



## The Role of Internal Communication on the Effectiveness of Employee Decision Making

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### Abstract

The process of decision-making among employees at the Office of the Minister of State in the Dhofar Governorate, Sultanate of Oman, relies on effective internal communication. Three independent variables were examined: administrative communication, formal communication, and informal communication in relation to employee decision-making. The study adopted a systematic literature approach to review methods for synthesising the fundamentals of internal communication among employees in government sectors. A sample of 238 employees was stratified using a quota sampling procedure to select respondents. The study used a questionnaire, adopted and adapted from the Internal Communication Questionnaire (ICSQ) and the Employee Participation in Decision Making Questionnaire (EPDM). Correlation analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) were used to examine the relationships among the variables. The results showed a significant positive relationship between administrative, formal, and informal communication and employee decision-making in the government institution. The most influential variable among these was formal communication, with a beta coefficient of 0.240 and a significance level of 0.000. Additionally, the model summary accounted for 20.3% of the variance, with an ANOVA significance of 0.000. Therefore, adopting internal communication within governmental sectors is recommended to achieve organisational goals, as this accounts for 20.3% of the variance with a positive significance level of 0.000. This implies that adopting such internal communication practices in employee decision-making is a suitable methodology for achieving organisational goals.

**Keywords:** *Administrative Communication; Employee Decision Making; Formal Communication; Informal Communication*

### Introduction

Communication and decision-making are integral to organisational operations due to the essential role of communication at all levels of an organisation. Communication is a fundamental part of life, helping us navigate daily activities, and organisations are no exception, especially regarding internal communication (Tkalac Vercic, Galić & Žnidar, 2023). Effective communication enables regular performance evaluation, and the achievement of objectives and potential success largely depends on its quality. Organisations serve as hubs for information exchange among employees, departments, and customers, as well as between the organisation and its external environment (Zerfass & Link, 2024). It is crucial for administrators to communicate with employees about their tasks, areas for improvement, and how they can contribute to organisational success. Decision-making is therefore based on

information flow, and employees should engage in direct and effective communication with their departments (Maurer, Bach & Oertel, 2023).

Administrative communication is a primary driver of education within organisations (Huda, 2024). The importance of administrative communication has grown due to the increasing number of employees and the complexity of administrative procedures (Akagha *et al.*, 2023). Organisations increasingly rely on administrative communication to make key decisions that significantly contribute to their medium- and long-term objectives (Sari, 2023). Administrative communication facilitates the sharing of ideas, opinions, and experiences between management and employees and is reflected in the communication style practiced among employees (Huda, 2024). Al Shobaki (2022) found that the focus of administrative communication is decision-making, as decisions depend on the communication methods among all management functions and activities.

Effective administrative communication requires implementing the plans and programs developed by the organisation to meet its goals. Eze, Eze and Ugwu (2023) emphasised that administrative communication relies heavily on the interaction among administrative units to complete daily work and address functional imbalances arising from efforts to achieve organisational objectives in the short term. The result of this interaction is the fulfilment of organisational goals. Lessy, Pary and Adamek (2024) further confirmed that administrative communication relies on the exchange of information across different administrative units, with the Office of the Minister of State in particular focusing on achieving administrative stability and developing communication methods. This research addresses the issue of improving employee decision-making to align with the organisation's current needs. Studies have shown that employee decision-making needs enhancement due to technological advancements in the era of artificial intelligence (Duan, Edwards & Dwivedi, 2019; Ramachandran, Babu & Murugesan, 2023). Previous studies also suggest that administrative, formal, and informal communication may play a vital role in enhancing decision-making (Mabondo, 2022; Parra *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, this study investigates the role of these types of communication in improving employee decision-making within the organisation, specifically focusing on employees at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate, Sultanate of Oman.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify the current level of decision-making among employees at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman.
2. To investigate the role of administrative communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman.
3. To examine formal communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman.
4. To determine informal communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman.
5. To determine which among the factors of internal communication (administrative, formal, and informal communication) explains the variance in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the current level of decision-making among employees at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman?
2. What is the role of administrative communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman?
3. What is the role of formal communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman?

4. What is the role of informal communication in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman?
5. Which of the factors of internal communication (administrative, formal, and informal communication) explains the variance in employee decision-making at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman?

