




Review

A Bibliometric Analysis on the Impact of Internal Communication in Post-Pandemic Corporate Environments: A Transversal Survey of Trends and Developments in the Scientific Literature

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Abstract: The emergence of COVID-19 has boosted internal communication as a central axis in the corporate environment, establishing itself as a key trend in 2024. This article examines the evolution and impact of internal communication in the business world since the appearance of the mentioned virus, with an analysis of selected publications in the months following the pandemic until the present in Scopus and the Web of Science. Through this study, the importance of internal communication in promoting well-being and effective leadership is highlighted, as well as its impact on transforming work practices and corporate culture, offering a detailed understanding of its benefits and added value for both organizations and employees.

Keywords: internal communication; telecommuting; bibliometric analysis; COVID-19; organizational culture



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1. Introduction

The importance of internal communication within corporations has received considerable attention, being an essential pillar for employee engagement and organizational attractiveness (Tkalcic Verčič et al., 2023). The post-pandemic era, characterized by the incidence of COVID-19, has seen an increase in its implementation (Gomes et al., 2023), emphasizing employee centrality and fostering an organizational environment characterized by dynamic, collaborative, and creative communicative behaviours (Aced et al., 2021). The aspiration to achieve a level of communication that generates employee satisfaction is one of the main concerns in today's business landscape (Tkalcic Verčič, 2021), which entails the development of transparent and open communication systems that strengthen the corporate culture and facilitate the creation of synergic links (Thelen & Men, 2023).

The synergy between internal communication and a range of corporate constructs is critical to organizational success, as evidenced by (Gomes et al., 2023). Although the pandemic led to the adoption of stronger communication policies and the transition to telecommuting—valued as an attraction for talent—there is a notable lack of research that examines these elements together. Petcu et al. (2023) highlight telecommuting as a facilitator of a better integration of work and personal life, thus improving the quality of life. Furthermore, Viererbl et al. (2022) argue that informal interactions in remote work environments not only preserve but also enhance integration and organizational climate, with a positive impact on productivity, which is intrinsically linked to the company's internal communication policy.

The intersection between internal communication and external perception of the company has been consolidated as a determining factor for corporate reputation, as identified by [Thelen and Men \(2023\)](#). Research by [Castro-Martínez and Díaz-Morilla \(2021\)](#) directly correlates the quality of internal communication with team happiness, well-being and satisfaction, which stresses the growing adoption by companies of policies focused on the strengthening of their human teams.

Establishing internal communication as a stand-alone practice has been a significant challenge throughout its evolution. As argued by [\(Tkalac Verčič et al., 2012\)](#) in its early days, this discipline oscillated between being considered a management tool or simply a form of dissemination. At that time, one of the main challenges was to consolidate it as a transnational and intercultural methodology, with a direct impact on the corporate culture of organizations. According to Mary Welch [\(Welch, 2015\)](#), internal communication also began to gain prominence in public relations educational frameworks, although its development required a stronger knowledge base and greater specialization. Therefore, there was a clear need for future research to delve deeper into this area. In 2007, Welch and Jackson defined internal communication as a process of interaction between stakeholders, aimed at fostering organizational commitment and ownership [\(Welch & Jackson, 2007\)](#). With this vision, they proposed that internal communication should make a decisive contribution to internal business situational analysis, reinforcing its strategic role within organizations.

By applying bibliometrics and adopting the PRISMA method, this research has identified the most relevant publications that approach the bases and transversal influence of internal communication in organizations. Two main objectives are pursued: first, to examine the concepts intrinsically linked to internal communication and their impact on the well-being of teams; and second, to explore the relationship between internal communication and the proliferation of telecommuting, evaluating how internal communication policies can be adapted to this predominant work modality. This research is aimed at identifying the fundamental concepts that underlie internal communication, with the purpose of expanding the limits of knowledge and generating new research opportunities in this area. The COVID-19 pandemic has generated a paradigm shift in the perception and application of internal communication within organizations, consolidating it as a strategic component in the contemporary corporate environment. This phenomenon raises the need to explore, from a scientific perspective, new lines of application and development. In this article, the research questions focus on the construction of solid conceptual bases that not only facilitate the generation of new academic publications but also allow for an in-depth analysis of the current state of internal communication and its transversal impact on key areas such as organizational well-being and the proliferation of telecommuting.

This research begins with the compilation of a table, that shows above as [Table 1](#), summarizing various definitions of the term “internal communication”, covering a period from 1989 to the present. The table provides a historical and evolutionary perspective of the concept, reflecting its development and adaptations over the years.

Table 1. Most relevant definitions of internal communication.

