LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION, CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

A CORRELATION STUDY

by

Sonia Angela Greenidge

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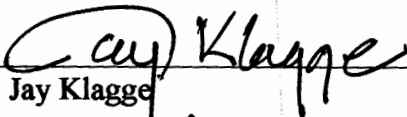A CORRELATION STUDY

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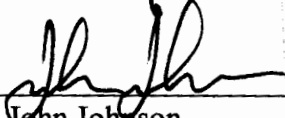
Approved:

Jay Klagge, Ph.D., Mentor

John Johnson, Ph.D., Committee Member

Matthew Knight, DBA, Committee Member

Accepted and Signed: _____ November 02, 2010
Jay Klagge   Date

Accepted and Signed: _____ November 02, 2010
John Johnson   Date

Accepted and Signed: _____ November 02, 2010
Matthew Knight   Date

_____   November 11, 2010
Jeremy Moreland, Ph.D.   Date
Dean, School of Advanced Studies
University of Phoenix

Abstract

This quantitative correlation research study investigated the degree to which the communication style of leaders influences the culture and level of employee engagement of organizations. Correlation analysis was used to investigate the following three hypothesized relationships: (1) the relationship between the communication styles of leaders and the culture of their organizations, (2) the relationship between the communication styles of leaders and the level of employee engagement in their organizations, and (3) the relationship between the organizational culture and the level of employee engagement in the organizations studied. Statistical analyses identified statistically significant correlations for all three hypothesized relationships. Differences in the correlations were noted among the private, public and non-profit sector leaders and organizations. Based on the tentative findings from this study, organizational leaders should use their communication style to influence the culture of their organizations and to improve the level of engagement of their employees.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter Ashley, husband Patrick and sister Melanie. Ashley, my hope and delight has been both frustrated and inspired by my journey. May this dissertation serve as a durable reminder of the importance of education and a promise that I will always support her as she seeks to achieve her academic goals in her chosen career.

Melanie has taken on the role of mother to Ashley when my studies separated us geographically. Her unselfishness has been an inspiration.

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband Patrick whose encouragement, patience and understanding never wavered. His presence helped to sustain me during the peaks and valleys of my journey.

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During the four years of my doctoral journey, several persons have supported me. Without their encouragement, guidance and commitment the achievement of my educational goal would not have been possible.

I sincerely and respectfully thank the members of my committee. Dr. Jules 'Jay' Klagge was more than a mentor. He recognized my potential, inspired me to excellence and helped me to achieve what I believed to be impossible. Dr. Klagge provided consummate expertise, guidance and encouragement in monitoring my progress and performance and the quality of this document. Dr. Klagge implored me to 'keep the faith, keep the fire burning.'

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I take this opportunity to acknowledge the suggestions and guidance of Professor Andrew Downes, whose support never faltered from the beginning of the program through to the completion of the dissertation. I appreciate the assistance of Mr. Rudy Gibbons whose support enabled me to complete the program. My gratitude goes to Andrea, Andre, Carol-Ann, and Philmore who supported me along the journey.

I acknowledge my learning teams and cohort members, especially Venetta, David, Dana and Irmatine who traveled the same journey. I thank the many persons who provided motivation and inspired me. Without these people, the completion of my doctoral studies would not have been possible. I share this accomplishment with them.

Most of all, I give my thanks to God who has sustained and carried me throughout the entire journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Organization is not possible without communication for this is the way a group influences the behavior of an individual. In order to encourage specific behaviors, not only is communication crucial but a willing attitude is essential (Feltner, Mitchell, Norris, & Wolfe, 2008). Corporate leaders may use communication as an influential device to guide the human resources and influence the culture of the organization (McLaurin, 2006a). Communication is not received by organizational members in a neutral environment, but according to the context of the organization. Employees are expected to function within the organization according to the culture and practices of the leaders (Briggs, 2008; Rogers & Meehan, 2007).

Leaders regard communication as the critical element in transferring the ownership of the most important messages to stakeholders, especially when members are geographically dispersed (Briggs, 2008). Leaders need to communicate with persons in the organization because of the distinct effect that leadership communication has on overall attitude (Bass, 1990a). Through the communication chosen, the leader may be positioned to exert some influence on the culture of the organization. When leaders are involved in sending clear, consistent messages the climate of the organization encourages employees to be more engaged or involved in the business (Trahant, 2008).

Communication from leaders to employees must compete with messages from a variety of sources and needs to be as effective as possible (Potter & Potter, 2008). Leaders recognize that the interpretation of communication is based not only on the content of the message, but also on the way in which it is delivered. The aim of chapter 1 is to define the problem and purpose of the quantitative study and identify its limit, scope,

and significance. The research questions and hypotheses are posed, the theoretical framework discussed, and the assumptions stated. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Background of the Problem

To communicate implies doing something with others. People have always shared knowledge and experiences through formal or informal channels. Culture is an endeavor by people to communicate or transfer their accumulation of knowledge, beliefs, customs, morals, law, and habits to future generations (Kanungo, 2006).

Transfer may be done either consciously or unconsciously such as is done by peers in professions who form associations and pursue common development (Kanungo, 2006). Walters (2008) pointed out that the way leaders communicate is a product of the culture and that communication is often blamed for problems that emanate within the organization. Persons within the organization appear to agree on specific ways of operating and leaders use this system to disseminate their messages and to influence the way things are done (Walters, 2008).

Haslam and Reicher (2007) found that the most effective leaders recognize and examine the social identity of the group, and adjust their leadership communication based on this identity. Haslam and Reicher argued that the leaders not only appear to belong to the group, but they also communicate in ways that typically characterize the group and make it distinct from others. Lutz (2008) advised leaders to imagine and pay attention to the situation of the other persons in the organization, understand their perspectives, and communicate using the style that would be most effective for shaping the reality of the organization.

Communication is perhaps the most complex cultural phenomenon (Williamson, 2007). Communication is an amalgamation of not only the language or dialects that are common in the organization, but also speech patterns, voice volume, intonation, eye contact, touching, amount of personal space, greetings, use of formal or informal names, facial expressions, and gestures (Williamson, 2007). Leaders must be aware of all the different facets of their communication as they influence the norms and values of the organization.

A close examination is necessary to understand the culture of an organization in order to acquire knowledge about the dynamics of the subcultures (Schein, 1999). Organizational dynamics and culture are complex and do not easily adapt to superficial study. For example, a leader may have good intentions, but if the communication is not in alignment with the actions, behavior and reality of the organization, this can damage the reputation and affect the culture of the organization. The communication programs of effective organizations are designed to involve employees in running the business and increasing the level of engagement (Trahant, 2008).

Many leaders now acknowledge that one of their most significant challenges is developing their communication skills (Briggs, 2007). When any change is taking place in the organization, the communication skills become even more critical. Culture commands the same level of importance to an organization as personality does to an individual (Guthrie & Shayo, 2005). Like human culture, organizational culture is passed on from one generation to the next, and both change at about the same pace (Guthrie & Shayo, 2005). The communication used by the leaders in the organization may create and maintain changes in the culture.

A well-intentioned leader whose communication is not in agreement with the actions of the organization or other perceptions of reality, can damage the culture. The culture can be affected by a leader whose behavior is unethical, whose communication is ambiguous or indirect, or who sends mixed messages. Transformational leaders aim to develop higher levels of personal commitment to the organization and to inspire collective aspirations for increased engagement with the firm (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008). The messages sent by leaders are interpreted by organizational members and form the basis of their behavior and actions in the workplace. The communication style of the leaders may influence how messages are interpreted and affect the culture of the organization.

People enter the public service or not-for-profit organizations for various reasons other than financial and security needs (Carlan, 2007). The need for affinity or companionship and the need for prestige are also reasons for persons who pursue careers that allow them to make positive contributions or to give back to the community (Carlan, 2007; McCarthy, Shao, & Garland, 2007; Trahant, 2008). Positive attitudes and a culture that encourage positive behavior will decline if the job does not live up to the employees' expectations. Communication from leaders may allow employees to determine their level of satisfaction and engagement and may also impact on the overall culture of the organization.

Leaders may use communication as an influential device to guide the behavior of human resources in their companies (Claver-Cortes, Zaragoza-Saez, & Pertusa-Ortega, 2007). Leader communication has a significant effect on overall management attitude (Bass, 1990a). Communication and culture are interdependent (Claver-Cortes et al.,

2007) but the culture of organizations may also be determined by those in leadership positions. Values such as allegiance, teamwork, and professionalism that are not related to the job are keys to building employee engagement and fostering the development of shared values and goals (Trahant, 2008).

Much of the research investigating communicator styles in organizations are focused on identifying the wide variety of communicator styles that managers and subordinates portray. Leaders employ a variety of verbal strategies or resources to convey meaning or feeling in their communication, or to reinforce differences in power with the other partner in the conversation (Porter-Wenzlaff & Froman, 2008). Norton (1983) focused on individual communication styles, and explained that within an organizational context, the leader's communication affects the perception of the members. Norton maintained that the leader's style of communication is an amalgamation of the way the leader verbally and *paraverbally* interacts to indicate how the meaning should be taken, interpreted, altered, or understood.

Different styles are integral and independent parts of the overall style of a competent communicator. A leader could demonstrate attentiveness by encouraging others and listening. Leaders could display openness by expressing their feelings, and indicate friendliness through goodwill toward others. Norton (1983) maintained that a competent organizational leader would manage a situation or conversation and be more at ease during a dispute.

The purpose of the study was to examine the connection among the communication styles of leaders, the culture of the organization, and the level of employee engagement. The specific focus of the study was to investigate the link

between the styles of communication used by the leaders and the culture of the organization, the link between styles of leadership communication and the level of employee engagement, and the link between the culture of the organization and the level of organizational engagement.

