

The Role of Employee Voice in Enhancing Job Satisfaction Amongst Employees in Religious Media Organizations in Nairobi, Kenya: A Comparative Study of Radio Waumini and Hope FM

Bramwel Opiyo Alukwe^{1*}, Barbara Nthoki¹, Jonathan Maweu²

¹Department of Journalism and Communication, Multimedia University of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya

²Faculty of Social Sciences, Multimedia University of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract—Although internal communication has been widely studied, employee voice as a distinct aspect of internal communication remains unexplored. Therefore, this study sought to establish the role of employee voice as an aspect of internal communication in enhancing employee job satisfaction amongst employees in religious media organizations in Nairobi, Kenya. The study was guided by the motivation theory by Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs and Organizational Support Theory (OST) by Eisenberger, Hutchison and Sowa. Data collection was achieved through participant observation and structured interviews. The study employed a stratified sampling technique to identify 19 informants, 11 were from Hope FM and 8 were from Radio Waumini. Data was collected through participant observation and structured interviews using a participant observation guide and an interview guide respectively. The study established that employee voice was important aspect of internal communication that directly influences employee job satisfaction. While all employees from Hope FM who took part in the study revealed that the available employee voice was satisfactory and had positively contributed to employee job satisfaction. On the other hand, some employees from radio Waumini said the same thing to those from Hope FM. However, some employees from radio Waumini pointed out that the existing employee voice at radio Waumini was not satisfactory hence it had resulted to low employee job satisfaction. This points to a strong relationship between employee voice as an aspect of internal communication and employee job satisfaction.

Index Terms—Internal communication, employee communication, employee job satisfaction, leadership communication, employee voice.

1. Introduction

There is a growing interest as well as recognition of the importance of internal communication in organizational functioning. Internal communication provides mechanisms through which organizations inform, consult and engage employees, while enabling employees to express concerns and contribute to organizational progress. Argenti (2023)

emphasizes the importance of recognizing employees as important organizational stakeholders and as a result, there is a need to support them. Similarly, Jethwaney (2010) highlights the role of internal communication in facilitating relationships between organizations and their employees, that employees concern can be handled through internal communication. Through internal communication, employee concern is shown and this activates employee commitment and employee interest towards their employer.

Additionally, Men and Bowen, (2017), have underscored the importance of internal communication on the basis of the dynamic nature of workplace environment. Therefore, the ripple effect of internal communication goes beyond relaying of information to employee welfare and job satisfaction. To appreciate the same, Jethwaney (2010), confesses that today's workplace has increased workload, high pressure levels and a tight work schedule all which demand productivity from the employees. Therefore, Jethwaney (2010) and Men & Bowen, (2017) provide enough reasons for a conclusion that there is an increased demand for internal communication in the recent past.

Nguyen, Nguyen and Nguyen, (2025) emphasize the role of internal communication in fostering functional relationships between the employees and the organizational management. Similarly, Santos, Santos, Sousa and Oliveira, (2024) highlight the relational significance of internal communication in contemporary organizations. Studies done in Europe and America have reported an association between internal communication and employee job satisfaction (Santos et al., 2024; Poljak 2025). This shows that employees contentment can be influenced by internal communication at the workplace. Although there are various aspects that make up internal communication, Bhatti & Otamurodov (2025), points out employee voice as a key determinant of employee job satisfaction.

Recent studies show that employee voice, an important

*Corresponding author: obramwel@gmail.com

aspect of organizational communication remains comparatively under examined. Generally, studies on internal communication fail to do justice to employee voice Rabiou *et al.*, (2024). For instance, a study by Nyamboga and Asimwe, (2026), did a study in Uganda on Employee voice, establishes that poor internal communication is the source of employee dissatisfaction and low productivity. Although the study does focus on employee voice, it treats internal communication with a sense of generality. On the other hand, Rwehabura and Mwakitalu, (2023), examined leadership and strategic Public Relations in Tanzanian commercial banks, they found that leadership behaviours influenced opportunities for participation in strategic communication. Such evidence is useful in understanding the importance of participatory communication but does not establish the role of employee voice in religious media organizations or its relationship with employee job satisfaction.