Source	Author(s)	Year	Definition
(Frank & Brownell, 1989)	Frank and Brownell	1989	Information exchange between individuals or groups at different levels and areas of the organization that facilitates the coordination of day-to-day activities.

Table 1. Cont.

Source	Author(s)	Year	Definition
(Kreps, 1990)	Kreps	1990	Process through which members gather relevant information about their organization and changes occurring in it.
(Del Pozo Lite, 1997)	Del Pozo Lite	1997	The one that targets the company's internal audiences and aims to respond to their concerns and needs for information and motivation.
(Capriotti, 1998)	Capriotti	1998	A set of messages and communication actions developed consciously and voluntarily to relate to the organization's groups, in order to communicate in a creative and differentiated way the characteristics of the organization, its products and/or services, and its activities.
(Mascaray Vidaller & Elias Monclus, 2003)	Elías and Mascaray	2003	Facilitates the implementation of effective and efficient communication strategies that accelerate the response elements and encourage human and organizational growth.
(Welch & Jackson, 2007)	Welch and Jackson	2007	Strategic management of interactions and relationships between stakeholders within organizations.
(Tkalac Verčič et al., 2012)	Tkalac, Vercic, and Sriramesh	2012	Collective effort to gather information/data and gain employee engagement and business performance for the organization.
(Karanges et al., 2014)	Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, and Lings	2014	Technique used within an organization to provide and share information among staff to develop a sense of community and trust.
(Tkalac Verčič & Pološki Vokić, 2017)	Tkalac and Poloski	2017	It encourages innovation and organizational competitiveness, offering a space for relationships between different job positions.
(Cuenca, 2018)	Cuenca	2018	A set of communicative activities developed by an organization to create and maintain good relations with its members and among them through the use of different communication techniques that keep them informed, integrated, and motivated.
(Berceruelo, 2020)	Berceruelo	2020	Stimulating the commitment of professionals to the achievement of the organization's challenges.
(Špoljarić & Tkalac Verčič, 2022)	Tkalac and Spoljaric	2022	Ability of employees to connect with the organization and understand its goals.

2. Methodology and Method

This research involves a systematic review of the emerging scientific literature on internal communication in the post-pandemic context of COVID-19. The PRISMA method was applied for the selection and analysis of the articles, thus ensuring methodological rigor. The detailed procedures for data collection and evaluation are provided below.

Proposed equation for the search:

Internal communication in active search for "Article title".

This research applied the following databases to perform the relevant searches as you can see in the Table 2:

Table 2. Results of the searches in the two databases.

Database	No. of Results Found (Previous Analysis)
Scopus	964
Web of Science	702

The search was conducted after 31 December 2023, during the first week of January 2024, to obtain all results from the last year. The total number of results amounted to 1666 articles. To shorten and redirect the search to the studied concept, it was necessary to use the time and category filters of both databases in order to obtain results only for the concept of internal communication.

Thus, starting with the first database, Scopus (S), we proceeded to apply a time filter from 2020 to 2023, which resulted in a total of 281 articles. Subsequently, to delimit the searches to the desired sectors; the following categories were applied: “Business, Management and Accounting”, “Social Sciences”, “Economics, Econometrics and Finance”, and “Psychology”. Once these categories were applied, Scopus offered 215 valid articles.

In the Web of Science (WoS), a similar filtering process was used. A temporal filtering was applied from 2020 to 2023 with a result of 251 articles. Subsequently, the following categories were applied: “Communication”, “Business”, “Management”, “Economics”, “Social Sciences Interdisciplinary”, and “Psychology Multidisciplinary”, finally obtaining a total of 155 valid articles.

After filtering both the databases, we obtained a total of 370 articles from which we proceeded to analyse by reading titles and abstracts in order to discard those that did not meet the standards required, were repeated in both databases, or were not related to the subject matter of this research. Once the pertinent checks on repetitions between both databases had been carried out, 59 articles were found to be repeated. Finally, the remaining 311 articles were analysed.

Based on the number of articles to be analysed, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were established.

Exclusion criteria:

- Publications or samples based on COVID-19 or before. This study focused on analysing the application and evolution of internal communication policies in a post-pandemic context.
- Studies on internal communications applied to a location with conditions different from those previously analysed. Surveys on internal communication applied to geographical or socio-economic contexts significantly different from the European reality, as these may reflect divergent practices that introduce biases and hinder the comparability of the results within the framework of this research.
- Surveys dealing with a specific sector or field. These surveys focused on specific sectors or on the application of internal communication tools within specific sectoral contexts. Our approach sought to analyse cross-cutting internal communication policies in order to identify general patterns applicable to different organizational environments.
- Publications on subjects other than internal communications (e.g., internal medicine, racial situations, or crises). Some of the reviewed articles presented scenarios that were not related to the analysis of internal communication policies in the post-COVID-19 context and were, therefore, considered irrelevant to the objectives of this research.
- Articles written in languages other than English or Spanish.
- Books, articles in press, graphic content (e.g., videos).