Statement of the Problem

The general problem is that the communication styles used by corporate leaders appear to influence the values, norms, and beliefs of the organizational members as well at the level of engagement with the organization. The specific problem is whether or not the culture of the organization seems to be driven by the style of communication that is used by the leader, and if the engagement of the members is determined by both the leadership style of communication and the culture of the organization. Highly effective organizations are more likely to ask employees to share their ideas, to encourage dialogue between leaders and employees and to follow-up with action (Trahant, 2008).

This quantitative research study involved a questionnaire administered to a sample of employees in private, public, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados to measure if the communication style used by organizational leaders influences the culture of the organization and the level of engagement of the members. The survey was used to measure the level of employee engagement in different organizational cultures. These data were collected by administering a questionnaire to a sample of members from each type of organization. A quantitative study was conducted to determine if the communication styles of the leaders influence the culture of the organization and the level of engagement of members and if the culture of the organization influences the level of employee engagement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to measure the degree of fit among the communication style of the top leadership, the organization's culture, and the level of engagement of organizational members. The goal of the study was to measure the strength of the relationship between the communication styles of the leaders and the shared, distinctive values, beliefs, and norms of the organization and the degree of association between the communication styles of the leaders and the level of organizational engagement. The link between the different organizational cultures and the level of employee engagement was also measured.

The survey was conducted with members of private, public, and nonprofit organizations located in Barbados. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of respondents randomly selected from each type of organization. No specific organization was targeted as the participants were chosen from the membership list of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity. The goal was to obtain valid survey responses from about 30 people from each of the three organization types, for a total of about 90 respondents.

The independent variable was identified as the communication style of the leader. Communication style is defined as the way a person indicates through verbal or nonverbal channels, how the specific meaning of a message should be interpreted, refined or understood in a communication context (de Jong & Den Hartog, 2007; Webster, 2005). Communication style includes the social elements of experience and confirmation, and encompasses composure, wit, appropriate disclosure, and articulation (Downs, Archer, McGrath, & Stafford, 1988).

The first dependent variable, organizational culture, is defined as a cluster of values, beliefs, traditions, specific relationships, and unique climate shared by its members of a specific organization (Buble & Pavic, 2007; Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007). Organizational culture is defined as the way activities are carried out in the organization to solve internal issues and to relate to customers, suppliers, and the environment (Harvath, 2008; Tan & Lim, 2009; Williamson, 2007). The second dependent variable, employee engagement, is defined as the energy or power that motivates employees to perform at a higher level; an amalgamation of commitment, loyalty, productivity, and ownership (Fleming, Coffman, & Harter, 2005; Little & Little, 2006).

Significance of the Problem

Many studies have been conducted on the relationship between leaders and culture but there is a lack of information on the specific area of the relationship between leadership communication, culture, and employee engagement, specifically in the Caribbean. The culture of the organization determines the way in which the company interacts with its internal and external customers and affects the performance of the organization. Communication helps employees understand the mission of the organization (Sinickas, 2006/2007) and the culture directly impacts how well they perform their jobs (Lazidou, 2008). The level of employee engagement indicates the degree to which an individual identifies with the organization and is committed ensuring that the firm achieves its goals (Little & Little, 2006).

In studying this paper, the reader may be able to correlate the communication style used by organizational leaders with the culture of the organization and the level of

engagement of organizational members. The reader may be able to identify if there is a
link between the organizational culture and the level of employee engagement. The
information may assist in determining the choice of leader when a change is needed for
the organization and may assist leaders in identifying their style of communicating and
making improvements where possible. Employees may be able to recognize if their level
of engagement is influenced by the culture of the organization and if developing a certain
culture will increase the level of engagement.

      Significance of the study to leadership. D'Aprix (2008) argued that recent
changes have brought the opportunities and challenges of leadership from the pedestal of
management down to the individual employee. During times of change, people rely on
communication to help them understand and interpret events. A more intense knowledge
of the leadership communication style, organizational culture, and employee engagement
are necessary to identify what are the possible issues for leaders and leadership (Fleming
& Kayser-Jones, 2008). This study may become significant for organizational leaders
and members in helping them to recognize their communication style and to understand if
it has an effect on the culture and the level of employee engagement in their
organizations. The information may position the leaders to make adjustments to ensure
that their communication style contributes positively to the culture and level of
engagement in the organization.

Overview of the Research Method

      A quantitative survey allows for the identification of whether there is a direct link
between the communication styles used by the leaders, the culture that dominates in the
organization and the level of employee engagement. Several instruments have been

identified to measure communication in organizations. No instrument was identified as satisfactory to measure the leadership communication, culture, and employee engagement for this study.

The Norton Communication Style Measure (CSM) is the most widely used in the field of communication while the Richmond and McCroskey (McCroskey & Richmond, 1995) Management Communication Style Scale (MCS) was designed to be used specifically in organizations. The Duran and Wheeless Communicative Adaptability Scale: Self-Reference Measure is focused on competence in communication as an indication of the ability of a person to adapt to different social constraints (Downs et al., 1988). A computer-based survey instrument was developed to accomplish the objectives of this study.

Surveys allow the researcher to collect a large amount of data from a sizeable population in an economical way. The data are collected by using a questionnaire administered to a sample. The data are standardized and allow easy comparison (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007).

Surveys are considered to be authoritative and are easy to explain and understand. The survey method allows for the collection of quantitative data that can be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2005; Saunders et al., 2007). The data collected using a survey method may be used to suggest possible reasons for relationships between variables and to produce models of these associations (Blumberg et al., 2005).

By using the survey method, the researcher gains more control over the research process and using samples presents the possibility to generate findings that are

representative of the whole population (Saunders et al., 2007). Computer delivered questionnaires allow participants to respond without interviewer assistance. Computers are susceptible to viruses and some persons do not open attachments which can slow or incapacitate the data collection process (Blumberg et al., 2005).

Appropriateness of Design

The purpose of a quantitative study is to discover the strength of the relationship between two or more variables (Mortenson & Oliffe, 2009). The empirical investigation of causal relationships requires knowledge about where cause and effect relationships exist. In order to determine causality there must be an understanding of the relationship between leader communication style, the culture of the organization and employee engagement. The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between the independent variable (communication style), and the dependent variables (culture of the organization and employee engagement). The aim of the research was to examine the relationship between organizational culture and employee engagement.

To determine the relationship between leader communication, organizational culture, and employee engagement, the quantitative approach was selected. This choice was guided by the need to estimate population characteristics, especially leader communication style as the independent variable and organizational culture and employee engagement as the dependent variables (Yahyagil, 2006). A descriptive approach was deemed to be appropriate for correlative questions because this approach allows insight on the event without altering the variables under study. The nature of the variables indicated a multivariate analysis among the different attributes (variables within

the major independent and dependent variables) that explain leader communication

organizational culture and employee engagement.

The available sample population of 103 persons (30 from private, 40 from public,

and 33 from nonprofit organizations) was selected from persons who have been with their

organizations for more than one year and are therefore familiar with the communication

style of the leader and the culture of the organization. Participants were selected from the

membership list of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity. No specific

organization was targeted and participants had an equal chance of being selected. The

understanding of the variables was treated in the same way for all participants.

Research Questions

The focus of this study was to compare the style of communication used by the

leaders with the shared, distinctive values, beliefs, and norms of the organizational

members to determine if the communication style of the leader influences the culture in

the organization. The second aim of the research was to compare the communication

style of the leaders with the level of employee engagement in the organization. The third

objective of the research was to compare the specific culture in the organization with the

level of employee engagement. The research questions were designed to explore the

influence of the communication style of the leader on the organization's culture and level

of employee engagement and guide this study.

The persons who lead organizations are responsible for guiding and directing the

performance of firms, and for establishing and supporting the culture of the organization

(Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007; Schein, 2004). The reason for doing this quantitative

study was to identify if organizational culture is created by the communication style used

by the leaders and to discover if the communication style guides the level of employee engagement. The independent variable was communication style employed by the leaders. The dependent variables were the culture found within the organization and the level of employee engagement.

The research questions were as follows: (a) To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the culture of the organization? (b) To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the level of employee engagement in the organization? (c) To what degree does the culture of the organization influence the level of employee engagement in the organization?

Hypotheses

This study had three null hypotheses and three alternative hypotheses, each of which was associated with one of the research questions posed in the study. The null hypothesis is a statement that indicates that no differences exist between variables in the study (Blumberg et al., 2005; Neuman, 2006; Saunders et al., 2007). The alternative hypothesis is a statement that indicates that differences between variables in the study are apparent. The hypotheses were as follows:

$H1_0$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the culture of the organization.

$H1_A$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does influence the culture of the organization.

$H2_0$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the level of employee engagement.

H2$_A$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does influence the level of employee engagement.

H3$_0$ – The culture of the organization does not influence the level of employee engagement.

H3$_A$ – The culture of the organization does influence the level of employee engagement.

These hypotheses were tested using correlation analysis. The findings from these hypothesis tests were used to answer the research questions posed in this study.

Theoretical Framework

The germinal theories of leadership, leader communication, organizational culture, and employee engagement served as the theoretical framework for this research. Research regarding the connection between leader communication, organizational culture, and employee engagement shows that a link exists (Schein, 2004). Latapie and Tran (2007) cautioned that subcultures are present along with the dominant culture in the organization, while Scott (2003) made it clear that organizational culture, strategy, and structure are all connected. Berg (2006) argued that culture theorists believe that culture affects the organization's performance and Trahant (2008) insisted that communication by managers builds employee engagement that results from teamwork that is focused on shared values and goals.

