



The effect of internal communication on employee performance: The mediating role of organizational commitment in Malian companies

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Abstract

Purpose: The study examines the effect of internal communication on employee performance in Malian companies, with organizational commitment as a mediating factor. It specifically investigated how communication practices influence employee attitudes and performance outcomes through commitment.

Methodology/Design: A quantitative research design was employed using a cross-sectional survey of 300 employees across multiple sectors in Mali. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test both direct and indirect relationships between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

Findings: Results revealed that internal communication significantly influenced employee performance ($\beta = 0.312, p < 0.001$) and organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.457, p < 0.001$). Organizational commitment also partially mediated the relationship between internal communication and employee performance (indirect $\beta = 0.214, p < 0.001$), confirming its role as a critical pathway linking communication to performance outcomes.

Implications: The study provides practical guidance for managers and HR practitioners in Malian companies to improve employee performance through effective communication systems, two-way feedback, and policies that foster organizational commitment.

Originality/Value: The study integrates Social Exchange Theory, Communication Satisfaction Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Expectancy Theory to offer a comprehensive understanding of how internal communication affects employee performance via organizational commitment in a developing country context.

Keywords: Internal communication, employee performance, organizational commitment, mediation, malian companies, structural equation modeling

Introduction

Internal communication is how information flows inside a company and how employees and managers exchange messages. Good internal communication helps workers understand their roles, follow guidelines, and stay updated about changes in the organization. When communication is clear and consistent, employees feel more confident and aligned with company goals (Wiwin *et al.*, 2020) [27]. Many studies show that communication affects how employees perform their tasks and interact with others.

Employee performance means how well employees complete their duties, meet targets, and contribute to company outcomes. Good performance is important for productivity, growth, and competitiveness in any business. But performance does not depend on communication alone; it also depends on how committed employees are to the organization.

Organizational commitment is the emotional bond employees have with their company. Committed employees are more loyal, motivated, and willing to give their best. Research shows that internal communication influences organizational commitment by helping employees feel valued and included (Sharma *et al.*, 2025) [23]. When workers receive clear communication, they are more likely to trust their leaders, support company goals, and remain loyal over time.

In many Malian companies, internal communication systems are still developing. Some organizations use meetings, emails, notices, and informal talks, but these may not always be effective or consistent. This can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and frustration among workers. Without strong communication, it is hard for employees to

know what the company expects or how their work links to organizational goals. When this happens, performance may suffer.

Studies from other contexts suggest that internal communication has a direct effect on performance and an indirect effect through organizational commitment (Okunade, 2025) [22]. In other words, internal communication not only sends information but also shapes how strongly employees feel connected to their workplace. If employees are committed, they are more likely to perform better because they understand and support organizational goals.

Despite growing research in other countries, there is limited evidence about how internal communication works in Malian business settings. Mali's unique cultural, economic, and organizational features may influence how communication is interpreted and how commitment develops. For example, communication patterns may be affected by language diversity, hierarchical work cultures, and limited communication infrastructure. Because of this, the direct links between communication and performance found elsewhere might not fully apply in Mali.

This study focuses on Malian companies to understand how internal communication affects employee performance. It also explores the role organizational commitment plays between communication and performance. In this way, the study goes beyond whether communication matters to how and why it matters in the work environment.

Problem Statement

Many Malian companies face problems related to poor performance and low employee engagement. Managers

often assume that sending information to workers is enough to improve performance. However, employees may receive messages that are unclear, late, or incomplete. As a result, workers may not clearly understand their responsibilities or how their tasks relate to company objectives.

Even when communication exists, employees may still feel disconnected from the organization. They may not feel valued, recognized, or loyal to the company. This lack of commitment can weaken the impact of communication and reduce performance (Sharma *et al.*, 2025) ^[23]. Some workers may follow instructions without enthusiasm, while others may disengage or look for opportunities elsewhere.

The key problem is that internal communication alone does not guarantee better performance in many Malian firms. There is an incomplete understanding of whether and how organizational commitment helps explain the link between communication and performance. Without examining organizational commitment as a bridge between communication and performance, companies may design communication strategies that do not fully address real employee needs.

Therefore, the study seeks to clarify this gap. It asks: How does internal communication affect employee performance in Malian companies? and Does organizational commitment explain the connection between communication and performance? The answering of these questions aims to provide clearer insight into workplace communication challenges and offer practical direction for managers and leaders.