Inclusion criteria:

- Publications and samples between 2020 (post-pandemic) and 2023. The purpose of this research was to analyse the evolution and dynamics of internal communication in the context following the COVID-19 crisis, identifying emerging patterns and their impact on organizational practices.
- To cover the basics of post-pandemic internal communication. These bases constitute the conceptual framework that will make it possible to investigate and understand the dynamics and behaviour of internal communication in this new organizational reality.

Sample

Below, you can see Figure 1, a PRISMA flowchart in four levels and Tables 3–5 which show the results ordered by typology:

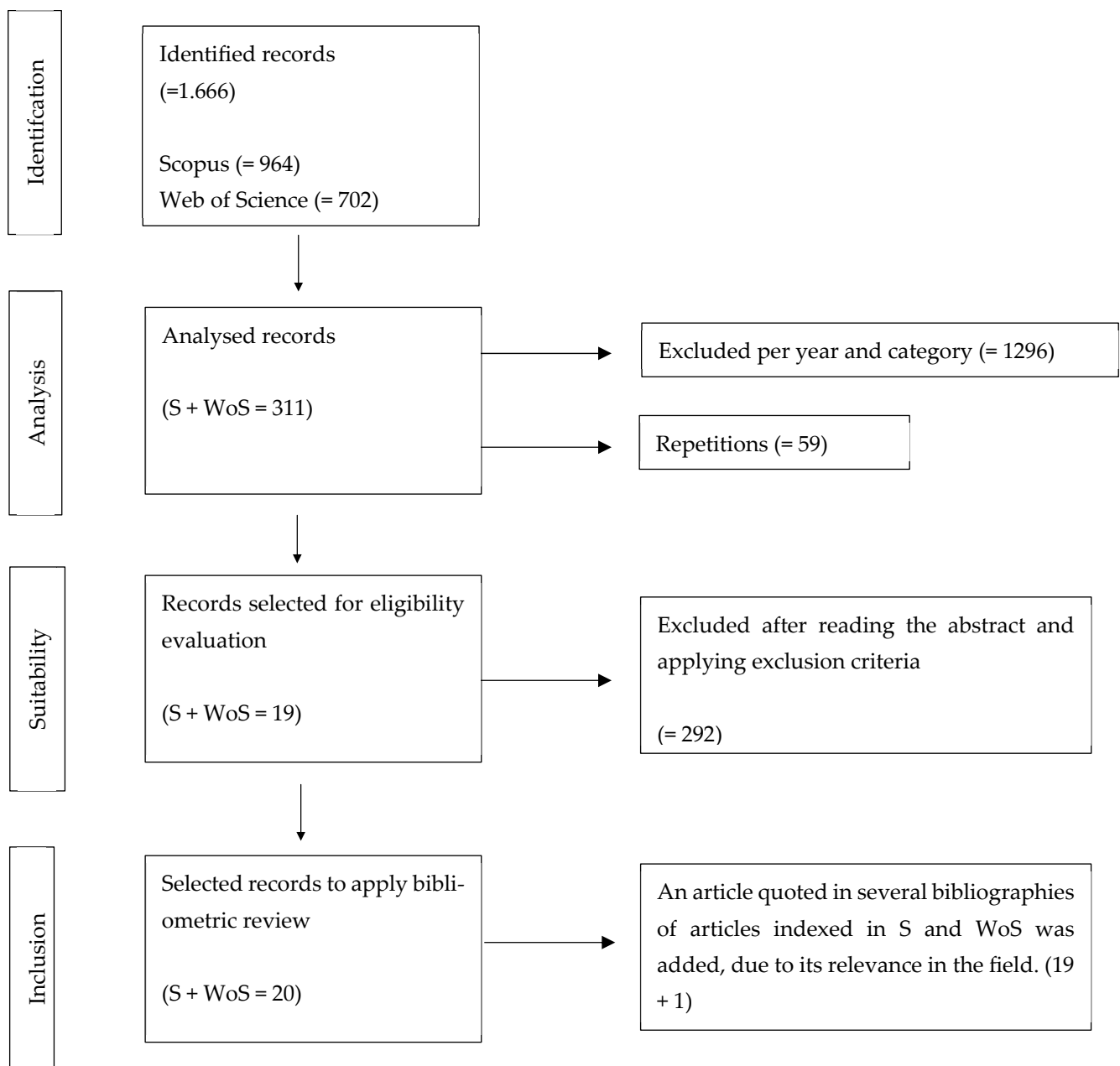


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart.