This contextual and conceptual gap is significant for religious media organizations such as radio Waumini and Hope FM, where effective communication may be important for coordinating professional responsibilities, maintaining organizational relationships and pursuing institutional mission. This study is done with the understanding that religious media organizations hold a unique position in the society such that they are supposed to propagate their professional operations while remaining grounded in their spiritual missions. Therefore, the need of employee voice as an aspect of internal communication and its relationship with employee job satisfaction remain imperative in such organizations. The present study therefore, examines the role of employee voice in employee job satisfaction in Radio Waumini and Hope FM in Nairobi, Kenya.

2. Statement of the Problem

Employee voice is an important aspect of an organizational internal communication as it provides employees with opportunities to express ideas, concerns, suggestions and feedback while participating in organizational processes. Effective mechanism for employee voice can facilitate dialogue between employees and the management and strengthen organizational relationships, and potentially enhance employee's perception of their work environment and job satisfaction (Men & Bowen, 2017). The issue is particularly relevant in religious media organizations where employees are expected to execute their professional responsibilities while guided by certain institutional values. When available internal communication mechanism does not accommodate employee voice, it affects the employees and the employer equally. In such setting, employees might feel like they have been ignored and excluded from organizational processes. This results to frustration, low morale and low employee job satisfaction. On the other hand, the organization will bear it through reduced employee productivity, weakened teams and high staff turnover whose negative effects of the organization can be detrimental. Although existing studies have examined internal communication and employees related outcomes, important contextual and conceptual gaps remain. For instance, Okora

(2021) suggests that high staff turnover can disrupt the continuity of an organization. On the other hand, Nyamboga and Asimwe (2026) reports concerns regarding internal communication in organizational settings including limitation associated with one-way communication. To Hope FM and Radio Waumini, employee voice is necessary for a seamless coordination, teamwork and alignment of employee job related aspirations with the organizational objectives. However, internal communication in such radio stations lack an effective employee voice in the entire internal communication system. There are no sufficient rooms for dialogue, feedback and participation opportunities for employees. According to Nyamboga and Asimwe (2026), internal communication is one-way. While there is an increased need for employee voice, most of the studies done in Kenya were based on governmental institutions and corporate organizations without addressing the religious media niche. Therefore, the aim of this study was to examine how employee voice as an aspect of internal communication influence employee job satisfaction in religious media organizations in Nairobi, Kenya by comparing Radio Waumini and Hope FM.

A. Study Objectives

the study sought to examine how employee voice influences job satisfaction among employees in Radio Waumini and Hope FM.

B. Research Question

How does employee voice influence job satisfaction among employees in Radio Waumini and Hope FM?

3. Literature Review

One of the vital aspects of internal communication that affect employee job satisfaction is the employee voice. This is the way employees express their opinions, ideas, concerns, feedback and suggestions to the management and other key players in decision making. According to Morrison (2023), an organization that provides a working employee voice structure to allow employees seek clarifications, voice their concerns and present their grievances increases chances of employee job satisfaction. According to Morrison (2023), employee job satisfaction stems from the efforts the management puts in when the employee wants to reach out to them. Therefore, when such avenues are provided, then the employee looks at the employer as a caring and listening organization hence an increase in the employee job satisfaction. Wilkinson *et al.* (2024) adds that open communication avenues creates employee safety. The employees are able to express themselves without fearing anything. Such an environment increases employee job satisfaction. On the issue of implementing proposals from the employees, Lin & Chen (2025), argue that an organization that implements proposals from the employees increases employee's retention hence increased employee job satisfaction. There is a high employee retention because employees feel valued by their employer hence they enjoy working in such an organization.

From Maslow's (1943), hierarchy of needs a missing

employee voice avenue constitutes a need that has not been met. In such a case, an employee has to find a way to meet it since Maslow's (1943) postulates that the needs of a human being are hierarchical and one cannot skip one at a lower level to satisfy another one at a higher level.

From the above reviewed literature, there are several studies that point towards a close relationship between employee job satisfaction and employee voice as an aspect of internal communication. However, none of the above studies have been done in a religious media organization. Additionally, there has been no single study that has sought to compare employee voice as an aspect of internal communication and employee job satisfaction in two religious media organizations. Therefore, this paper seeks to compare the effect of employee voice as an aspect of internal communication and employee job satisfaction at Hope FM and Radio Waumini.