Significance of the Study

This study matters in several ways.

First, it will help managers and leaders in Malian companies understand how to use internal communication in ways that strengthen employee commitment and performance. Instead of simply sending messages, leaders can learn how communication affects employee feelings and actions. This may help reduce misunderstandings, conflicts, and performance problems.

Second, the study will guide human resource professionals in designing policies that build stronger communication practices. Human resource teams can use the findings to create training, feedback systems, and employee engagement programs that enhance commitment and performance.

Third, the research will add to academic knowledge about internal communication in West African contexts. Most existing studies come from developed countries or different cultural settings. Hence, the focusing on Malian companies fills a research gap and offers evidence that reflects local workplace realities.

Finally, the study can help policy makers and business groups see how communication and employee commitment contribute to productivity. When performance improves, companies can grow, create jobs, and strengthen the national economy.

Literature Review

Internal Communication

Internal communication refers to how organizations share information with employees and how employees interact within the company. Effective internal communication ensures employees understand organizational goals, roles, and expectations, while promoting trust and collaboration

(Sharma *et al.*, 2025) ^[23]. Research shows that clear, timely, and meaningful communication improves employee engagement, reduces misunderstandings, and strengthens commitment. For instance, Wiwin *et al.* (2020) ^[27] found that internal communication directly influenced employee motivation and job performance, emphasizing its role as a key driver of organizational success.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is the measure of how well individuals complete their assigned tasks and contributes to organizational objectives. Performance depends on factors like skills, motivation, and the work environment. Studies highlight that employees perform better when they receive guidance, feedback, and support through effective communication (Okunade, 2025) ^[22]. Performance is not only about completing tasks but also about efficiency, quality of output, and willingness to go beyond minimal expectations. Employees who feel informed, valued, and engaged tend to show higher productivity and better results.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is the emotional attachment, loyalty, and dedication employees feel toward their organization. Committed employees are more likely to stay with the company, support its goals, and invest discretionary effort in their work (Sharma *et al.*, 2025) ^[23]. Research suggests that internal communication strengthens commitment by creating transparency, trust, and a sense of belonging (Wiwin *et al.*, 2020) ^[27]. High organizational commitment has been linked to improved job performance, lower turnover, and stronger engagement, making it an important mediating factor in the communication–performance relationship.

Malian Companies

Malian companies operate in a unique context influenced by cultural diversity, economic challenges, and evolving business practices. The organizational environment in Mali often features hierarchical structures, limited resources, and variable communication infrastructure (Okunade, 2025) ^[22]. Studies suggest that effective internal communication and strong employee commitment are critical for improving performance in these companies. The understanding of the local context is essential because strategies that work in other countries may not produce the same outcomes in Mali, highlighting the need for research that reflects local realities.

Theoretical Underpin and Hypotheses Development

Internal communication and employee performance

Social Exchange Theory explains that workplace relationships are built on reciprocal interactions and trust between employees and employers (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2020) ^[6]. When internal communication is clear, timely, and meaningful, employees perceive it as organizational support. This strengthens their loyalty, trust, and willingness to contribute to organizational goals. Equity and fairness in communication further reinforce these positive attitudes, creating a sense of mutual obligation (Sharma *et al.*, 2025) ^[23].

Empirical studies support this relationship. Wiwin *et al.* (2020) ^[27] found that effective internal communication significantly improved employee performance by fostering positive workplace interactions and engagement. Similarly,

Okunade (2025) [22] showed that employees who received clear and consistent communication exhibited higher productivity and job commitment.

H1: Internal communication has a significant positive influence on employee performance in Malian companies.

Internal Communication and Organizational Commitment

Communication Satisfaction Theory posits that employees' satisfaction with organizational communication directly affects their attitudes and behaviors at work (Downs & Hazen, 2021) [9]. When employees are satisfied with the clarity, accuracy, and usefulness of information, they are more likely to feel committed and motivated. In other words, organizational commitment may act as a bridge linking communication to performance outcomes.