Table 3. Quantitative and Qualitative.¹

Source and Author(s)	Sample	Methodology	Results
(Gomes et al., 2021)	340 participants	Google Forms, Likert	IC, POS, and individual performance were closely related. IC was a predictor of both the other terms. POS mediated between both the other concepts.
(Gomes et al., 2023)	177 participants	Google Forms (27-question test)	IC and HR were directly and positively related to business attractiveness and had an impact on performance and turnover intention.
(Lee & Dong, 2023)	403 participants	Questionnaire with Likert scale. Remunerated (USD 5)	Transparent communication by CEOs and supervisors was positively associated with employee behaviour regarding the company. Employee empowerment impacted on the relationship between CEOs IC, coworkers, and employee advocacy.
(Lee & Kim, 2021)	405 participants	Questionnaire with Likert scale. Remunerated (USD 5)	Supervisors' communication influenced symmetrical IC. CEO involvement = positive effect. Symmetrical IC = positive and direct effect on horizontal, vertical, and creative feedback behaviour.
(Lee & Kim, 2022)	405 participants	Questionnaire with Likert scale. Remunerated (USD 5)	Symmetrical IC was positively associated with the affective engagement and exploratory behaviour of employees, which is related to affective organizational commitment. The CEO's relationship-oriented leadership was positively associated with IC.
(Lee, 2022)	405 participants	Questionnaire with Likert scale. Remunerated (USD 5)	IC between superiors and coworkers had an impact on employee behaviour. Symmetrical IC was positively related to inclusive leadership.
(Pološki Vokić et al., 2023)	3457 participants	ICSQ questionnaire (32 questions, Likert)	The quality of a company's attractiveness was partly based on the quality of the IC and the satisfaction of its employees.
(Špoljarić & Tkalac Verčič, 2022)	1805 participants	UPZIK questionnaire (32 questions, Likert)	↑ satisfaction with IC = + impact on employer brand, loyalty, and identification with the company. ↑ satisfaction with IC = + emotional relationship.
(Thelen & Men, 2023)	25 participants	In-depth interviews (Qualitative)	+ connection and identification with organizational goals = corporate culture. To report openly and transparently, stronger IC is needed.
(Thelen, 2021)	777 participants	Questionnaire with Likert scale	Positive relationship between servant leadership and satisfaction with communication as well as the relationship between employees and the organization. Common conclusion of these relationships = ↑ employee advocacy.

Table 3. Cont.

Source and Author(s)	Sample	Methodology	Results
(Tkalac Verčič et al., 2023)	1805 participants	UPZIK questionnaire (32 questions, Likert)	↑ satisfaction with IC = + business attractiveness and + sense of a hypothetical psychological contract being fulfilled in employee welfare. Workers are more committed to companies with good IC practices.
(Tkalac Verčič, 2021)	1805 participants	UPZIK questionnaire (32 questions, Likert)	↑ satisfaction with IC = + employee engagement, + POS, and + employer branding.
(Viererbl et al., 2022)	21 participants	Semi-structured interviews (qualitative)	The quality and number of contacts during TC. More engagement is perceived in face-to-face relationships. Communication creates a friendly and frustration-free ecosystem. In TC mode, there is less exchange of information between professionals in the same team, but there is still the need for communication to improve performance and well-being at work.

Table 4. Validation.

Source and Author(s)	Sample	Methodology	Results
(Tkalac Verčič et al., 2021)	Validation	Validation of UPZIK questionnaire (32 questions, Likert)	32 significantly correlated questions. Measurement instrument that can evaluate subjects' satisfaction with the level of IC experienced.

Table 5. Bibliometrics.

Source and Author(s)	Sample	Methodology	Results
(Araújo & Miranda, 2020)	Literature about HR, CC, OC, and MC applied to IC (unquantified)	Bibliometrics	Although HR, CC, OC, and MC have an impact on the behaviour and development of IC, this should be treated as an interdisciplinary trend and profession on its own.
(Castro-Martínez & Díaz-Morilla, 2021)	Literature about IC, Innovation, and CCU (unquantified)	Bibliometrics	IC is an enabler of innovation and creativity that employs corporate culture to boost employee engagement, participation, happiness, and well-being.
(Gara & La Porte, 2020)	Literature on HR and IC (unquantified)	Bibliometrics	Processes to generate and build employee trust require an IC strategy that is reflected in the managerial, personal, and functional dimensions. There is a deep relationship between HR and IC processes.
(Kukovec et al., 2021)	Literature about OC, OM, IC, stress, and WS (unquantified)	Bibliometrics	In cases of social transfer of organizational culture, the literature shows a gap that directly has an impact on the well-being of employees, but it is possible to design a model that allows a responsible transfer of organizational culture.

