The Mediation of Employee-Organisation Relations on the Nexus of Internal Communication and Employee Engagement: The Case of Presbyterian University, Ghana.

Mr. Daniel Siaw Agyemang[1], Mrs. Francisca Serwaa Adamah[2]

[1]Junior Assistant Registrar, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Presbyterian University, Ghana

[2]Acting Registrar, Registry, Presbyterian University, Ghana

Abstract

The study examined the mediation of Employee-organisation Relations on the nexus of internal communication and employee engagement of employees in the Presbyterian University, Ghana. The study used a quantitative approach and administered closed-ended questionnaires. The study was conducted using a sample size of one hundred and fifty employees which is the corresponding size for the population of two hundred forty-five using Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination. The variable used was subjected to reliability test showed internal consistency by Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. . The obtained data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS) and Structural equation modelling. Using the individual employees as the unit of analysis, three hypotheses were formulated to test the relationship. The outcomes conclude that there are positive and strong relationship of employee-organisation relations on both internal communication and employee engagement but no impact as a mediating role on the nexus of internal communication efforts and employee engagement

Keywords: Employee engagement; employee-organisation relations, internal communication; tertiary educational context.

1.   Introduction

Institutions rely on their employees to carry out tasks and engage in critical thinking that contributes to their achievements. The study includes a cohort of persons who are recognised as workers of the institutions, representing them. Workers are individuals who engage in labour and serve as formal representatives for an organisation. According to academic research, "employees" refer to individuals who are hired by a company inside an organisational framework, including both managers and the workers they supervise (Dhingra et al., 2021; Rogers, 2018). Nonetheless, examining how internally communicative features affects employee engagement has become a subject of investigation in multiple research (McLarty et al., 2021). The link that prevails among employee stations as well as behaviours has been examined in previous studies (Argenti, 2017; Holland et al., 2017) in relation to accomplishing

institutional goals (Hallahan et al., 2007; Thomas et al., 2009). Although institutions establish clear visions and strategies to guide their actions in structuring and developing their operations, they face challenges when personnel do not align their behaviour with the intended goals, objectives, and missions. However, the studies provide significant insight into the behaviours and organisational relations that indicate the level of motivation, dedication, and involvement of workers in their workplaces.

It is explained by Odeba, et al (2021), employee-organisation relations refer to the policies and procedures that govern the relationships between a company, its employees, and groups of workers in a workplace. The study aimed to convey that employee-organisation relations as a crucial factor in determining workplace performance. Furthermore, research has shown that numerous establishments fail to acknowledge the significance of employee-organisation connections. This study is based on the neglect of an important factor in the formation and success of institutional image. Employee-organisation relations refer to the potential and valid connection between a company and its employees. Organisational relationships facilitate mutually beneficial interaction within firms to accomplish corporate goals through activities like as inquiry, recruitment, and training and development (Ngari & Agusioma, 2016).

Researchers must tolerate an institution that is unable to consistently enhance interdependent processes until it progressively rectifies the interpersonal relationships within the institution. In order to achieve that objective, it is essential to establish strong and effective relationships between each organisation and its employees. Ngari and Agusioma (2016) argued that establishing an Employee-Organisation Relations (EOR) can ensure that employers exercise their legal powers and responsibilities in a manner that enables workers to actively participate in determining the terms and conditions of their employment. Considering that it has been proven that EOR is a vital determinant of employee productivity, this forms the basis for the inquiry. Moreover, research suggests that many institutions do not prioritise EOR. This study focuses on the essential component of institutional image building and achievement, which is sometimes is disregarded, among other features.

Furthermore, research revealed that a stronger bond between individuals enhances the probability of them engaging in conversations about their views and expressing the significance of the relationship to them (Madlock & Booth-Butterfield, 2008). Ghana, being classified as a high context society, is closely associated with this issue within organisations. Existing research has previously demonstrated that internal communications play a crucial role in fostering employee engagement, whether it is done formally or informally. Despite the high level of social adaptability in Ghanaian society, the lack of clear internal communication channels can hinder effective engagement of employees in understanding and actively participating in the organisation's vision or strategic direction (Obuobisa-Darko, and Domfeh, 2019).

This study examined the interdependence of employee-organisation connections, specifically focusing on how internal communication and employee engagement are interconnected. Literature has shown that numerous institutions strive to safeguard their commercial image by inadequately and effectively cultivating positive relationships with their essential stakeholders, namely, the workforce. The study aims to evaluate, explore, and clarify theconnection between employee-organisation interactions and the advantages of effectivecommunication and employee engagement, as previously noted.

