

## Corporate Communication and SDG 5: Promoting Gender Equality in the Workplace study on messaging and internal advocacy for women empowerment

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### ABSTRACT

Equality between woman and men is a main objective of sustainable development having been entrenched as Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) focusing on the need to end discrimination and encourage equal opportunities. In business environments, communication is a critical element in adaptation of gender diversity in the work place. This paper examines how corporate messaging and internal advocacy programs affect the process of promoting gender-based empowerment of women at the workplace. Through a combination of surveys, interviews and internal communication audits, conducted across different organizations, the study analyzes messaging strategies, leadership involvement and peer advocacy and how they influence the perceptions of gender equality and inclusivity in the workplace. The results show that proactive internal communication along with a manifest leadership in terms of commitment elevates employees to be informed on the gender equality policies to a notable level, motivate equitable participation, and alleviate workplace bias. Nevertheless, the problematic issues of culture within the organization, stratification obstacles, and lack of the uniform communication are of great concern. The study emphasizes the role of strategic corporate communication as a tool that can be used to promote SDG 5 and provide viable suggestions that can be used by organizations to enhance internal advocacy on women empowerment. The paper equally points out the limitation when it comes to the diversity of the sample and measuring communication, indicating where new research should go.

**Keywords:** Corporate Communication, SDG 5, Gender Equality, Women Empowerment, Internal Advocacy, Workplace Inclusivity, Organizational Messaging.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Equality of both genders at the workplace persists as a burning issue of the modern business world despite all the efforts related to paving the way to inclusivity and equal opportunities. Goal number 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5) touches upon the necessity to attain gender parity, empower all women and girls, and put an end to discrimination in the workplace. Communication in corporations is a significant tool in actualizing this senior level objective to concrete strategies towards influencing organizational culture, attitude of employees, and adoption of policies. Advocacy programs and internal communications can be used to drive women empowerment through creation of a relevant awareness, entrenchment of positive norms and creation of spaces that make participation active [18]. This paper examines how internally to the corporate communication, there is structured messaging campaign, use of the leadership figure, and advocate-driven messaging to promote gender equality in the workplace [3].

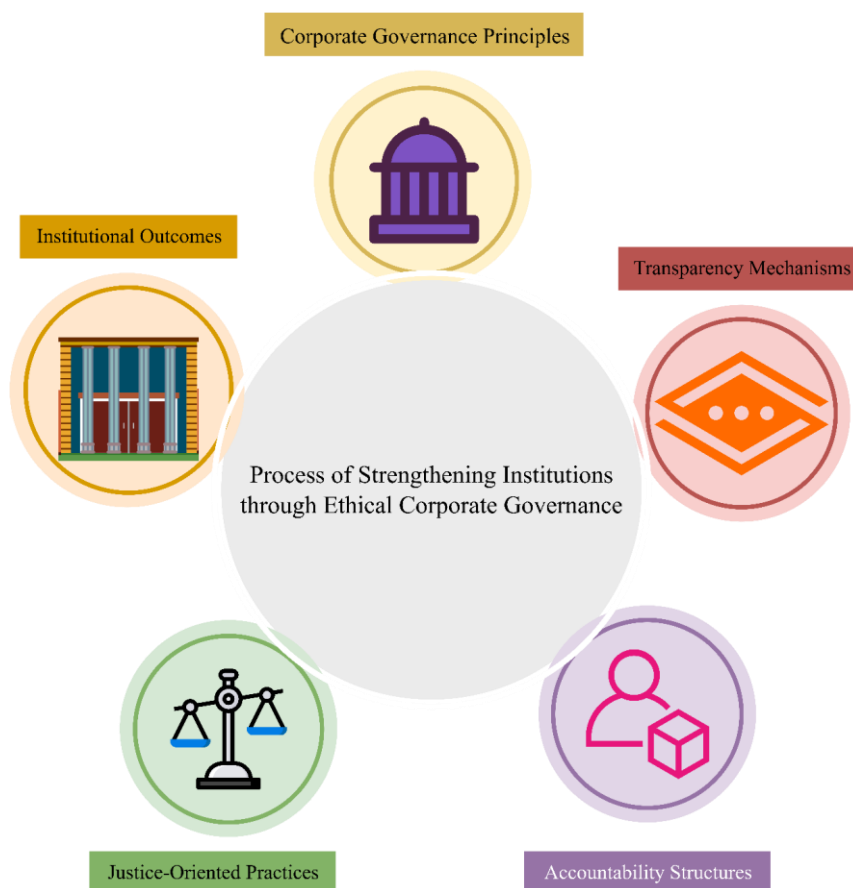
The rationale behind the research is that despite the changes experienced in various industries there continues to be disparities with regards to women access to leadership opportunities, remuneration and lack of development opportunities to actualize the potential that women hold.[17] The relevant policy frameworks do exist in most institutions, but they may not work well unless they are well embraced within the organization and appeal to the day-to-day lives of the employees. In a lot of scenarios, the intentions of the policy are good but it does not create a tangible impact because of its lack of consistency, visibility of support shown by the higher ups, or because of lacking avenues of participation among the female