Table 5. Cont.

Source and Author(s)	Sample	Methodology	Results
(Müller & Müller, 2022)	Literature, journals, and scientific articles (unquantified)	Bibliometrics	It is necessary to adapt employees to the corporate culture in a scenario in which the new generations (Y and Z) will set the pace.
(Saks et al., 2022)	40 articles analysed	Bibliometrics	A company's organizational environment, trust, and internal communication have a direct impact on corporate commitment, which is positively associated with job satisfaction, involvement, and non-rotational intention.

3. Results

The detailed review of the selected literature revealed a diversity of issues influenced by internal communication policies in the work context. However, only one reference was identified as focusing on telecommuting, indicating a lack of exploration of this area in the scientific literature following the COVID-19 pandemic. This research gap reinforces the relevance of our study on the dynamics of internal communication in hybrid and telecommuting environments in the aftermath of the pandemic.

In the analysis of the literature on internal communication, the following key concepts were identified as recurrently associated with internal communication.

3.1. Culture

In the current context of organizations, successful communication must be a part of the organizational culture and be reflected in human relations and corporate communication activities (Tkalac Verčič et al., 2023), thus being intrinsically incorporated into the company's routine. Recent research shows that, in some organizations, there is a relationship between internal communication and innovation based on culture, environment, and happiness (Castro-Martínez & Díaz-Morilla, 2021). In line with this fact and because of the factors that relate culture to internal communication, the latter is undergoing a fundamental change that is mixed with new communication techniques in the content of organizations and the way it is applied, related to new tools to apply it, mostly digital (Müller & Müller, 2022).

3.2. Work Satisfaction

The scientific literature reviewed establishes a correlation between internal communication and job satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of focusing on the employee and adopting bidirectional communication methods. These methods are essential to meet the psychological needs of employees and foster their emotional bond with the company (Lee & Kim, 2022). In addition, commitment and satisfaction with internal communication policies generate a strong corporate bond. Future research should explore how satisfaction-focused work experiences can strengthen this bond (Špoljarić & Tkalac Verčič, 2022). The proper management of internal communication is equally crucial in periods of organizational change and transition, contributing to overall staff satisfaction and well-being (Kukovec et al., 2021).

3.3. Strategies

In terms of strategies, internal communication evaluation methods should be used, as they are an important tool that allows us to reveal the results of vertical internal communication practices or the interactions that trigger specific practices (Araújo & Miranda, 2020). The impact of internal communication, building a positive organizational climate that

fosters staff happiness, is beneficial for developing an innovative system and as a facilitator of change (Castro-Martínez & Díaz-Morilla, 2021). Although in the business ecosystem it is still necessary to emphasize this discipline of communication as a profession, its position in the academic world is important because it can help to increase its professionalization (Araújo & Miranda, 2020).

3.4. Employee Advocacy

Although some studies argue that the concept of employee advocacy is not yet at an early stage, it is directly related to some leadership skills that talk about the importance of communicating effectively with their teams to facilitate relationships and trust (Thelen, 2021). Internal communication in companies should focus on legitimizing employees by giving them a voice, listening to their needs, and asking for feedback. To have a greater impact, it is necessary for the department designated to manage internal communication to participate with others in order to develop new opportunities (Thelen & Men, 2023).

Another area of employee advocacy is the importance of recognition and how internal communication can help to develop a corporate culture that recognizes employees for their involvement in the organization (Thelen & Men, 2023). This involves several types of communication: from top management, executives, and colleagues, each of them influencing in different ways, and with a focus on the latter group, which is of extreme importance to enhance empowerment and facilitate continuous interaction environments and a support network within the organization (Lee & Dong, 2023).

3.5. Engagement

Corporate engagement is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, organizational environment, bidirectional communications between employees and management, and an intention not to turnover and to stay with the organization (Saks et al., 2022). Part of the engagement sought by companies depends on the quality of internal communication and the consequent satisfaction employees have with it. These positive experiences can promote attitudinal responses and positive results (Tkalac Verčič et al., 2023) that have a direct impact on employees. On how to increase employee engagement, research explains that this happens when they are emotionally connected to others and know what is expected of them, have all the information they need, and have opportunities to develop as employees (Tkalac Verčič, 2021).

3.6. Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Internal communication is also related to perceived organizational support (POS), confirming, through some research, that organizations investing in internal communication stimulate feelings of support and well-being in a significant and positive way (Gomes et al., 2021). Clear bidirectional communication highlighting mutual obligations helps to clarify expectations and, therefore, increases POS (Tkalac Verčič et al., 2023). The relationship between internal communication, POS, and individual performance of professionals, together with an organizational strategy, makes employees an essential part of achieving company objectives and goals (Gomes et al., 2021).

