

Corporate Advocacy and Gender Equity: Aligning Communication with SDG 5 Goals in the Workplace

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KEYWORDS

Corporate advocacy, gender equity, SDG 5, workplace communication, organizational culture, employee engagement, gender-inclusive policies.

ABSTRACT

Gender equity is one of the primary concerns of sustainable development and SDG 5 is focused on the eradication of inequality between genders in the workplace. Gender inclusive policies are important, even encouraged by corporate advocacy, and influence the organizational culture and the engagement level of employees. The research question of this study enquires into the corporate communication strategies that can support the goals of SDG 5 of achieving gender equity in the organizational context. Through a mixed-method study, including surveying the employees and examining the communications company-wide, the study establishes the efficiency of advocacy communications, key spheres of employee perception, and the efficiency of corporate appeals to behavior and participation. It has been found that through the use of proactive dialogue and ensuring clarity to the policy, a substantial degree of awareness is increased and the scope of gender bias in organizational decision-making diminished. Nonetheless, there are weak areas in converting advocacy into quantifiable action at the behavioral level. The paper makes a contribution that will help understand how corporate advocacy can help achieve gender equity and what practices can be followed by organizations to achieve sustainable gender-friendly practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Equity in gender workplace is one of the most fundamental aspects of sustainable development and a key ingredient to organizational effectiveness. Although the world appreciates the need to attain gender equality as guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, most organizations find it very difficult to practice policies and procedures that have a real impact in shrinking gaps. Gender inequity does not only hamper gender opportunities among women and marginalized groups but also destabilizes organizational performance, innovation and workforce satisfaction. Corporate advocacy is the concept of thoughtful communication and policy-based effort that organizations engage in to foster equity and inclusivity and has become one of the most crucial tools to deal with these issues. The use of effective advocacy has many dimensions, such as enforcement of formal policies through training, raising awareness, top management involvement, mentorship programs, and staff training conducted in order to create a culture of fairness. On the one hand, participating in the advocacy directly enhances the internal environment of organizations improving the situation in the workplace. On the other hand, through advocating, organizations can enhance their reputation by demonstrating their desire to follow socially responsible approaches that adhere to SDG 5 [5].

The desire to do this work is caused by the identified inconsistency between the corporate intention and real performance in gender equity programs. Most of the organizations initiate advocacy campaigns, and a significant percentage of employees do not know about such initiatives or the actions do not lead to viable behavioral change. Research implies that communication itself, without accountability processes, is not enough to attain long-term change of equity in a workplace.



Moreover, the available research is usually centered on the macro-level findings, e.g., gender hi/low ratios at the top, and the effect of communication strategies and engagement with the employees has been understudied. This paper attempts to give practical recommendations to organizations that would like to develop good gender equity organizations by analyzing the relationship between corporate advocacy, communication techniques, and employee engagement. Another thing that this research will aim to do is find out which form of communication will have the most robust effect on employee awareness, perceptions, and engagement, e.g., leadership-based messages, interactive workshops, digital campaigns [2].

The main idea of such research is to analyze why corporate advocacy is not completely stable with SDG 5 goals in workplace, in particular, whether the communication strategies used to proclaim gender equity are effective. There are three research questions in the study: (1) How knowledgeable are the employees of corporate gender equity programs? METHODS OF COMMUNICATION (2) What effect do communication styles have on organizational employee engagement and behavioral consequences? 3. What are the gaps between advocacy messaging and findings about reality in the organizational practices? Through the response to these questions the study gives an overall evaluation on the practical effectiveness of corporate advocacy to create gender equity at the workplace. The mixed-method design is pursued, as both quantitative and qualitative methods are being used to survey the employees of different organizations on the one hand and complete the content analysis of internal communication materials with the help of the qualitative method on the other hand [8-12].