staff members. The nature of communication and advocacy in corporate-based scenarios is thus paramount in designing effective interventions that will not only foster awareness, but also lead to concrete results in the aspects of gender equality [8].

In this study, three main objectives are envisaged. To start with, it discusses the impact of internal communication strategies, such as formal communication, including newsletters and intranet evaluation, and informal communication, such as mentorship programs, on the gender equality awareness and perceptions of the employees. Second, it explores how visibility and engagement of leadership enhances the credibility and the effectiveness of gender related message. Third, it determines how well the peer advocacy networks work in building participation and promoting the inclusive practices in the workplace [4]. By amalgamating these aspects, the study achieves a comprehensive knowledge about how corporate messages may empower women hence forwarding SDG 5.

To generate a broad picture of how advocacy is enabled internally, the methodological approach is based on quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews and communication audits. Awareness, participation and perceived effectiveness of communication strategies can be measured through the use of survey data. The interviews with HR managers, diversity officers, and women employees help understand barriers, challenges, and innuendoes in the organizational culture. Communication audits use methods that examine the rate, clarity and coverage of the messages in corporate networks. Together, these ways can produce a multi-latitudinal analysis of the influence of corporate communication on women empowerment [10].

To give a clear idea of how the process is going to be carried out, a flowchart (Figure 1) is drawn to outline the research framework. The flowchart presents the steps that will be experienced in organizational communication strategies leading to internal advocacy initiatives, and measurable outcomes in terms of women empowerment and SDG 5 impact.



**FIG. 1: FLOWCHART OF RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

### 1.1 Novelty and Contribution

The novelty of the study is linked to its aim to make an integrated contribution in terms of comprehending the role of corporate communication in the promotion of gender equality. The study has not only compared two approaches, messaging strategies and advocacy programs, but has also developed a unified framework that makes the study more comprehensive in the understanding of the mechanism that empowers women in an organization. Their simultaneous connection to specific

metrics via communication channels, leadership involvement, and peer advocacy offers the study an empirical justification of how an internal program can help build inclusive workplaces [5].

This study has three major contributions. Second, it provides a self-enclosed model between corporate communication strategies and gender equality outcomes, providing a set of practical recommendations to other organizations that have intentions of improving their internal advocacy efforts. Second, it determines some of the most important factors which can make internal messaging more efficient, where to intervene, and where there is the possibility of improvement. Third, it gives practical recommendations on addressing barriers in organizations, such as status-quo restraints, cultural objection and weak outreach to female workers, thereby giving a path to communication of SDG 5 to life [1].