The idea of organizational culture was adapted from anthropology to be used in organization management research (Chang & Lin, 2007). Almost every scholar has a specific position on culture, and different scholars have different definitions of organization culture (Chang & Lin, 2007). Erickson (2008) pointed out that organization

culture was the emergent result of the continuing negotiations about values, meanings, and proprieties between the members of that organization. Chow and Liu (2007) determined that there are three types of corporate cultures: bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive cultures. Every workplace has its own unique culture, and with larger organizations, several subcultures co-exist with the dominant culture (Coomer, 2007).

Several theoretical positions exist on the topic of leadership communication. Communication of leaders is a mature field of study and is supported by scholarly literature that includes examination of leadership communication as a part of a communication theory and as a separate construct. The fields of organizational culture and employee engagement in the Caribbean, as defined in this study, are significantly less mature.

The theorists of symbolic convergence argue that communication creates the social ideas of a common understanding (Claver-Cortes et al., 2007; Olufowote, 2006). The theorists of restructuring propose that structuring refers to constructing social systems by applying rules and resources through communication (Shockley & McNeely, 2009). Alternative theorists such as Jih, Lee, and Tsai (2007) believed that communication is more readily facilitated if the shared values are known by organizational members. Maslow's theory of human motivation defined belonging as one of the motivators but this theory has been criticized because it lacks a sound empirical base (as cited in Welch & Jackson, 2007). The need to belong has been confirmed by Baumeister and Leary (1995) who suggested that the need to belong is a strong motivator for people.

Leadership theories allow the study to examine the perspectives of different leaders and to understand the communication that may be associated with different leadership styles. From the time of Confucius (ca. 552-479 B.C.) organizations developed hierarchies and leaders used communication to develop a merit system. In biblical times, during the period 1900 B.C. to 1000 B.C., an early model of transformational leadership was practiced when Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David combined spiritual and secular powers and communicated the ideas to lead the Hebrew people (Wren, 2005). The scientific method of leadership can be traced to Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) and Plato (469-399 B.C.) who proposed division of labor, and communicated the principles of centralization, delegation, and synergy (Wren, 2005).

The trait model of leadership identifies several characteristics of leaders (successful and unsuccessful) as observed over a period of time. Henri Fayol believed that managers/leaders needed specific qualities, knowledge, and experience to be successful (Scott, 2003). According to Scott, Fayol identified physical qualities and how the leader behaved as being important. Eventually theorists discovered that it was impossible to make a list of traits that could withstand questioning, and researchers attempted to determine how leaders behaved, especially toward their followers.

The focus then shifted from leaders to the concept of leadership (1950s and early 1960s). Patterns of behavior were grouped together and labeled as styles. The contingency models emerged, proposing that effective leadership was contingent upon a mix of factors. If the leaders' personal characteristics and communication style encouraged the followers to like and respect them, it was more likely that the followers would be supportive (Scott, 2003).

The situation or contingency models do not take cultural differences into consideration. What works in North America would not necessarily be effective in other cultures for reasons of religious orientation, family life, and the view taken of working in an organization. Burns (1978) argued that two types of charismatic leaders are apparent: charismatic transactional and transformational. Transactional leaders want to exchange or barter with their followers whereas transformational leaders are visionaries who aim to elicit the good in people and help them transcend their own self-interest for the good of the team or larger entity (Bass, 1985).

Researchers report that employee engagement predicts employee outcomes, organizational success, and financial performance (Saks, 2006). Conversely, according to Fuller, Hester, Bell, Frey, and Relyer (2009), employee engagement is decreasing, resulting in higher levels of disengagement among employees. The majority of the workforce members are not fully engaged or they are disengaged leading to what has been referred to as an engagement gap (Saks, 2006).

The current study may contribute to the existing research on the influence of leadership communication style on organizational culture and employee engagement. Past researchers have employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches in examining leadership communication styles and on organizational culture and employee engagement. The research findings of this study may narrow a gap in management literature since minimal literature and research exist on the concept of the influence that leadership communication style has on the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement in Caribbean societies.

Definition of Terms

Communication style is defined as the way a person uses verbal and nonverbal methods of interaction to indicate how the literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, and understood (Charlton, Dearing, Berry, & Johnson, 2008; Downs et al., 1988). Communication style includes social composure, wit, appropriate disclosure, articulation, social experience, and social confirmation (Downs et al., 1988).

Employee engagement is defined as the enthusiastic involvement and satisfaction of the individual with work; how each person connects with the company; one step beyond commitment (Little & Little, 2006).

Organizational culture is defined as the set of values, beliefs, norms, symbols, and rituals that are shared by the members of a specific company and defined as the way activities are carried out in the organization to solve internal issues and to relate to customers, suppliers, and the environment (Barger, 2007).

Assumptions

Assumptions are elements of a research study the researcher does not attempt to control. Culture is regarded in different ways by various persons, based on their socialization to factors such as truth, time, space, and interpersonal relationships. The information collected to evaluate the communication style of leaders in organizations is dependent on the cultural aspects of each organization.

The quantitative approach was assumed to be an appropriate method for exploring the effects of leadership communication style on organizational culture. Quantitative methods were necessary to measure the strength of the influence of the leader communication on the culture and the level of employee engagement of the organization.

The study included the assumption that the research participants would respond honestly to the survey questions. The study also included the assumption that participants would not deliberately try to reflect a positive image of the superior or the organization (Rubin, 2008). The use of a Web survey as the primary means of collecting data involved the assumption that participants were technologically competent and more inclined to complete the survey online than on paper.

Scope and Limitations

The focus of this study was on leader communication style and the effects on the culture and influence on the level of employee engagement within organizations. The scope of this study was limited to persons employed in public, private, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados. Each participant had been employed in the organization for at least one year to be aware of the various aspects of the communication of the leader, the culture, and the level of engagement of employees. Thirty persons were chosen from private, 40 from public, and 33 from nonprofit organizations.

The study was restricted to private, public, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados. An exhaustive examination of all factors was not likely or possible because of the diverse impacts that are possible on the culture and employee engagement of the categories of organizations. A survey of participants in different Caribbean islands and other countries would be useful in revealing if differences exist in various locations.

Delimitations

The current study had some limitations that provide an agenda for future research. Since the study was confined to one island, a large-scale follow-up survey would be useful to find out which specific leader communication exerts the strongest influence on

the norms, beliefs, and values and level of engagement of the organizational members. The focus was on the most senior leader of the organization while the communication styles of other person in senior strategic positions may also influence the culture and level of engagement of the organization.

Summary

Communication is integral to the functioning of every organization and so too are the leaders (Claver-Cortes et al., 2007). Some organizations appear to have one culture when specific leaders are at the helm and a different culture when there is a different leader. The level of employee engagement with the organization also appears to vary according to the leader.

The style of communication used by the leader determines the way the message is received by the persons in the organization. The interpretation, internalization, and reaction to these messages are all affected by the culture that prevails in the organization. Each leader has a distinctive method or style of communication so leaders of organizations need to know how strongly the communication of the leader will influence the culture and ultimately the way individuals engage in organizational activities. The aim of the current study was to address these issues.

Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature surrounding the theoretical framework of the study. A historical overview was presented using the germinal theorists in the areas of leadership, communication, employee engagement and culture, and then a review of the current theorists was highlighted. The related literature for each variable was examined.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This chapter is divided into five sections relating to the communication of corporate leaders, organizational culture, and employee engagement. The first section contains a review of the historical development of the literature on leadership and the major theories that have evolved. The goal of Section two is to compare communication theories and discuss the different styles of communication used by leaders of organizations. Section three includes a review of the varying viewpoints on theories of organizational culture and the methods for classifying various types of organizational culture. The goal of the fourth section is to review the existing literature on employee engagement and the fifth section includes a discussion on the link between leadership communication, culture, and employee engagement.

Leadership is a dynamic and complex process that is defined in several ways, but most of the definitions agree that leadership is not about an individual acting alone (Ancona, Blackman, & Bresman, 2008; Ashley & Reiter-Palmon, 2009; Painter-Morland, 2008). Leaders, irrespective of the model of leadership they adopt, must always be aware that leadership is the ability to translate vision into reality (Bennis, 1997). Leadership is about interacting and communicating with people and going on a journey with them.

In order to lead, others must be influenced to follow. Leaders must be innovative and creative in the way they resolve issues, and must be able to communicate and articulate their goals and beliefs to others in the organization (Ancona et al., 2008). Leaders are persons who deliberately influence the actions, beliefs, and feelings of others (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Mungai & Osgood, 2008). Culture is also closely associated

with organizations as demonstrated by the meshing of culture theories with organizational analysis.

Wren (2005) argued that any examination of leadership must consider that the culture (economic, social, technological, and political) of the period influences the thinking of both the leaders and followers. Leaders must consider what messages they communicate within the organization as well as how the messages are conveyed. The focus of this study was to examine if the communication style of the leaders creates the culture and influences the level of employee engagement with the organization. Specifically, the study was focused on if the style used by leaders to communicate within the organization is central in creating the specific culture and influencing the level of employee engagement in the organization. To support this position, Bass and Avolio (1993) and Quinn and Dalton (2009) pointed out that the culture of the organization is derived largely from its leadership.

Historical Development of Leadership Perspectives

From 552 to 479 B.C., the time of Confucius, organizations evolved into hierarchies that were staffed according to a merit system, while the Chinese state, governed by a large civil service, was operational from around 1000 B.C. and was ruled by a bureaucratic system of leadership (Wren, 2005). During biblical times, from the period 1900 B.C. to 1000 B.C., Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David combined both spiritual and secular powers to lead the Hebrew people using an early model of transformational leadership (Cooper, 2005; Wren, 2005). The scientific method of leadership can be traced to Aristotle (384 to 322 B.C.) and Plato (469 to 399 B.C.) who proposed division of labor, and debated the concepts of centralization, delegation, and

synergy (Bass, 1990a). In each system, leaders communicated their ideas and perspectives to the followers.

