

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The branch of Human Resource Management is incomplete without the two leaves- employee engagement and communication. Communication is the backbone or cornerstone of employee engagement. The importance of understanding the significance of effective communication in employee engagement has amplified in today's rapidly changing times. The current research paper highlights the increasing importance of understanding the relationship between Employee Engagement and communication which would lead to an improved organizational and global environment. The paper is a bibliometric analysis of a total of 1050 articles published in Scopus Indexed Journals for the Keywords "Employee Engagement" and "Communication". It shows the significance of the relationship between employee engagement and communication by outlining the emerging trends. This analysis brought out key insights about the significance and linkages between employee engagement and communication. The Bibliometric Analysis was conducted using VosViewer and the findings of the research paper reveal core themes, most relevant authors, countries of publication, most cited papers, most relevant sources, most relevant keywords associated with the two terms "Employee Engagement" and "Communication".

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Communication, Human Resource Management, Scopus, Bibliometric Analysis, VosViewer.

Introduction

Success of any organization depends to a very large extent, inter alia, on an effective and regular communication between leaders and the led, between supervisors and subordinates, and between employers and employees. Effective communication is the foundational tool which turns abstract strategies into actionable steps, unifies teams around a shared purpose, and builds the trust necessary to navigate organizational challenges.

For any establishment to succeed in contemporary competitive environment, it is essential to have regular and periodical interaction at various levels of hierarchy, to include Executive Leadership like Board of Directors or CEO, Senior Management like Vice President or Senior Vice President or Senior Director, Middle Management like Director or Manager, First-Line Management like supervisor or Team Leader or Coordinator, and Individual Contributors or non-managerial employees who perform the core, day-to-day tasks of the organization. Such interactions would promote understanding, cooperation, success, ensure employee engagement and reduce turnover intention.

The field of Human Resource Management (HRM) has two vital components- Communication and Employee Engagement. Nowadays, majority of the youth leads a very stressful life due to various work-life problems, domestic problems, and other personal problems; in this scenario, importance of communication and its relevance needs no emphasis in the present-day working environment. By interacting with the employees regularly, the management can carry out periodic progress review of organizational objectives to include getting feedback, tracking key performance indicators, milestone tracking and performance appraisals. The management can also keep itself abreast with the morale of the employees and their problems; and take timely and appropriate corrective actions to ensure that its employees are generally destressed, well-motivated, counselled and that they remain engaged.

Definitions

The following are the important definitions central to the topic of the research paper which give a holistic understanding about the essence of the theme.

Communication

The word 'communication' has been derived from the Latin word 'communis', which means "to share". Communication may, therefore, be defined as sharing information and ideas so as to create mutual

understanding between people. Communication is the dynamic, two-way process of exchanging information, ideas, feelings, or thoughts between individuals.

According to Newman and Summers (1961), "communication is an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions by two or more persons." In the words of Allen (1958), communication is "the sum total of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuing process of telling, listening, and understanding." This definition suggests that communication is an orderly and ongoing process.

In other words, Communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, feelings, or messages between two or more individuals to achieve mutual understanding. Communication is the dynamic, continuous process of exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings between a sender and a receiver. It is only fully successful when the transmitted message is accurately decoded and the intended meaning is mutually understood.

In the context of employee engagement, communication is used to share information between employees and the organization to build trust, commitment, participation, and motivation. Effective communication is one of the most important drivers of employee engagement because it helps employees understand organizational goals, feel valued, and contribute meaningfully.

Types of Communication

Communication can be classified in several ways depending on the direction of information flow, the medium used, the level of formality, and the participants involved. However, communication is categorized into four primary methods – Verbal, Non-verbal, Written, and Visual.

1. **Verbal Communication:** It involves the use of spoken or written words to convey information in face-to-face conversations, meetings, presentations, telephone calls, video conferences, and speeches. In Verbal Communication, exchange of information is clear and direct and feedback is available immediately.
2. **Non-verbal Communication:** It refers to conveying messages without words. It includes conveying the meaning through body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, eye contact, gestures, appearance and physical distance. Non-verbal cues often reinforce or contradict verbal messages and play an important role in interpersonal communication.
3. **Written Communication:** It is the exchange of information, ideas, or messages using written materials like emails, letters, reports, notices, memos, circulars, manuals, and text messages. Written communication provides a permanent record that supports accountability and ensures consistency. It allows the senders time to carefully edit and format their messages.
4. **Visual Communication:** It is the practice of conveying ideas, information, or emotions using visual elements like charts, images, graphical elements, diagrams, maps, videos, and presentations. Effective visual communication is incredibly important because it improves memory retention, bypasses language barriers, improves understanding and simplifies complex concepts and is engaging.