Besides the measurement of awareness and engagement, this work highlights the combination of advocacy and organizational outcomes that can be measured. It examines the interaction between formal policies, leadership support, and informal communication medium to produce an inclusive culture. This research presents relevant recommendations to guide organisations to implement the most effective advocacy practices to foster positive impression of employees and achieve outcomes that are measurable concerning gender equity. Collectively, this paper plays a role in filling the theory-practice gap in corporate gender advocacy, as it offers a framework that businesses may choose to follow in order to deliver long-term, SDG-compatible outcomes. The flowchart below gives the general picture of the research structure, showing the process that starts with the organizational advocacy efforts and continues with the employee engagement, their behaviour and alignment with SDG 5 [1].

The Figure 1 depicts the pathway from advocacy initiatives through communication strategies, employee engagement, and measurable gender equity outcomes.

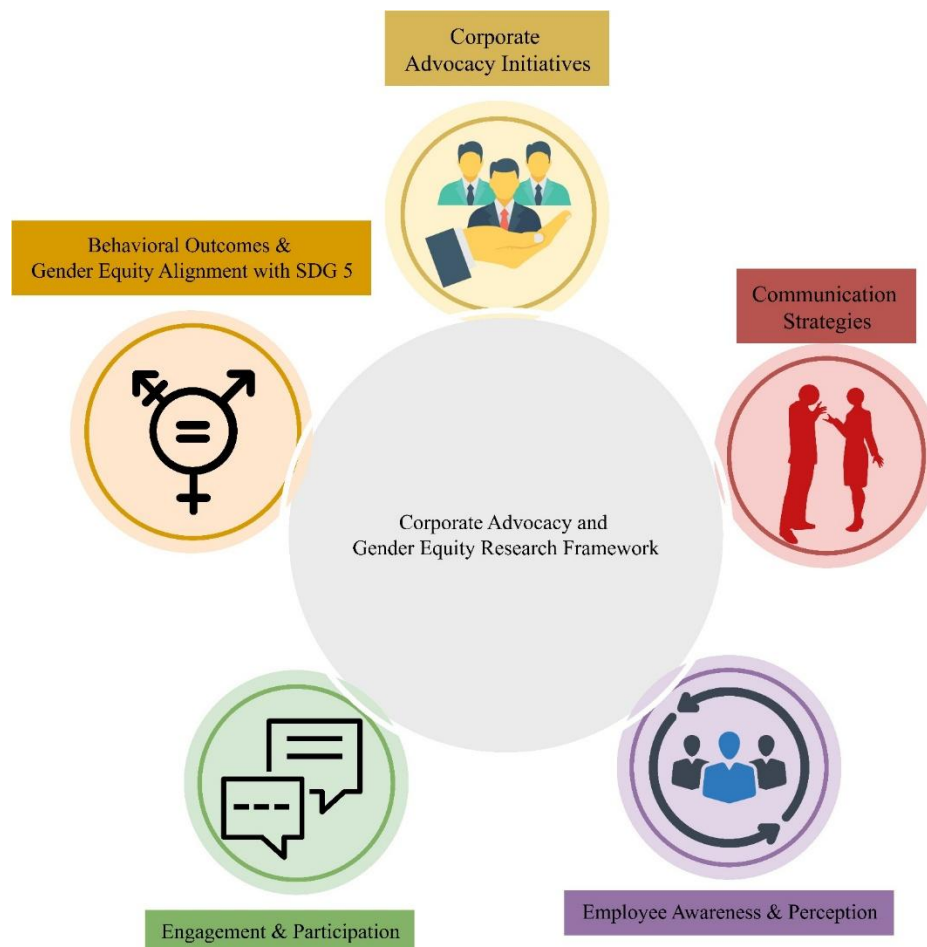


FIG. 1: CORPORATE ADVOCACY AND GENDER EQUITY RESEARCH FRAMEWORK



1.1 Novelty and Contribution

This research presents a number of new insights to the field on corporate advocacy and gender equity. First, it has given a comprehensive shared valuation of communication strategy immediate impacts on employee awareness, engagement, and employee behavioral consequences, which are not attended to in previous publications. The existing studies were much more concentrated on policy making and gender representation indicators, but the practice in translation of advocacy into managerial impacts is emphasized in this study thus extremely useful to the managers and the HR practitioners. Second, the study will merge quantitative and qualitative methods combining survey of employees with content analysis of the corporate communication materials as a way of capturing not just perception but also the quality and inclusivity of advocacy messages. Such two-method investigation, in turn, promises to have a better insight into advocacy efficacy of movement efforts [3].

