

Frontline Leadership in Communicating Organizational Policies and Its Mediating Influence on Employee Commitment in Nonprofit Organizations in Monrovia, Liberia

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of frontline leadership communication on employee commitment within nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia. Four key questions guided the research: (1) perceptions of leaders' communication and transparency, (2) commitment levels, (3) the relationship between communication, transparency, and commitment, and (4) the mediating role of transparency. Data from 388 respondents show that employees perceive communication and transparency positively. A strong positive correlation ($r=0.891$, $p < 0.001$) was found between these factors and commitment, which predicted 82.5% of the variance. The Sobel test confirms that transparency mediates this relationship ($z = 7.403$, $p < 0.001$). This highlights the importance of strategic communication in enhancing employee commitment. Recommendations include broadening the study's scope to determine if the findings are applicable across various cultural and organizational contexts.

Keywords: Frontline leadership, communication, employee commitment, nonprofit organizations, organizational policies, Liberia

Introduction

Effective communication of organizational policies by frontline leaders is vital in nonprofit organizations, particularly in Monrovia, Liberia. Frontline leaders are the primary link between senior leadership and employees, ensuring policies are clearly communicated, understood, and implemented effectively (Garcia et al., 2022). This communication process is essential for enhancing employee commitment, directly impacting organizational efficiency, job satisfaction, and fulfilling the nonprofit's mission (Shields, 2020).

Globally, nonprofit organizations address critical issues such as poverty alleviation, environmental preservation, disaster relief, and access to education (Kamrujjaman & Obaidullah, 2016). These organizations rely heavily on committed employees motivated by a shared vision to achieve their mission. However,

challenges in policy communication can significantly hinder such efforts. This highlights the importance of understanding the relationship between frontline leadership communication and employee commitment, as it can inform strategies to strengthen nonprofit operations and effectiveness.

In Liberia, the unique sociocultural and economic environment shapes the dynamics of employee commitment. Nonprofit organizations often operate under challenging conditions, addressing critical issues such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Effective policy communication by frontline leaders fosters commitment in this context (Wilson & Jallah, 2019). The post-war recovery period and the impact of political instability have influenced organizational structures and employee expectations, making clear and transparent communication crucial for building trust (Ngwama

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& Ogaga-Oghene, 2022). Moreover, limited resources and financial constraints further emphasize the importance of aligning leadership communication with the organizational mission to maintain motivation and engagement (Kotamena et al., 2020). Understanding the cultural values of communal cooperation and resilience can enhance the effectiveness of communication strategies (K. H. Kim & Lee, 2021)

Nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia face unique challenges in fostering employee commitment, a factor critical to their sustained success. These challenges often stem from limited resources, cultural nuances, and inherent difficulties in operating in an environment in which socioeconomic constraints persist. Employee commitment in nonprofit settings is often driven by alignment with the organization's mission and core values (Beblavý et al., 2022). Therefore, effective communication by frontline leaders serves to connect policies with the overarching mission, fostering a positive work environment and increasing employee engagement (H. Kim et al., 2018). In contrast, poor communication can lead to misunderstanding, frustration, and a decline in commitment (Bryson & Crosby, 2018).

Research underscores the significance of transparent and effective communication by frontline leaders in fostering employee commitment. Grego-Planer (2019) emphasized that clear communication practices increase job satisfaction and stronger commitment levels. Similarly, Bosco and Harvey (2017) and Shields (2020) reveal that effective communication correlates with improved organizational performance and heightened employee engagement. Despite this growing body of literature, the specific impact of frontline leadership communication on employee commitment in Monrovia's nonprofit sector remains under-explored. This research gap points to the need for a focused investigation into how employees perceive leadership communication, the resulting

levels of commitment, and the role communication transparency plays in these dynamics.

