that reinforces company culture and highlights achievements.

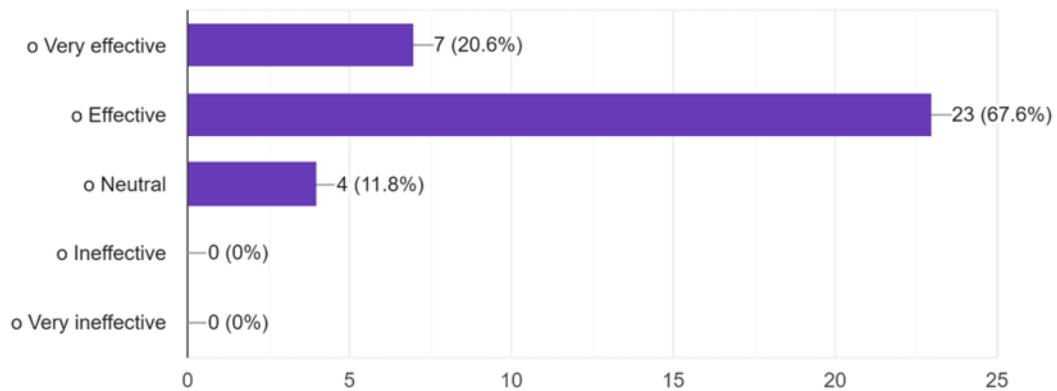
Together, these communication channels form a layered and complementary system that supports the flow of information, reinforces leadership visibility, and contributes to a cohesive internal communication strategy.

5.1.3. Perceived Effectiveness of Communication Channels

Employees' perceptions of effectiveness (Likert scale: 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree) are crucial for understanding the true impact of communication efforts. The data is captured in the figure below:

How effective are these communication channels in fostering your commitment to ICEA LION Group?

34 responses



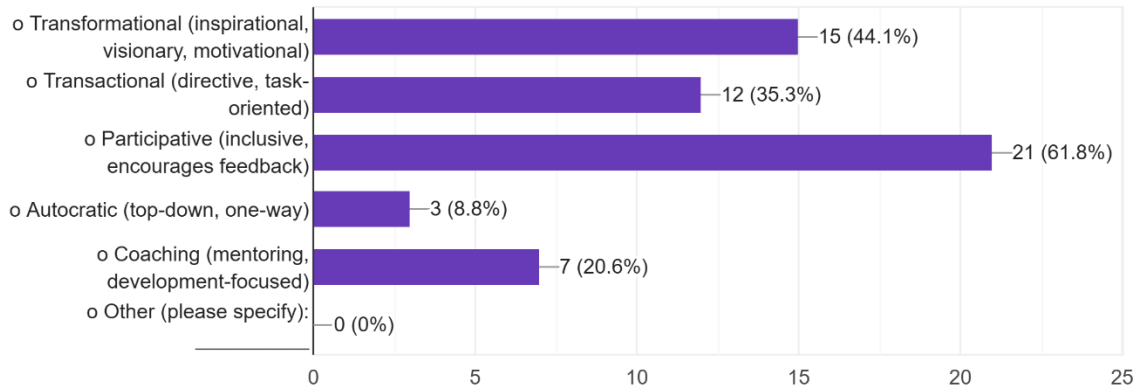
Channels that allow direct interaction and real-time feedback, such as all-staff meetings and informal face-to-face engagements, were rated highly effective for understanding leadership messages and organizational direction. Email was generally seen as an effective information dissemination tool, though engagement through it may vary. The intranet and internal memos were considered reliable but less engaging. Less frequent channels like SMS, WhatsApp, and newsletters served specific, often urgent communication needs but varied in perceived impact depending on content quality and frequency.

Objective 2: Communication Styles & Employee Engagement

This section focused on how leaders' communication styles influence employee engagement, particularly in interactions related to company matters with customers. While specific survey questions were not detailed, the objective implies an assessment of various communication styles and their observed outcomes. The findings are indicated in the figure below:

Section C: Dominant Communication Styles of Organizational Leaders How would you describe the communication style most commonly used by the executive leaders?