4. Research Methodology

According to Lewis *et al.* (2023), a research methodology provides a framework that directs a research process from its beginning to the end. Therefore, Creswell and Creswell (2023) proposes that there is a need for every study to be guided by a research methodology so that they can be in a position to appropriately consolidate research variables and unify them in a logical order in a journey to resolve a research problem. Therefore, this study used a descriptive qualitative research design to find out the effect of employee voice as an aspect of internal communication in enhancing employee job satisfaction in religious media organizations in Kenya. To this effect, the research was comparative in nature and sought to establish points of departure from one another in employee voice by the aid of Radio Waumini (owned and managed by KCCB - Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops) and Hope FM (owned by CITAM - Christ is the answer Ministries). The two radio stations are faith-based and are located in Nairobi. To collect data structured interviews and participant observation were used. Each radio station was observed for a period of two weeks. Stratified purposive sampling as a sampling technique yielded 11 informants from Hope FM and 8 informants from Radio Waumini. Collected data was thematically analyzed and presented through a detailed explanation to paint a clear picture of the variables under the study.

5. Results and Discussions

Both Radio Waumini and Hope FM have an avenue for employee voice which is expressed through available channels of communication used by each respective media house. Employees from Hope FM were satisfied with the available avenues for employee self-expression. Additionally, employees from Hope FM were fully satisfied with the feedback they get when they seek for clarifications from the management. The fact that most of the suggestions given by employees at Hope FM to the management had been implemented had made such employees to develop a sense of commitment to the employee. The existing sense of commitment by the employee to their employer had led to increased job satisfaction as espoused by

Morrison (2023).

Additionally, the state of employee voice at Hope FM points to an existence of growth needs as espoused by Maslow's (1943) through hierarchy of needs theory. This is the case because once the employees have an opportunity to express themselves, then they are fully satisfied that they have a listening management that addresses their needs. Such employees will move to the next level in the hierarchy of needs by Maslow's (1943) since the previous level has been satisfactorily addressed. On the other hand, employees from Hope FM have a socioeconomic fulfilment according to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986). The socioeconomic fulfilment as per Organizational Support Theory (OST) by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986), posits that when an organization listens and implements the proposals of employees then such employees feel valued hence they reciprocate the same. In the process of reciprocating their productivity will be increased and also their employee job satisfaction will also be increased.

On the other hand, employees from Radio Waumini were aware that there were opportunities for employee voice but the fact that feedback from management was not common to some of the employees led to discouragement in voicing their suggestions. Therefore, some employees from were not committed to their employer hence they were experiencing low levels of employee job satisfaction. Some employees from Radio Waumini whose suggestions had been taken up by the management and implemented were experiencing high levels of employee job satisfaction due to increased commitment to the employer as reported in the findings of Albrecht and McCarthy (2023). It is therefore clear that the existence of employee voice that receives feedback from the management increases employee commitment to the employer hence increased employee job satisfaction.

Those employees from Radio Waumini whose voice was not heard had unresolved issues implying that according to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, they were still battling with unmet needs. Such unmet needs lead to frustration, job related stress and inability to collaborate hence low employee job satisfaction. Moreover, according to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986), as proposed in the OST theory, their reaction was a form of a socio exchange behaviour. Once they realised that their voice went unheard, they reciprocated the same due to frustration. Such instances of frustration and work related stress results to low employee job satisfaction.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is prudent to conclude that employee voice has a place at both Radio Waumini and Hope FM and is allowed through available channels of communication. Employees from Hope FM expressed a satisfaction with available channels of employee voice due to available feedback from management, existing clarifications in times of need hence an increased employee job satisfaction. On the other hand, some employees from Radio Waumini expressed a sense of dissatisfaction due to ignored voices,

delayed feedback and non-considered proposals which had contributed to reduced employee job satisfaction. Therefore, employee voice has a direct positive or negative influence on employee job satisfaction depending the level of recognition and value employees are accorded.

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