This study aimed to ascertain the correlation between internal communication and employee engagement, as well as the role of employee-organization relations as a mediator. An observed phenomenon is that institutions that effectively interact with their employees create an environment in which employees demonstrate belief in the institution's objective and consequentlyencounter fewer difficulties during their workday. Internal communication is considered essential for engagement, since scientific research confirms this idea. The current data primarily consist of surveys and studies undertaken by private consulting firms, which provide limited information oncommunication and engagement. The present study offers empirical evidence on the correlation between internal communication and employee engagement, taking into account the mediating influence of employee-organisation interactions. Furthermore, studies on this matter have been carried out in several nations except Ghana (Kang & Sung, 2017). This study aims to fill these voids.

The study as already intimated explores the specific connection between internal communication and its impact on employee engagement, which in turn contributes to the success of the organisation through employee-organisation relations. This study is specifically pertinent to Presbyterian University, Ghana, which is an approved private University that offers tertiary education and research to people worldwide. Furthermore, this study will provide suggestions to alleviate the potential adverse impacts on Presbyterian University, Ghana.

Research on the mediation of employee-organisation relations on internal communication and employee engagement have been carried out in several nations with limited studies on Ghana using the PUG as a case, the objectives of the research were to:
1. assess the extent of mediating role of employee-organisation relations on the nexus between internal communication and employee engagement.
2. examine the nexus between internal communication and employee engagement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

From the introduction, which gives the background to this study, it has been established that employee-organisation relations is one of the major factors of institutional performance. In addition, studies have shown that many organizations do not give employee-organisation relations the necessary priority attention. This critical aspect of organizational culture building and success being neglected forms the basis for this study. Another aspect of concern in this study is the relatedness or the nexus of internal communication and employee engagement. Studies have revealed that many organisations rush to project their organisational culture without properly and adequately establishing a good relationship with their most important people – their employees. It is in view of the foregoing that this study is undertaken to review, explain and clarify the mediating role of employee-organisation relations and the implications on the nexus of internal communications between employee engagements to enhance a successful employer-employee relations in the organisation (Ellis, Bauer and Erdogan, 2017).

2.1 Employee-Organisation Relations (EOR)

Employee-organisation relations (EOR) have been extensively studied by scholars and are considered a crucial factor that links management practices and plans to measurable corporate results, such as the quality of patron's service, loyalty of workers, and work fulfilment. An Employee-organisation relation is

a comprehensive word used to define the connection between a person and the institution they work for (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2007). The term generally encompasses ideas such as the innate agreement and supposed institutional sustenance at the individual stage, as well as the engagement connection at the organisational stage. This principle of mutuality is the primary context used to understand and analyse the mechanism of the EOR (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

Also, employee-organisation relations refers to the policies and practices which are concerned with the management and regulation of relationships between an organisation, the staff member, and groups of staff within work settings. Employee-organisation relations facilitate mutually beneficial relationships with workers and the organisation to achieve organisational objectives through employee development, satisfaction and trust (Ngari and Agusioma, 2016).

The study of employee-organisation relations has received less attention in communication research, despite its significant impact on institutional effectiveness and success. A number of surveys have specifically evaluated EOR, such as the study conducted by Kim & Rhee in 2011. However, in recent times, several researchers have begun to investigate the connections between internal communications and institutional performance. For instance, Meng and Berger (2012) explored this topic. They have observed that effective internal communications play a crucial role in cultivating stronger relationships with employees and promoting employee engagement. This study built upon previous scholarly efforts by investigating the impact of employee engagement and institutional relationships on employee outcomes, specifically in the context of employee communication behaviours and loyalty intention. The study will explore how a company's internal communication efforts can influence employees' perception of relationship outcomes and their subsequent communication behaviours. Additionally, the study investigates how these complex interconnections result in employee behaviours related to external communication.

The authors, Odeba, et al. (2021), accordingly intimated that employee-organisation relations encompass the policies and procedures that govern the administration and control of interactions between an institution, individual employees, and groups of employees in a work environment. The study would demonstrate that employee-organisation relations are a crucial determinant of work performance (Ngari & Agusioma, 2016). In order to accomplish this, establishing healthy relationships between superiors and employees is fundamental. Effective organisational relationships between managers and their staff can ensure that the tasks assigned by law are fulfilled in an environment that encourages employees to actively participate in resolving issues related to their working circumstances (Ngari & Agusioma, 2016).

The research suggests that an institution's ability to communicate is crucial for its survival, as stated by EOR (Nwammuo and Nkwam Uwaoma, 2017). The significance of employee-organisation connections in this study stems from the fact that internal communication and employee engagement theories encompass all forms of relationships and communication pertaining to the establishment and maintenance of interactions.