This study aims to address this research gap by investigating the impact of frontline leadership communication on employee commitment in Monrovia's nonprofit organizations. By examining employee perceptions and commitment levels as well as the transparency of communication, this study seeks to provide insights that will inform management practices, enhance employee engagement, and ultimately support the missions of nonprofit organizations in Monrovia. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which communication influences commitment, offers practical solutions for improving leadership practices, and fosters a more committed workforce.

Theoretical Perspectives on Employee Commitment

Three-Component Model (TCM) of Organizational Commitment

Employee commitment is a multifaceted construct encompassing an individual's psychological attachment to an organization, significantly influencing organizational success through enhanced performance, engagement, and loyalty (Grego-Planer, 2019). In nonprofit organizations, employee commitment is often closely tied to organizational mission and values (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). Committed employees are crucial for the success and sustainability of nonprofit organizations, particularly in resource-constrained environments (Agus & Selvaraj, 2020).

Allen and Meyer (1990) Three-Component Model (TCM) of organizational commitment remains a foundational framework, identifying three key components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective Commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to their organization, characterized by a strong sense of belonging and identification with organizational goals (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This

commitment is often driven by positive emotional experiences within the workplace and aligns with employees' personal values (Galanaki, 2020). Research has consistently shown that employees with high affective commitment exhibit higher job satisfaction, performance, and organizational citizenship behavior (Kaur et al., 2020).

Continuance Commitment is based on the perceived costs associated with leaving an organization. Employees with high continuance commitment remain with their organization out of necessity, fearing the potential losses (financial or social) that departure might entail (De Clercq et al., 2021). However, not inherently beneficial, continuance commitment can contribute to organizational stability by reducing turnover rates (Galanaki, 2020).

Normative Commitment stems from a sense of obligation to remain with the organization, which is often influenced by personal values and cultural or social norms. Employees with high normative commitment feel a moral duty to stay, which is often driven by loyalty and ethical considerations (Bhatti et al., 2019).

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships within an organization are built on reciprocal interactions that promote mutual trust and benefits (Blau, 1964). When frontline leaders effectively communicate policies, they strengthen employees' perceptions of fairness and support, enhancing organizational loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Transparent communication by frontline leaders bridges management and employees, nurturing a sense of belonging and fostering an environment conducive to trust and high morale (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

By leveraging the principles of Social Exchange Theory, organizations can enhance employee trust and commitment through strategic and transparent communication practices. Failure to communicate policies clearly can result in ambiguity, fostering misunderstandings and resistance to change (Tourish

& Robson, 2006). This can impede workflow, reduce job satisfaction, and undermine overall organizational commitment (Clampitt, 2012). To mitigate these risks, organizations must prioritize training frontline leaders in effective communication strategies that emphasize clarity, active listening, and feedback mechanisms (Eisenberg & Goodall, 2001; Men, 2014). Frontline leaders play a pivotal role in policy dissemination.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership theory plays a significant role in policy communication. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by articulating a clear vision, encouraging innovation, and providing individualized support (Bass, 1999). This leadership style fosters a positive work environment and enhances employee commitment by aligning personal goals with organizational objectives (Avolio & Yammarino, 2002). Factors influencing commitment in nonprofits include effective communication and leadership style.

Policy Communication by Frontline Leaders

Effective policy communication is crucial to ensuring that employees understand organizational goals, procedures, and expectations. According to the Social Exchange Theory, clear and transparent communication of organizational policies fosters trust and commitment among employees (Farid et al., 2019). However, poor communication can lead to confusion, resistance, and decreased organizational commitment (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021).

Transparency in policy communication refers to the openness and clarity with which organizational policies are conveyed to employees. Transparency involves providing complete information, explaining the rationale behind decisions, and maintaining consistent communication (Beblavý et al., 2022). Research indicates that transparency in communication enhances trust and commitment as employees

feel more informed and involved in organizational processes (Eisenbeiß et al., 2019).

