

Enhancing Effective Communication Through Organization Development Intervention Treatment Case Study: An Experimental Research at Raffles International College in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The significance of effective communication in organizational development cannot be overstated. This research aimed to achieve the following objectives: Investigate the state of communication at Raffles International College in four sub variables as Leader Communication, Information, Group work and Communication climate amongst Raffles International College employees during the Pre-ODI stage. Design and implement suitable Organization Development Interventions (ODIs) to enhance communication within Raffles International College. Assess the communication situation at Raffles International College during the Post-ODI stage. Determine the disparities in communication between the Pre-ODI and Post-ODI stages among the experiential group at Raffles International College. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the employee body of Raffles International College serving as the sample. Three experts reviewed the questionnaires, which were then distributed to 301 employees at the college. Descriptive analysis and t-tests were employed for data analysis. Results indicated that the experimental group, which underwent Organization Development Intervention, exhibited improvement in the four sub variables amongst Raffles International College employees, as evidenced by higher scores in the Post-ODI stage compared to the Pre-ODI stage. In contrast, no discernible differences were observed between the Pre-ODI and Post-ODI stages in the control group. This underscores the positive impact of Organization Development Intervention on communication within the organizational context.

KEYWORDS: Organizational communication, Higher education institution, Organization development.

Introduction

In contemporary professional life, communication stands out as one of the most crucial soft skills, fostering connections among entrepreneurs, employers, employees, and interpersonal relationships among coworkers. This multifaceted aspect of communication encompasses various elements such as communication channels, transparency, authenticity, and employee engagement.

Communication channels play a pivotal role, as Welch emphasizes that effective internal communication relies on providing accurate information in suitable and usable formats for employees. Social media, rooted in Web 2.0's theoretical and technological foundations, facilitates the creation and sharing of user-generated content (Men & Hung-Baesecke, 2015).

Transparency is essential for informed decision-making, with Rawlins highlighting open communication as a key mechanism enabled by technological advancements. Organizations should ensure that information is communicated comprehensibly, meeting the needs of the recipients. Effective communication with internal stakeholders not only enhances organizational credibility but also contributes to competitive advantage and overall success (Men & Hung-Baesecke, 2015).

Authenticity holds significant importance in public relations research and practice, according to Molleda. In a landscape where organizations are increasingly called to be accountable and accessible, Bishop's principles—such as being clear, relevant, timely, consistent, truthful, fundamental, comprehensive, accessible, caring, and responsive to feedback—are crucial (Men & Hung-Baesecke, 2015).

Employee engagement, as noted by Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2003), involves cognitive and emotional antecedents in the workplace. Schaufeli and Bakker further define employee engagement as a positive work-related state characterized by energy, dedication, and absorption (Men & Hung-Baesecke, 2015). Recognizing and fostering employee engagement is vital for cultivating a satisfying and productive work environment.

Purposes

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the communication situation, focusing on four sub-variables: Leader Communication, Information, Group Work, and Communication Climate among employees of Raffles International College in the Pre-ODI stage.

2. To devise and implement suitable Organization Development Interventions (ODIs) aimed at enhancing communication across four sub-variables: Leader Communication, Information, Group Work, and Communication Climate among employees at Raffles International College.

3. To assess the communication landscape, considering four sub-variables: Leader Communication, Information, Group Work, and Communication Climate among Raffles International College employees in the post-ODI stage.

4. To evaluate the effectiveness of Organization Development interventions on communication, specifically in the sub-variables of Leader Communication, Information, Group Work, and Communication Climate.

Literature Review

Internal communication is often regarded as the lifeblood of an organization, holding significant influence. Ineffectiveness in internal communication is frequently linked to various internal issues within organizations. Poor internal communication not only affects individual aspects but also has a cascading impact on broader corporate dimensions, leading to negative sentiments and strained employee relationships. The larger the organization, the more complex and challenging internal communication becomes, emphasizing the need to identify key factors that can mitigate reliability issues before they escalate. The following factors significantly influence the effectiveness of internal communications:

Leader Communication Skill:

This factor encompasses top-down and centralized communication, emphasizing not only the individual but also communication style, leadership approach, and tonal aspects in communication (Yamaguchi, 2017).

Information:

The core of organizational communication, information plays a crucial role in measuring effectiveness. This involves assessing the accuracy of information and gauging employees' understanding of the information provided (Yamaguchi, 2017; Vercic, 2021).