34 responses

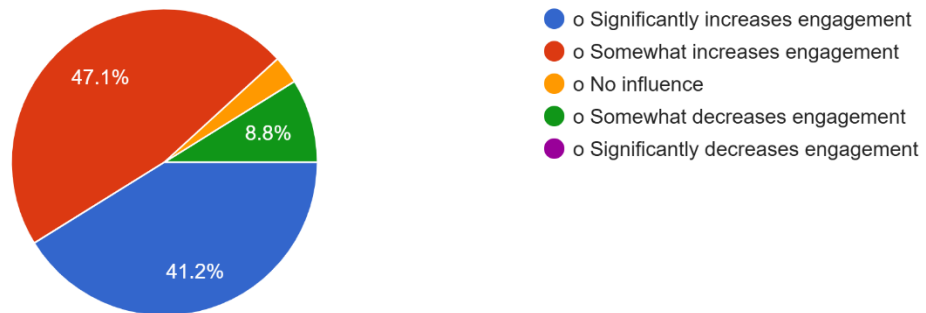


Leadership communication styles that emphasize openness, support, participation, and coaching were associated with higher employee engagement levels. Such styles empower employees to take initiative, contribute ideas, and confidently represent company values, particularly in customer interactions. Conversely, directive, unclear, or disconnected communication approaches tended to reduce engagement, potentially limiting employees’ proactive involvement and effectiveness.

Influence of Communication Styles on Employee Engagement

How does this communication style influence your engagement with company matters?

34 responses

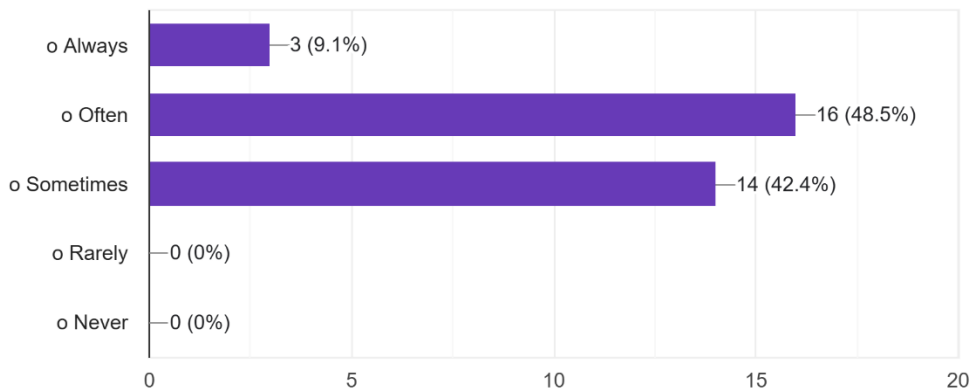


From the data collected, the finding indicates that 47.1% reported that communication styles by the leaders influence their engagement on company matters, 41.2% reported that it significantly

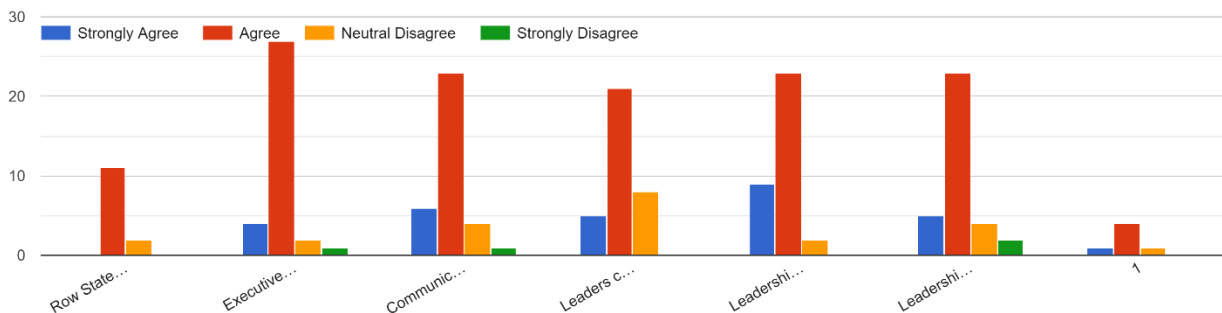
influenced engagement while 8.8% reported that leader’s communications styles decrease engagement.