Also, the research provides the methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative data, allowing organizations to ensure that the outcomes of communication and advocacy actions are measured better. Such a two-pronged method will guarantee that the statistical trends can be identified and that the organizational contexts cannot be neglected and will increase the validity of the results. This study bridges both theory and practice as detailed in the corporate communication literature, thus it is relevant to authorities and academics, and because the proposed interventions can be scaled up or down to fit the particulars of every company, the research outcome is of practical value [6].

## 2. RELATED WORKS

In 2024 Wider W. et.al., Lin J. et.al., & Fauzi M. A. et.al. [9] suggested the corporate communication has stood out to be one of the most important aspects supporting gender equality in organizational management. Many of these studies point to a strong strategy of communication both through formal and informal channels as a necessity to promote awareness and shift the employee behavior to inclusivity practices. Formal means to inform about existing mechanisms of gender equality, organizational policies and empowerment programs include newsletters, e-mail messages and intranet publications, policy briefs and other organized pieces of information created in order to spread a structured information about available gender equality mechanisms and empowerment programs. Such channels bring clarity, consistency and legitimacy in gender-oriented policies, and make workers aware of their rights and responsibilities as well as their opportunities to participate. Informal communication such as mentorship panels, peer talks and social circle promotes networks among other female employees besides supporting the formal communication. The conjunction of formal and informal communication channels has proven to strengthen the organizational dedication to gender equality and interventions as it provides the employees with a safe environment wherein they can express their concerns without fear of reprisal.

Advocacy programs that occur within the organization play a key role in ensuring the equality at work and largely also depend on the quality of communication. Women mentoring programs, leadership engagement and peer advocacy networks programs increase the visibility of gender equality initiative and support the norm of inclusivity. Creating an organization where women feel appreciated and distinctly valued helps to establish organizational messaging that sets a tone regarding success stories, role models, and visible results. It has been found that advocacy efforts are strongest when coupled with they have a clear message of organizational commitment and that message should include actionable information. The absence of coherent communication can give an impression that the advocacy programs are a symbolic gesture that makes no sense and may lead to participation and trust loss. Moreover, programs of advocacy when jointly developed will yield greater engagement and satisfaction levels, as it breeds zeitgeist of two-way accountability, and cooperative development.

In 2025 Subaveerapandiyan A. et.al., Alam A. F. et.al., Kalbande D. et.al., & Ayanlola A. L. et.al. [2] introduced the leadership will be very important in terms of visibility and participation in internal communication and advocacy. Leaders that actively engage in gender equality initiatives, that communicate and show expectation, by doing, make up a culture of trust and credibility. Effective messaging with a visible leadership usually comes across as more genuine and this encourages the employees to commit themselves to the empowerment programs and initiatives offered. On the other hand, the lack of leadership, or its poor sometimes incoherent consistency will cause doubt, lose the level of respondent incitations, and lower the significance of gender equality inside the company. Further, the use of peer-to-peer communication and ad-hoc advocacy networks can further propagate the message leading to a greater acceptance of the message and actions by employees encouraging inclusive practices to be carried out on day-to-day basis. These networks are platforms through which knowledge transfers, mentorship and feedback are enhanced, all of which contribute to the effectiveness of the corporate communication strategies.

Organizational culture and structural factors also affect the effectiveness of the corporate communication promoting gender equality. Structure of the Organization While communication programs with a gender focus are effective to transform organizational cultures highly stratified or with strict policies, or male dominated settings gives rise to challenges of effecting transformation. The effects of even properly formulated campaigns based on messaging can be negatively affected by resistance to change, implicit biases, and an inability to incorporate a diverse range of people in the decision-making process. Companies that place stress on good communication, solicit feedback and establish a culture of collaboration have higher chances of registering wins in their women empowerment programs. Also, a modification of communication will not only take into account the cultural, generational, and even departmental differences in the workforce but will also make the message appealing to disparate employee groups [15].