Group Work:

Often synonymous with teamwork, group work evaluates how well employees collaborate. Group dynamics, leadership styles, and individual employee performance are key factors influencing group work effectiveness (Verčič, 2021).

Communication Climates:

The social tone of relationships, communication climates define how individuals interact within their professional relationships. Each relationship possesses its unique communication climate, influencing overall communication effectiveness (Verčič, 2021).

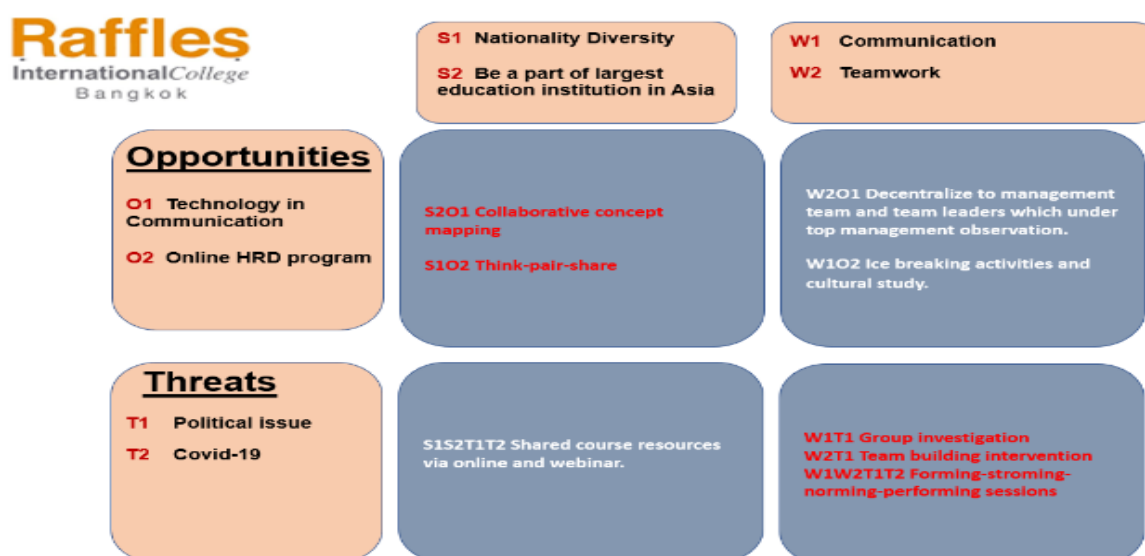


Figure 1: Organization Diagnosis

Based on the insights derived from Figure 1, the researcher will concentrate on two primary dimensions: Strength + Opportunity and Weakness + Threat. These dimensions serve as significant indicators of major advantages and disadvantages for the organization. Figure 1 facilitates the

categorization of strategies, where strengths align with opportunities, and weaknesses align with threats. Additionally, it introduces a collaborative concept strategy mapping and encourages the think-pair-share approach for organizational considerations.