## **Literature Review**

### ***Administrative Communication and Employee Decision Making***

Previous studies have indicated that administrative communication consists primarily of procedures aimed at transferring information from one person to another to achieve a specific benefit or establish mutual understanding (Abubakari, Inusah & Abdulai, 2023). Communication serves as one of the most crucial means for exchanging information and ideas among specific administrative parties to influence change in a workplace situation (Ohara, 2023). It also involves transferring skills, tendencies, and values between individuals to foster knowledge and experience-sharing in a purposeful manner, thereby creating mutual understanding within the workplace (Erbay *et al.*, 2024).

Administrative communication functions as a key administrative process that ensures information reaches its intended purpose within the organisation. Given these concepts, communication can be defined as the process by which information and knowledge are transferred and exchanged to achieve organisational goals (Zabelavicius, 2024). Communication is widely recognised as a fundamental administrative procedure and is seen as the most influential force within an organisation. It serves to make the organisation cohesive and connects organisational goals to its leaders and subordinates (Tracy, 2024). Managers and employees must engage in constructive dialogue to address organisational issues, challenges, and solutions (Mordovtseva *et al.*, 2023).

In a company, communication involves the sending and receiving of messages between individuals connected within a particular environment to achieve both individual and organisational goals. Administrative communication is not an isolated phenomenon but rather one that is contextually and culturally embedded. Within organisations, people communicate through direct, written, and mediated channels, including telephones, SMS, and email (Carlos *et al.*, 2018). Communication is defined as the process by which humans respond to the symbolic behaviour of others, recognising both the process and the interaction of those engaged in communication.

Research indicates a positive relationship between administrative communication and employee decision-making, accounting for 76% of the component of job satisfaction (Rabiu *et al.*, 2024). Other studies suggest that administrative communication, through teamwork, job satisfaction, and commitment, can enhance employee decision-making processes within organisations (Al Naggar, 2022). However, conflicting results show that administrative communication does not always contribute to organisational performance. A comprehensive literature review suggests that when employees perceive communication as effective, it can lead to more concrete decision-making, which, in turn, increases job satisfaction and supports organisational goals (Rahim, 2023).

### ***Formal Communication and Employee Decision Making***

The formal communication in an organisation takes place through the terms and rules set by the organisation (Tompkins, 2023). These are well-established rules that guide employees and the organisation to achieve the organisation's maximum possible goals. Therefore, due to the nature of formal communication, it is characterised by the content, responsibility, format, timing, and destination of the message. Informal communication can be of two types in terms of the receiver of the message. It can be unidirectional, meaning the message is quickly and easily transmitted, but there is a risk that the receiver may not understand it and does not have the right to reply (Eke, 2020). On the other hand, bidirectional communication is slower and more precise, which leads to better understanding among employees in the organisation. Formal communication is divided into three types: downward communication, upward communication, and horizontal communication (Larasati & Suharti, 2023). It is

all connected to the formal form of communication that organisations must consider when passing messages to employees. Research conducted on the relationship between formal communication and employee decision-making confirms that meaningful communication positively influences employee decision-making through strategic behaviour, characterised by understanding organisational goals (Arif *et al.*, 2023). Another finding showed that formal communication was positively associated with employee mental wellness and decision-making in the organisation (Ghorbanzadeh *et al.*, 2023). In addition, trust, corporate systematic communication, peer communication, and downward communication have increased employee decision-making. Formal communication incorporates psychological wellness and enhances effective employee decision-making (Nguyen & Ha, 2023). Thus, the organisation can achieve its goals through formal communication by increasing employee decision-making. Research conducted by Said, Bachtiar and Masdulhak (2023) asserted that downward communication influenced by formal communication has a positive relationship with employee decision-making. This study examined top-down communication in relation to employee decision-making, with employee voice related to horizontal communication found to be an effective mediator.

### ***Information Communication and Employee Decision Making***

Making Informal communication does not normally comply with set rules and develops over time through the employees' conscience. Informal communication is defined as the exchange of information that takes place outside official communication channels (Mabondo, 2022). This communication deals with information that does not necessarily pertain to organisational activities; rather, it focuses on emotional criteria, common interests, and less restricted communication. The two types of formal and informal communication coexist in the organisation due to employee involvement in implicit goals coupled with various decisions, although the nature of informal communication is to establish random, horizontal, and vertical networks (Chepkurui, 2020).