Implications for Policy Communication and Employee Commitment

The relationship between frontline leadership communication and employee commitment is mediated by perceived transparency and clarity of policy communication. When policies are communicated effectively, employees are more likely to feel informed, valued, and committed to the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). This relationship is particularly significant in nonprofit organizations, where employee dedication is critical for achieving organizational goals. Understanding the dynamics of frontline leadership, policy communication, and employee commitment is crucial for enhancing organizational effectiveness in nonprofit settings. By adopting transformational and authentic leadership styles, promoting transparency, and aligning communication strategies with organizational values, nonprofits can foster higher levels of employee commitment. This, in turn, can enhance organizational performance and contribute to the successful achievement of missions.

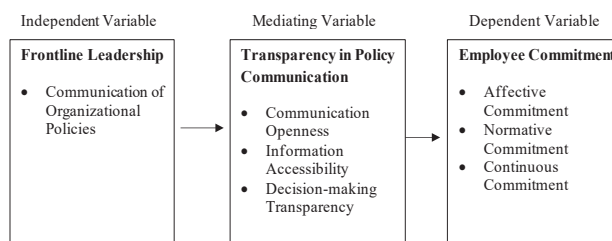
Research Questions

1. What are the respondents' perceptions regarding how frontline leaders communicate organizational policies and exhibit transparency in their communication in nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia?
2. What is the commitment level of the respondents in nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia?
3. What is the relationship between employees' commitment and communication of policies and transparency in policy communication in nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia?
4. Does frontline leadership communication transparency significantly mediate

the relationship between communication and employee commitment?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the influence of frontline leadership communication on employee commitment in Monrovia's nonprofit organizations. It integrates the three key variables displayed in Figure 1.



Policy communication by frontline leaders plays a crucial role in shaping employee commitment. The effectiveness and clarity with which frontline leaders convey organizational policies impact how employees perceive their roles and responsibilities. Transparency in policy communication acts as a mediating variable that reflects employees' perceptions of openness, accessibility, transparent decision-making, and consistency. Research has shown that transparency significantly enhances employee commitment, which can be broken down into affective (emotional attachment), normative (sense of obligation), and continuance (perceived costs of leaving) commitment.

Empirical studies have underscored this relationship. For instance, a study by (H. Kim et al., 2018) found that transparent communication alleviates emotional exhaustion among employees, leading to more positive communication behaviors and stronger organizational commitment. Their research highlights that when employees perceive communication as transparent, they are more likely to develop trust and commitment to the organization. Similarly, Williams and Cole (2021) reported that organizations with high transparency observed higher normative and continuance commitment levels, boosting overall employee retention and engagement. These findings illustrate

that effective frontline leader communication mediated by transparency plays a pivotal role in fostering a committed workforce.

Methodology

This research utilized a cross-sectional design deemed appropriate for investigating frontline leadership communication and its influence on employee commitment in nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia. This approach facilitated data collection from a sizable sample at one specific moment, offering an overview of the perceptions of the respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Research Setting

The research was conducted across various nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia, encompassing sectors such as education (29.4%, 114 organizations), healthcare (24.0%, 93 organizations), poverty alleviation (19.1%, 74 organizations), social work (17.3%, 67 organizations), and general NGOs (10.3%, 40 organizations). These organizations varied in size from small groups with fewer than 20 employees to larger entities with over 200 staff members. They operate using centralized or decentralized models supported by grants, international donors, and religious institutions. Monrovia's status as the capital makes it ideal for this study because of its diverse, representative nonprofit landscape (Kim & Lee, 2021); (Smith et al., 2018)

Sampling

The target population for this study comprised employees and frontline leaders within nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, totaling approximately 1,350 individuals. A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure representation across different sectors, including NGOs, education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and social work. The sample size was 388 respondents, which ensured sufficient statistical power and representation (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013). Each sector's proportionate contribution to the sample was calculated to

reflect its relative importance within the overall population.