Organizational Communication

Organizational communication is the structured process of exchanging information, ideas, and meaning within a company or institution. It serves as the connective tissue of a workplace, helps align employees, coordinates daily operations, and shapes workplace culture to achieve shared goals.

Types of Organizational Communication

There are two primary types of organizational communication viz internal and external communication. They are classified based on the intended audience and the direction in which information flows.

1. **Internal Communication:** This occurs strictly within an organization, connecting employees, management, and different departments. Its primary goal is to align teams, boost morale, and streamline operations. Examples include staff meetings, employee emails, company intranets, and team-building memos.
2. **External Communication:** This refers to the exchange of information between an organization and outside parties. Its objective is to build relationships, manage reputation, and attract stakeholders. Examples include customer service interactions, press releases, marketing campaigns, and supplier negotiations.

Internal Communication within an Organization

As far as employee engagement is concerned, it is the internal communication which is of relevance and of significance. Internal communication is the process through which an organization shares information, instructions, feedback, and knowledge among its employees and management to facilitate coordination, improve performance, and strengthen employee engagement.

According to Argenti & Forman (2002), "Internal communication is communication among employees within an organization that helps create understanding of the company's strategy, goals, values, and culture while fostering employee commitment and engagement." Internal communication is the systematic exchange of

information, ideas, feedback, and knowledge among employees and management within an organization to facilitate coordination, enhance collaboration, align employees with organizational objectives, and foster employee engagement and organizational effectiveness.

According to Cornelissen (2020), "Internal communication concerns communication with employees and other internal stakeholders to inform them, create understanding, and build commitment to the organization's goals."

According to Vercic, Verčič & Špoljarić (2022), internal communication is communication with internal stakeholders; and employees are the most important internal stakeholders of any organization, making internal communication a strategic management function. The authors further stated that internal communication is a management responsibility aimed at creating mutual understanding between an organization and its employees; and the purpose of internal communication is to inform employees, engage them, and help them understand organizational goals and changes.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the emotional commitment, enthusiasm, and dedication an employee has toward his organization and its goals. Unlike basic job satisfaction, engaged employees genuinely care about their work, willingly invest discretionary effort, and are motivated to help the company succeed rather than just working for a paycheck.

Kahn (1990), credited with the first academic definition of employee (personal) engagement, described it thus, "Personal engagement is the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles". He argued that engaged employees employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances

According to Schaufeli & Bakker (2004), "Engagement is positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption". They further explained that work engagement is not a momentary or specific emotional state, but rather a persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior.

Kruse (2012) defined employee engagement as "the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals," emphasizing that true engagement drives employees to use "discretionary effort". According to the author, employee engagement is not merely about employee satisfaction or happiness. Instead, it reflects the extent to which employees are emotionally invested in the organization and its objectives. This emotional commitment motivates employees to exert discretionary effort, leading to higher productivity, improved performance, better customer service, and stronger organizational outcomes.

Relationship between Internal Communication and Employee Engagement

Internal communication acts as the foundation of employee engagement. When organizations prioritize transparent, two-way communication, employees gain a clear understanding of company goals and see how their daily work contributes to the bigger picture. This shared understanding fosters trust, psychological safety, and a strong sense of belonging, which directly motivates staff to give their best. Conversely, poor communication leads to confusion, breaks down trust, and ultimately results in disengagement and higher turnover. A Systematic literature review found a strong relationship between internal communication and employee engagement (Nadales-Gallego et al., 2025)

Sharma et al., (2025) had investigated the impact of internal communication on employee engagement from the employee's and employer's perspective and found that there was significant correlation between effective internal communication and positive employee outcomes. Specifically, 62% of employees reported that good communication motivates them to stay with the company, while 71% valued freedom of speech and expression. Additionally, 80% agreed that clear and practical communication channels enhance their motivation to stay. However, there was a notable division in opinions regarding the effectiveness of internal communication in resolving issues, with 52% agreeing and 48% disagreeing. The study also highlighted that transparency and regular updates on company goals significantly boost employee commitment, with 78% of employees feeling encouraged to work harder when informed about organizational progress.