From around 500 B.C., Plato advocated that leaders were born with special traits, and no consideration was given to developing leadership skills (Wren, 2005). This belief continued to be held by Machiavelli, Galton, and Weber and is still prevalent in some parts of the world as evidenced by royal families that pass on leadership roles from generation to generation (Chen & Chen, 2008; Wren, 2005). Communication has been used to transfer beliefs and practices through generations.

In order to have a clear picture of the reasons for the development of leadership perspectives, the culture of the time must be examined. During the 12th and 13th centuries the Crusaders challenged some of the traditional models of Christianity (Bass, 1990a). As new markets and towns emerged, money was more freely used and political order surfaced, increasing the need for more people to become involved in organizations (Wren, 2005). More participation in formal organizations precipitated the need for more leaders and more convincing ways to explain leadership. Communication by leaders became increasingly important.

The challenge of explaining leadership was accepted by Martin Luther (1483 to 1546) and promoted by Max Weber (1864 to 1920) who argued that every person's occupation was a calling approved by God (DeMaris, 2008; Jarbawi & Pearlman, 2007; Wren, 2005). McClelland concluded that individualistic religions, such as Protestantism, were associated with a high need for achievement and therefore produced more leaders, while authoritarian religions such as Catholicism were the opposite (Wren, 2005). The

findings of these researchers are still used by transformational leaders who seek to communicate and instill values about achievement in their followers.

Trait- competency theory. The traits theory is possibly the first recorded theory of leadership. Many theorists have suggested that the trait theory is an expansion of the great man theory but none of the theorists has been effective in identifying the characteristics of successful leaders (Gehrig, 2007; Stogdill, 1974). Later theorists such as Adler and Rodman, Mullins, Daft, and Marcic, and Bryce and Jex recognized that none of the theories was able to identify leaders from non-leaders using the traits or characteristics of successful leaders (Gehrig, 2007; Stogdill, 1974). No distinct style of communication was used by all leaders.

Henri Fayol (2000) believed that leaders needed specific competencies, education, and experience to be successful and that certain mental and moral qualities, or competencies, could predict which leaders would be successful. Heiji, Na, and Dan (2007) argued that the skills or competencies of cleverness, intelligence, creativeness, diplomacy, and tact were important. Communication, organization, persuasion, and social acumen as identified by Stodgill in 1974 were useful but did not make anyone a good leader (Heiji et al., 2007). Charisma, although the most frequently mentioned in studies, also did not guarantee effective leadership (Heiji et al., 2007).

Situational- contingency theory. As a response to the identified shortcomings of the trait/competency theory, situational/ contingency theorists suggested that leadership was the direct result of the interaction of activities at the situation level. According to Arvidsson, Johansson, Ek, and Akselsson (2007), situation or contingency leadership is designed to accommodate the qualities of the leaders, idiosyncrasies of subordinates, and

circumstances of the situation. Opinions about adaptive behavior are regarded as the cornerstones of the contingency theories, while the concept of responding to situations was the main force behind the situational theories of leadership (Arvidsson et al., 2007; McLaurin, 2006b). The communication style of the leader may affect the situation.

Contingency models were encouraged as a result of the eagerness by leaders to improve organizational performance. Situation-contingency theories are represented by Fiedler's model (Cummins, 1990), House's path-goal theory (Fukushige & Spicer, 2007), and Hersey-Blanchard's theory and Vroom and Yetton's leader-participation model (McLaurin, 2006b). Contingency theorists Tannenbaum and Schmidt suggested that the behavior of leaders transforms according to the situation and that as leaders become less autocratic, the participation and involvement of subordinates increases (McLaurin, 2006b). The way messages are communicated affect performance. Other theorists such as Hersey and Blanchard believed that leadership communication is influenced by the situation rather than the leaders controlling the situation (McLaurin, 2006b).

Behavioral theory. The behavior approach sought a different explanation for leadership effectiveness by seeking to discover the behavior and communication patterns that were constant among successful leaders (Ralph, 2005). Bass (1990b), in citing the work of Davis and Luthan, pointed out that the behavior of the leader was instrumental in determining the actions of subordinates. As the welfare of the workers became more important to organizational leaders, the ability to understand and communicate information about the dimensions of the behaviors of followers became an essential skill.

Leaders found that they were required to diagnose situations and to determine whether the behavior of the follower was caused by personal or situational factors

(Daniels, 2007). Employees believed that leaders affect their performance whether this is reality or fiction, and blame the leader for poor performance (Caruth & Humphrey, 2008). Schneider (1999) noted that the leader's communication and the situation have an effect on the behavior of persons in the organization.

   Transactional leadership. From biblical times several examples have been presented of leaders who were exceptionally successful at changing the values and behaviors of their followers. Leaders with this skill often accomplished success through their words and actions. Transactional leadership, referred to as managerial or instrumental, is regarded as a more traditional model of leadership and is described as having its origins in leaders who focused on the organization or business and its bottom line (McLaurin, 2006b). Some theorists assert that transactional elements are not a genuine form of leadership at all (Korkmaz, 2007; McLaurin, 2006b). Transactional leaders may influence their followers through the communication style used.

   Bass and Avolio (1993) identified transactional leadership as having an essential focus on explicit and implicit contractual relationships. Nwokah (2008) agreed with Bass' initial version of his theory and identified two types of transactional leadership: contingent reward and management-by-exception. Machiavelli promoted the idea that leaders were justified in pursuing any leadership style that suited the occasion and suggested that leaders could use both force and deceit if necessary (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Transactional leadership may have its most significant influence through the power and authority communicated by the leader to the followers.

Transformational leadership. The concept of transformational leadership was initially espoused by Burns (1978) and was developed by several scholars, particularly by Bass during the 1990s (Bass, 1990b). Burns identified the transformational leader as one who is a visionary and elicits the good in people by helping them to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the team or entire entity. This makes transformational leadership an agent of change. Communication plays a significant role in facilitating change. Ruddell (2008) evaluated transformational leadership as being moral and based on values, charisma, and a real concern for others in the organization.

Walumbwa, Avolio, and Zhu (2008) explained that charisma or idealized influence, motivation, and intellectual stimulation were important elements of transformational leadership that worked to bring groups together to commit to the vision of the leader. Transformational leadership theory evolved quickly during the late 1970s and 1980s because organizations changed significantly during this period. Rapid change increased the importance of transformation and required a new culture of enterprise instead of stability (Trottier, Van Wart, & Wang, 2008). Transactional leaders need an appropriate style of communicating to shape the culture and influence followers in the organization.

Many varying descriptions of transformational leadership have evolved. Jayakody (2008) portrayed vision and empowerment as critical factors, and Choi (2006) addressed the fact that groups were motivated by the charisma and vision of the leader. Bass (1990b) pointed out that transformational leaders gained prominence during times of crisis, change, and organizational growth.

Transformational leadership demonstrates the ability to help people find more

meaning and become more motivated in their daily work routines. Bass (1990b), Konorti (2008), and Van Vugt (2006) emphasized that transformational leaders often try to change the culture in the organization in order to complete the goals and mission of the organization. The communication style of the transformational leader can influence the culture of the organization.

Servant-stewardship leadership. The concept of servant leadership arose from Greenleaf's essay, and has been adopted by several scholars and practitioners (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006). Servant leaders are regarded to be ultimately wise, while their methods of operating and their service orientations seem to be instruments for summoning and integrating applied knowledge (Konorti, 2008). Servant leaders rely on informed experience to make the best, unselfish choices (Kumuyi, 2007).

Much of the literature has been concentrated on constructs that are similar to altruism (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005; Sapolsky, 2008), self-sacrifice (Singh & Krishna, 2008), and charisma (Bromley & Kirschner-Bromley, 2007; Goldman, 2008; Weber, 1947). Other features mentioned were authenticity (Buchanan, 2007), and spirituality (Fry & Cohen, 2009). Less focus has been paid to the constructs of transformation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993) and leader-member exchange (Burton, Sablynski, & Sekiguchi, 2008; Landry & Vandenberghe, 2009). Servant leaders need communication to serve their followers.

Other scholars have examined various aspects of servant leadership. Fry and Cohen (2009) investigated the biblical roots of servant leadership, exploring the religious and spiritual aspects. Others have identified parallels with biblical figures (Hawkinson, 1994; Snodgrass, 1993).

Washington, Sutton, and Field (2006) developed a hierarchical model of servant leadership, presenting it as a cyclical process that is an integration of behavioral and relational elements. Stupak and Stupak (2006), in making a contribution to servant leadership, differentiated it from three prominent leadership approaches: traits, behavioral, and contingency. Servant leadership influences the culture of the organization and the way employees engage the firm.

Dispersed leadership. Dispersed leadership, referred to as emergent or informal, is a new school of thought that grew out of the belief that no one person is perfect for all situations and that the role of the leader should not be tied to the hierarchical structure of the organization. The theory proposes that persons, regardless of their levels and functions in the organization, can exercise leadership influence over their colleagues and on the total leadership of the organization (Buchanan, Caldwell, Meyer, & Wainwright, 2007; Politis, 2005).

Politis (2005) distinguished between the operation of *leadership* and that of *authority*. Leadership is separate from formal organizational power roles. Currie and Lockett (2007) discussed improving organizations through collaborative, collective, and lenient leadership. The origins of this approach may be traced to the doctrines of sociology and politics rather than to the more traditional management literature.

Hesselbein (2005) argued that everyone in the organization is a person, and that dispersed leadership encourages people to depend on themselves as leaders rather than on an individual who has been appointed as the leader. Hesselbein explained that the view of dispersed leadership is a reflection of the current practices in modern organizations and that the behavior starts with a common commitment to the purpose and mission of

the organization. Dispersed leadership creates its own culture and style of communication.