The main aim of informal communication is to create a pleasant atmosphere for employees to express their feelings toward the organisation. This kind of communication helps employees to find who can be of help in the organisation, which aids in their critical decision-making (Whetsell, Kroll & DeHart-Davis, 2021). Research has shown that informal communication reduces risks such as strikes, work conflict, and turnover (Kilag *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, studies have shown that combining formal and informal communication can generate effective positive employee decision-making, thereby enabling the organisation to eradicate negative effects (Huda, 2024).

### ***Employee Decision Making in the Workplace***

The involvement of employees in organisational decision-making has proven effective in enhancing the work environment. Many studies have shown that allowing employees to participate in decision-making is the best way to foster commitment, creativity, and innovation among workers (Tortorella *et al.*, 2021). A study confirmed that employee decision-making gives them a sense of belonging to the organisation (Rampen, Pangemanan & Mandagi, 2023). The relationship between manager and employee provides a framework in which all parties can enjoy the organisation's achievements. Research conducted in Indonesia by Sandi *et al.* (2021) confirms that employee participation in decision-making has a positive relationship with motivation. Another study revealed that the involvement of employees in decision-making is fundamental to achieving organisational goals through successful transitions (Korherr *et al.*, 2023). Another researcher concluded that organisational communication and employee decision-making are vital for improving worker performance and fostering independence among co-workers (Jiang & Shen, 2023). Additionally, studies have shown that managerial decision-making can be essential for employee motivation, which in turn affects work performance (Adriansah, Ramli & Ferils, 2023). The research also suggests that managerial decision making positively impacts employee decision-making through a shared understanding within the organisation.

### ***Research Methodology***

This study uses a survey method consisting of employees at the Office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman. The sample of population was selected using stratified sampling

and consisted of 238 employees. The study used a questionnaire adopted and adapted from the Internal Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (ICSQ) by Tkalac Verčič, Sinčić Ćorić and Pološki Vokić (2021) and the Employee Participation in Decision-Making Questionnaire (EPDM) by Ike, Ezeh and Etodike (2017). Data was collected from the head, heads of departments, and employees in the office. The questionnaire submitted to the respondents in this study is divided into three parts: parts A, B, and C. Part A contains demographic information about the employees, such as gender, age, educational level, status, and experience. Part B is related to questions on internal communication (administrative communication, formal communication, and informal communication), which were taken from the ICSQ by Tkalac Verčič, Sinčić Ćorić and Pološki Vokić (2021). This section uses a Likert scale of 1 to 5. In addition, the reliability of this study tool is 0.78, indicating that this questionnaire has sufficient reliability strength. Meanwhile, Part C pertains to the employee questionnaire by Ike, Ezeh and Etodike (2017) on Employee Participation in Decision-Making (EPDM). Based on a study conducted by Ike, Ezeh and Etodike (2017), the reliability value of this study tool is 0.77.

## Results

The demographic information for all categorical variables.

**Table 1: Demographic information**

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	184	77.3%
	Female	54	22.7%
<b>Age</b>	20-30 Years	51	21.4%
	31-40 Years	45	18.9%
	41-50 Years	116	48.7%
	51 and above	26	10.9%
<b>Educational Level</b>	Diploma	75	31.5%
	Degree	117	49.2%
	Master	46	19.0%
<b>Status</b>	Head	37	15.5%
	Head of Department	45	18.9%
	Employee	156	65.5%
<b>Experience</b>	1-3 years	84	35.3%
	4-6 years	96	40.3%
	7 year and above	58	24.4%

Table 1 represents the distribution of respondents based on their gender: males are 184 (77.3%), and females are 54 (22.7%). Age was categorized into four groups: 20-30 years, represented by 51 respondents (21.4%); 31-40 years, represented by 45 respondents (18.9%); 41-50 years, represented by 116 respondents (48.7%); and 51 and above, represented by 26 respondents (10.9%). The educational levels were diploma with 75 respondents (31.5%), degree with 117 respondents (49.2%), and master's with 46 respondents (19%). Employee status was categorized into heads with 37 respondents (15.5%), heads of department with 45 respondents (18.9%), and employees with 156 respondents (65.5%). For experience, 1-3 years accounted for 84 respondents (35.3%), 4-6 years for 96 respondents (40.3%), and 7 years and above for 58 respondents (24.4%).

**Table 2: Reliability test**

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
0.788	40

Table 2 shows the reliability test of the items involved in the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha is ( $\alpha = 0.788$ ) for the 40 items that were included in the questionnaire.