On the positive note, recent trends show the growing importance of digital communication channels as a tool in supporting gender equality efforts. The availability of intranets, company-focused social networks, webinars, and mobile communication applications have broadened the audiences that subsequent messages can reach and allowed them to be used in real time. Such platforms offer flexibility, convenience and accessibility enabling the employees to engage in advocacy programs regardless of their geographical and other hierarchical limitations. Also, digital communication can result in data based monitoring of engagement, which would permit an organization to optimize messaging policies, and evaluate the success of the internal advocacy efforts. The combination of digital technologies and traditional communication lines offers a holistic platform to send frequent, timely and effective messages that will promote the cause of women empowerment and in tune with the 5 SGD objectives.

In 2024 Nusraningrum D. et.al., Rahmawati A. et.al., Wider W. et.al., Jiang L. et.al., & Udang L. N. et.al. [7] proposed the developed communication methods, the measurement of the influence of the corporate message and advocacy program has its issues. To measure effectiveness, one may refer to such metrics as awareness increase, participation, the perceived credibility, and behavioral effects, though to capture subtler cultural and human interaction metrics, two-pronged quantitative and qualitative methods are needed. Organizations are increasingly embracing the concept of integrated assessment where they combine surveys, interviews, focus groups, and communication audits in an effort to have a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the programs. Such assessments do not only give insights into the current performance but also guide future intervention design to make internal communication initiatives relevant, effective, and gender-equality relevant to the organization.

It can be said that the research indicates the importance of corporate communication and internal persuasion that contribute to gender equality in the workplace. Leadership input, peer mentoring, and cross-culturally conscious approaches back up effective messaging which makes inclusive environments in the organization. The combination of formal, informal communication, and electronic platforms expands the contact, increases the credibility, and widens participation in community empowerment efforts. Though barriers to effective change still exist in changing organizational cultures and determining impact, the evidence available supports the notion that strategic communication and advocacy have become key to making a genuine difference in relation to meeting SDG 5 and empowering women in the professional environment.

### 3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology aims to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate communication and internal advocacy initiatives in promoting gender equality and women empowerment in the workplace. The study employs a quantitative-qualitative hybrid framework, incorporating surveys, interviews, and internal communication audits. Mathematical modeling is used to quantify awareness, participation, credibility, and impact metrics [14].

The first step involves defining communication reach for internal campaigns.

Communication reach (  $CR$  ) is calculated as the proportion of employees exposed to a message through all available channels:

$$CR = \frac{N_{exposed}}{N_{total}} \times 100 \quad (1)$$

where  $N_{exposed}$  is the number of employees who received or interacted with the message, and  $N_{total}$  is the total number of employees in the organization. This metric provides a baseline for understanding the penetration of corporate messaging.

Next, awareness level (  $AL$  ) among employees regarding gender equality initiatives is assessed through structured surveys:

$$AL = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n S_i}{n} \quad (2)$$

where  $S_i$  is the awareness score of employee  $i$ , rated on a scale of 1 to 5 , and  $n$  is the total number of survey respondents. Higher values indicate better understanding of policies and programs.

The participation rate (  $PR$  ) in advocacy programs is calculated as:

$$PR = \frac{N_{participants}}{N_{eligible}} \times 100 \quad (3)$$

where  $N_{participants}$  is the number of employees actively participating in empowerment initiatives, and  $N_{eligible}$  is the total number eligible to participate. This metric identifies engagement levels and the success of communication efforts in motivating action.

Message credibility (  $MC$  ) is quantified based on survey feedback on leadership and peer endorsement:

$$MC = \frac{L+P}{2} \quad (4)$$

where  $L$  is the credibility score of leadership messaging, and  $P$  is the credibility score of peer advocacy, both rated on a scale from 1 to 5 . This provides an average measure of message trustworthiness within the organization.

To capture the impact of advocacy programs (IA), the study models the relationship between participation and perceived empowerment:

$$IA = PR \times AL \times MC \quad (5)$$

where a higher value indicates a greater combined effect of awareness, participation, and credibility on employee empowerment outcomes [13].