2.2 Concept of Internal Communications

Internal communication has been identified as a critical factor that influences employer branding by serving as a means to convey organisational values and employment benefits to employees (Verčić and Špoljarić, 2023). Furthermore, internal communication has a significant influence on organisational performance by facilitating the exchange of information among staff, ensuring alignment with organisational principles, and coordinating work activities. Ultimately, this demonstrates a direct impact on the overall performance in public institutions (Salim, 2022). Internal communication is an essential process within an organisation that facilitates interactive exchanges and promotes unity and trust among organisational members (Ryynanen, Pekkarinen and Salminen, 2012). Developing and maintaining relationships among the organisation, managers, and staff is crucial for fostering a sense of unity and trust through internal communication (Hume and Leonard, 2013). Within the workplace, employees form various relationships, but two specific relationships have a significant influence on their professional lives: their relationship with the organisation and with their immediate superior, which are referred to as social exchange relationships (Sluss, Klimchak, and Holmes 2008).

2.3 Relationship between EOR and Internal Communications

Richard (1989) intimated that the organisation is about results and people bring out the results. It therefore followed that people are a main concern and focus of any progressive management. The nature of relationship between the employer and the employee; the manager and the subordinate is attributed to constitute a relations closeness or distance in the relationship. It is expected to attract a level of commitment owing to the efficiency of organisational communication.

Further, Kim and Rhee (2011) proposed that organisations should treat their employee-organisation relations in the like manner as their relationships with other people. They argued that operational communication programmes should be built on principles of strategic management, an integrated communication functionality, and the leadership role, as well as the two-way balanced model of relations. By theorising the connection between internal communication and effective employee communication initiatives, it is further suggested that high-quality employee communication can ultimately lead to positive employee relationships and supportive employee behaviours towards the organisation (Narteh, 2012). Internal communication, also known as communication efforts for synergetic purposes, is typically characterised by its focus on trust, credibility, openness, reciprocity, network symmetry, horizontal communication, feedback, and negotiation (Kim and Rhee, 2011).

H₁: Organisations' internal communications efforts will be positively related with good EORs.

2.4 Concept of Employee Engagement

Employees are fundamental assets for organisational success. Their engagement strongly influences goal achievement and institutional effectiveness. While employee engagement lacks a unified definition, it ensured job satisfaction, involvement, commitment, and citizenship behaviour.

In addition, employee engagement represents a fundamental determinant of organizational success and sustainability. The multifaceted nature of workforce commitment significantly influences the attainment of corporate objectives and organizational effectiveness. While scholarly discourse presents diverse

conceptualizations of employee engagement, the construct encompasses several critical dimensions, including job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour, institutional loyalty, and positive workplace deportment. However, employee engagement is understood on how well workers undertake their roles. Employee engagement is mostly characterised by mindedness in one's duties as an employee and member of a team in an organisation (Welch, 2011).

The enhancing employee engagement, investigations from organisational communications intimated that effective internal communication within organisations is crucial for influencing employee perceptions and behaviours. Research conducted by Kim (2018) has revealed that the quality and transparency of internal communication have a substantial impact on employee trust, organisational legitimacy, and engagement. Research conducted by Gomes et al. (2023) has demonstrated that the perception of internal communication, particularly in the context of remote work, significantly influences both the flow of organisational information and the level of employee engagement.

Consequently, engaged employees manifest characteristics contrary to occupational exhaustion, demonstrating cognitive absorption, affective attachment, and proactive behaviours consonant with organizational imperatives (Eldor, & Harpaz, (2016)). This engagement transcends prescribed role obligations, as employees voluntarily extend discretionary effort beyond formal requirements, and goes beyond basic duties, requiring additional personal effort. Despite varying definitions, employee engagement clearly connects to improved corporate performance through physical, cognitive, and emotional investment in work roles that build relations for the organisation (Lee et al, 2022).

2.5 Relationship between Internal Communications and Employee Engagement

Internal communication plays a crucial role in the dissemination, support, and exchange of these variables. The proposed link between internal communication and employee engagement, whether implied or explicitly stated, could lead to further research that either confirms or challenges this notion. While achieving effective communication should be a primary goal for any organization, it is essential to recognize that communication alone is merely the starting point. A lack of open communication within an organization can have harmful effects, forcing employees to speculate, rely on rumours, and seek information about their company from external sources like the media (Hoover, 2005). During times of change and difficulty, effective communication is vital for maintaining a firm's viability. According to Hoover (2005), effective communication is key to keeping staff engaged and ensuring organizational progress, even in times of crisis. Conversely, the absence of communication can create a "discrepancy between the information employees receive from their manager and what they observe in the media. This, in turn, results in unfocused and demotivated employees who experience a sense of distrust stemming from a lack of transparency, regardless of whether it is actual or perceived" Hoover (2005). To maximise their effectiveness, organisations should develop a communication plan that prioritises internal messaging and media while remaining adaptable to external messages.