1. To determine the current level of employee decision making.

**Table 3: Mean of all means**

Variables	Mean	Total Mean Score	Scale 1-5 (SD-SA)
Administrative communication	2.82	11.98/5	= 2.39
Formal communication	3.38		
Informal communication	2.82		
Employee decision making	3.00		
Total	11.98		

Table 3 shows the results of the mean of each variable, which was divided by the total scale of the quantitative instrument to obtain the mean of all means. The variables involved include administrative communication (2.82), formal communication (3.38), informal communication (2.82), and employee decision-making (3.00). The total mean score is 11.98, divided by the five scales used in the questionnaire, which range from 1 for Strongly Disagree (SD) to 5 for Strongly Agree (SA), resulting in 2.39. According to Howell (2014), a mean of 2.66 is at a moderate level. The results show a mean (2.39) below the recommended level of 2.66 and above. In other words, internal communication at the office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman is regarded as below moderate level, indicating a need to investigate the relationship between internal communication and employee decision-making.

**Table 4: Correlation**

Variables		Administrative	Formal	Informal
Employee decision making	Pearson correlation	0.240	0.335	0.355
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 4 shows the results of the correlation between administrative communication, formal communication, and informal communication on employee decision-making. Based on the table, the correlation value for administrative communication on employee decision-making is ( $r = 0.240$ ), and for formal communication, it is ( $r = 0.335$ ). The correlation for informal communication on employee decision-making is ( $r = -0.355$ ). These relationships indicate a positive correlation level. Although these relationships are not strong, they are considered moderate correlations. According to Chua (2014), a correlation value between 0.01 and 0.30 or -0.01 and -0.30 indicates a very weak positive or negative relationship, while a correlation between 0.31 and 0.50 or -0.31 and -0.50 shows a weak positive or negative relationship. A correlation between 0.51 and 0.70 or -0.51 and -0.70 shows a moderate positive or negative relationship. In summary, in this study, the level of correlation is a very weak positive relationship.

### **Hypothesis Testing**

H1: There is a relationship between administrative communication and employee decision making.

**Table 5: Pearson correlational analysis for administrative communication relationship with employee decision making**

	Administrative Communication	Employee Decision Making
Administrative communication	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	<i>n</i>	238
Employee decision making	Pearson Correlation	0.240
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	<i>n</i>	238
Significant at confidence level $p \leq 0.05$		

Table 5 shows that the relationship between administrative communication and employee decision-making is 0.240, indicating a very weak relationship. However, since  $p = 0.000$  is less than 0.05, this hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is a positive, significant relationship between administrative communication and employee decision-making. Since the results of the correlation test

show a significant relationship, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between administrative communication and employee decision-making among employees.

H2: There is a relationship between formal communication and employee decision making.

**Table 6: Pearson correlation analysis for formal communication and employee decision making**

	Formal Communication	Employee Decision Making
Formal communication	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	<i>n</i>	238
Employee decision making	Pearson Correlation	0.335
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
Significant at confidence level $p \leq 0.05$		

Table 6 shows that the relationship between formal communication and employee decision-making is 0.335, indicating a moderate relationship. Since  $p = 0.000$  is less than 0.05, this hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is a positive, significant relationship between formal communication and employee decision-making. Since the results of the correlation test show a significant relationship, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between formal communication and employee decision-making among employees.

H3: There is a relationship between informal communication and employee decision making.

**Table 7: Pearson Correlation Analysis for informal communication and employee decision making**

	Informal Communication	Employee Decision Making
Informal communication	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	<i>n</i>	238
Employee decision making	Pearson Correlation	0.355
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	<i>n</i>	238
Significant at confidence level $p \leq 0.05$		

Table 7 shows that the relationship between informal communication and employee decision-making is 0.355, indicating a moderate relationship. Since  $p = 0.000$  is less than 0.05, this hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is a positive, significant relationship between informal communication and employee decision-making. Since the results of the correlation test show a significant relationship, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between informal communication and employee decision-making among employees.