3.7. Human Resources/Relations (HR)

Starting as early as the recruitment stage, proactive corporate engagement with employees is becoming increasingly important, which facilitates their integration into the corporate culture from the beginning (Gara & La Porte, 2020). Although the human relations and internal communications departments operate independently, their joint collaboration, supported by management, is crucial to foster transparency in internal communications (Gomes et al.,

2023; Lee & Dong, 2023). Interaction between these departments is essential to enhance positive perceptions of the company and stimulate job satisfaction (Gomes et al., 2023).

Employees satisfied with internal communication policies feel that their organizations care more about them (Tkalac Verčič et al., 2023), impacting equally on the well-being of employees and organizations. The processes for building trusting relationships in organizations require an internal communication strategy that is reflected in management, in the personal and functional dimensions, on the basis of which the human relations departments manage people (Gara & La Porte, 2020).

3.8. Leadership

The implication of corporate leadership roles has a considered impact on the way any organization communicates. It is usually associated with the values, missions, and vision of the company as well as offering a controlling view of the well-being of its employees (Lee & Kim, 2021). In this context, the leadership and the way they communicate become a critical component in achieving the goals proposed in internal corporate communication plans (Lee & Kim, 2021). Symmetrical communication becomes the key to manifesting the power of inclusive leadership, influencing employees' communication behaviours (Lee, 2022). As organizational leaders, being equipped with the knowledge to understand how to lead and inspire also increases the likelihood that workers will advocate for their organizations (Thelen, 2021).

3.9. Symmetrical Communication

Although many of the concepts discussed may be independent, the direct antecedent related to symmetrical communication is the role of leadership communication, specifically the relationship between leadership and how positively related it is to symmetrical communication (Lee & Kim, 2021). In this way, the vision offered by CEOs helps employees to perceive communicative environments in a symmetrical way, causing employees to identify with the values of their companies (Lee & Kim, 2022).

3.10. Employer Branding

Achieving employee loyalty is a competitive advantage to differentiate among organizations (Špoljarić & Tkalac Verčič, 2022). This is where the concept of employer branding comes into play, which is built on three variants: to develop a concept of value for employees, to externalize this concept to potential employees, and, finally, to integrate it into the organizational culture (Tkalac Verčič, 2021). The most relevant concepts of this term are satisfaction with the communicative climate and satisfaction with feedback (Pološki Vokić et al., 2023).

3.11. Telecommuting

The research on telecommuting and its relationship to internal communication is limited. Viererbl et al. (2022) identified that telecommuting can reduce the frequency of interactions, especially between employees at the same hierarchical level, and the spontaneous communications of an office environment are missing. However, the benefits of internal communication to strengthen corporate culture and the maintenance of social rules and values are also highlighted. This suggests the need for organizations to foster communication among their remote professionals to preserve these vital elements. Since this is the only reference identified that addresses the relationship between telecommuting and internal communication, and considering the limited historical evidence in this area, it is important to reflect on the need to carry out further investigation of the intersection between these two concepts. In the current context, characterized by the possibility of facing new global crises and the consolidation of telecommuting as a permanent modality,

it is essential to study its impact on organizational dynamics. As pointed out by (Viererbl et al., 2022), organizations must implement strategies that facilitate the connection between teleworkers and the flow of information with their teams, thus preserving the essential elements of cohesion and internal communication.

Two figures are shown below: Figure 2 includes the main keywords of the analysed articles. Figure 3 is a cloud of the main concepts that, according to size, indicate their presence in the articles.