Full-range leadership. One relatively recent model of leadership that examined leadership from varying perspectives is the full-range leadership model developed by Bass and Avolio (1993). The aim of the model is to differentiate between transformational and transactional leadership and also examine laissez-faire or non-leadership. Transactional leaders are identified as those who set goals and performance targets, provide feedback, and then barter in exchange for performance. Transformational leaders are considered to be persons who inspire, motivate, encourage, and treat their followers with consideration to help them reach full potential and consequently high levels of performance. Leaders who use the full-range model incorporate all the perspectives according to the situation and rely on communication skills to influence their followers and the culture of the organization.

Summary of leadership perspectives. Throughout the history of leadership study, several theories have evolved. The theorists have examined factors including heredity, traits, behavior, and the situation in which leadership is exercised. Researchers have considered psychological aspects, humanistic perspectives, and exchange models to identify core elements that can be objectively and reliably measured to describe and explain leadership.

Rodine (2008), in studying the effects of top-level leaders in organizations, discovered that there appeared to be differences in organizational outcomes based on leadership style and organizational culture. According to the leader's style and the group culture, there were differences in performance in times of upheaval but not during times

of certainty (Rodine, 2008). Bakotie (2008) argued that specific characteristics of leadership style guided the performance of the organization.

Varying perspectives on leadership have addressed the influence on the culture of the organization. No distinct style of leadership was common. Communication is the common method used to transfer the influence of the leaders and to create the culture. Communication style is an integral component of leadership and influences the culture and the way employees are involved with the organization.

Leadership Communication

One important skill that defines a good leader is communication. Leaders must be able to communicate effectively to convey accurately ideas and thoughts to others in the organization. Organizational leaders are required to motivate persons in the organization to prevent stagnation.

Leaders in modern organizations must encourage employees to work together as a team and must themselves become a part of the team. Communication may be described as the connection made between self and others. Connectivity at all levels of the organization is ensured through communication and includes social, political, spiritual, and functional factors.

Maslow (as cited in Welch & Jackson, 2007) in his needs theory placed belonging in the middle of the motivators and suggested that a sense of belonging is very important to people. Belonging is a social need and may exist at the corporate and group levels in organizations. The social identity theorists (Bell & Hughes-Jones, 2008; Gelardini, 2009) emphasized that people categorize themselves and identify with specific groups to increase their self-esteem. Leadership communication affects how closely employees

identify with the organization and the attitude they will adopt in supporting the organization (Welch & Jackson, 2007). When persons see themselves as team players, they gain a sense of belonging and a positive social identity.

Leaders of modern organizations feel compelled to encourage and practice participative decision making, resulting in a reduced requirement for top-down communication and an increase of communication from all levels (Alkadry, 2007). The resulting responsive organization, together with the emphasis on customer satisfaction, has produced the type of leadership communication that encourages feedback from both internal and external customers (Alkadry, 2007). Leadership communication plays a pivotal role in the relationship of organizational members and in the culture of the company.

Perspectives on Communication Theory

Coombs (2007) argued that modern communication theory is undergoing a revolution and breaking away from the traditional Euro-centric focus to embrace new perspectives. Scholars such as Chen and Chen (2008) and Petrilli (2008) are demanding that communication research take a multi-cultural emphasis and examine phenomena outside of the western societies. Globalization and localization have both mandated that future communication theory should be aware of cultural differences and reflect this in the models developed. Communication affects culture and is influenced by culture.

Personal influence and the two-step flow model of communication were developed by Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld during the pioneering years when mass communication was being identified with specific organizations (Alhassan, 2007). The model identified the four variables of exposure, differential character of media, content,

and interpersonal factors as providing a method for persons to communicate. The model suggested that the opinions of organizational members can be key in communication (Alhassan, 2007).

Accommodation theorists explained that during verbal exchanges, the participants adjust their styles of speaking to generate the social approval of the other parties in the conversation (Petrilli, 2008). This mutual accommodation results in an increased efficiency between all persons while their social identities continue to be positive. Both verbal and nonverbal messages are included in the exchanges. Convergence of communication style, according to this theory, is a benefit because people prefer others whose communication style is similar to theirs and that congruence in behavior increased as communication was assessed to be more positive (Alhassan, 2007). The culture and the way employees engage the organization can be influenced by the style of communication used by the leader.

Sensemaking theory has been used to explain several phenomena, including the socialization of members, in organizations. Sensemaking involves examination of the constant interaction between members in the organization and the context of the interactions (Cavanagh, 2005). According to this theory, what any one person in the organization communicates is contingent upon the communication of others in the organization. Messages that persons remember have more influence on the socialization in the organization. Remembering messages allows leaders to structure and communicate their messages to make them memorable and influential in their organizations.

Janis' groupthink described a situation where group members seek to be unanimous in their actions and decisions rather than actively identify realistic alternatives

(Sai On Ko, 2005). Groupthink creates a barrier to communication when group members, in order to reach a consensus and minimize conflict, ignore analysis or evaluation and arrive at a false agreement or conclusion. Sai On Ko argued that groupthink is an obstacle in cultural communication.

Golightly (2009) discussed the complexity of internal corporate communication and advised that there is the need for a systematic approach to match the complexity of the organization. The leader's communication style is determined by personality, self-awareness of personal traits, and preferences. The communication system and style used by the leader need to facilitate alignment of the messages and the methods of communication.

The complexity of the organization and knowledge of this complexity reveal useful communication channels that may be used to disseminate messages throughout the organization. Arvind (2009) suggested that leaders should communicate at all levels directly, using both formal and informal channels, multiple media and direct communication on a personal level. The leader's personality determined the preference of channel used and affected the style chosen.

Communication Style

The study of communication style emanated from studies of the effects of cultural elements on communication (Rowe, 2009). Communication style was initially regarded as a discrete attribute of communication mechanisms, not as a topic deserving of separate study. Bass (1990b) traced communication style as a significant and separate construct of leadership from around 1981 and made reference to studies by Klauss and Bass (1982).

Norton (1983) began measuring elements of style from 1975, starting with how ambiguity affected communication and how it was tolerated by listeners.

Communication style is defined as the way a person indicates through verbal or nonverbal channels, how the specific meaning of a message should be interpreted, refined or understood in a communication context (Webster, 2005). Webster suggested that communicators demonstrate two styles: the positive and the negative. The positive dimension relates to the degree to which the communication is associated with the listener and the negative dimension is the extent to which the communicator dominates the listener. Leaders who use the positive style practice behaviors that encourage and maintain a substantial and indisputable relationship with persons in the organization and communicate social warmth, while those who prefer the negative dimension tend to display behaviors that portray dominance to secure and retain control (Webster, 2005).

Hanke (2009) and Sohn, Ci, and Lee (2007) classified communication styles as (a) expressive or spirited, (b) cool or persevering, and (c) softhearted and bold. Some persons can adapt the style of communicating to accommodate the situation, while others display a dominant style and have difficulty in making the transition. The environment can also affect or determine the style of communication that is used by leaders but flexibility is central to communicating effectively in the workplace.

Leaders who are optimistic and enthusiastic are known to use the expressive or spirited style of communication. They speak rapidly and emotionally, using their entire body to assist in the communication process (Hanke, 2009). These leaders display a high degree of caring for persons and relationships and can often be impressive motivators. Optimistic leaders are motivated by change and actively seek out diverse activities, often

conceptualizing the bigger picture rather than the minute details (Hanke, 2009; Snavely & McNeill, 2008). The enthusiastic style may have a positive effect on the culture and level of employee engagement in the organization.

Leaders who are reserved and determined are said to be using the systematic or technical style of communication and are described as phlegmatic (Chojenta, Byles, Loxton, & Mooney, 2007; Hanke, 2009). Persons with a systematic communication style pay attention to facts and the working details, approaching communication in a methodical manner in order to complete tasks. They focus more on the results than on the people or their feelings, sometimes ignoring the holistic picture at the expense of the minute details (Hanke, 2009; Snavely & McNeill, 2008). While technical leaders prefer to concentrate on facts, they do not readily embrace change and often need to be convinced of the need for change. Employee engagement and culture may be affected by the phlegmatic communicator.

The sympathetic or considerate communication style is used by persons who enjoy performing tasks for others and place much emphasis on relationships (Hanke, 2009; Walters & Norton, 2008). Active listening is the main strength of considerate leaders so they canvass everyone before taking action in order to avoid conflict and discomfort for persons. Sympathetic leaders carefully ponder before implementing change because the reactions of persons in the organization are crucial to them and they prefer to maintain the status quo. Leaders who use the considerate style of communicating may be less likely to create significant cultural changes.

Some organizational leaders display an audacious, ingenious, and straightforward style of communication and are described as passionate or irascible (Jourdain, 2004).

The verbal communication of straightforward leaders is economical but their activities are diverse and simultaneous (Chojenta et al., 2007). Audacious leaders concentrate on activities and results at the expense of the needs of people and, because they are so powerful and energetic, can intimidate others. Forcefulness prevents others from challenging the choleric leader who excels in an environment or culture of constant change.

Martin, Rich, and Gayle (2004), in referring to Fairhurst's 1993 classification, highlighted twelve patterns of communication and classified them into three styles: aligning, accommodating, and polarizing. The aligning style of communication was used by leaders who display irregular problem-solving, or supporting relationships with subordinates and behaviors that support the values and culture (Martin et al., 2004). The accommodating style of communication is displayed by leaders who respond to negotiated roles, disagree politely with their subordinates, and adjust their patterns of communication according to their interactions (Martin et al., 2004). Polarizing communication is used by leaders who have poor interpersonal relations with others in the organization. Polarizing leaders exert their authority by employing power games, rival conflicts, and intimidating activities (Martin et al., 2004).