Empirical studies show similar trends. Sharma *et al.* (2025) [23] demonstrated that employee satisfaction with communication processes enhanced organizational commitment, which in turn improved work performance. Additionally, Agyemang and Mensah (2022) [2] in Ghana found that clear and transparent internal communication significantly increased organizational commitment among employees in the banking sector, highlighting the importance of communication for loyalty and engagement. Guided by this theoretical reasoning and empirical evidence, the study hypothesizes:

H2: Internal communication has a significant positive influence on organizational commitment in Malian companies

Organizational Commitment Mediation between Internal Communication and Employee Performance

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory explains that employee motivation is influenced by both hygiene factors and motivators (Herzberg, 2020) [12]. Internal communication serves as a motivator when it clarifies roles, expectations, and career paths. At the same time, it acts as a hygiene factor by reducing uncertainty and preventing dissatisfaction. Employees who are well-informed and understand their roles are more likely to be committed and perform better.

Empirical evidence confirms this link. Okunade (2025) [22] found that communication addressing both informational and relational needs of employees improved commitment and productivity. Similarly, Adeyemi and Okechukwu (2021) [1] in Nigeria reported that organizational commitment significantly mediated the relationship between internal communication and employee performance, demonstrating that commitment strengthens the impact of communication on productivity.

H3: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between internal communication and employee performance in Malian companies.

Internal Communication Mediation between Employee Performance and Organizational Commitment

Expectancy Theory suggests that employees are motivated to perform when they believe that their effort will lead to desired outcomes (Vroom, 2021) [26]. Clear internal communication helps employees understand performance

expectations and the rewards associated with achieving them. When employees know that their effort will be recognized and valued, they are more likely to commit to their tasks and improve performance.

Empirical research supports this mechanism. Wiwin *et al.* (2020) [27] found that clear communication about expectations and outcomes enhanced both commitment and performance. In Cameroon, Nchinda and Tchouassi (2023) [19] showed that internal communication significantly mediated the link between employee performance and organizational commitment in manufacturing companies, suggesting that communication acts as a key channel through which performance drives loyalty.

H4: Internal communication positively affects employee performance through organizational commitment as a mediating factor

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. Internal communication serves as the independent variable, directly influencing employee performance H1 and organizational commitment H2. Organizational commitment acts as a mediator, explaining how internal communication indirectly enhances employee performance H3 and H4. The framework highlights both the direct effect of communication on performance and the indirect effect through commitment, showing the mechanisms by which clear, timely, and accurate communication can improve employee outcomes in Malian companies.

This visual model provides a clear guide for testing the hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and aligns with the theoretical foundations of Social Exchange Theory, Communication Satisfaction Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Expectancy Theory. It emphasizes the importance of fostering organizational commitment as a pathway through which internal communication translates into higher performance.

The diagram also serves as a roadmap for managers and HR practitioners, showing that enhancing communication practices can strengthen commitment and, in turn, drive employee effectiveness and organizational success. Figure 1 presents the construct



Source: Author's Construct, 2026

Fig 1: The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesized relationships among the study variables

Empirical Review

Nchinda and Tchouassi (2023) [19] conducted a cross-sectional survey among 250 employees in manufacturing companies in Cameroon. They employed structured questionnaires to measure internal communication,

employee performance, and organizational commitment, and applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the relationships. The study found that effective internal communication significantly improved employee efficiency and performance, and organizational commitment mediated the relationship between communication and performance. This highlights the critical role of communication in enhancing productivity and loyalty in Cameroonian organizations.

Also, Chirwa and Banda (2022) investigated employee engagement and internal communication practices in 220 private sector firms in Malawi. A quantitative survey design with structured questionnaires was used to measure engagement, communication, and performance levels. SEM analysis revealed that effective internal communication was positively associated with employee engagement, which in turn improved job performance. The study underscores that communication strategies play a vital role in enhancing productivity and employee commitment in Malawian workplaces.

Methodology

Research Philosophy

The study was guided by a pragmatic research philosophy, which allowed the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to generate practical and actionable insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) [8]. This approach was suitable because the research aimed to examine the effect of internal communication on employee performance while exploring the mediating role of organizational commitment in Malian companies.

Research Design

A quantitative research design was adopted to test the hypothesized relationships between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. This design enabled the collection of numerical data and the application of statistical techniques to analyze patterns, relationships, and effects among the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) [8]. Quantitative designs are particularly suitable for testing hypotheses and examining cause-and-effect relationships between measurable constructs.

Population and Sample Size

The target population consisted of employees from various Malian companies across different sectors. To determine an appropriate sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) [15] table was applied. Based on the estimated population of about 2,800, a sample size of 300 employees was selected. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that respondents represented staff with varying roles, responsibilities, and lengths of service, providing insights that were relevant to internal communication practices, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections measuring internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” to capture respondents’ perceptions accurately.

Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

The reliability and validity of the measurement instrument were assessed in line with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) requirements. Construct reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR), with values exceeding 0.70 for all constructs, indicating that the measurement items consistently reflected the underlying variables (Hair *et al.*, 2022) [18].

Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all constructs recording AVE values above 0.50, confirming that the indicators adequately represented their respective constructs. Discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, ensuring that each construct was distinct from the others and measured unique aspects of the study variables (Hair *et al.*, 2022) [18].

These procedures ensured that the instrument was both reliable and valid, providing accurate measurements for examining the relationships between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance using SEM

Data Analysis Procedure

Collected data were entered and analyzed using SPSS version 25 for descriptive statistics, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to test the hypothesized relationships among the variables. SEM enabled the examination of both direct and indirect effects of internal communication on employee performance through organizational commitment, allowing for robust testing of mediation effects (Hair *et al.*, 2022). Anonymity and voluntary participation was ensured

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study collected data from 300 employees across various Malian companies to understand the influence of internal communication on employee performance. In terms of gender distribution, 58% of respondents were male, while 42% were female, reflecting a slight male dominance in the workforce. This finding aligns with research in Nigeria by Adeyemi and Okechukwu (2021) [1], who reported a similar gender distribution in public sector organizations, with men slightly outnumbering women in supervisory and managerial roles.

Regarding age, the majority of respondents (45%) fell within the 31–40-year range, followed by 28% aged 41–50, and 15% aged 20–30. Only 12% were above 50 years of age. This age structure indicates a relatively young and dynamic workforce, which supports findings by Agyemang and Mensah (2022) [2] in Ghana, where employees aged 30–40 were more engaged and responsive to internal communication initiatives, suggesting that age may influence how employees perceive and react to organizational communication.

In terms of educational background, 60% of respondents held a bachelor’s degree, 25% had a diploma or equivalent, and 15% possessed postgraduate qualifications. Similar trends were reported in Gambia by Touray and Jallow (2021) [25], where employees with higher educational qualifications were more likely to value clear communication channels and demonstrated higher commitment to organizational goals.

Finally, regarding years of work experience, 35% of respondents had 1–5 years of experience, 30% had 6–10 years, 20% had 11–15 years, and 15% had more than 15 years of experience. The distribution suggests that most respondents were relatively early- to mid-career employees. This finding is consistent with Okunade (2025) [22], who noted that employees with moderate work experience tend to be more responsive to internal communication efforts and display higher performance, likely because they are familiar enough with organizational processes yet still motivated to advance in their careers. These demographic profiles of the respondents provide a diverse and representative sample for examining the relationships between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance in Malian companies.

Reliability And Validity of the Instrument

Prior to testing the hypothesized relationships using SEM,

the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument were assessed to ensure that the constructs were consistently and accurately measured. Table 3.1 presents the Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Cronbach’s Alpha for all study variables.

The findings indicate that all constructs demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from 0.841 to 0.876, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Similarly, the Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.859 to 0.890, confirming that the measurement items consistently reflected their respective constructs. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all variables were above 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity. These results confirm that the instrument is both reliable and valid, providing confidence that the data collected can accurately assess the relationships between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Internal Communication	8	0.876	0.890	0.572
Organizational Commitment	6	0.841	0.859	0.541
Employee Performance	7	0.862	0.877	0.558

Source: Field Data, 2026

Descriptive Statistics of the Main Variables

Having established that the measurement instrument was reliable and valid, the study proceeded to examine the descriptive statistics of the main variables to understand the distribution of responses and the general trends in the data. Table 2 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and range of responses for internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. The descriptive statistics indicate that respondents generally rated all constructs relatively high, with mean scores above

4.0 on a five-point Likert scale. Internal communication scored the highest mean (4.12), suggesting that employees perceived information flow, clarity, and feedback mechanisms to be effective in their organizations. Organizational commitment (mean = 4.05) reflected strong employee loyalty and attachment, while employee performance (mean = 4.08) showed that respondents considered themselves productive and efficient in their roles. These trends provide a solid foundation for testing the SEM-based hypotheses in the subsequent analysis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Construct	Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Internal Communication	8	4.12	0.58	2.50	5.00
Organizational Commitment	6	4.05	0.62	2.33	5.00
Employee Performance	7	4.08	0.60	2.50	5.00