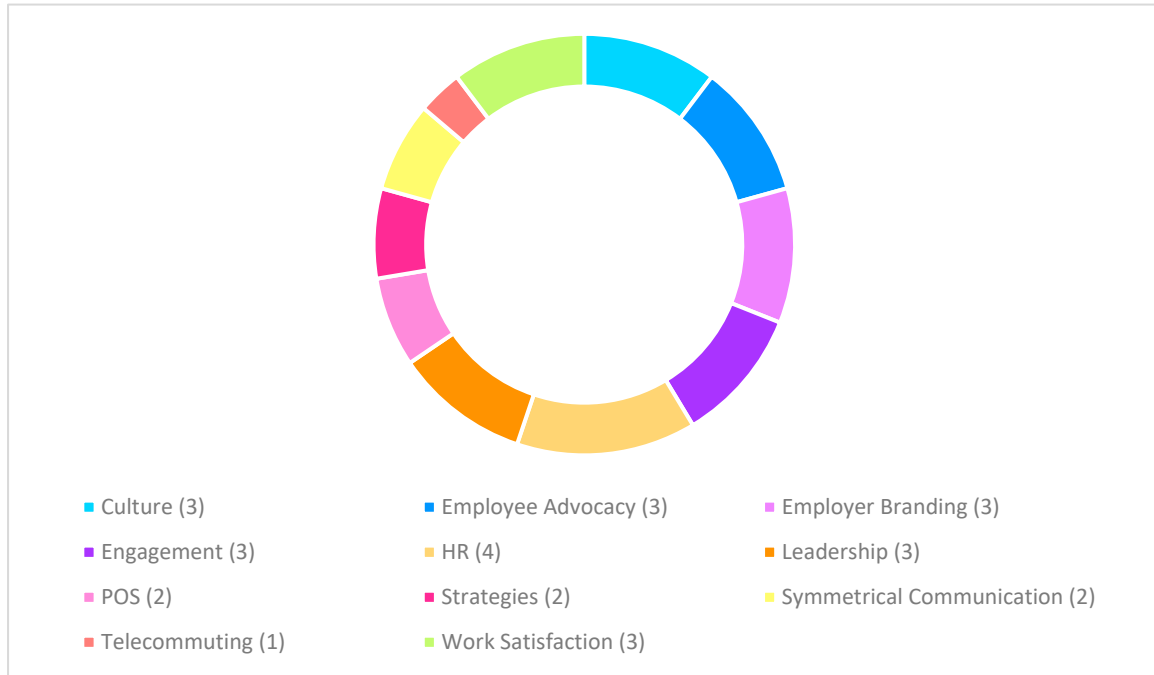


Figure 2. Relationship between the number of articles and the main concepts.²



Figure 3. Word cloud on the concepts related to internal communication based on the keywords in from the analysed articles.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The central purpose of this article focuses on the correlation between the chosen articles and their fundamental concepts, focusing particularly on the low association detected between the impact of internal communication and telecommuting in the post-pandemic period, a time in which telecommuting has become normalized in many organizations. The exhaustive analysis of internal communication through the two main academic databases has culminated in the formulation of critical conclusions. It is relevant to understand that the implementation of internal communication must be approached in a holistic manner to ensure its effectiveness. This approach requires organizations to maintain an optimal state of health at all levels of practice, ensuring its alignment with the strategic, operational, and human objectives of the organization (Gomes et al., 2021). Internal communication must be managed as an interconnected system, in which bidirectionality, transparency, and coherence are the pillars that support the relationships between the different organizational stakeholders. Moreover, a strong internal communication not only facilitates cohesion between teams but also reinforces employee commitment, promotes adaptation to change, and improves the working environment. In contexts such as the current one, in which modalities such as telecommuting have become normalized, it becomes crucial to develop communication strategies that transcend physical and digital barriers, preserving the organizational culture and the sense of belonging.

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a turning point in the importance of internal communication within organizational environments. Companies found it necessary to adapt, test, or implement new internal communication strategies as an essential mechanism in a context of uncertainty. The rise of telecommuting consolidated internal communication as a vital bridge for business continuity, becoming an indispensable tool to keep workers informed and, simultaneously, as a strategic advantage for organizations. The strengthening of practices aimed at improving internal communication has a significant impact on several key organizational aspects. These include greater employee identification with the corporate culture and a substantial increase in the level of corporate engagement. These improvements not only reinforce the sense of belonging and cohesion within teams but also enhance the alignment of employees with the organization's strategic objectives, promoting a more collaborative and effective work environment.

Internal communication is present in many areas of the corporate world. Good policies, applied to any company, allow workers to develop higher levels of well-being and a sense of belonging, motivation, and satisfaction, which ends up having an impact on the external image of the organization and on the operation of all its procedures. In the words of Thelen and Men (2023), internal communication should focus on legitimizing employee concern, asking for feedback, and facilitating new opportunities. Conscious leadership with the right knowledge to understand how to lead and inspire is essential for business success. Conscious leadership not only promotes a positive work environment but also facilitates the creation of an organizational environment aligned with strategic objectives, fostering commitment and cohesion among teams. According to (Thelen & Men, 2023), leaders should adopt a transparent and collaborative approach that legitimizes employee concerns, promotes feedback, and facilitates new opportunities. This type of leadership, closely linked to effective internal communication, acts as a catalyst for engagement, enabling organizations to achieve higher levels of job performance and well-being. The ability to inspire and lead with purpose strengthens corporate culture and ensures a sustainable competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment (Thelen, 2021).