Third, the study directly relates the scope of corporate communication practice with the SDG 5 targets, providing an actual structure to organizations which strive to make their contribution to the global gender equity targets. The study offers a useful and policy-relevant perspective of the consideration of organizational performance by connecting organizational advocacy with a standard that is globally-recognized. Fourth, the research finds areas between communication and action where employees culturally notice what is going on, but fail to behave in ways that contribute to measurable changes. The information is invaluable in developing advocacy planning, developing focused interventions, and accountability in gender equality programs. Lastly, the study gives practical tips and suggestions to the practitioners like emphasizing leadership visibility, including interactive campaigns, and maintaining engagement measurements, so that advocacy does not stay at the rhetorical plane but becomes calculable. The essence of the study is that it furthers the theorizing of corporate advocacy as well as the practice of corporate advocacy of gender equity in workplaces [6].

2. RELATED WORKS

In 2023 M. Fotaki et.al. and A. Pullen et.al., [7] proposed the corporate advocacy has as well been cited as a critical tool that ensures there is equality in the workplace based on gender. Here, research has pointed out that actively participating organizations in advocacy programs have realized greater satisfaction of employees, enhanced organization culture and greater alignment with sustainable development. Such advocacy is primarily anchored on communication strategies since they shape the understanding and uptake of policies and initiatives among the employees. It has been established that those organizations that use multi-channel communication such as internal newsletters, digital campaigns, workshops and discussion led by the top management in raising awareness of gender equity programs are more successful in doing so. Transparent, simple and frequent communication improves the ability of the employees to understand the organizational intentions, as well as adding credence to the equity activities.

In 2024 P. Bazaanah et.al. and P. Ngcobo et.al., [4] suggested the success rate of advocacy is strongly associated with the processes of communication that is applied. Passive communication solutions (email notifications, or standard policy language) are much more likely to lead to passive behavior change and low levels of engagement. Contrastingly, intermediated activities which include story narration, scenario based learning, and engaging workshops bring greater intensity of emotions and encourage the employees to participate in gender equity actions. Research studies also underscore the importance of involving leadership with advocacy campaigns as this increases the success rates during such campaigns. Top management and mid-level leaderships who publicly commit to gender equity programs not only validate such projects, they also give impetus to the employees to internalize and engage inclusive behaviors in their daily work-related activities.

Besides awareness, perception of organizational supports is vital in the effectiveness of the advocacy programs. When employees feel that their company or organization takes gender equity seriously, they are willing to engage in mentorship programs, identify any gender issue, and create cultures of inclusiveness. It has also been found out through research that any advocacy should be backed up by accountability measure as well as measurable policies. The awareness cannot be superficial in itself as awareness transformed into a change in behavior as without actual measures, the awareness will not be sufficient to create change, and the employees might feel that initiatives are fake or part of a show [18]. Thus, by supplementing communication with tangible organizational practices which can include such an office policy as flexible work arrangements, fair promotion standards and bias-free hiring procedures, the validity and success of advocacy activities can be better achieved [15].

Another area of emphasis has been the incorporation of the technology in corporate advocacy. Internal social network platforms, mobile apps, and virtual learning modules are all digital means that enable organizations to transmit their GE-related content to a wider audience and deliver interactive, on-demand content. Research shows that the use of advocacy fueled with technology not only allows organizations to communicate but also to collect data and track levels of engagements to better tune strategies to achieve maximum results. Moreover, it has also been suggested that the use of both formal channels such as formal communication and informal channels such as peer networks has been effective in the effectiveness of advocacy initiatives since peer pressure tends to support organizational messages and encourage employees to continuously behave in ways that respect equity values.