Organizational leaders' style of communication was an amalgamation of both verbal and paraverbal cues to convey accurately the meaning of their messages. Martin et al. (2004) referred to Norton's 1978 classification and identified ten different styles of communication that are employed as part of an effective communication arsenal. Communication styles that assist in the interpretation of messages are as follows: (a) impression leaving, (b) contentious, (c) precise, (d) dominant, (e) dramatic, (f) attentive,

(g) animated, (h) relaxed, (i) open, and (j) friendly (Downs et al., 1988; Martin et al., 2004).

The additional independent variable of communication image allows communication to be evaluated according to the leader's ability to interact with different people. Martin et al. (2004) agreed that, regardless of the style used by the leader, the communication is evaluated to be effective if the style is similar to that of the subordinates. Alignment may influence the culture and the level of employee engagement in the organization.

The style of communication used by the leader may either reinforce the content of the message or alter it. Some persons do not tolerate ambiguity very well and become frustrated when they have to decipher the style of communication to extract the meaning of the message (Beasley, 2005). Communication style is viewed as an integral part of personality so when the communication style changes, the entire person changes. By applying personal style constructs to the communication of others, miscommunication and misunderstanding may occur. The style of communication used by the leader may affect various communication activities and determine how readily the organization's culture is affected.

Beasley (2005) examined communication style from a gender perspective and suggested that men tend to employ a hierarchical, objective-driven style while women appear to concentrate more on process and collaboration in making decisions. Beasley argued that in modern organizations, leaders are expected to communicate in an energetic and commanding manner when making decisions while women with the identical style of communicating are classified as too aggressive and difficult to work with. Beasley

advised that leaders must recognize the appropriate communication style to use in different situations according to the persons involved in the interaction. Communication by the leaders must take place at all levels of the organization if it is to be effective (Garnett, Marlowe, & Pandey, 2008).

Communication Content

Leaders communicate to influence or change the actions and behaviors of others and communication content explains the methods used to influence to achieve these goals (Sinickas, 2006/2007). Communication content does not address the specific message that is being sent but refers instead to the candor of the communication that the leader uses to affect the actions of the receivers of the message (Sinickas, 2006/2007). Leaders have the option of using direct communication, through forceful instructions or indirect communication by sharing information and involvement in making decisions (Arvind, 2009). Communication content is a direct result of the style of communication used by the leader.

Arlestig (2007) pointed out that leaders are important agents in creating the culture of the organization, making decisions, and facilitating change. To achieve the goals of the firm, leaders must communicate to share their vision and ensure the sustainability of the organization (Arlestig, 2007). Leaders must, at the same time, pilot the organization through the necessary changes.

The communication processes and the message content chosen by leaders influence the style used and determine how critical concepts, objectives, and plans become familiar to persons within the organization. Nwokah (2008) described the leader of the organization as the one person whose specific responsibility is to determine the

style of the organization. This argument concluded that the leader is responsible for creating the culture of the organization by establishing the content and style of the messages sent in the group.

The act of leading is a deliberate process through which the leader attempts to influence followers in a particular context (Arlestig, 2007). Conversely, the decisions and activities of the leader are also affected by the followers and the situation of the interaction. Communications from leaders are used to facilitate four processes in organizations.

Karadag and Caliskan (2009) identified the four types of communication processes as (a) structural (to relay facts and information), (b) human resource (concentrating on expressing feelings and individual needs), (c) political (exerting influence or dominance or manipulating), and (d) symbolic (to relate anecdotal information). Regardless of the process being facilitated by the communication of the leader, sensitivity to the needs of the followers must be respected to articulate the message of the organization. The followers will be collectively motivated to react in the desired way (Fry & Cohen, 2009).

In bureaucratic organizations the content of messages is often focused on disseminating information and maintaining rules. Bureaucratic organizations employ the simplest and most traditional, normative approach to communication (Arlestig, 2007). In this type of organization the ability of the leaders to construct messages and the ability of the persons in the organization to receive and understand the meaning are central to effective communication (Arlestig, 2007). Leaders in this model have more power and a

more stable environment and may exert greater influence on the culture and engagement of employees.

The communication content and style of successful leaders must reflect the situation and must be cognizant of both the immediate and delayed effects of the message (Clampitt, 2005). Within organizations, the communication of the leader has a broader function than merely transmitting information. The communication must be interpreted to manage organizational functions, it must be understood, and it must encourage the commitment to the goals of the organization (Vaaland & Heide, 2008).

Communication is a two-way process and this makes the content and style of the messages from leaders critical. For example, many modern organizations include Generation X members, persons born between 1965 and 1976. Generation X members defy limits, falseness, and efforts to group or define them (Gibson, 2009). The significant sense of individuality, college education, and self-acceptance increase the influence of Generation X members in the workplace (Gibson, 2009).

Generation X individuals have been exposed to television more than older persons and having developed shorter attention spans, they prefer brevity in their communications. Their parents were lenient, and Generation Xers are averse to authority (Gibson, 2009). The specific characteristics demand that leaders must communicate differently with Generation Xers to ensure their understanding of messages. The communication style of the leader may need to be adjusted to engage Generation Xers.

Communication Media

Transfer of knowledge and information in organizations has been acknowledged to be increasingly important. The awareness of this importance has impacted on the

strategy of organizational leaders, and knowledge transfer has evolved into one of the central issues in organizations (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Knowledge is information that has been proven to be valid and that is not confused with opinion, belief, or speculation (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Transferring knowledge within organizations allows organizational members to learn from each other and, in the process, originate new knowledge. Knowledge transfer also provides the means through which leaders can influence the actions and beliefs of persons in the organization and alter the overall culture.

Leaders may transfer knowledge, especially new knowledge, to empower members to adapt more readily to changes in the culture and to make sound decisions in critical situations. The relationship between the leaders and others in the organization determines the style of communication used to transfer knowledge. Information is shared more readily if there are positive social relations and an organizational culture that promotes cohesion and knowledge diffusion (Ambrose, Lynch, Fynes, & Marshall, 2008; Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Knowledge transfer is promoted through habitual interaction, insistence on conformity, a high degree of trust, and a feeling of contentment with persons and other members of the organization (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Conversely, weak links encourage knowledge transfer through the sharing of information by persons in overlapping groups.

Each organizational leader has a preferred method for transferring knowledge. Mechanisms available to organizational leaders include movement of personnel, expatriation of managers, transfer of technology, patents and collaborative arrangements, such as joint ventures, between organizations (Ambrose et al., 2008; Murray & Peyrefitte,

2007). Information is also communicated informally between leaders and followers and through nonverbal behavior such as clothing, body language, and other symbols. Communication is a social interaction process that facilitates the organizational culture by sharing, amalgamating, and retaining knowledge through interaction with customers or other company events such as meetings (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007).

Leaders may improve their communication by matching the type of media chosen to the requirements of the organizational needs. For situations that require close interpersonal contact, rich media are preferable while less rich media are better suited for conditions that focus on regulations, procedures, and other impersonal activities (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Media richness theorists argued that messages should be transmitted via media that suit the richness of the situation, with equivocal messages requiring immediate feedback and unequivocal messages being better handled by lean media such as written documents (Ambrose et al., 2008; Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Leaders may need to adjust their communication style to accommodate the situation or the culture.

When communication media are used to share knowledge, technology may be used to assist the communication. Videoconferencing is a rich medium that may be used to facilitate face-to-face dialogue, while media low in richness include email, teleconferencing, and databanks (Murray & Peyrefitte, 2007). Ambrose et al. (2008) also included telephone communication but pointed out that it is lower in richness because it lacks face-to-face interaction. Leaders with different communication styles use various combinations of media to complement their style. The media used may be part of the overall style of the leader and may affect the culture and how employees engage the organization.

Kurtzberg, Belkin, and Naquin (2006) added that leaders and others in organizations maintain different attitudes about the various media that are used to communicate. Electronic, paper, and face-to-face delivery methods generate different reactions based on the perceptions of the sender and the receiver about what is considered appropriate for the particular message (Kurtzberg et al., 2006). Although email is now considered one of the primary ways to communicate in organizations, some persons perceive this method to be more informal and less satisfactory than the more traditional methods (Harvard, Du, & Xi, 2008). Leaders who include email in their communication style may have an impact on the culture and employee engagement in their organizations.

The Changing Nature of Leader Communication

Leaders in modern organizations are now required to manage crises as well as take advantage of opportunities. Organizations are faced with layoffs, and the economic well-being of companies is constantly being challenged. Customers are becoming more demanding and at the same time are being diverted by more attractive offers of competitors. Corporate leaders need to recognize the value of their communications in the overall operations of their organizations.

Superior leaders will need, through communication, to encourage individuals in their organizations to be enthusiastic about change. The traditional approach is in contrast to the constant. Leaders will be required at all levels in the organization and these leaders will in turn champion new leaders. All future leaders will be required to communicate the need for change.

The expected competence in communication will demand that leaders be trained. Companies will be forced to include career planning to ensure that leaders acquire the

skill as they move to more senior positions in the organization (Denning, 2008). Denning argued that the concept of story-telling is becoming necessary for leaders. Leaders of the future must be able to enhance their communication by telling stories that are genuine, positive, and simple and that will elicit desired change in the organization (Denning, 2008).

Research conducted by Rush and Goodman showed that poor communication by leaders had the most significant impact on the attitude of the workers (Landry & Vandenberghe, 2009). Karadag and Caliskan (2009) also researched the relationship between leadership and communication but this study was conducted using the terms leader and manager interchangeably. Much of the literature addresses the artifacts or symbols of change in culture as opposed to the leadership interaction that is essential to create and maintain a heavily ingrained culture that is practiced in organizations.