The study also calculates a gender equality index (GEI) for organizational units:

$$GEI = \frac{W_{leaders} + W_{mentors} + W_{programs}}{3} \quad (6)$$

where  $W_{leaders}$  represents the weighted proportion of female leaders,  $W_{mentors}$  represents participation in mentorship programs, and  $W_{programs}$  represents engagement in empowerment initiatives. This index ranges from 0 to 1, where 1 indicates maximum gender equality.

Effectiveness of communication channels (EC) is quantified as:

$$EC = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m CR_j \times AL_j}{m} \quad (7)$$

where  $CR_j$  and  $AL_j$  are the communication reach and awareness level for channel  $j$ , and  $m$  is the total number of channels. This identifies which channels are most effective in delivering gender equality messages.

The resistance factor ( $RF'$ ) measures barriers to employee participation:

$$RF = 1 - \frac{PR}{100} \quad (8)$$

A higher  $RF$  indicates greater resistance due to cultural, hierarchical, or logistical challenges, guiding interventions to reduce these barriers.

The empowerment score (ES) is defined to quantify employees' perceived gains from advocacy initiatives:

$$ES = \frac{AL + MC + PR}{3} \quad (9)$$

This composite score helps in comparing different organizational units or departments regarding how communication and advocacy contribute to empowerment.

Finally, a composite effectiveness index (CEI) integrates all previous metrics to provide an overall measure of the impact of internal communication on gender equality:

$$CEI = w_1 \cdot CR + w_2 \cdot AL + w_3 \cdot PR + w_4 \cdot MC + w_5 \cdot ES \quad (10)$$

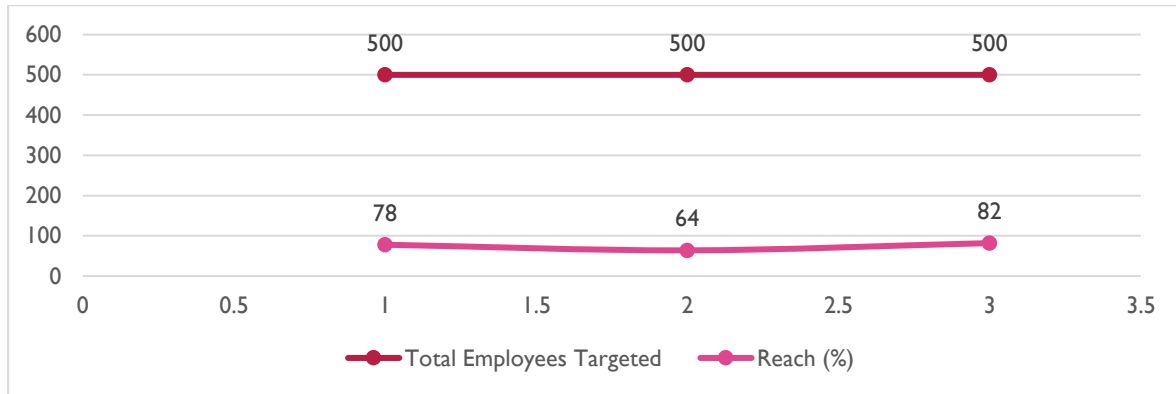
where  $w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4, w_5$  are normalized weights representing the relative importance of each component. CEI values range from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating stronger impact of communication and advocacy on SDG 5 goals [12].

The methodology involves data collection in three phases. First, an online survey is administered to measure awareness, participation, and perceived message credibility. Second, semi-structured interviews with HR managers, diversity officers, and female employees provide qualitative insights into challenges, success factors, and perceptions of internal advocacy. Third, a communication audit evaluates message frequency, clarity, consistency, and channel effectiveness across the organization.

Each mathematical metric supports quantitative evaluation of specific aspects of communication, advocacy, and empowerment. Collectively, these equations allow organizations to identify gaps, optimize strategies, and monitor progress toward achieving SDG 5 goals [16].