H₂: The perceived quality of internal communication will lead to high Employee Engagement level.

2.6 Relationship between EOR and Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has changed over time, much like the development of EOR. In the past, engagement meant how well someone did their job. From the employee's view, engagement means being fully involved and committed to work as part of a team (Rothmann, 2016). Kim & Rhee (2011) defined employee engagement by comparing it to burnout. They saw engagement as the opposite of stress, describing it with energy, involvement, and effectiveness. Maslach and Leiter (1997) said employee engagement is a positive and rewarding feeling related to work, marked by energy, dedication, and focus. It is different from a short-term engagement.

The link possibly to be developed between employee engagement and EOR is both conceptually and empirically suggested in literature. Also, there exist a positive relationship between employee engagement and the quality of relatedness has been strongly implied in literature. Employee trust and satisfaction are the bedrocks of quality relationships, thereby enhancing engagement (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006). This showed the importance of a beneficial relationship for active participation.

2.7 The mediation of Employee-Organisation Relations (EOR) on the nexus of Internal Communication and Employee Engagement

EOR serves as the intermediary connecting internal communication and employee engagement. Although the literature strongly suggests a direct connection between internal communication and employee engagement, the current study investigates the Employee-organisation Relations (EOR) as a mediator between internal communication and employee engagement. Research on employee engagement has shown that trust and satisfaction play a crucial role in driving employee engagement. It is valuable to examine the significant impact of these relational concepts (trust and satisfaction, as well as commitment and control mutuality) on the connection between internal communication and employee engagement. The lack of essential factors that promote engagement in the overall model highlights the significant role of EOR as the primary intermediary between internal communication and employee engagement. Intercommunication and staff involvement (Imam, Sahi, & Farasat, 2022).

Research has indicated that the efficiency of internal communication is a significant predictor of an organisation's achievement (e.g. Welch, 2012). Meng & Berger (2012) argue that effective internal communications in organisations typically provide future-oriented values, such as providing advice on issues and identifying possible growth prospects for investors. Employee engagement has become increasingly important for companies as they have come to understand its impact on key business outcomes such as performance, innovation, and productivity (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008).

Furthermore, EOR in tertiary educational institutions are an intricate and diverse concept that has a substantial impact on the dynamics inside the organisation and the outcomes of its employees. Multiple studies have explored different facets of EOR, providing insights into its influence on employee engagement, organisational commitment, and overall performance in the higher education setting (Johnston et al, 2020).

In addition, Adamonienė, Litavniece, and Vidnoliene (2021) examined how individual and organisational factors affect the way people perceive the values of an organisation. It specifically focused on the distinct features of educational organisations in contrast to municipal settings. This study offers useful insights

into the unique organisational ideals and dynamics present in tertiary educational institutions, enhancing our comprehension of the EOR within educational settings.

According to Wang (2020), employees who have positive relationships with their organisations tend to display more empathic communication behaviours and are less inclined to criticise organisational errors. The perceived genuineness of organisational actions as well as the state of the affiliation amid the institution and employees also influence the creation of management assets by employees and engagement (Lee, Lee & Yoo, 2022).The interactional psychology perspective highlights the complex and reciprocal relationship between employees and the orientation towards organisational wellness. It offers a model to evaluate the effectiveness of organisational wellness programmes.

The literature reviewed offers a thorough investigation of the connection amid employees and organisations in tertiary educational institutions. It highlights the complex nature of this relationship, its influence on employee engagement and organisational commitment, and the distinct values and dynamics that exist within the tertiary education context (Men, 2015).

Kang (2014) proposed that a strong connection between stakeholders and an organisation is a catalyst for high-quality public involvement. Nevertheless, the existing literature has not thoroughly investigated the relationship between employee engagement and the quality of the EOR across all four dimensions: trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. In a limited number of studies, Men (2015) discovered that employee engagement was positively impacted by a high-quality survey. Thus, this study suggests that enhancing employees' understanding of EOR will result in increased levels of employee engagement.

Even though there exist a direct connection between internal communication and employee engagement as strongly suggested in other studies as discussed earlier, the current study investigated the EOR being employed in a mediating role between internal communication and employee engagement. Trust, commitment and happiness are major determinants of employee engagement, and to test the significance of these relational concepts connecting internal communication to employee engagement. Thus, the following research question is suggested to examine the extent EOR mediates the nexus between internal communication and employee engagement.

H₃: Positive influence of the mediation of EOR on the nexus of internal communication and employee engagement.

3.   METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the positivist lens. A positivist research philosophy, according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), involved testing an existing theory. The positivists believe that a social phenomenon are borne out of objectiveness which arise out of statistics and numerical analysis. Stated more assertively, reality consists of objective interpretations and cannot be studied subjectively. The positivist approach adopted assures that objective interpretations were provided based on statistical data and analysis.