Lazidou (2008) theorized that leaders must prepare their organizations for change and opposition; to do this, they need effective communication. The communications must be adjusted according to the audience, customers, location, and several other factors. Tuunanen and Vainio (2005) suggested that when leaders communicate, anything that is not stated explicitly is covered tacitly, whether they intend to or not.

Persons in the organization will complete any blanks that remain in the leaders' communication. As a result, tacit communication becomes ingrained in the culture of the organization. Leaders must be aware that in cases where they are unable to provide information, persons will speculate and complete what is missing from the communication.

Summary of leader communication. Leaders whose communication faithfully aligned with the organization's core values and whose values were shared by members of the organization find that their communication was directly linked to the organization's culture. Deficiencies in communication are often responsible for misrepresentation and misinterpretation. The style of communication used by the leader is determined by personality and affects the reactions of others to the message. The content of messages from leaders, along with the media chosen, is also an important element in determining the culture of the organization. Message content and media individually and collectively affect the leader's communication style and become ingrained in the way things are done in the organization.

Various leaders use different models of communication. The style of communication used by the leader produces different organizational outcomes. Modern theories are embracing new perspectives and globalization is changing the direction of communication theory.

Communication style determines how the leader relates messages and how the culture is affected. Classifications of communication style include expressiveness, optimism, and sympathy. Each style has a distinct impact on the culture and level of employee engagement in the organization.

Organizational Culture

Culture has been defined in several ways and each interpretation may be applied to different situations. The Latin root of the word refers to tilling the soil, while the modern, western usage includes acting in a civilized manner (Barger, 2007). The term is defined by sociologists and anthropologists as relating to patterns in thinking, feeling, and

reacting by distinctive groups of people and is expressed through values and tradition (Barger, 2007). Hofstede as cited in Barger expanded this definition to include social as opposed to genetic learning and referred to culture as the software that makes the mind work as a result of the programming by the collective members of the same group. This collective reality is the factor that identifies and separates members of different groups.

Authors of Webster's *New Collegiate* dictionary (Barger, 2007), as well as Li and Harrison (2008) referred to patterns of human behavior that are integrated and include patterns of thought, action, speech and artifacts that are employed to pass on learning from one generation to another. The authors of *American Heritage* dictionary defined culture as the entire amalgamation of behavior, art, institutions, beliefs, and artifacts that are socially transmitted in a society or population (Barger, 2007). E. H. Schein (1997, 1999) added to this definition, that the demonstrations and manifestations of culture must be believed to be valid in order to be taught to ensuing generations as the correct way to act, think, and believe (Barger, 2007).

The idea of a culture for organizations was derived from anthropology for organizational management research (Chang & Lin, 2007). Chang and Lin explained that organizational culture resulted from negotiations about interpretations and meanings between different persons in the organization. Organizational culture, viewed as the connection between management and behavior in the organization, is usually central to the way employees think and react when performing their functions in organizations. Chang and Lin argued that the culture of the organization may be the one factor that determines the success or failure of the organization.

Culture is often seen as something an organization has, and as something that may be shaped. Other theorists believed that culture and its elements are merely abstractions. Briggs (2007) proposed a model that amalgamates culture, organizational climate, and communication. This model gave legitimacy to the study of organizational culture as a separate field.

Culture, as examined from a communication perspective, may be identified with the systems way of thinking which emphasizes the use of metaphors to encourage the thinking about both organization and communication at the same time. The magnetic theory of communication, as proposed by Walton in 1969, argued that the organization is a communication network with a magnetic center that attracts messages to it (Pickering, 2009). Davis (1997) explained in the grapevine study how communication traveled throughout the organization in both formal and informal ways. Davis identified chains of communication, and described them as single, gossip, probability and cluster, and Davis argued that the flow of information was determined by the pattern used.

When a decision is made to change the values, goals, path or objectives, the organization is initiating a cultural change that has implications for the morale and loyalty of employees (Coomer, 2007). The culture of the organization is tied to the rituals, fairy tales, stories, ceremonies, and myths that have been passed from one person to the other (Barger, 2007). Persons in the organization often have differing values but these values are minimized through the human resources functions of performance appraisal and selection, resulting in a position where the individual values reflect the values of the organization (Barger, 2007).

Each organization has its unique culture and additional sub-cultures in larger companies (Coomer, 2007). The existence of more than one culture in an organization is particularly evident in organizations where different cultures have been amalgamated as a result of a merger. While there is no one specific culture that may be classified as better than others, some cultures are more suited to certain contexts than others. Within one organization, varying styles of culture may conflict with the overriding organizational culture (Coomer, 2007). Leaders are responsible for maintaining the culture.

Theories of Organizational Culture

Buble and Pavic (2007) proposed three levels of culture. According to the theory, national or regional culture is at the highest level, followed by organizational or corporate culture and professional culture is at the lowest level. Little and Little (2006) added that the social, historical, and individual aspects of culture came together to identify one society from any other.

Cultural synergy has been proposed as a method of encouraging persons to collaborate and cooperate in a culturally diverse organization (Barger, 2007). Cultural synergy introduces a systematic method to solving problems and involves describing and interpreting the culture, and being creative about the situation to manage the cultural diversity. Organizational culture is evident at the level of subunits involvement with the interactions such as communication between managers and employees. Behavior by the leader, on a daily basis, and involving the vision of the organization, is critical in the formation of the culture.

Buble and Pavic (2007) identified two types of organizational culture: dynamic and static. According to Buble and Pavic, organizations that encompass elements that are

entrepreneurial, developmental, and decentralized are also dynamic, flexible, and encourage change. Static cultures are bureaucratic and formal, maintaining the status quo by predictably following rules and discouraging change.

Saturation theory of organizational culture stated that individuals, especially leaders, act so that they may take control over their immediate environment and in so doing, go on to influence the entire world (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Pech & Slade, 2007). Saturation theory has been used to explain the behavior and motivation of persons who seem to have a pathological desire for power and try to satisfy this need through any weaknesses in the organization (Pech & Slade, 2007). Leaders who adopt this model have a strong effect on culture and employee engagement in the organization.

Memetics theory explained the behavior of persons as they transmit either implicit or explicit messages by mimicking behavior as it is displayed in the organization (Pech & Slade, 2007). Pech and Slade pointed out that memes are pieces of information that may be coded and reproduced in the minds of the persons in the organization. Memes may be used to understand the elements in an organization, especially when there are negative or undesirable aspects of the culture. Leaders who are adept at using memes can manipulate the culture and affect the engagement of employees.

Classification of Organizational Culture

Postmodernism theorists do not support the belief that human reason is superior, that man is rational, and they do not believe in intellectual progress (Da Silveira & Crubelatte, 2007). These theorists view persons as being products of the power relationships and the social settings that decisions are a part of the culture of the organization (Da Silveira & Crubelatte, 2007). The postmodern position has been

criticized by social scientists and studies in organizational administration as being unscientific and without foundation. Postmodernism theorists view organizational culture as shattered, with weak, occasional connections of individuals that constantly change according to circumstances (Da Silveira & Crubelatte, 2007). The classification of organizations according to postmodernism theories is therefore doubtful.

Organizational culture has been classified as bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive (Chow & Liu, 2007). A bureaucratic culture has been classified as one that is focused on hierarchy and divisions, with clear lines of authority. Organizations with a bureaucratic culture are focused on power, regulations, procedures, and the hierarchy and so are not attractive to persons who are creative and ambitious (Chow & Liu, 2007). A culture is classified as innovative when the work environment is creative, challenging, and risk-taking is encouraged. A supportive culture exists when relationships are built on trust, and the atmosphere is open, collaborative, and encouraging and people assist each other (Chow & Liu, 2007).

Chang and Lin (2007) explained four types of organizational culture as (a) group, (b) developmental, (c) hierarchical, and (d) rational. Chang and Lin also argued that leaders of organizations will probably display characteristics and values from all four classifications of culture. Chang and Lin classified organizational culture into (a) clan, (b) hierarchy, (c) adhocracy, and (d) market while Oney-Yazici, Giritli, Topcu-Oraz, and Acar (2007) used (a) mission, (b) consistency, (c) adaptability, and (d) involvement as the categories for identifying the culture of the organization.

E. H. Schein (1997) pointed out that five specific cultures were operating in global organizations: (a) professional or functional cultures, (b) subcultures within

organizations, (c) overall organizational cultures, (d) cultures within industries, and (e) country-specific cultures. Global organizations will be faced with cultures that are inherent to the country and encompass national and ethnic influences. Within a particular industry the culture is based on the shared assumptions derived from the technology and socialization within the field (Barger, 2007). The specific factors will come together to give the organization its distinct culture and within the organization itself subcultures will emerge, based on job groupings and history, while cultures will also be linked directly to professions and specific job functions (Barger, 2007).

The Connection Between Leader Communication and Organizational Culture

The relationship between culture and communication is not simple. The way the organization operates, the values, beliefs, and behaviors of leaders determine its communication. Conversely, all of the communication, formal and informal, verbal and nonverbal is used to send and receive messages to shape, determine, and maintain the culture of the organization. Culture is expressed in language, symbols, values, and stories, and it is important to understand the role of the leader in deciding how these aspects are communicated.

Organizational leaders need to pay special attention to communication. Lazidou (2008) argued that leadership is essential for creating the culture of the organization and for communicating the substance of the culture to the organizational members. Lazidou contended that the cultural norms change and evolve according to the focus and direction of the leader and the messages must be clearly articulated in order to model the behavior of the organization.

Leaders are regarded as agents of change for the organization and they must understand the culture and subcultures within the organization. Leaders must develop their cultural knowledge to modify behavior and influence culture in the desired direction (Schein, 1999). The literature reviewed contained the influence of leaders on the culture of the organization through communication.