Table 1

Study Sample

| Sector | Percentage | Sample Size |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| NGO's | 10.3% | 40 |
| Education | 29.4% | 114 |
| Health Care | 24.0% | 93 |
| Social Worker | 17.3% | 67 |
| Poverty Alleviation | 19.1% | 74 |

Data Collection

The data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed specifically for this study. The questionnaire included sections on the effectiveness and clarity of policy communication by frontline leaders, perceived transparency, and employee commitment (Abt et al., 2020). The items were designed based on validated scales and tailored to the context of nonprofit organizations in Monrovia (Doyle & Peterson, 2019; Kim & Lee, 2021). The data collection process involved the following steps:

1. **Pilot Study:** A pilot study was conducted with 20 respondents from different sectors to assess the instrument's reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.968 for communication, 0.938 for transparency, and 0.958 for commitment.
2. **Survey Administration:** The final questionnaire was distributed to the selected sample (Mishra et al., 2022). The respondents were assured confidentiality and anonymity to encourage honest and accurate responses.
3. **Data Screening:** Collected data were screened for completeness and accuracy.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson’s correlation, linear regression, and the Sobel test for mediation. Descriptive statistics provided a summary of respondents’ perceptions and commitment levels. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to assess the strength of the relationships between variables. Linear regression analyzed the predictive power of communication and transparency on employee commitment. The Sobel test was used to determine the mediating effect of transparency on the relationship between communication and commitment (Hair et al., 2010). These analyses provided a robust understanding of the relationships between variables and the overall impact of leadership communication on employee commitment.

Ethical Considerations

Before data collection, the study received ethical approval from the Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) at Adventist University of Africa. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants, who were

assured of their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study to protect participants’ identities and data.

Results

Perceptions of Frontline Leaders’ Communication, Transparency, and Employee Commitment

Table 2 presents the key variables from the study, depicting respondents’ perceptions. Frontline leaders had a mean communication score of 4.1 (SD=0.5), with responses varying from 3.0 to 5.0. Policy Transparency received a mean score of 4.2 (SD=0.6), with scores between 3.5 and 5.0. Employee Commitment achieved the highest mean at 4.3 (SD=0.7), with a range from 3.0 to 5.0. These results indicate that respondents rated all variables positively, displaying minimal variation.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Variables

| Variable | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------------------------------|-----|------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Communication by Frontline Leaders | 388 | 4.1 | 0.5 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| Policy Transparency | 388 | 4.2 | 0.6 | 3.5 | 5.0 |
| Employee Commitment | 388 | 4.3 | 0.7 | 3.0 | 5.0 |

The findings imply that participants viewed frontline communication, policy transparency, and commitment as relatively high, supporting the study’s goal of fostering effective organizational practices. These descriptive statistics highlight a positive view of how frontline leaders communicate and convey transparency in their policy messaging. The Employee Commitment mean score of 4.3 suggests considerable commitment among respondents. A small

range of standard deviations indicates consistent positive perceptions throughout the sample.

Relationship between Employee Commitment, Communication and Transparency

Table 3 presents the relationships among the key variables: Communication, transparency, and employee commitment. The near-identical Pearson correlations (.891**) between Commitment and both Communication and Transparency are justified by their inherent interdependence. Transparency inherently

involves clear, honest communication, making the constructs conceptually aligned and often perceived similarly by the respondents. Both drive employee commitment by fostering trust, clarity, and psychological safety, which are shared pathways. Methodological factors, such as collinear survey items or consistent response patterns, further explain numerical similarity. While theoretically distinct, these constructs may overlap practically in organizational

contexts, justifying similar relationships with commitment. This highlights the importance of treating them as complementary, rather than entirely independent, factors that influence commitment.