According to Kimani (2024), the importance of effective internal communication strategies in fostering employee engagement is evident from numerous studies, which consistently highlight the positive association between transparent communication, two-way communication, leadership communication, and the use of multiple communication channels with higher levels of engagement. The author stated that leadership communication, particularly, plays a crucial role in shaping organizational culture and values, impacting employees' commitment to organizational goals. The author emphasized the importance of transparency, two-way communication, and effective leadership communication in fostering trust and collaboration among employees.

Methodology- Bibliometric Analysis

The current paper attempts to present a bibliometric analysis of documents, published in journals indexed in Scopus database only, on increasing importance of understanding the significance of communication in Employee Engagement which would lead to an improved organizational environment. This paper considers the analysis of Articles, Books, and Conference papers. Software of VOSviewer has been used to give the visualizations and the analysis. Keywords such as “Employee Engagement” and “Communication” together yielded 1050 documents; this information is presented in the following table:-

Keywords	Results
“Employee Engagement” and “Communication”	1050

The Analysis is done under three broad headings namely- Most Relevant Authors, Most Relevant Countries, Citations, Sources, Organizations and Co-Occurrences of All Keywords.

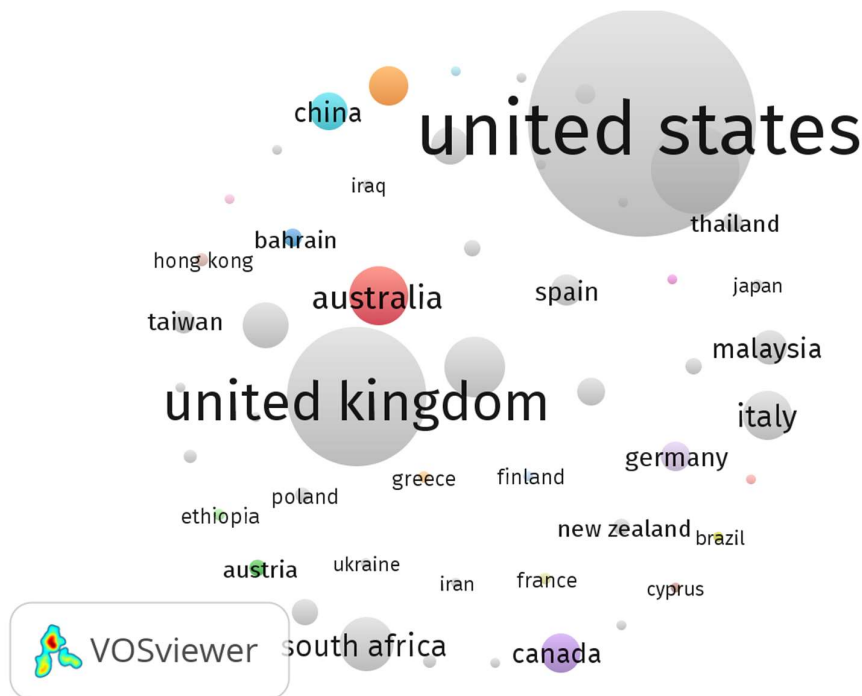
Bibliometric Analysis using VOSviewer

Variables taken together: “Employee Engagement” and “Communication”

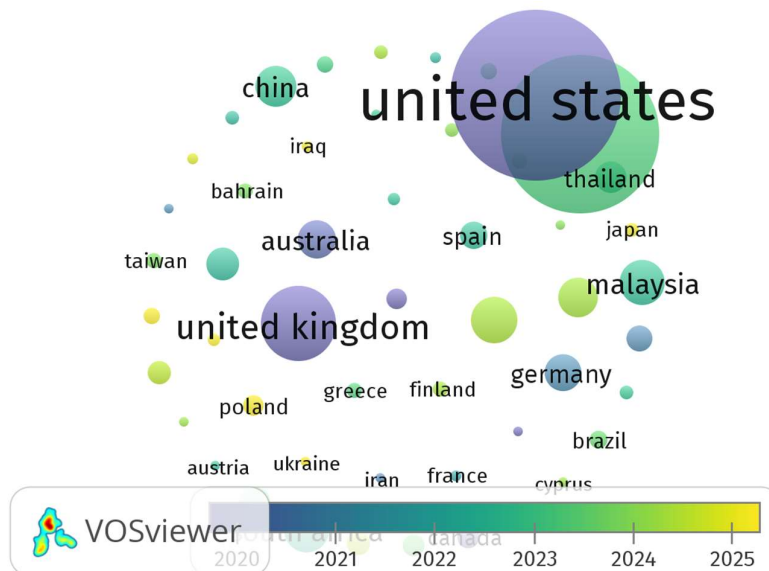
1. Most Relevant Authors in terms of Citations- Out of a total of 1002 authors, given minimum number of documents of an author as 2, 23 meet this threshold; Welch M had most cited documents at 392.