3.1 Case Organisation and sample selection

The Presbyterian University, Ghana (PUG), was founded in April 2003 by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. It received institutional accreditation from the National Accreditation Board, now known as the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission, in November 2003, allowing it to start functioning. The University presently offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the fields of Social Science, Humanities, Medical Sciences, Nursing and Midwifery, Education, and Science and Technology. The PUG achieved autonomy when the President of Ghana granted it Charter Status in March 2022.

The sample size of 150 has been determined from the population of 245 employees of the Presbyterian University, Ghana using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample selection model and confirmed using Taro Yemen formula at a significance level of 95 percent.

3.2 Participants and data collection

Data collection was conducted with a total of 150 employees who worked as Management, lecturers, administrators and supporting staff for the case organization in the Ghana. Participants were drawn from all of the levels through which the University operates. The primary data was collected through a closed-ended self-administered questionnaire. It was sectioned to get the demographic data, and measurable data. The questionnaire adopted a five point Likert-type scale instrument design where respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement(s). That is; SDA= strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=Neutral, A=agree, and SA=strongly agree.

3.3 Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected was analysed using SPSS v27, a structural equation modelling, and adopted SMART-PLS 3 to test for the hypotheses of the study. Descriptive statistics were adopted to summarise the demographic information and used inferential statistics which helped to investigate the mediation role of employee-organisation relations on the nexus between internal communication and employee engagement.

4.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS

The survey presents the educational attainment, including qualifications and whether they had received any formal education in Table 1. It is evident that in terms of level of education, Master's degree sixty-eight has the highest representation with 45.3%, followed by bachelor's degree twenty-nine at 19.3%, PhD followed by twenty-six at 17.3% and SSCE/WASSCE eight at 5.3%. The B.E.C.E category represented the smallest proportion at 2.7% while those with No formal education make up 6.0%. This shows that more staff with Master's degree completed predominantly responded to the survey as compared to other staff. This information helps understand the educational background of the staff.

Table 1: Level of education

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage
	PhD	27	17.3
	Master's Degree	68	45.3
	Bachelor's Degree	29	19.3
Level of education	Diploma	6	4.1
	S.S.C.E / WASSCE	8	5.3
	B.E.C.E.	4	2.7
	No formal education	8	6.0
Total		**150**	**100**

Table 2 displays the category of designation of the respondents, it was classified into five groups namely; Senior Management, Senior member (Academic), Senior member (Administrative), Senior Staff and Junior Staff. It became obvious that thirty-eight employees, representing 25.3% of the respondents identified as Senior staff, thirty-seven people, representing 24.0% are identified as Senior member (Academic), thirty-three people, representing 22.0% are Senior member (Administrative) and sixteen representing 10.7% are identified as Senior Management. There were respondents of twenty-six representing 18.0% as Junior Staff. This verifies that majority of employees fall under Senior members of the University. This breakdown provides insight into the categories of staff of Presbyterian University, Ghana's employees and distribution across roles.

Table 2: Categories of Staff of the University

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage
	Senior Management	16	10.7
	Senior Member (Academic)	37	24.0
Category of Staff in the University	Senior Member (Administrative)	33	22.0
	Senior Staff	38	25.3
	Junior Staff	26	18.0
Total		**150**	**100**

The number of years the Staff has rendered their services to the University, survey data shows (Table 3), there were fifty-four respondents, representing 36.0% have worked for 5-9 years, followed by forty-eight (48) respondents, representing 32.0% who have worked for 10 years and above, and forty-three (43) respondents, representing 28.7% have worked for 1-4 years. Five (5) respondents have worked for less 1 year, representing 3.3%. The information on the number of years of working help understand how employees are conversant with processes in the Presbyterian University, Ghana.

Table 3: Years working with the University

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Number of years working with the University	10 years and above	48	32.0
	5 – 9 years	54	36.0
	1 – 4 years	43	28.7
	Less than 1 year	5	3.3
Total		**150**	**100**

4.1. Scale Measurements of Study Constructs

This section presents the mean responses to survey items across three principal constructs derived from a five-point Likert-scale assessment administered to employees at the Presbyterian University, Ghana.