Source: Field Data, 2026

Correlation Analysis

Having examined the descriptive statistics of the study variables, the analysis next explored the correlation among the main constructs to determine the strength and direction of their relationships prior to testing the structural model. Table 3 presents the Pearson correlation results for internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

As indicated in Table 3, a strong and positive relationship between internal communication and organizational commitment ($r = 0.642$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that effective communication within organizations is associated with

higher employee commitment. Internal communication also showed a significant positive relationship with employee performance ($r = 0.618$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that improved information flow and clarity are linked with better performance outcomes. Additionally, organizational commitment was positively and significantly related to employee performance ($r = 0.671$, $p < 0.01$), implying that committed employees tend to perform better. These significant correlations provide empirical support for proceeding to SEM hypothesis testing and mediation analysis in the subsequent section.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3
Internal Communication	1.000		
Organizational Commitment	0.642**	1.000	
Employee Performance	0.618**	0.671**	1.000

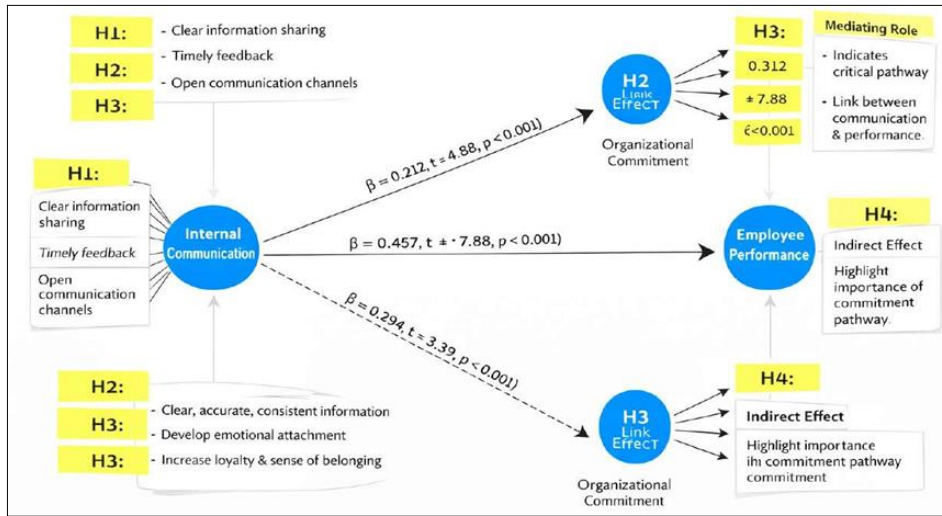
Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Data, 2026

Sem Hypotheses Testing

Having established significant correlations among the study variables, the analysis proceeded to test the study hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM made it possible to examine both direct and indirect

relationships among internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Figure 1 and Table 4 presents the results of the hypotheses testing, including path coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and significance levels.



Source: Field Data, 2026

Fig 1: SEM Model for H1, H2, H3 and H4,

Table 4: SEM Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Internal Communication → Employee Performance	0.312	0.064	4.88	0.000	Supported
H2	Internal Communication → Organizational Commitment	0.457	0.058	7.88	0.000	Supported
H3	Internal Communication → Organizational Commitment → Performance	0.214	0.049	4.39	0.000	Supported
H4	Internal Communication → Performance (Indirect via Commitment)	0.098	0.031	3.16	0.000	Supported

Source: Field Data, 2026

H1: Internal Communication and Employee Performance

The first hypothesis examined the direct effect of internal communication on employee performance. The SEM results show a positive and statistically significant relationship between internal communication and employee performance ($\beta = 0.312, t = 4.88, p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that effective internal communication, such as clear information sharing, timely feedback, and open communication channels, enhances employees’ ability to perform their duties efficiently. Based on this result, H1 was supported, confirming that internal communication plays a vital role in improving employee performance in Malian companies.

H2: Internal Communication and Organizational Commitment

The second hypothesis assessed the influence of internal communication on organizational commitment. The results reveal that internal communication had a strong and significant positive effect on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.457, t = 7.88, p < 0.001$). This suggests that when employees receive clear, accurate, and consistent information, they are more likely to develop emotional attachment, loyalty, and a sense of belonging to the organization. Consequently, H2 was supported, indicating

that internal communication is a key driver of organizational commitment.