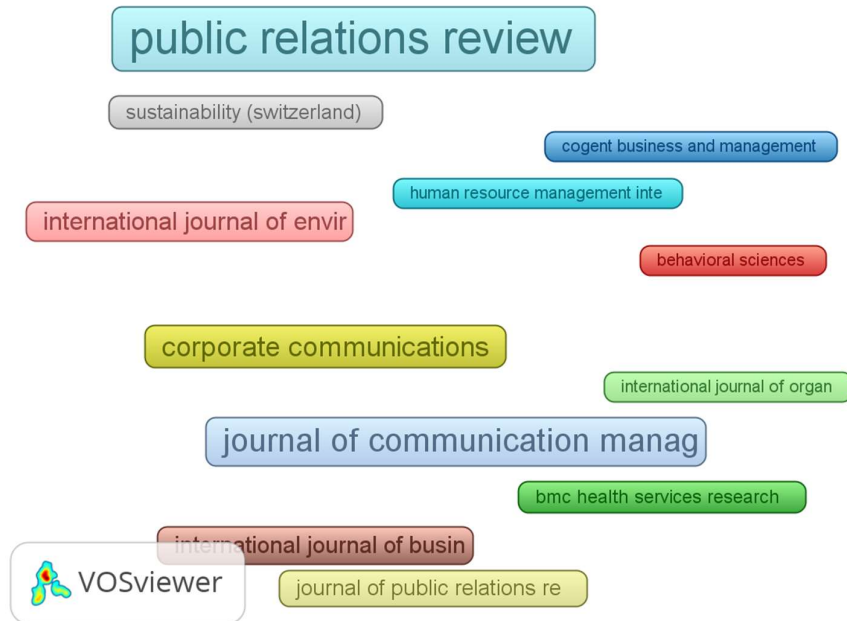
2. Most Relevant Countries in terms of Citations- Out of a total 105 countries, 51 meet the threshold of having 5 as the minimum number of documents of a country. United States has most citations at 3874, with 234 documents. India is relevant country in terms of citations at 1060 with 211 documents.



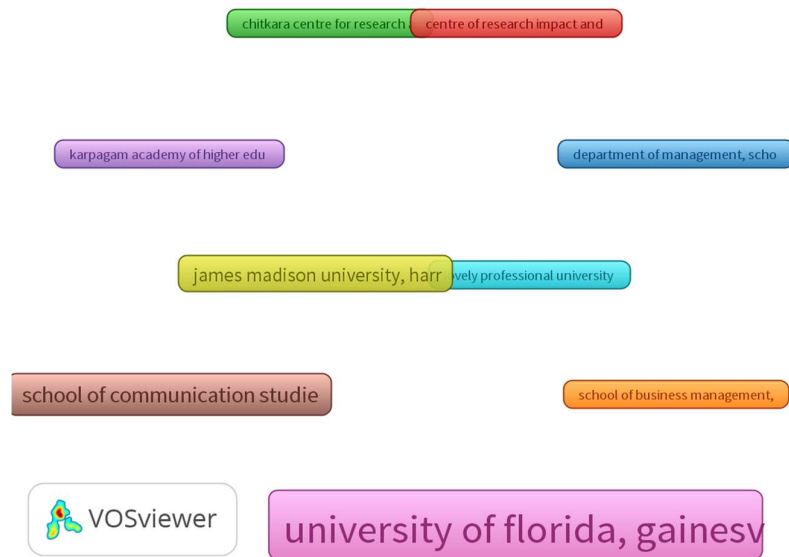
The following visualization shows most relevant countries with respect to number of documents published over the years ranging from 2020 to 2025.