Do executive leaders encourage dialogue and feedback from employees through their communication style?

33 responses



Section D: Communication Strategies and Their Role in Building Trust and Loyalty Please rate the following statements regarding leadership communication strategies at ICEA LION Group:



How Communication Strategies Influence Customer Loyalty and Commitment to the ICEA LION brand

The study findings reveal that leadership communication strategies have a profound and far-reaching impact on employee loyalty and commitment to the ICEA LION brand, which in turn influences how employees represent the organization to customers. Respondents consistently emphasized that transparent, timely, and personalized communication from executive leaders fosters a sense of respect, recognition, and emotional connection among employees. When leaders communicate openly about organizational goals, challenges, and achievements, employees feel

more informed and included, which strengthens their identification with the company and its values.

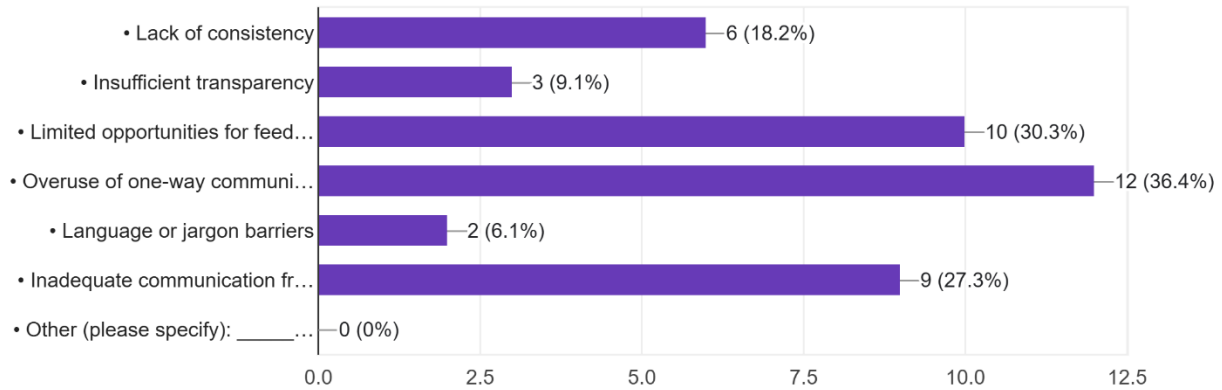
This sense of connection is not merely symbolic; it translates into tangible behaviours that affect customer experiences. Employees who feel valued and engaged are more likely to go the extra mile in their interactions with clients, embodying the brand's promise and delivering service with authenticity and care. Respondents noted that when leadership communication is clear and consistent, it creates a ripple effect that enhances internal morale and external brand perception.

In addition to communication, respondents acknowledged that other factors such as recognition, rewards, and career development opportunities also play a critical role in reinforcing loyalty. However, they emphasized that these elements are most effective when accompanied by strong communication. For instance, recognition programs that are well-communicated and publicly acknowledged tend to have a greater impact than those that are inconsistently applied or poorly explained. Employees reported that feeling seen and appreciated by leadership, through both words and actions, deepens their commitment to the organization and motivates them to uphold its reputation.

Furthermore, the study highlighted that effective communication helps employees stay grounded in the company's mission and aligned with its customer service ethos. When leaders actively listen, respond to concerns, and provide regular updates, employees are more likely to trust the organization and advocate for its brand. This trust becomes a cornerstone of brand loyalty, not only internally but also in the way employees engage with customers, reinforcing ICEA LION's image as a reliable and people-centered organization.