Table 4: Internal Communications (IC)

Code	Scale Measure	Mean
IC1	My superior makes me feel that things I tell him/her are really important	3.68
IC2	My superior makes me feel free to talk with him/her.	4.20
IC3	My superior makes it easy for me to do my best work	3.65
IC4	My superior really understands my job problem.	3.68
IC5	My superior listens to me when I tell him/her about things that are bothering me.	3.80
IC6	I can communicate job challenges to my superior.	3.85
IC7	I am kept informed about how well organizational goals and objectives are being met.	3.25
IC8	I am pleased with the management's effort to keep employees up-to-date.	3.01
IC9	I am notified in advance of changes that affect my job.	3.11
IC10	My job requirements are specified in clear language.	4.04
IC11	I can tell my superior about the way I feel he /she manage my department.	3.33
IC12	I am free to tell my superior that I 2 with him/her.	3.26
IC13	People in this organization freely exchange information and opinions.	3.15
IC14	My opinions make a difference in the day-to-day decisions that affect my job.	3.48
IC15	I believe my views are respected in my organization.	3.35
IC16	I believe any recommendations I make are heard and considered positively.	3.31
IC17	I believe the information received from management is reliable.	3.61
IC18	I believe information received from my colleagues (co-workers) is reliable	3.40
IC19	Overall communication in my organization is trustworthy.	3.35

The scale measures under the internal communication construct generally yielded moderate to moderately high mean values, with the highest being IC2 at 4.20, and one of the lowest being IC8 at 3.01 as evidenced in Table 4. All the scales used to measure the internal communication were found to be reliable as they exceeded the acceptable mean value.

Table 5: Employee Engagement (EE)

Code	Scale Measure	Mean
EE1	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	3.75
EE2	When I get up in the morning, feel like going to work.	3.68
EE3	I can continue working for a very long periods at a time	3.79
EE4	At my job, I am very mentally resilient.	3.98
EE5	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	3.51
EE6	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well.	4.12
EE7	My job inspires me.	3.77
EE8	I am proud of the work I do.	4.42
EE9	To me, my job is challenging.	3.93
EE10	I am enthusiastic about my job.	4.09
EE11	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.	4.27
EE12	I get carried away when I am working.	3.69
EE13	I am immersed in my work.	3.86
EE14	When I am working, I forget everything else around me.	3.41
EE15	Time flies when I am working.	3.91
EE16	I feel happy when I am working intensely.	3.88
EE17	It is difficult to detach myself from my job.	3.95

The employee engagement construct generated relatively higher mean scores than the internal communication, signalling a more positive sentiment among staff toward their occupational roles (Table 5). Notably, scale measure EE8 recorded the highest mean score at 4.42, followed by EE11 at 4.27. These among employees are indicators of intrinsic motivation and alignment with organisational mission. However, some measures such as EE9 and EE17 scored lower, demonstrating differentiated engagement dimensions and perhaps the need for targeted organisational support structures.

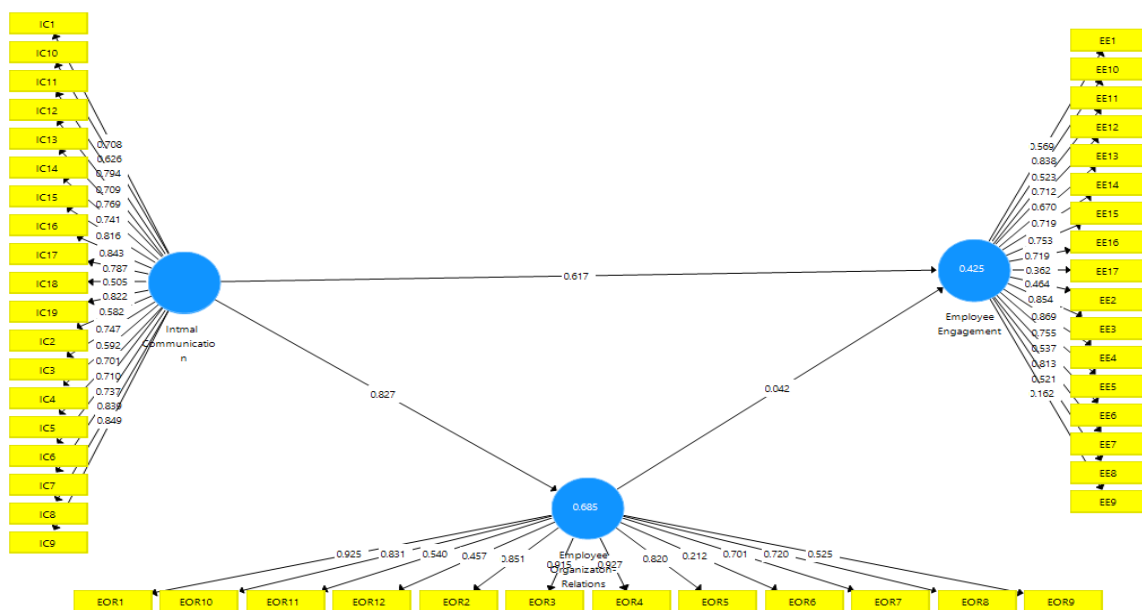**Table 6: Means of the Employee-Organisation Relations (EOR)**