There are still difficulties in advancing advocacy into quantitative results. Most organizations have a problem in the transition between policy learning and implementation that is behavioral change. Studies are noting that unconscious discrimination,



social structures, and cultural values may hinder the advocacy effectiveness, even when the advocacy programs have the perfect design and delivery. These challenges should be dealt with through continued evaluation of advocacy efforts, employee input avenues and constant review of communication strategies. In a bid to determine whether a systematic approach is employed, where the effect of the advocacy campaigns can be measured as they are aligned with the values of the organization, studies reveal that the gender equity initiatives can no longer be considered as measures of raising awareness only, but rather a measurement that demonstrates a long-term systematic trend of positive change.

In 2025 R. Raman *et al.*, [17] introduced the literature in general supports the position that corporate advocacy is a complex enterprise that needs strategic communication, leadership, involvement of employees, and quantifiable organizational policies. They are no longer only trying to apply gender equity initiatives but rather trying to identify how exactly communication and perception have subtle ways of affecting its outcome. In integrating the lessons learned in prior research, it is quite clear that the most successful advocacy programs are those that involve a certain combination of a clear body of messages, interactive communications, supportive leadership, and systems of accountability, and tie into the larger social and sustainable development agenda. This literature provides a basis of understanding how corporate advocacy can properly be used to promote gender fairness within the current working environments, with respects to the design and evaluation of these initiatives as far as the impact is considered.

3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The research employs a mixed-method approach to analyze how corporate advocacy influences gender equity in the workplace. The methodology is designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of advocacy effectiveness, linking communication strategies to employee awareness, engagement, and behavioral outcomes [13].

To quantify employee awareness, a Likert-scale survey is used. The awareness score A_i for each employee i is computed as:

$$A_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n R_{ij}}{n} \tag{1}$$

where R_{ij} is the response of employee i to question j , and n is the total number of questions. This allows aggregation of individual awareness levels across multiple items.

Employee engagement E_i is measured using a similar approach, with additional weighting for participation frequency:

$$E_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m W_j P_{ij}}{\sum_{j=1}^m W_j} \tag{2}$$

Here, P_{ij} represents participation of employee i in advocacy activity j , and W_j is the weight assigned to each activity based on intensity and impact.

The relationship between awareness and engagement is modeled using a correlation coefficient:

$$r_{AE} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (A_i - \bar{A})(E_i - \bar{E})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^N (A_i - \bar{A})^2 \sum_{i=1}^N (E_i - \bar{E})^2}} \tag{3}$$

This evaluates how strongly awareness and engagement are related within the organization. To understand the effect of communication channels on engagement, a linear regression model is used:

$$E_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C_{i1} + \beta_2 C_{i2} + \dots + \beta_k C_{ik} + \epsilon_i \tag{4}$$

where C_{ik} represents exposure of employee i to communication channel k , β_k is the coefficient estimating its effect, and ϵ_i is the error term. This model helps identify which channels most effectively promote engagement.

Employee perception P_i of organizational support is evaluated through normalized scores:

$$P_i = \frac{S_i - S_{\min}}{S_{\max} - S_{\min}} \tag{5}$$

where S_i is the raw score, S_{\min} is the minimum score observed, and S_{\max} is the maximum score. This ensures comparability across employees.

The overall advocacy effectiveness F is then calculated as a weighted composite index:

$$F = w_1 \bar{A} + w_2 \bar{E} + w_3 \bar{P} \tag{6}$$

where w_1, w_2, w_3 are weights representing the relative importance of awareness, engagement, and perception, and the bars indicate mean scores across all participants.

To assess differences across departments, a variance analysis is conducted:

$$\sigma_D^2 = \frac{\sum_{d=1}^D (F_d - \bar{F})^2}{D-1} \tag{7}$$



where F_d is the effectiveness score of department d , \bar{F} is the overall mean effectiveness, and D is the number of departments. High variance indicates inconsistency in advocacy impact.