The effectiveness of internal communication is a critical factor in corporate dynamics, whose implementation transcends departmental boundaries and requires an integrated strategy. Systematic evaluation of the methods applied can become a fundamental tool

for driving continuous improvement (Araújo & Miranda, 2020). Interdepartmental collaborations, particularly among human resources, communication, and marketing, enrich the policies implemented, providing a holistic view of the organizational ecosystem. A thorough understanding of the operational context is essential and is achieved through a combined effort. The necessary independence of an internal communication department lies in the ability to analyse and apply such policies with professionalism and creativity to innovate within the internal communication sphere that provides comprehensive support to workers, from their incorporation to their full integration, ensuring their adaptation to the organizational environment (Gara & La Porte, 2020). The results show that these practices contributed significantly to increased well-being at work.

Although telecommuting has become widespread in companies after the pandemic, the scientific literature exploring its interaction with internal communication is still limited. The dynamics between these two facets need to be investigated, examining implementation periods and their impact on employees, both in face-to-face and remote environments. The proliferation of digital tools in the business sector expands the possibilities of study, which consequently requires a thorough and systematic analysis of this subject. Researching the relationship between internal communication and telecommuting has become a pending challenge in academia. Advances in digital tools and new ways of working that are emerging in the corporate environment present significant challenges but also open the door to emerging trends (Viererbl et al., 2022).

The current academic environment reflects a significant increase in searches on internal communication, in a business context in which factors such as job satisfaction, recognition, and organizational bonding are becoming increasingly important beyond remuneration. Organizations face the imperative of differentiating themselves from their competitors to retain and attract talent, making the strategic management of internal communication a valuable tool to achieve these objectives and attract committed employees with a competitive edge to make a difference (Špoljarić & Tkalac Verčič, 2022).

This bibliometric analysis constitutes a preliminary exploration of the effect of internal communication on the organizational environment, with the aim of providing a solid foundation for future research. The analysis of all the articles and the more than 11,000 responses gathered in this research reinforces the importance of identifying key terms to guide and delimit the priority areas of study, thus enabling further research in this field to be precisely targeted. It invites a deeper understanding of the concept, its areas of influence, and less explored domains, thus opening new lines of research in this field of study.

5. Implications, Limitations, and Future Studies

This research provides significant theoretical contributions to the scientific literature on internal communication, consolidating its relevance as a strategic area in the post-pandemic business environment. Through the analysis of keywords, key trends have been identified, and these outline future research directions, motivating the examination of more specific lines of research focused on current challenges. This approach not only enriches theoretical knowledge but also proposes practical applications that can guide the design and evaluation of effective corporate internal communication policies.

As pointed out by (Gomes et al., 2021), the relationship between internal communication and COVID-19 has left a critical information gap that needs to be addressed. This research answers that need by providing a basis for understanding how internal communication can evolve in a corporate environment transformed by the pandemic. A systematic evaluation of existing policies will enable organizations not only to adapt to technological and cultural changes but also to strengthen their ability to manage teams in hybrid and remote contexts.

Ultimately, this study and future research will allow us to embrace a new and complex challenge: that of innovating internal communication as a multidimensional discipline, integrating its impact on organizational well-being, corporate culture, and strategic effectiveness. This approach provides a solid framework for addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by the changing global business environment.

The main limitation of this research lies in its temporal framework, as it focuses exclusively on the years after the outbreak of the pandemic caused by COVID-19. This approach restricts the analysis to a relatively short period, which may not fully capture the long-term evolution of internal communication dynamics in the post-pandemic context. Furthermore, as pointed out by (Kukovec et al., 2021; Müller & Müller, 2022) the complexity of the analysis is significantly influenced by factors such as national, corporational, and generational culture, which can introduce variations in the results and limit the generalizability of the findings.

In terms of future lines of research, it would be valuable to explore the applications of internal communication in organizational ecosystems with different cultural and structural characteristics than those examined in this research. This would include specific sectors or geographic regions with unique work contexts that could provide new insights into the adaptability and effectiveness of internal communication policies. It would also be relevant to delve deeper into the impact of digital tools and hybrid work arrangements on team cohesion and organizational well-being, areas that, although emerging, still lack thorough exploration in the scientific literature.

Finally, it is suggested that future studies incorporate longitudinal perspectives and comparative methodologies to analyse the evolution of internal communication in scenarios of continuous organizational transformation, thus contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its strategic role in the global business environment.

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Notes

¹ + = more. ↑ = the higher it is. POS = perceived organizational support. HR = human resources. CEO = chief executive officer. CC = corporative communications. OC = organizational communications. MC = marketing communications. IC = internal communication. OM = organization model. WS = work satisfaction. CCU = corporative culture. TC = telecommuting. UPZIK = The Internal Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire.

² ICSQ = The Internal Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire.

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