Code	Scale Measure	Mean
EOR1	The University makes important decisions with the employee in mind.	3.21
EOR2	The University takes into consideration my suggestions when making important decisions.	3.03
EOR3	The University keeps its promises to employees.	3.21
EOR4	I am happy with this University.	3.50
EOR5	There is a cordial relationship between employees and the management	3.29
EOR6	I feel sidelined in my interactions with this University.	3.13
EOR7	I feel that this University is trying to maintain a long-term commitment with me.	3.59
EOR8	I can see that this University wants to maintain a relationship with me.	3.51
EOR9	Compared to other organizations, I value my relationship with this University more	3.79
EOR10	This company and I are attentive to what each other say.	3.31
EOR11	This company believes my opinions are legitimate.	3.49
EOR12	This company has a tendency to throw its weight around.	3.43

For the EOR construct, mean scores were relatively reasonable, with EOR9 showing a higher endorsement at 3.79, whereas EOR2 received a lower mean of 3.03 as indicated in Table 6. This goes to show that there is a reasonable degree of employee-organisation relations in the PUG.

4.1.2 Analysis of the Study Constructs

To test the hypotheses in the structural model (see Figure 1), the current study used the structural model for the variables of internal communications, employee engagement and EORs since they are conceptually distinctive, as adopted by Kim and Rhee (2011). SPSS version 22 was used for the data analysis.

Structural Model (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Structural Model for the Mediation effect of EOR on the relationship between Internal Communication and Employee Engagement

Table 7: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Constructs	Employee Engagement	Employee Organization-Relations	Internal Communication
Employee Engagement			
Employee Organisation-Relations	0.599		
Internal Communication	0.622	0.811	

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), a statistical criterion used to assess discriminant validity among the study's latent constructs. Discriminant validity ensures that constructs are empirically distinct from each other, and an HTMT value below the conservative threshold of 0.85 (or 0.90 in some cases) typically indicates acceptable validity (Table 7). In this study, all HTMT values of 0.622 between Internal Communication and Employee Engagement, 0.599 between Employee Engagement and EOR, and 0.811 between Internal Communication and EOR fall below the 0.85 threshold. This implies that each construct

is sufficiently unique and not redundant in measurement.

Table 8: Reliability and Validity of the Study Constructs

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Employee Engagement	0.918	0.935	0.925	0.441
Employee Organisation-Relations	0.915	0.956	0.928	0.539
Internal Communication	0.952	0.958	0.957	0.542

Table 8 assesses the reliability and validity of the study's constructs using Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All three constructs exhibit strong internal consistency, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding the accepted threshold of 0.70. The AVE values for Employee-Organisation Relations (0.539) and Internal Communication (0.542) exceed the 0.50 benchmark, confirming adequate convergent validity for these constructs. However, the AVE for Employee Engagement is slightly below the ideal cut-off at 0.441, suggesting a marginal deficiency in capturing sufficient variance through its indicators.

Table 9: Hypothesized Relationships

Relationships	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Employee Organisation-Relations -> Employee Engagement	0.042	0.216	0.829
Internal Communication -> Employee Engagement	0.617	3.234	0.001
Internal Communication -> Employee Organisation-Relations	0.827	43.544	0

The hypothesised relationships examined through structural equation modelling to test the significance and direction of effects among the study variables (Table 9). The relationship between internal communication and employee engagement is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.617$, $p = 0.001$), indicating a strong positive influence of effective internal communication on employee engagement. Likewise, internal communication significantly predicts Employee-Organisation Relations ($\beta = 0.827$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that transparent and consistent communication enhances relational quality within the organisation. However, the direct effect of employee-organisation relations on employee engagement is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.829$), indicating a weak or negligible direct link in this model.

Table 10: Mediation Analysis

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Internal Communication -> Employee Organisation-Relations -> Employee Engagement	0.035	0.214	0.831

Table 10 indicates the mediation analysis examining the role of Employee-Organisation Relations (EOR) as a mediator between Internal Communication and Employee Engagement. The path coefficient for the mediation effect is 0.035, which is very weak, and the corresponding t-statistic of 0.214 indicates a lack of statistical significance. With a high p-value of 0.831 (greater than 0.05), the result confirms that the mediating effect is not statistically significant. This implies that EOR does not meaningfully mediate the relationship between internal communication and employee engagement. Consequently, while internal communication has a strong direct effect on employee engagement, the indirect effect through EOR is negligible. Thus, the mediation of EOR on internal communication and employee engagement in Presbyterian University, Ghana, was found to be insignificant.