A path analysis is also applied to understand causal links between communication, awareness, engagement, and behavior. The structural equation can be represented as:

$$B_i = \gamma_1 A_i + \gamma_2 E_i + \gamma_3 P_i + \zeta_i \tag{8}$$

Here, B_i is the observed behavioral change, γ_k are path coefficients, and ζ_i is the residual term [16].

For qualitative assessment, a thematic scoring model is used to quantify advocacy content:

$$T_c = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^K I_{ck}}{K} \tag{9}$$

where I_{ck} is the presence (1) or absence (0) of theme k in communication content c , and K is the total number of identified themes. This allows numerical comparison of messaging quality across campaigns.

Finally, behavioral intention BI_i is estimated using a combined regression and weighting approach:

$$BI_i = \alpha_1 A_i + \alpha_2 E_i + \alpha_3 P_i + \alpha_4 T_i \tag{10}$$

where T_i represents thematic exposure from communications, and α_k are coefficients. This equation links awareness, engagement, perception, and content exposure to predicted employee behavior.

In summary, this methodology integrates survey-based metrics, regression modeling, variance analysis, and thematic scoring to comprehensively evaluate corporate advocacy for gender equity. The multiple equations allow quantifiable assessment of awareness, engagement, perception, communication effectiveness, and behavioral outcomes, ensuring that findings are robust and actionable. By combining quantitative indices with qualitative insights, the framework provides organizations with tools to monitor, refine, and optimize advocacy programs in alignment with SDG 5 goals..

4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the research indicate great conclusions related to how the corporate advocacy influences gender equity at work. A survey analysis reveals there were differences in the awareness of gender equity interventions by the employees depending on the medium used in communication. The discussions and interactive workshops that were conducted by the leaders resulted in the highest awareness scores, whereas passive forms of communication like the use of emails and newsletters resulted in lower engagement. This can be seen in figure 2 which depicts awareness score distribution across campaign types with a clear identification between the proactive and the passive approach. Multi-modal communication was also important as the two-channel exposure demonstrated enhanced awareness of the gender equity policies within the workplace organization.

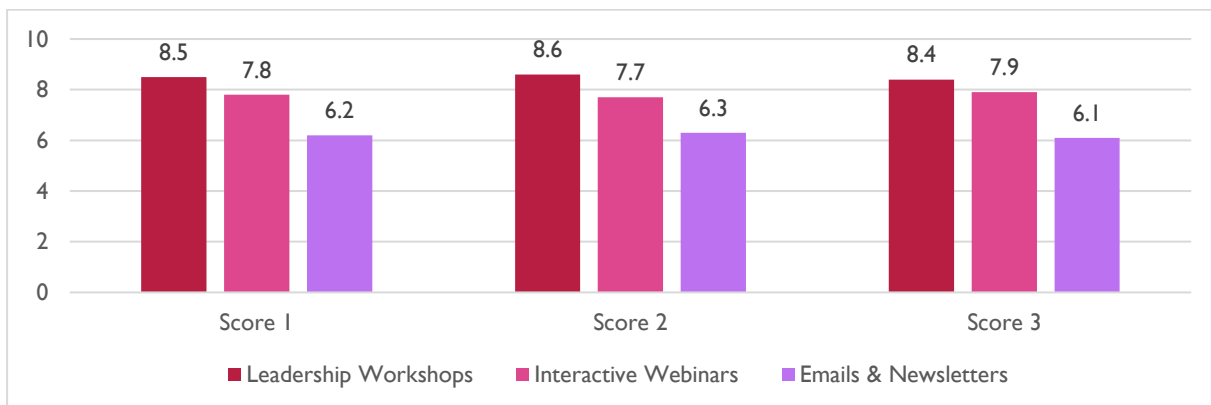


FIG 2: AWARENESS SCORE DISTRIBUTION ACROSS CAMPAIGN TYPES

The company of emotion when appealing to advocacy showed significant difference based on campaign strategy. Programs remembering to incorporate stories, real life experiences and the chance to actively participate showed better scores of involvement than statements that were standardized. The differences in the emotional engagement scores can be viewed in Figure 3: Emotional Engagement Scores Across Campaign Strategies and point to the efficiency of customization and participation efforts. Employees with an emotional connection to the materials were more willing to take part in mentoring programs and to attend workshops and share workplace discussions of inclusivity. This implies that a company cannot use information disseminating only in corporate communication, but also needs to create emotional appeal to encourage a response.