3. To examine among the factors of internal communication which explains the variance on employee decision making.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

**Table 8: Model Summary**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.451	0.203	0.193	0.27119

a. Predictors: (Constant), Administrative, Formal, Informal

b. Dependent Variables: Teenager Social Behaviour

**Table 9: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.397	3	1.466	19.928	0.000
Residual	17.209	234	0.074		
Total	21.605	238			

The model summary (Table 8) and Table 9 (ANOVA) show the regression result between administrative, formal, and informal communication on employee decision-making. It shows that  $R^2$  is 0.203 and is significant at 0.000. Therefore, the effect of administrative, formal, and informal communication on employee decision-making is 20.3%.

### **Determining the Best Factor among the Three Factors towards Employee Decision Making (RQ3)**

**Table 10: Coefficient**

	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>		
<b>Model</b>	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	1.657	0.177		9.371	0.000
Administrative	0.129	0.036	0.212	3.588	0.000
Formal	0.157	0.046	0.230	3.417	0.001
Informal	0.159	0.051	0.213	3.128	0.002

### **Dependent Variable: Employee Decision Making**

Table 10 shows the regression result between administrative, formal, and informal communication on employee decision-making. It shows that the effect of administrative communication on employee decision-making is 0.212, with a significant value of 0.001. The effect of formal communication on employee decision-making is 0.230, with a significant value of 0.001, while the effect of informal communication on employee decision-making is 0.213, with a significant value of 0.002. The significant values of the three variables are less than 0.05, indicating a positive relationship with the dependent variable. It can be concluded that administrative, formal, and informal communication contribute effectively to employee decision-making in the organisation where the research was conducted.

### **Discussion**

The objective of the present research was to understand the roles of internal communication in the impact of employee decision-making in organisations. Employee decision-making is described as the procedure whereby an individual associate of the organisation reaches a deduction about what upcoming actions were to be taken to a particular unbiased set by the organisation on limited resources (Aguilera *et al.*, 2024). The study results further revealed that the meaningful impact of internal communication on employee decision-making was dominant. This outcome confirms previous findings that show a correlation between the level of employee decision-making and both downward and upward communication (Prouska *et al.*, 2023).

It is obvious that the literature is unanimous that internal communication significantly impacts the sharing of employee opinion. Okoro *et al.* (2023) reported that different internal communication roles in the workplace affect several aspects of driving capability and effectiveness of employee decision-making. Another study investigated by Qin and Men (2023) in Vietnam concluded that internal communication has a positive effect on job satisfaction, which in turn reflects their decision-making. In addition, Sun *et al.* (2023) found that internal communication is positively related to employee emotions during decision-making in the workplace. Another study also linked internal communication with organisational identification, voice of the employee, and opinion of the employee. There were three alternative hypotheses in this study that were met according to the results that were presented in the multiple regression analyses. Although the results also concluded the internal communication is below the moderate level that is expected to be 2.66. Therefore, this is a new discovery by the current research by filling the literature gap by understanding the present situation of internal communication among administrative staff in governmental organizations. The result of this research has been consistent with previous research, which made the finding appealing and reliable through the literature (Sultan, 2024). Moreover, most research has emphasised the importance of internal communication on the effectiveness of any educational or governmental organisation around the world to facilitate employee performance. This discussion focuses on the importance of internal communication in employee decision-making to foster a healthy corporation. The findings indicate a considerable association between internal communication and employee decision-making, which is consistent with past research



in various commercial and government companies. Employee decision making, because of the opportunity for employees to express their opinions, may provide strong instances of organisational success. Overall, the study emphasised the importance of employee decision-making in increasing organisational success.

## Conclusion

The study concluded that the effect of administrative, formal, and informal communication on employee decision-making is positively significant. Research has identified that internal communication is vital in all organisations, whether private or governmental. Communication must prevail in all organisations to pave the way for employee motivation, commitment, and hard work toward achieving the organisation's goals. This study targeted the employees of the office of the Minister of State in Dhofar Governorate in the Sultanate of Oman. The response rate was approximately 75%, with only 238 completed questionnaires returned and analysed. Statistically, SPSS version 25.0 was utilised to perform the initial data screening and cleaning. The mean of all means was used to understand the level of employee decision-making, and correlation analysis was used to measure the extent to which the variables are related to the dependent variable. Three hypotheses were tested and supported, with none rejected based on the results of the analyses. Multiple regression analysis was utilised to find the predictive level of all independent variables, and it was concluded that all variables are predictive in understanding the level of employee decision-making in the organisation. Therefore, this study recommended that internal communication should be prioritised to achieve organisational objectives.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that there are no conflicting objectives.

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