4.2 DISCUSSIONS - HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H$_1$: Organisations' internal communications efforts will be positively related with good EORs. This hypothesis is accepted. Similar to the findings from previous research (Kim, 2007; Kim and Rhee, 2011), this study clearly demonstrated the very strong, positive effects of internal communication efforts on significantly foretells employee-organisation relations ($\beta = 0.827$, $p = 0.000$) from table 9, suggesting that transparent and consistent communication enhances relational quality within the organisation. This finding indicates that internal communication plays a significant role in employee sensitivity, trust, commitment and happiness within the Presbyterian University, Ghana (PUG) and reinforces the importance of clear and timely internal communication strategies. This is consistent with what Men (2015) discovered in the analysis of the role of transparency that connects internal communication efforts and employee-organisation relationship outcomes.

H$_2$: The perceived quality of internal communication will lead to high employee engagement level. The hypothesis is accepted. The relationship between internal communication and employee engagement is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.617$, $p = 0.001$) as evidenced in table 9, indicating a positive relationship between effective internal communication on employee engagement and shows a very strong relationship. The result supports findings of Kim (2018), and Gomes, de Castro Neto, and Silva (2023) but contradicts with Hoover (2005). This aligns with the hypothesis that the perceived quality of internal communications have a significant effect on employee engagement in the PUG, as observed by the results (Table 9). Also, the results of this study (Tables 9 and 10) provide empirical support for the significant direct relationship between internal communication and employee engagement. Internal communication emerged as a strong predictor of employee engagement, indicating that timely, transparent, and reliable communication strategies foster greater motivation, energy, and emotional attachment among employees in the Presbyterian University, Ghana. This aligns with prior scholarship (e.g., Kim, 2018; Mishra et al., 2014), which has established internal communication as a catalyst for enhancing employee involvement and organisational commitment. Thus, a conclusion is drawn based on the sufficient evidence that efficient

internal communication strategies lead to highly probable levels of employee engagement in PUG.

H₃: Positive influence of the mediation of EOR on the nexus of internal communication and employee engagement. The hypothesis is rejected. The structural equation model of EOR on the nexus of internal communication and employee engagement is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.829$) in table 9, indicating a weak or negligible direct link on the effects on internal communication and employee engagement in the PUG. With a high p-value of 0.831 (greater than 0.05) as seen in table 10, the result confirms that the mediating effect is not statistically significant on the nexus of internal communication efforts and on employee engagement. The result contradicts with findings of Kim and Rhee (2011) where they found significant effects of EOR on both internal communication and employee engagement in a Korean marketing company. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that positive influence of the mediation of EOR on the nexus of internal communications and employee engagement. One possible explanation for the low significance on both concepts in the current study may be due to the context of formalised communication hierarchies of the Presbyterian University, Ghana that exerts more automatic effect on employee engagement. Therefore, the mediating effect of employee-organisation relations on the nexus between internal communication and employee engagement was found to be statistically insignificant. This suggests that while relational factors such as trust, mutual respect, and long-term commitment are important, they do not serve as an intermediary in the internal communication-engagement relationship within the context of Presbyterian University, Ghana.

5.CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From a theoretical standpoint, the study challenges the assumption that employee-organisation relations inherently mediate the relationship between internal communication and engagement in the Presbyterian University, Ghana (PUG). This finding prompts a re-evaluation of theoretical frameworks that position EOR as a mediating variable in organisational behaviour models. It suggests that in tertiary education settings, like PUG, where communication hierarchies and governance structures are more formalised, internal communication may exert a more immediate and self-sufficient influence on employee engagement. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for Management and Heads in PUG. Enhancing employee engagement requires strong internal communication systems that are consistent, inclusive, and bi-directional. Institutions should prioritise strategies that facilitate open dialogue between management and staff, clarity in role expectations, and feedback mechanisms that foster trust, commitment and transparency. Furthermore, while EOR was not found to mediate the internal communication-engagement link, strengthening relational quality through employee involvement in decision-making and long-term relationship-building could still positively influence overall job satisfaction and retention in the PUG.

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted within a single tertiary educational institution limiting the generalizability of findings to other sectors or educational contexts. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the data collection restricts causal inference, as the study captures relationships at a single point in time rather than examining changes over time. Lastly, cultural and institutional variables in PUG that may influence the internal communication-employee engagement-EOR dynamics were not explored in-depth, thereby limiting contextual sensitivity in interpreting the findings. Future research should consider employing a longitudinal design to explore how internal communication

and EOR evolve over time, and their cumulative impact on employee engagement. Expanding the study to multiple institutions across different sectors or regions within Ghana and beyond would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Researchers should also explore potential mediators such as leadership style, organisational culture, or digital communication tools, which may affect the strength and direction of these relationships. Additionally, qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could offer deeper insights into the subjective experiences of communication and engagement.

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