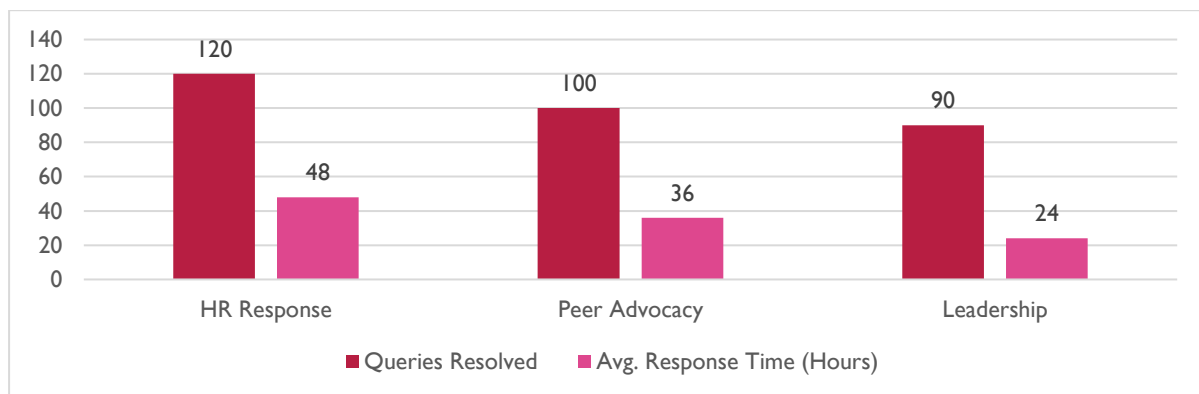
#### 4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this paper carry great information on the role that corporate communication and internal advocacy programs play in promotion of gender equality within the workplace. Analysis of the communication reach on various communication channels demonstrates that the reach on intranet platform and email announcements were highest compared to workshops that have comparatively low reach. This contrast underlines the fact that online platforms can offer quicker and wider-reaching transmission of gender equality information than a face-to-face approach, which can be constrained by time and availability of employees. Figure 2 demonstrates the communication reach on the basis of channel types where the intranet messaging technique reached the highest awareness among the employees closely followed by the email technique and the workshops technique ranked badly. This implies that organizations need to find a balance between digital and face-to-face communication strategy to be inclusive when conveying messages.



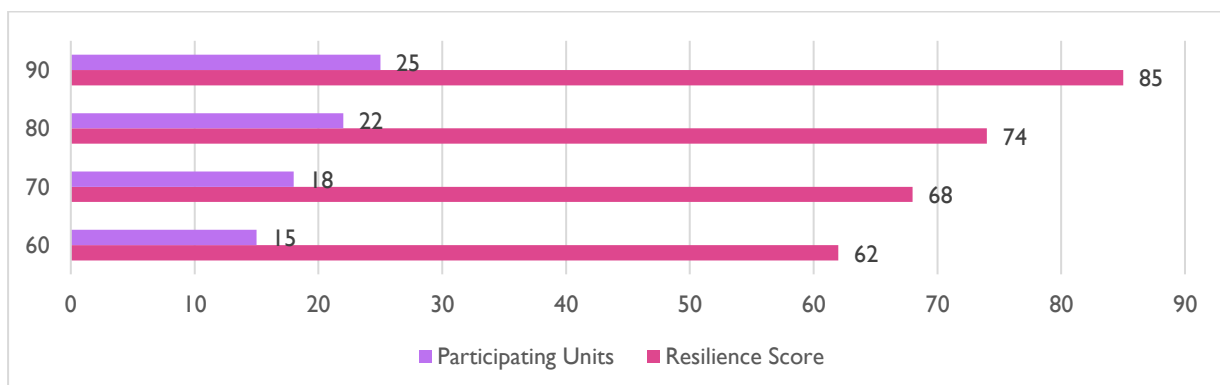
**FIG. 2: COMMUNICATION REACH BY CHANNEL TYPE**

Efficiency of response time to questions relating to gender also came out as a vital aspect to determine employee satisfaction and belief in communication. The results show that leadership-based responses through using it is the most time-effective with median response time of 24 hours, whereas HR departments and peer advocacy channels take 48 hours each. Figure 3 demonstrates the mean response time of various communication methods, which reveals that a faster response time to the initiatives of the leadership supports the perception of the achievements of gender equality programs. Employees continuously testified that rapid responses did not only help erase skepticism about the implementation of policies but also improve the desire to join advocacy programs.