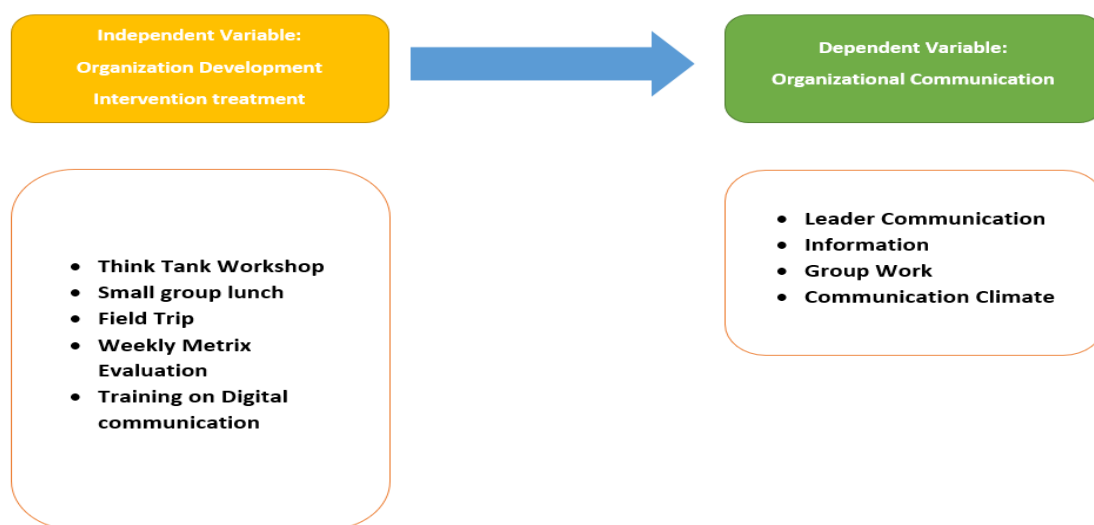


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

To establish its conceptual framework, the study relies on a theoretical foundation and a literature review (refer to Figure 2). Within this conceptual framework, communication and teamwork are considered a singular relationship. The independent variable is Organization Development Intervention, while organizational communication serves as the dependent variable.

Hypotheses

H1: The mean score of communication (LC, IF, GW, and CC) in the experimental group during the post-test is expected to be higher than the mean score of the control group in the Pre-ODI stage.

H2: The mean score of communication (LC, IF, GW, and CC) in the experimental group during the post-test is anticipated to be higher than the mean score of the control group in the Post-ODI stage.

H3: The mean score of communication (LC, IF, GW, and CC) in the control group during the post-test is projected to be higher than the mean score of the control group in the Pre-ODI stage.

H4: The mean score of communication (LC, IF, GW, and CC) in the experimental group during the post-test is predicted to be higher than the mean score of the experimental group in the Pre-ODI stage

Benefits of Research

This study provides organizations with a comprehensive understanding of internal communication dynamics. The interventions outlined in this research paper are designed to enhance organizational communication, offering owners and managers practical insights applicable to their respective organizations. Improved communication at all levels has the potential to inspire employees, aligning them with the organization's strategic objectives. Effective communication stands as a pivotal strategy for organizational success.

Furthermore, the findings of this research are particularly relevant to private educational institutions that share similar contexts and cultures with Raffles International College. The study demonstrates that interventions such as think tank workshops, business trips, and field trips can effectively enhance leader communication, information dissemination, group collaboration, and overall communication climate within an organization.

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in the investigation is an experimental research design. Within this design, an Organizational Development Intervention (ODI) centered around communication is implemented, complemented by teamwork assessments conducted before and after the intervention.

For data collection and interpretation, a hybrid research approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Qualitative approaches employ non-standardized tools and procedures, such as interviews and analytical techniques, to delve into the

underlying reasons and processes behind observed situations (Creswell, 2014).

Conversely, quantitative approaches employ standardized measurement tools and procedures, such as sample surveys and statistical analyses. The primary focus of quantitative research is to elucidate frequency and relationships within the data (Creswell, 2014).

The integration of a mixed methods approach combines both qualitative and quantitative techniques, offering a more comprehensive and nuanced analytical perspective. In the pursuit of a thorough organizational understanding, this research utilizes a mixed methodology, rigorously testing the outcomes of the intervention. The methodology involves a judicious blend of quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a holistic overview of the organization and robustly assess the impact of the intervention.

Population and Sample

For this research, a sample of 301 individuals is drawn from the entire population of 301 employees at Raffles International College Bangkok. This comprehensive selection encompasses all strata within the organization, reflecting the entirety of the employee demographic. It is noteworthy that the researcher holds the position of President at Raffles International College and is deeply committed to advancing internal communication within the organization. Given this commitment and the desire to capture a holistic perspective, the decision was made to include the entire population of 301 employees as the sample.

This diverse group comprises individuals from various departments, including management, academic staff, academic support, student administration

and services, finance and accounting, admissions and marketing, as well as facility and building management. The inclusivity extends across the organizational hierarchy, encompassing roles from the presidential level to positions such as housekeeping, gardening, and security.

It is important to highlight that the research methodology employed is a quasi-experimental approach, emphasizing a structured yet flexible design to assess the impact of organizational development interventions on communication within Raffles International College.

Instruments

Quantitative analysis of survey responses was conducted using SPSS software to evaluate and analyze the hypotheses proposed in the study.

For qualitative analysis, responses from interviews and the primary focus group questions were subjected to content analysis. Additionally, questionnaires underwent a thorough review by three experts to assess the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) and gather expert insights. This IOC index was instrumental in determining the content validity of the questionnaire. Three experts specializing in Human Resource Management and Organization Development, representing both educational institutes and business companies, meticulously examined the questionnaire.

The Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) employed a scoring range from -1 to +1, where:
Congruent = +1

Questionable = 0

Incongruent = -1

Items scoring below 0.5 underwent updates, while items scoring equal to or above 0.5 were retained. The departments, including Administration Team, Marketing Team, Human Resources Team, Finance Team, Management Team, and Facility Team, each contributed half of their population to control and experimental groups through a random method.

The main focus group comprised all 301 employees of Raffles International College Bangkok, categorized into departmental groups such as Academic Team, Student Services Team, and Admission Teams for effective analysis and evaluation.

ODI Design Process

During the Pre-ODI phase, OD interventions were planned according to the results of the questionnaires, detailed interviews and group interviews were held. Furthermore, in order to design the most effective solutions for the appropriate group of staff, the needs of each group on either dimension must be prioritized.

ODI Design Process

In the Pre-ODI phase, the design of Organizational Development Interventions (ODIs) was meticulously crafted based on the outcomes derived from questionnaires, detailed interviews, and group discussions. To ensure the development of highly effective solutions tailored to specific groups of staff, a thorough prioritization of the needs of each group on various dimensions was undertaken. This process aimed to ascertain the unique requirements of each staff category, thereby facilitating the creation of targeted and impactful interventions.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistic of the experimental group

Information	Percentage
Gender	
1. Male	54
2. Female	46
Age	
1. <30	34.67
2. 30-40	41.33
3. 41-50	18.67
4. >50	5.33
Education Background	
1. Below bachelor's degree	6
2. Bachelor's degree	48.7
3. Master's degree	30
4. Doctoral Degree	15.3
Position	
1. Management	13.33
2. Non-Management	86.67
Current workplace service year	
1. Less than 6 months	14.0
2. 6 months – 1 year	14.4
3. Between 1 year – 3 s	16.6
4. More than 3 years	55

Data Analysis

The research sample has been categorized into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. An overview of the overall demographic data for both groups is presented in Table 1.

For the control and experimental groups, the survey reveals a higher participation of female respondents in both categories. In the experimental group, 54 percent of the participants are female, while 46 percent are male. In terms of age distribution within the experimental group, the majority falls between 30-40 years old (41.33 percent), followed by those less than 30 years old (34.67 percent). The age group of 41-50 years old constitutes 18.67 percent of the respondents.

Examining the highest level of education attained by the experimental group, 48.7 percent hold a bachelor's

degree, while 30 percent have a master's degree or lower. Those with a doctorate degree comprise 15.3 percent. Additionally, 86.67 percent of respondents in the experimental group hold non-management positions, while 13.33 percent are in management roles. Regarding the duration of employment with the organization, the majority of respondents have over 3 years of experience (55 percent), followed by those with 1-3 years of experience (16.6 percent), and 28.4 percent with less than a year's experience.

To assess the impact of the Organizational Development Intervention (ODI), a mean comparison was conducted between the control and experimental groups in the Pre-ODI stage, revealing discernible differences between the two groups.

Research Results

Table 2: Pre ODI on Communication

Grouping	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error	Result
Control	151	2.5464	.19496	.01587	Priority area for improvement
Experimental	150	2.4661	.17653	.01441	Priority area for improvement

However, during the ODI stage, the intervention aimed at enhancing communication effectiveness unfolded, targeting specific factors: Leader Communications (LC), Information (IF), Group Work (GW), and Communication Climate (CC), as detailed in Table 2. The Organization Development Intervention (ODI) comprised various strategies, including interviews, a Think Tank Workshop, small group lunches, business trips, and field trips.

In this context, the Think Tank Workshop served as a platform to share insights on routine tasks, prevalent issues, complaints, and recommendations across

the entire organization. Additionally, the small group lunches were instrumental in fostering a communicative group work climate, while Communication Climate itself was defined as the social tone within relationships—capturing the nuances of how individuals interact.

The final ODI incorporated a field trip, offering all management levels an opportunity for uninterrupted interaction and collaborative problem-solving away from day-to-day tasks. This unique experience took place at Raffles Education Corporation in Singapore, the origin of the Raffles Education group.