Section E: General Perceptions and Recommendations What are the main challenges you experience with leadership communication in the organization? (Select all that apply)

33 responses



6.0 Recommendations for Improvement

The findings of this study reveal several actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing leadership communication within ICEA LION Group. Employees emphasized the need for more frequent and meaningful engagement sessions between executive leaders and staff. These sessions should go beyond formal meetings to include interactive forums where employees feel encouraged to share ideas, raise concerns, and contribute to organizational dialogue. Regular feedback mechanisms were also highlighted as essential, with employees calling for structured opportunities to voice their experiences and receive timely responses from leadership.

Expanding the range of communication channels was another key recommendation. While traditional methods such as emails and memos remain important, employees expressed a desire for more dynamic and inclusive platforms, including internal social networks, digital dashboards, and real-time messaging tools. These channels can help bridge communication gaps, especially across departments and hierarchical levels, and foster a more connected workplace.

Transparency emerged as a recurring theme, with respondents urging leaders to be more open about organizational developments, strategic decisions, and performance metrics. Employees noted that when leaders communicate candidly and consistently, it builds trust and reinforces a sense of shared purpose. There was also a strong call for executives to be more approachable and responsive, demonstrating active listening and empathy in their interactions with staff.

Additionally, respondents recommended improvements in coaching and mentoring practices. Informal conversations, one-on-one check-ins, and leadership walkabouts were seen as valuable tools for strengthening relationships and cultivating a supportive internal culture. Some employees expressed concern that certain leaders appeared disconnected from frontline realities, underscoring the importance of staying attuned to day-to-day challenges and employee experiences.

Overall, the recommendations point to a clear need for leadership to adopt a more participatory, transparent, and empathetic communication approach. Doing so will not only enhance employee engagement and trust but also contribute to a more resilient and high-performing organizational culture.

7.0 Discussions

The study's findings corroborate extensive literature that effective leadership communication is both a driver and a reflection of healthy organizational culture. ICEA LION's communication practices, while strong in some channels and styles, show opportunities for greater frequency, inclusivity, and digital engagement to boost employee connection, trust, and culture.

The reliance on emails as the most frequent communication channel aligns with industry observations that formal written communication is vital for broad reach and record-keeping but may lack engagement (Aquino et al., 2023). The higher perceived effectiveness of face-to-face and interactive meetings accords with academy research suggesting that real-time, two-way communication builds trust and clarity, essential for culture-building (Manurung et al., 2023).

Lower usage of intranet and internal newsletters reflects a trend where digital platforms often serve as reference tools, but their engagement potential depends heavily on content relevance and usability (Mousena & Raptis, 2020). This observation suggests ICEA LION could explore enhancing intranet functionality and content curation to increase staff engagement.

The positive association between participative, open, and coaching leadership communication styles and higher employee engagement reaffirms key theoretical frameworks emphasizing the motivational power of inclusive, empathetic communication (Kraus et al., 2023). Leaders who empower employees and encourage feedback foster an environment conducive to engagement and innovation (Eddington et al., 2020).

Conversely, styles characterized by autocracy or disengagement, which are linked to lower engagement, support literature warnings that top-down communication risks dampening creativity

and employee morale (Barbaros, 2020). This underscores the critical need for ICEA LION leaders to balance directive clarity with employee feedback on leadership communication's role in fostering loyalty through transparency, personalization, and prompt responses. It aligns with the broader research that robust two-way leadership communication strengthens emotional bonds that employees have with their organizations (Aquino et al., 2023; Perrin, 2024). Recognition and respect through communication are vital for nurturing this loyalty (Manurung et al., 2023).

However, calls for more frequent, open, and approachable communication reflect a common cultural challenge in large organizations: maintaining close leadership connection with frontline realities (Margolis & Mayo, Harvard Business School). Addressing this gap is paramount for sustaining trust and engagement.

8.0 Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the data collected, the study proposes a series of strategic recommendations aimed at strengthening leadership communication and enhancing the internal communication culture at ICEA LION Group. These recommendations are designed to address the gaps identified in employee feedback and to support the development of a more transparent, responsive, and engaging communication environment.