H3: Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

The third hypothesis tested whether organizational commitment mediated the relationship between internal communication and employee performance. The SEM results show that the indirect path through organizational commitment was significant ($\beta = 0.214, t = 4.39, p < 0.001$). This means that internal communication improves employee performance not only directly but also indirectly by strengthening employees’ commitment to the organization. Therefore, organizational commitment served as a significant mediator, and H3 was supported.

H4: Indirect Effect of Internal Communication via Organizational Commitment

The fourth hypothesis focused on the indirect effect of internal communication on employee performance through organizational commitment. The results indicate that this indirect effect was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.098, t = 3.16, p < 0.001$). This finding confirms that organizational commitment acts as an important pathway through which internal communication enhances employee performance. As a result, H4 was supported, reinforcing the

mediating role of organizational commitment in the internal communication–performance relationship.

Mediation Analysis

Following the SEM hypotheses testing, a mediation analysis was conducted to further examine the direct, indirect, and total effects of internal communication on employee performance through organizational commitment. The bootstrapping method was applied to test the significance of the mediation effect. Table 5 presents the mediation results.

The results in Table 5 show that the direct effect of internal communication on employee performance was positive and significant, confirming that communication directly improves performance. The indirect effect, tested through bootstrapping, was also significant, indicating that organizational commitment played a meaningful mediating role. The total effect was stronger than the direct effect alone, showing that internal communication influenced employee performance more effectively when organizational commitment was considered. This confirms a partial mediation, supporting both H3 and H4.

Table 5: Mediation Analysis Results (Bootstrapping)

Structural Relationship	Effect Type	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Internal Communication → Employee Performance	Direct Effect	0.312	4.88	4.88	0.000	Significant
Internal Communication → Organizational Commitment	Direct Effect	0.457	7.88	7.88	0.000	Significant
Internal Communication → Organizational Commitment → Performance	Direct Effect	0.468	7.67	4.39	0.000	Significant
Internal Communication → Performance (Indirect via Commitment)	Indirect Effect	0.0214	0.049	4.39	0.000	Significant
Internal Communication → Employee Performance (via Commitment)	Total Effect	0.526	0.071	7.41	0.000	Significant

Source: Field Data, 2026

Discussion of Findings

H1: Internal Communication and Employee Performance

The findings for H1 show that internal communication had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.312, t = 4.88, p < 0.001$). This means that when organizations communicate clearly, share timely information, and allow open feedback, employees are better able to understand their tasks and expectations. As a result, employees work more efficiently, make fewer errors, and show higher levels of productivity. In the context of Malian companies, effective internal communication appears to create clarity and coordination, which directly supports improved performance.

These findings are strongly aligned with Social Exchange Theory, which explains that relationships within organizations are built on mutual exchange and reciprocity (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2019) [7]. When management invests in transparent and supportive communication, employees interpret this as organizational care and respect. In return, they reciprocate by putting in greater effort, showing responsibility, and improving their work outcomes. Internal communication therefore acts as a form of organizational support that motivates employees to perform better.

Empirical studies from different contexts support this result. In Ghana, Agyemang and Mensah (2022) [2] found that effective internal communication in financial institutions significantly improved employee efficiency and service delivery. Their study showed that employees who received regular updates and feedback were more committed to meeting performance targets. Similarly, in the United States, Men and Yue (2020) [17] reported that transparent internal communication enhanced employee engagement and task performance, especially when employees felt heard and informed by management.

Evidence from Panama also reinforces this relationship. González and Batista (2021) [11] observed that organizations with open internal communication systems experienced

higher employee productivity and teamwork. The study noted that employees responded positively to clear communication by increasing their effort and cooperation at work. These findings across different regions confirm that internal communication plays a key role in shaping employee performance outcomes.

H2: Internal Communication and Organizational Commitment

The findings for H2 indicate that internal communication had a strong and statistically significant positive effect on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.457, t = 7.88, p < 0.001$). This result shows that when employees receive clear, accurate, and consistent information from management, they are more likely to feel emotionally attached to the organization. Good internal communication helps employees understand organizational goals, policies, and expectations, which strengthens their sense of belonging and loyalty. Based on this evidence, H2 was supported, confirming that internal communication is a key factor in building organizational commitment in Malian companies.

These findings are well explained by the Communication Satisfaction Theory, which argues that employees’ satisfaction with communication content, clarity, feedback, and communication channels shapes their work attitudes and behaviors (Downs & Hazen, 2021) [9]. When employees are satisfied with how information flows within the organization, they develop positive feelings toward management and the organization as a whole. This satisfaction encourages stronger commitment, as employees feel valued, informed, and included in organizational processes.