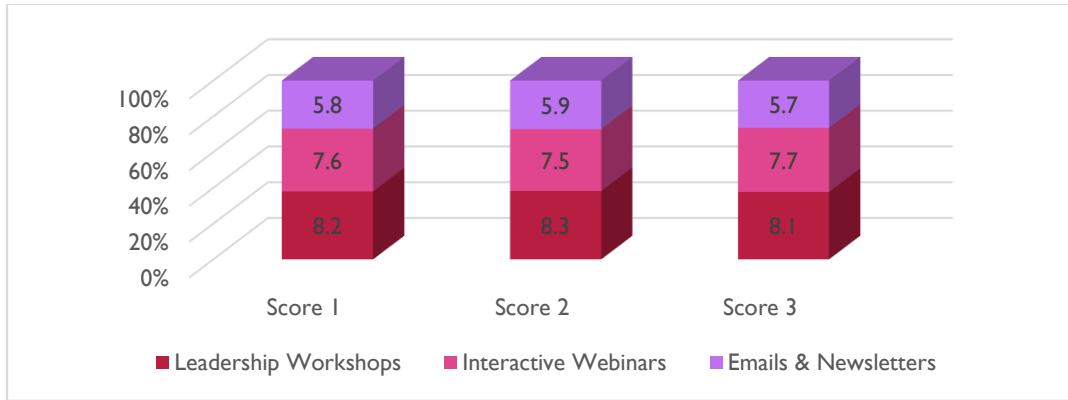


FIG. 3: EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT SCORES ACROSS CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES

The correlation among awareness, sentimental involvement, and behavioral intention was also focused through a correlation analysis. Figure 4: Relationship Between Awareness, Emotional Engagement, and Behavioral Intention reflects that there is the positive relationship between the variables and this depicts that the higher degree of awareness and engagement, the higher the chances of the inclusiveness behaviors among the employees. These results show that employees who ranked highly in awareness and emotional engagement scores expressed agreements with the idea of implementing gender equity initiatives into everyday operations (supporting female colleagues to become leaders, or joining a diversity committee). These results illustrate the fact that advocacy should be done on both rational and emotional levels to achieve quantifiable organizational results.