Optimize the Communication Channel Mix by Leveraging Interactive Platform: ICEA LION Group is encouraged to diversify and enhance its communication channels to better meet the needs of a modern, dynamic workforce. This includes increasing the frequency and quality of all-staff meetings, town halls, and other forums that allow for direct interaction between executive leaders and employees. Both formal and informal face-to-face engagements should be prioritized to foster openness, build rapport, and encourage real-time feedback. Digital platforms such as the company intranet, internal newsletters, and employee portals should be revitalized to deliver content that is not only informative but also engaging, visually appealing, and interactive. Content should be tailored to different employee segments, incorporating multimedia elements, storytelling, and opportunities for feedback to ensure relevance and resonance.

Strategic Use of Quick Communication Channels for Urgent Messaging: The study recommends that leadership adopt a more deliberate approach to using rapid communication tools such as SMS and WhatsApp. These channels should be reserved for urgent, time-sensitive updates and critical alerts, rather than complex or nuanced communications. This ensures clarity and avoids information overload. Additionally, ICEA LION Group should invest in training executive

communicators on how to craft messages that are clear, concise, and empathetic across all platforms. This training should emphasize tone, emotional intelligence, and audience awareness to improve message reception and impact.

Anticipate and Address Frequently Asked Questions and Employee Concerns: Proactive communication is essential in building trust and reducing uncertainty. Leaders should anticipate common employee questions and concerns, especially during major organizational changes, strategic shifts, or policy updates. Developing pre-emptive communication materials such as FAQs, explainer videos, and briefing documents can help clarify intentions, reduce speculation, and demonstrate transparency.

Strengthen Departmental Communication and Empower Line Managers: The study highlights the importance of ensuring that information cascades from executive leadership to departmental teams in a consistent, timely, and clear manner. Departmental meetings should be structured to allow for two-way dialogue, where employees can ask questions, share feedback, and receive updates. Line managers play a pivotal role in this process and should be equipped with the tools, training, and support needed to act as effective communication conduits. Their ability to interpret and relay executive messaging accurately and empathetically is critical to maintaining alignment and trust across the organization.

Foster a Culture of Continuous Communication and Feedback: Finally, ICEA LION Group should embed communication as a continuous process rather than a periodic event. This involves creating regular touchpoints for feedback, encouraging open dialogue across all levels, and integrating communication metrics into leadership performance evaluations. By doing so, the organization can ensure that communication remains a strategic priority and evolves in response to employee needs and organizational goals.

9.0 Conclusion

The investigation into executive communication channels and leadership styles at ICEA LION Group underscores their profound and multifaceted influence on employee organizational commitment, engagement, and overall workplace dynamics. The study reveals that the methods through which leaders communicate, the frequency and transparency of their messaging, and the relational tone they adopt are not merely operational choices but strategic levers that shape employee perceptions, motivation, and alignment with the company's mission. These

communication practices directly affect how employees interact with one another, how they represent the organization to external stakeholders, and how they internalize their roles within the broader corporate framework.

By strategically optimizing communication channels to ensure accessibility, responsiveness, and relevance, ICEA LION Group can foster a more inclusive and informed internal environment. Prioritizing clarity in leadership messaging helps eliminate ambiguity, reduce misinformation, and build a culture of trust and accountability. Furthermore, the deliberate cultivation of effective leadership communication styles, whether participative, transformational, or supportive, can significantly enhance employee morale, encourage initiative, and strengthen the emotional connection between staff and the organization.

Such improvements in internal communication are not isolated benefits but ripple outward, influencing customer experiences, brand reputation, and long-term organizational resilience. A workforce that feels heard, valued, and well-informed is more likely to be proactive, loyal, and innovative, thereby driving sustained business performance and customer satisfaction. Ultimately, the findings of this study provide ICEA LION Group with actionable insights to refine its leadership communication strategies, reinforcing the critical role of executive messaging in shaping a vibrant, engaged, and high-performing organizational culture.

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