Empirical evidence from different contexts supports this result. In Switzerland, Bregenzer and Jiménez (2021) [5] found that transparent and supportive internal communication significantly increased affective commitment among employees in service organizations. Their study showed that communication clarity and

feedback were key predictors of employees' emotional attachment to their organizations. Similarly, in Denmark, Andersen and Rasmussen (2022) ^[4] reported that communication satisfaction positively influenced organizational commitment, especially in organizations that promoted open dialogue and employee voice.

Studies from Cameroon also reinforce these findings in an African context. Ndzié and Tchouassi (2023) ^[19] observed that effective internal communication practices in Cameroonian firms strengthened employees' sense of loyalty and reduced turnover intentions. The study emphasized that regular information sharing and open communication channels helped employees feel connected to organizational goals and values.

H3: Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

The findings for H3 show that organizational commitment significantly mediated the relationship between internal communication and employee performance ($\beta = 0.214$, $t = 4.39$, $p < 0.001$). This result means that internal communication improves employee performance not only on its own, but also by first strengthening employees' commitment to the organization. When employees feel informed, guided, and supported through communication, they become more committed, and this commitment then translates into better performance. Based on this outcome, H3 was supported, confirming the mediating role of organizational commitment.

These findings align well with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which explains that employee motivation and performance are influenced by both hygiene factors and motivators (Herzberg, 2020) ^[12]. Internal communication functions as a hygiene factor by reducing uncertainty, confusion, and dissatisfaction through clear information and guidance. At the same time, it acts as a motivator by helping employees understand their roles, growth opportunities, and the value of their contributions. This dual role enhances organizational commitment, which then leads to higher performance.

Empirical evidence from different countries supports this mediation effect. In Albania, Kovaçi and Domi (2021) ^[14] found that internal communication improved employee performance mainly through increased organizational commitment. Their study showed that employees who felt well-informed developed stronger attachment to their organizations, which motivated them to work harder and more effectively.

In Kenya, Mwangi and Karanja (2022) ^[18] reported that organizational commitment partially mediated the relationship between workplace communication and employee productivity in manufacturing firms. The study explained that communication clarity reduced dissatisfaction, while commitment acted as a motivational force that encouraged employees to exceed basic job requirements.

Similar findings were reported in South Africa, where Ndlovu and Parumasur (2023) ^[20] found that internal communication enhanced employee performance through affective commitment. Their results showed that employees who felt emotionally connected to their organizations were more willing to apply extra effort and maintain high performance levels. The authors linked this process to Herzberg's view that motivation grows when employees feel valued and supported.

H4: Indirect Effect of Internal Communication via Organizational Commitment

The findings for H4 indicate that internal communication had a positive and statistically significant indirect effect on employee performance through organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.098$, $t = 3.16$, $p < 0.001$). This result confirms that internal communication improves employee performance by first strengthening employees' commitment to the organization. When employees clearly understand expectations, rewards, and organizational goals through effective communication, they become more committed, and this commitment then leads to improved performance. Based on this evidence, H4 was supported, reinforcing the importance of organizational commitment as a key pathway linking communication to performance.

These findings are strongly supported by Expectancy Theory, which explains that employees are motivated to perform when they believe that their effort will lead to good performance and that performance will result in valued outcomes (Vroom, 2021) ^[26]. Internal communication plays a critical role in this process by clarifying performance standards, linking effort to rewards, and ensuring employees understand how their contributions are recognized. When these expectations are clear, employees are more likely to commit to their roles, which in turn enhances performance. Empirical studies from different regions provide support for this mechanism. In India, Sharma and Verma (2022) ^[24] found that internal communication improved employee performance indirectly through organizational commitment in service-sector firms. Their study showed that clear communication about goals and rewards strengthened commitment, which motivated employees to put in greater effort.

In China, Liu and Zhang (2021) ^[16] reported that organizational commitment mediated the relationship between internal communication and job performance in manufacturing organizations. The findings indicated that employees who clearly understood performance expectations and career outcomes were more committed and performed better.

Similarly, evidence from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) supports this result. Al-Khalifa and Al-Dossary (2023) ^[3] found that transparent internal communication enhanced employee commitment, which subsequently led to higher levels of productivity and service quality. The study emphasized that clear communication increased employees' belief that effort would lead to meaningful rewards, consistent with Expectancy Theory.