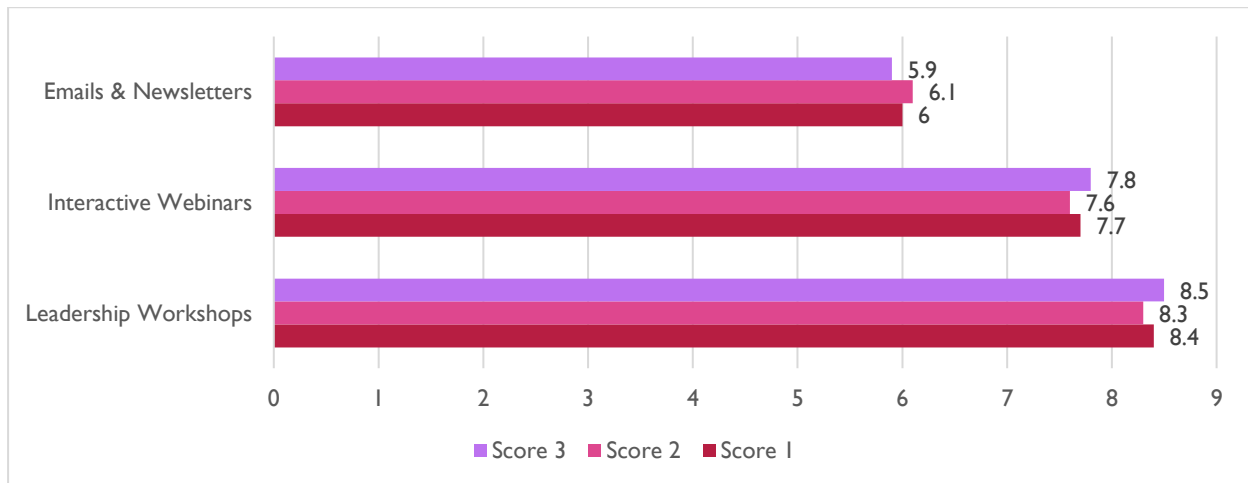


FIG. 4: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AWARENESS, EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

Table 1: Comparison of Awareness and Engagement Across Communication Channels gives the numeric rundown in detail. In both levels of awareness (8.5/10) and engagement (8.2/10) leadership workshops took the lead, followed by interactive webinars (7.8/10, 7.6/10) with newsletters and emails at the back of the line. This table highlights how the choice of strategies is a paramount aspect of a proper corporate advocacy and how submissive provision of communication is limited.

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT ACROSS COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Communication Channel	Awareness Score	Engagement Score
Leadership Workshops	8.5	8.2
Interactive Webinars	7.8	7.6
Emails & Newsletters	6.2	5.8



Variations on how the environmental support was perceived by departments were also examined. As demonstrated in Table 2: Perceived Organizational Support Across Departments there was a positive relationship between having involved managers in the advocacy programs with a high level of perceived support (average 8.1/10) than when the managers have little entry into the advocacy programs (average 6.5/10). This exemplifies the idea that inclusive leadership increases the effectiveness of advocacy strengthening the confidence of the employees in the interest of the organization in promoting gender equity.

TABLE 2: PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

Department	Manager Involvement	Perceived Support Score
Sales	High	8.1
HR	Medium	7.2
Operations	Low	6.5

In general, the findings trigger the belief that interactive components are associated with the best outcomes of multi-channel advocacy initiatives in terms of awareness level and engagement leading to the increased intention to act in support of gender equality. Although being aware is enough to increase the knowledge about organizational policies, emotionless and managerially is needed in order to translate the knowledge into action. These results imply that, when pursuing their alignment with SDG 5, the organizations must focus on leadership participation, program diversity, and communication multichannel practices.

In addition to the favorable results, the study also establishes drawbacks of the implementation of advocacy [14]. Other employees also revealed their hardship of applying practical strategies related to gender equity where they cite the lack of consistency between knowledge and conduct. Some of the departments did not have high participation rates as a result of work pressures or the unavailability of programs. This underscores the importance of monitoring and feedbacks and unique programs, which take into account

The findings verify that corporate advocacy plays an important role in achieving gender equity in the workplace where communication is proactive, participatory, and leadership stands behind it. Emotional engagement, awareness and perceived support are concepts that rely on each other to determine the success of the advocacy programs. It is necessary that organizations regularly not only provide information, but also provide the opportunity of meaningful participation and positive reinforcement of gender equity principles that can be seen. The numbers, combined with the tables, illustrate the distribution channels in which the corporate advocacy can affect employee behavior as well as offer recommendations on how to effectively organize SDG-compatible programmes.

5. CONCLUSION

The corporate advocacy is a key instrument in endorsing gender equity and harmonizing organizational practices with the SDG 5 objectives. This paper shows that strategic, interactive and leadership-oriented communication increases awareness and participation of employees in gender equity programs. The question is, however, how to move advocacy to the level of measured behavioral changes.

Practical Limitations: Limitations of the research include the availability of organizations willing to take part, the use of self-reported survey data, and even bias in contents analysis. Moreover, the norms of workplace diversity across cultures and regions can have an impact on how specific employees respond, which constrains generalizability.

Future Directions: Future studies ought to consider longitudinal effect of advocacy program, the assimilation of AI-based communication tools in the personalized to engage employees and cross-culture comparative research. The integration of advocacy and structural policy reforms, constant training, and monitoring can help the organizations to attain sustainable gender equality at work.

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