Table 2: Pre ODI on Communication in each variable included by Leader Communication (LC), Information (IF), Group Work (GW) and Communication Climate (CC)

		N	Mean	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Mean Pre LC	Control Group	151	2.5391	.32659	.172	.863
	Experimental Group	150	2.5327	.30946		
Mean Pre IF	Control Group	151	2.3550	.27660	.472	.638
	Experimental Group	150	2.3387	.24924		
Mean Pre GW	Control Group	151	2.6728	.19111	.258	.796
	Experimental Group	150	2.6673	.18715		
Mean Pre CC	Control Group	151	2.6209	.25837	.463	.644
	Experimental Group	150	2.6083	.20819		

In concluding Hypothesis 1, all variables exhibit a significance level exceeding 0.05, implying acceptance of the

Null Hypothesis. This indicates that there are no discernible differences between the control and experimental groups

concerning organizational communication in the Pre-ODI stage.

Table 3: Post ODI on each variable

		N	Mean	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Mean Post LC	Control Group	151	3.2424	.57160	-24.833	.000
	Experimental Group	150	4.4633	.19504		
Mean Post IF	Control Group	151	2.9669	.56705	-22.892	.000
	Experimental Group	150	4.4153	.11469		
Mean Post GW	Control Group	151	3.2437	.67916	-25.406	.000
	Experimental Group	150	4.4400	.11469		
Mean Post CC	Control Group	151	3.3742	.6916	-14.416	.000
	Experimental Group	150	4.2017	.18981		

In concluding Hypothesis 2, all variables with a significance level below 0.05 indicate acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis. This suggests that differences

exist between the control group and experimental group concerning organizational communication in the Pre-ODI stage.

Table 4: Compare Pre and Post ODI of Control group

		Mean	SD	Std. Error	t	df	Sig
Pair1	Mean Post LC Mean Pre LC	.00331	.05088	.00414	.80	150	.425
Pair2	Mean Post IF Mean Pre IF	-.00132	.11718	.0954	-.139	150	.890
Pair3	Mean Post GW Mean Pre GW	.00662	.22261	.01812	.366	150	.715
Pair4	Mean Post CC Mean Pre CC	.02341	.19377	.01577	1.485	150	.140

Concluding Hypothesis 3, all variables exhibit significance levels greater than 0.05, signifying acceptance of the Null Hypothesis. This implies that there is no

significant difference in communication for the control group between the Pre-ODI stage and Post-ODI stage.

Table 5: Compare pre and post ODI on experimental group

		Mean	SD	Std. Error	t	df	Sig
Pair1	Mean Post LC Mean Pre LC	2.13733	.36957	.03018	70.830	149	.000
Pair2	Mean Post IF Mean Pre IF	2.07667	.41619	.03398	61.112	149	.000
Pair3	Mean Post GW Mean Pre GW	1.84867	.26157	.02136	86.558	149	.000
Pair4	Mean Post CC Mean Pre CC	1.59333	.30932	.02526	63.088	149	.000

Conclusion of Hypothesis 4:

All variables exhibit significance levels below 0.05, indicating acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis. This suggests a significant difference in communication for the experimental group between the Pre-ODI stage and Post-ODI stage.

Conclusion and discussion

As per the research result, it's how that Organization Development Intervention generates a positive effect on the experimental group. The mean score of Post-ODI is significantly higher than Pre-ODI. On the other hand, there is no difference between Pre-ODI and Post-ODI inside the control group. Moreover, this result also confirms that all ODI that researchers conducted for the company generated positive effects in organization communication. which included statistical analysis to testing the conceptual framework. The researcher can conclude the result of 4 hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 1: H1a: There is a significant difference in Leader Communication between the Pre-ODI stage and the Post-ODI stage.

Hypothesis 2: H2a: There is a significant difference in Information between the Pre-ODI stage and Post-ODI stage.

Hypothesis 3: H3a: There is a significant difference in Group Work between the Pre-ODI stage and the Post-ODI stage.

Hypothesis 4: H4a: There is a significant difference in Communication Climate between Pre-ODI stage and Post-ODI stage

Recommendation

According to the research results, Organization Development Interventions are customized and designed for Raffles International College, which this organization has a complex in nationality and gender diversity. However, it's not reflected in the bigger or smaller organizations which also have their own style. Raffles is considered as a flat organization in which there isn't a lot of power privilege between management and sub-ordinates. To generate better accuracy of research results, researchers would like to apply this research method to all colleges and schools under Raffles Education Group. The result shall represent international private education which provides a higher sample size and shows another dimension in the bigger picture not only Thailand.

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