Table 3

Pearson Correlations Between Employee Commitment, Communication and Transparency

| | | Commitment | Communicate | Transparent |
|------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Commitment | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .891** | .891** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | <.001 | <.001 |
| | N | 388 | 388 | 388 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis was performed to identify the factors influencing employee commitment in the context of frontline communication and transparency. As shown in Table 4, the stepwise regression analysis indicates that communication and transparency are key predictors of employee commitment.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis for Predicting Employee Commitment

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------|-------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .891 ^a | .794 | .793 | .47277 | | |
| 2 | .908 ^b | .825 | .824 | .43571 | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 332.041 | 1 | 332.041 | 1485.572 | <.001 |
| | Residual | 86.275 | 386 | .224 | | |
| | Total | 418.316 | 387 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 345.227 | 2 | 172.614 | 909.258 | <.001 |
| | Residual | 73.088 | 385 | .190 | | |
| | Total | 418.316 | 387 | | | |

| Model | | Coefficients ^a | | | t | Sig. |
|-------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .385 | .085 | | 4.546 | <.001 |
| | Communicate | .900 | .023 | .891 | 38.543 | <.001 |
| 2 | (Constant) | .339 | .078 | | 4.332 | <.001 |
| | Communicate | .470 | .056 | .465 | 8.415 | <.001 |
| | Transparent | .443 | .053 | .461 | 8.334 | <.001 |

The model, with an R-squared value of 0.794, indicates that policy communication accounts for 79.4% of the variance in employee commitment. Its significance is supported by an F-statistic of 1485.572 ($p < 0.001$). The regression coefficient (β) of 0.900, accompanied by a t-value of 38.543 ($p < 0.001$), shows that a one-unit increase in communication leads to a 0.900 unit increase in commitment. Introducing transparency raised the R-squared value to 0.825, explaining 82.5% of the variance. These findings illustrate that both communication and transparency are important predictors of employee commitment ($p < 0.001$).

Mediation Analysis

Table 5 reveals that the unstandardized 'a' path coefficient is 0.971 (.021), $p < .001$, 'b' path coefficient is 0.470 (.056), $p = .001$. and path 'c' (0.443 (.053), $p < .001$) were all significant. This implies that policy communication significantly affects employee commitment (direct effect, Path c). In addition, policy communication positively influences transparency, subsequently enhancing employee commitment levels (indirect effect).

Table 5

Regression Coefficient Results

| Model | | Coefficients ^a | | | t | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .104 | .075 | | 1.391 | .165 |
| | Policy Communication | .971 | .021 | .923 | 47.081 | <.001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Transparent

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .339 | .078 | | 4.332 | <.001 |
| | Policy Communication | .470 | .056 | .465 | 8.415 | <.001 |
| | Transparent | .443 | .053 | .461 | 8.334 | <.001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment

The results of the Sobel test presented in Figure 2 demonstrate that the indirect effect of front leadership communication on employees' commitment levels through communication transparency is statistically significant ($z = 7.403$, $p = .00$).

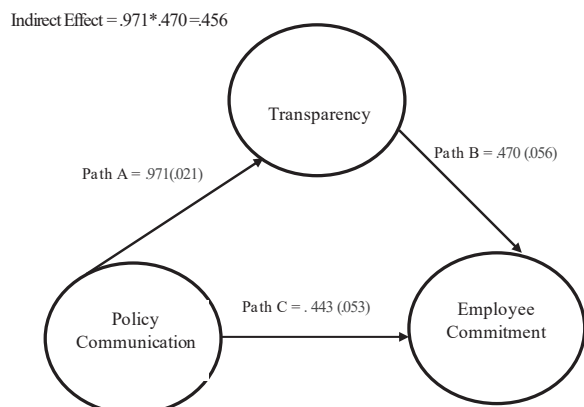
Figure 2

Sobel Test for Mediation

| Input: | | Test statistic: | Std. Error: | p-value: |
|----------------|------|--------------------------|-------------|----------|
| a | .971 | Sobel test: 7.40324224 | 0.05508668 | 0.0 |
| b | .420 | Aroian test: 7.40155582 | 0.05509923 | 0.0 |
| s _a | .021 | Goodman test: 7.40492981 | 0.05507412 | 0.0 |
| s _b | .056 | Reset all | Calculate | |

Figure 3 shows the path diagram of the causal relationships between the three variables. This demonstrates that the mediator significantly transmits the influence from the independent variable to the dependent variable, affirming the hypothesized relationships in the model. The strong path coefficients ($a = .971$ and $b = .420$) highlight the critical role of the mediator within the framework.