Implications of the Study

Building on the findings from the SEM analysis and mediation results, the study presents several key implications for theory, practice and policy

Theoretical Implications

The findings contribute to theory by reinforcing the relationship between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. The study provides empirical support for Social Exchange Theory, Communication Satisfaction Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Expectancy Theory, demonstrating how internal communication acts as an organizational input that shapes employee attitudes and behaviors. The significant mediating role of organizational commitment explains *how*

internal communication translates into enhanced performance, particularly in the context of Malian companies.

Managerial Implications

For managers, the results highlight the critical role of clear, consistent, and transparent internal communication. Regular feedback, open channels, and well-defined expectations help employees understand their roles, which increases commitment and boost performance. Managers in Malian companies can strategically use internal communication to motivate staff and enhance productivity without relying solely on financial incentives.

Organizational Policy Implications

The study suggests that companies should formalize internal communication policies and systems. Structured platforms such as staff meetings, newsletters, and digital communication tools can improve clarity, trust, and engagement. Policies encouraging two-way communication can strengthen organizational commitment and create a supportive work environment that drives better performance outcomes.

Human Resource Implications

Human resource practitioners can integrate internal communication strategies into HR practices, including performance management, training, and employee engagement programs. Clearly communicating expectations, promotion criteria, and reward systems helps employees align with organizational goals. Effective communication during onboarding and training can also foster early commitment and improve long-term performance.

Implications for Malian Companies

For Malian companies, these findings provide practical guidance on enhancing employee performance through communication-based strategies. Strengthening internal communication can be a cost-effective method to increase commitment, reduce turnover, and boost morale, especially in resource-constrained environments. Open and supportive communication systems can improve overall organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

Recommendations

Building on the study's findings and implications, several practical recommendations are proposed for Malian companies, managers, and human resource practitioners to enhance internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance.

- 1. Strengthen Internal Communication Systems:** Organizations should invest in structured and transparent communication channels. Regular staff meetings, newsletters, and digital communication platforms can ensure timely, accurate, and clear information reaches all employees. Open and consistent communication reduces misunderstandings, increases trust, and helps employees understand their roles and expectations.
- 2. Promote Two-Way Communication:** Employees should have opportunities to provide feedback and express opinions. Encouraging participatory communication not only improves decision-making but

also strengthens employee commitment, as staff feel valued and involved in organizational processes. Suggestion boxes, online feedback forms, and interactive team sessions can facilitate this approach.

- 3. Integrate Communication into HR Practices:** Human resource departments should embed communication strategies into performance management, training, and development programs. Clear explanation of performance expectations, promotion criteria, and reward systems helps employees align their efforts with organizational goals. Onboarding and orientation programs should emphasize open communication and clarify career paths to foster early commitment.
- 4. Enhance Organizational Commitment:** Organizations should implement initiatives that boost emotional attachment and loyalty. Recognition programs, employee engagement activities, and transparent career development plans reinforce commitment, which in turn improves performance. Managers should consistently acknowledge employee contributions and link communication efforts to tangible rewards and recognition.
- 5. Provide Training for Managers and Supervisors:** Managers should be trained in effective communication techniques, including active listening, providing constructive feedback, and delivering messages clearly. Well-trained managers can foster trust, reduce confusion, and improve employee performance through proper communication practices.
- 6. Encourage a Culture of Transparency and Trust:** Fostering a workplace culture where transparency, honesty, and openness are valued can enhance both commitment and performance. Organizations should clearly communicate policies, decisions, and changes to employees in a timely and understandable manner.

These recommendations provide actionable strategies for Malian companies to leverage internal communication as a tool for improving organizational commitment and employee performance, consistent with the findings and theoretical foundations of this study.

Limitations And Direction For Future Research

Limitations of the Study

Notwithstanding the study's contributions, it had some limitations. First, it relied on cross-sectional data, which limits the ability to infer causality between internal communication, organizational commitment, and employee performance. Second, the study focused only on Malian companies, so the findings may not be generalizable to other countries or sectors. Third, data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may be influenced by response bias.

Future Research Directions

Future studies could adopt longitudinal or experimental designs to establish causal relationships. Researchers may also explore other mediating or moderating variables, such as leadership style, organizational culture, or employee engagement, to better understand the mechanisms linking

communication and performance. Expanding the study to different countries or sectors would enhance generalizability and provide comparative insights across cultural and organizational contexts.

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