3. Citations in terms of Sources- Out of total of 687 Sources, when threshold of Minimum Number of documents of a source was kept as 5, a total of 19 sources met this threshold by VOSviewer; the Source titled "Public Relations Review" has the greatest number of citations at 1613 with 28 Documents.



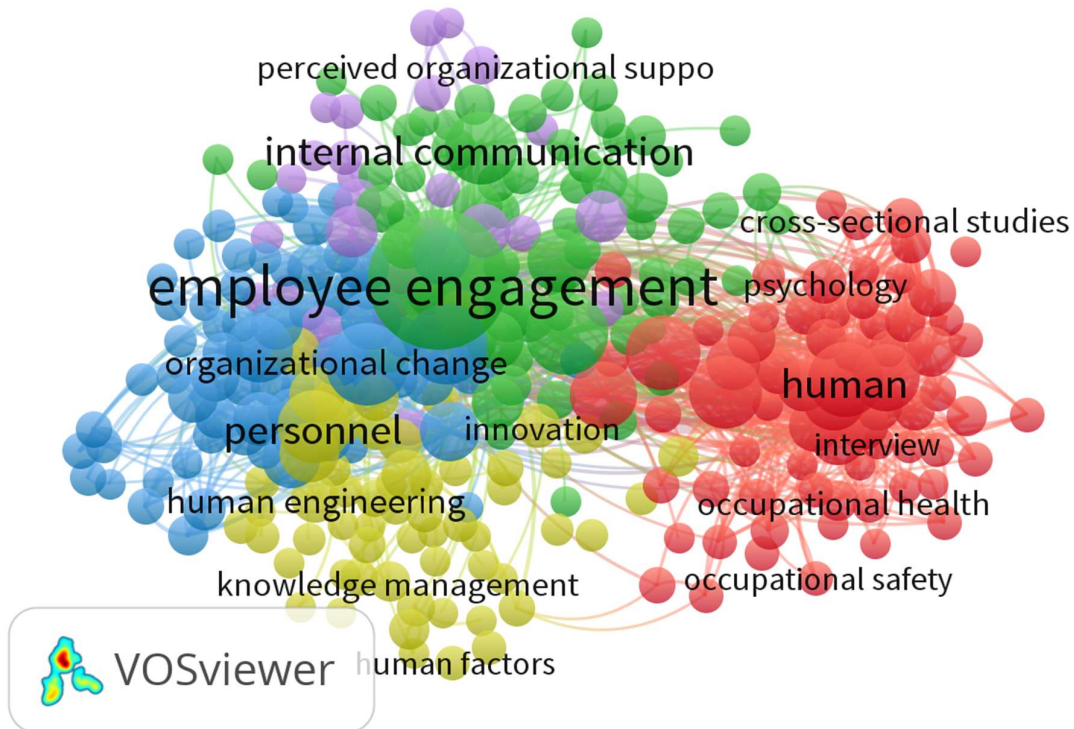
4. Most Relevant Organizations in terms of Citations- Out of a total 1994 organisations, 10 meet the threshold of having 3 as the minimum number of documents of an organization. The Vosviewer put forth the result that University of Florida had most cited documents at 222.



5. Most Number of Citations in terms of Documents- a Total of 1050 Scopus indexed Documents the VOSviewer provided the following Network Visualization: -



6. Co-Occurrence of All Keywords- Out of a total of 4426, 293 meet the threshold of having 5 as the minimum number of occurrences of a keyword. VOSviewer identified top three keywords as Employee Engagement (478), Communication (95), Human Resource Management (94), internal communication (68), organizational culture (51).



Limitations of this Bibliometric Analysis

This analysis is focussed only on Scopus database and no other database such as Web of Science has been considered for the bibliometric analysis which limits the results of the analysis. This is a bibliometric analysis; there exists a broader scope for the study about the significance of communication in employee engagement.

Conclusion

It is observable from the above bibliometric analysis that maximum number of documents has been contributed by United States and United Kingdom, which are developed countries. India, also has a

remarkable contribution for the same. But India, who is on its path to become a developed country, Viksit Bharat @ 2047, provides for greater prospects to delve deep into field of Human Resource Management, in general and Employee Engagement and communication, in particular. Emphasis on role of communication in employee engagement, would expand the opportunities to achieve individual as well as organisational objectives, thereby leading to improvement in the performance and efficiency of the organisation and the nation.

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