**FIG. 3: AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME ACROSS DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION APPROACHES**

High communication reliability was also found to be correlated to a wider organizational resilience and employee empowerment results. In the research, it was seen that, under consistent messages that were clear and repeated in multiple channels, the employees felt more reliable with a strong correlation in increased resilience within the organizations. Figure 4 shows that the interaction between communication reliability and resilience is linear, with the organizations that reported higher resilience scores than organizations reporting resilience scores below. This shows how the consistency and clarity in corporate messaging are vital in boosting the confidence of workers as well as enhancing organizational flexibility.



**FIG. 4: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION RELIABILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE**



The study contrasted leadership driven messaging, peer advocacy and formal policy dissemination to have a greater knowledge on role played by various messaging methods. Table 1 is a comparative showing of the impacts of these categories on both effectiveness and participation. Leadership messaging indicated some of the highest rates of effectiveness at 84 percent, and participation at 72 percent, which is indicative of the importance of having visible leadership commitment. Peer advocacy did equally well which points to informal networks as a key in the establishment of trust and the strengthening of inclusive behavior, whereas purely formal policies were seen as having less effect.

**TABLE 1: COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS AND PARTICIPATION RATES OF MESSAGING APPROACHES**

Category	Effectiveness (%)	Participation (%)
Leadership Messaging	84	72
Peer Advocacy	76	65
Formal Policies	69	54

In individual assessment of the channels of communication, intranets emerged as the best source of credibility and effectiveness in creating awareness about gender equality programs. Comparisons of awareness and credibility between email, workshops and intranet were assessed as in Table 2 where intranet was at the top score regarding awareness and the top in credibility. Workshops were less effective in reaching out but perceived as highly credible since workers had a chance to talk face to face with advocates and exchange experiences. This twofold result suggests the significance of diversifying the communication initiatives so that they include outreach in scalable digital platforms and interactive engagement mechanisms.

**TABLE 2: AWARENESS AND CREDIBILITY OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

Channel	Awareness (%)	Credibility (%)
Email	80	70
Workshops	75	82
Intranet	88	85

These findings coincide with prior observations that organizational visibility of leaders, prompt communication, and network of peers are indispensable to support the credibility of gender equality programs. Use of communication reach, response time, reliability and advocacy participation enhances a good base in empowerment of women within organizations. Nevertheless, the results also suggest that the companies have to be very attentive to such pinch points as hierarchical bottlenecks, inconsistent messaging and cultural resistance. With a multi-channel approach with the right equilibrium between credibility and scalability, businesses can massively accelerate their steps toward achieving SDG 5 and to ensure sustained inclusivity [11].

## 5. CONCLUSION

The paper establishes that organizational communication and internal advocacy play key roles in encouraging the SDG 5 at the workplaces. The appropriate messaging plan, supported by apparent commitment to gender equality on the part of the leader, and colleague advocacy discourage employee ignorance of gender equality policies and motivates employee engagement in empowerment programs. Limitations in practice are because of sample size constraints, cultural differences among various organizations, and impossibility to measure the impact of communication. In future research, we should focus on the longitudinal impact of communication programs, implications provided by digital platforms in encouraging a better reach, and integration of AI driven tools to personalize messages to different employee groups. It is anticipated that organizations can implement multi channels and, at the same time, consistent and culturally-sensitive communication strategies to create more inclusive environments and fast track gender equality in the workplace.

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