Figure 3
Path Diagram for Mediation Analysis



The path diagram reflects a mediation model in which transparency, directly and indirectly, influences policy communication through employee commitment. transparency directly affects policy Communication (coefficient = .443) and indirectly by enhancing Employee Commitment (coefficient = .971), which in turn positively affects Policy Communication (coefficient = .470) (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mayer et al., 2009). The substantial indirect effect (.456), calculated as the product of the coefficients of paths A and B, highlights the critical mediating role of commitment (Sobel, 1982). This model illustrates how organizational transparency can foster effective communication via employee commitment (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021).

Discussion

The study on frontline leadership communication and its impact on employee commitment in nonprofit organizations in Monrovia, Liberia, revealed several key findings. Data from 388 respondents across various nonprofit sectors indicated that employees perceive frontline leaders' communication and transparency positively, with mean scores reflecting favorable views. The study found a strong positive correlation ($r=0.891$, $p < 0.001$) between communication transparency and employee commitment. This suggests that employees are more likely to feel committed to the organization when frontline leaders communicate

policies transparently. Transparent communication helps build trust and align employees with the organization's goals and values. Regression analysis demonstrated that communication and transparency significantly predicted employee commitment, explaining 82.5% of the variance.

This finding indicates that effective communication by frontline leaders is a crucial factor in enhancing employee commitment. Leaders who ensure clear, consistent, and transparent communication can better engage with their employees and foster a sense of loyalty and dedication. The Sobel test confirms that transparency mediates the relationship between communication and commitment ($z = 7.403$, $p < 0.001$). This mediation effect highlights the importance of transparency as a bridge to enhance the positive impact of communication on employee commitment. When employees perceive communication as transparent, it strengthens their commitment to the organization.

Transparent and effective communication by frontline leaders strengthens employee trust and cohesion, fosters a supportive work culture, and boosts morale. Thus, clear communication increases employee commitment, aligns teams with organizational objectives, and enhances adaptability when facing challenges, which is vital in Liberia's resource-constrained nonprofit sector. It also promotes a learning culture that encourages feedback and idea-sharing, builds loyalty, and reduces turnover. By involving the broader community through consistent outreach, frontline leaders maintain internal engagement and reinforce public trust and support, driving long-term success and community integration.

Conclusion

This study examines the relationship between frontline leadership communication, transparency, and employee commitment in nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in Monrovia, Liberia. Data from 388 employees across various NPO sectors, including education and healthcare, were analyzed. Most respondents were aged 31-50 years, with a higher proportion

of female participants (55.4%). Findings indicate generally positive perceptions of communication and transparency by frontline leaders and employee commitment. Employee commitment, communication, and transparency also have a positive relationship. Hence, the study concludes that effective and transparent communication by frontline leaders significantly boosts employee commitment to NPOs. Enhancing communication and transparency practices can foster a committed workforce that supports organizational success and sustainability.

Limitations of the Study

This study encountered various limitations, such as the following.

1. Limited Geographic Scope: The study was conducted exclusively in Monrovia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or countries with differing cultural and organizational norms.
2. Sample Representation: The sample size, while adequate for initial insights, may not fully represent all sectors or industries, potentially limiting the breadth of the conclusions.
3. Contextual Bias: The study's focus on non-profit organizations may not capture the dynamics of for-profit or hybrid organizational models, which may operate under different leadership and communication paradigms.

Future studies should broaden the scope to determine if the findings are applicable across various cultural and organizational contexts. Additionally, increasing the number of participants from diverse industries will help ensure the results are relevant to various organizations. It is also essential to explore for-profit and mixed organizations to compare their leadership and communication styles with those of nonprofits.

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