The leader plays a symbolic role in the culture and must be resourceful in guiding the behavior of the organization and assisting in defining the reality for others (Flanagan & Runde, 2009). In performing these roles the leader creates the pictures and symbols that are inherent in the culture of the organization. Leadership consequently provides an understanding of culture in organizations.

Leaders are regarded as agents of change for the organization and they must understand the culture and subcultures within the organization. Leaders must develop their knowledge of the culture associated with the organizational hierarchy and the sources of influence. Leaders must use this knowledge to modify behavior and influence culture in the desired direction (Schein, 1999; Shaffer, 2008).

Theorists have argued for many years that a substantial link exists between organization culture and communication (Garnett et al., 2008). The tools that have been identified for cementing the culture of the organization are all dependent on communication. The tools include the importance placed by the leaders on attention, control, rewards, and status. The rites, rituals, stories, and legends about the organization are used by leader to develop the culture (Flanagan & Runde, 2009; Garnett et al., 2008; Shaffer, 2008).

Communication by the leaders of their values to the organization, and as reflected in the leaders' behaviors creates alignment (Covey, 1992). That alignment includes identifying goals that clearly demonstrate the values of the leader and those of the organization. Alignment also leads to the internalization of shared values by members of the organization, and the institutionalization of the pervading nature of those values throughout the organization's culture (McLaurin & Amri, 2008).

Alignment involves the members of the organization so that decisions made throughout the organization are based on shared, common values with the result that all activities contribute to the overall culture (Covey, 1992; O'Toole, 1996; Schein, 1999; Shaffer, 2008). Members of the organization, having accepted and internalized the shared values of the leaders and the organization, act in a manner consistent with those values. The meta-mechanisms of communication are the various verbal and nonverbal methods and channels used by leaders to create, reinforce or change the culture of the organization. The interpretation that the receivers of the message apply to the communication has the most significant influence on the culture of the organization (Garnett et al., 2008).

Pickering (2009) discovered that communication guided the influence of culture on the performance of the organization, especially in open organizational cultures. Garnett et al. (2008) concluded that internal communications were closely correlated with a culture of trust and openness. On the other hand, Griffin (2009) and Wieand, Birchfield, and Johnson (2008) found that where the culture was dominated by the leaders, communication problems included the withholding of information and increased

competitiveness among units. Hostility between older and younger persons, little cohesiveness, and difficulties with morale were also evident in the culture.

Garnett et al. (2008) identified a negative relationship between morale, trust, and the credibility of the leader and cultures that were hierarchical and rational. Kouzes and Posner (2002) explained that leaders cannot completely control the culture of the organization but they guide and help to shape it by being role models, and by directing the organization toward a culture that is compatible with their specific style of leadership. By employing specific communication styles, leaders may influence both the culture and level of employee engagement in their organizations.

Summary of organizational culture. According to Jung and Avolio (1999), the style of the leader has a direct effect on the culture of the organization. Several links may be found between the leadership and the culture of the organization, with many of the researchers clearly identifying the leader as a key factor in determining, maintaining or changing the culture of the organization. In order for leaders to be successful agents of change, they must communicate their values, beliefs, and desires to persons in the organization.

Communication is essential for leaders in affecting the culture of the organization. Since the culture of the organization is the shared patterns of behavior, these patterns must be taught to all members to influence their perception, thoughts, and behaviors. Communication is the most efficient way to teach these patterns to members of the organization. This establishes a possible link between leadership, employee engagement and culture, through communication.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is receiving considerable attention in management literature and has gained recognition because it has been demonstrated to have a statistical relationship with productivity, profit, safety, customer satisfaction, and retention in organizations (Little & Little, 2006). Other traditional organizational constructs such as job satisfaction have not revealed similar relationships. Current usage of the phrase employee engagement was coined by the scholars of Gallup Organization after extensive research interviewing and surveying employees and leaders (Little & Little, 2006). Employee engagement is not only about how employees think, but also about how they feel, so that engaged employees exert a significant impact on the economic performance of the organization (Fleming et al., 2005).

Employees may be classified as actively engaged, non-engaged or actively non-engaged. Actively engaged employees are involved, satisfied with, and enthusiastic about their work (Guthrie & Shayo, 2005). When employees are engaged with their organization, the employees display a sense of confidence, integrity, pride, and passion. Lucey, Bateman, and Hines (2005) referred to employee engagement as an elusive force that gives employees encouragement to perform at higher levels; an energy that is similar to (a) commitment, (b) job ownership, (c) pride, (d) passion, (e) excitement, and (f) loyalty.

Descriptions of employee behavior do not distinguish attitudes from behaviors. For example, Lucey et al. (2005) and Saks (2006) did not distinguish pride, passion, and excitement (attitudes) from performing at a higher level (behavior). The construct of employee engagement is not clear as it relates to the level of analysis covered. The link

of engagement to productivity, profit, retention of employees, and customer satisfaction is at the level of the company rather than at the individual level (Little & Little, 2006).

Saks (2006), in referring to Kahn's study, explained that three psychological conditions are associated with engagement or disengagement at work: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Employees became more engaged at work when the job situation provided them more psychological meaningfulness and safety, and when the workers were more psychologically available. In a study to test Kahn's model, researchers found that meaningfulness, safety, and availability were significantly related to engagement (Saks, 2006).

Social exchange theory may be used to explain employee engagement. The theorists argue that obligations are created through a set of interactions between parties who are in a state of reciprocal interdependence. A basic tenet of the social exchange theory is that relationships evolve over time and become trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments provided the parties abide by the rules of exchange (Reb, Goldman, Kray, & Cropanzano, 2006).

Rules of exchange often involve reciprocity or repayment rules to ensure that the actions of one party lead to a response or actions by the other party. When employees receive economic and other resources from their organization, they feel obligated to respond in kind and repay the organization (Reb et al., 2006). One way for individuals to repay their organization is through their level of engagement. The style of communication used by the leader may affect the level of engagement.

Communication, culture, and employee engagement.

Leaders of organizations who concentrate on effective communication do many activities different from the leaders of organizations who do not place much emphasis on communication (Trahant, 2008). Leaders of organizations who pay attention to communication deliberately design communication programs that engage the employees in playing an active role in running the company. Leaders of companies who encourage effective communication continuously work to improve the effectiveness of the communication of the leaders and the leaders of the companies measure the impact of communication on the critical business metrics (Trahant, 2008).

Leaders whose communications indicate that the opinions of employees are valued are nearly seven times more likely to ask employees to share suggestions on programs and changes and are twice as likely to encourage ideas on how to get the work done (Fleming et al., 2005; Trahant, 2008). Leaders who support involvement will develop more engaged employees. Leaders can encourage or create an informal and collegial work culture across the different levels in the organization and various generations of workers. According to Trahant, leaders of 83% of highly effective companies measure the impact of communication on employee engagement.

Large organizations invest money and time in creating a brand for their products and services and many are seeking to create an employee experience brand. Companies and leaders aim to recruit, engage, and retain employees and to assist employees in internalizing the values of the company. Branding the experience of the employees involves integrating the employee programs with the culture and strategies of the business and developing employee loyalty in the same way that customer loyalty is built

(Saks, 2006; Trahant, 2008). Leadership communication is critical in interpersonal relationships in the organization. Communication from leaders links the employees to the goals of the firm and includes style, language, and media (Lucey et al., 2005).

Summary of employee engagement.

The research on employee engagement demonstrates its relationship with outcomes that are important to every organization. A high level of employee engagement is linked to increased productivity, retention, and profits. Leaders who encourage the participation of employees create a culture that develops the engagement of employees. Communication from leaders is critical in ensuring that the goals, values, and strategies of the organization are known and practiced by employees. The way messages are communicated is important in how the employees view the message and can determine the way employees become engaged in the organization.

Conclusions

The literature review of leadership, communication, culture, and employee engagement revealed that there is a possible link between the communication of the leader, the dominant culture in the organization, and the level of employee engagement. The culture of the organization may be influenced through the communication of the leader, regardless of the leadership approach taken. Traits-competency theorists believed that the specific traits of the leader predetermined success in influencing the culture of the organization and the behavior of the followers. The shortcomings of the trait-competency theory were addressed by the situational-contingency theorists who suggested that leadership was a direct response to situations. Theorists of both the trait-

competency and situational-contingency models agree that communication was the link between the leaders and followers.

The behavioral approach to leadership required leaders to diagnose the behavior of the followers and determine what was the cause. Leaders could use communication to influence culture and the performance of the followers. Transactional theorists are focused on implicit and explicit contractual arrangements between the leader and followers and acknowledge that leaders influence followers and the culture through power and authority.

Transformational theorists focused on the vision of the leader and the ability to motivate others and change the culture. Servant-steward leadership theorists focused on the ability of the leader to make unselfish choices and influence the culture through behavior and relations. The culture and level of employee engagement could be altered through dispersed leadership because persons, regardless of their hierarchical level, can exercise leadership influence.

Leaders communicate in various ways to influence how closely employees identify with the organization. Communication theory has embraced the concept that cultural differences influence communication. Leaders adjust their style during verbal exchanges to influence the social approval of the audience.

Mutual accommodation allows the leader to exert some influence on the culture and employees. Communication styles may exert positive or negative influences on the culture and employees. Leaders may use an expressive or reserved style and may be sympathetic, straightforward or polarizing in the way they communicate in the organization.

The leader and the group share a common vision for the organization and this is established and passed on through communication (Kerfoot, 2007). The literature revealed that the relationship between culture, communication, and employee engagement is complex. The way the organization operates, the values, beliefs, and behaviors of the members of the organization are influenced by its communication (Lazidou, 2008).

The literature demonstrated a possible link between leader communication and culture, but minimal information on the degree to which this communication influences the culture and level of employee engagement of the organization was found. The past researchers have focused on the role that communication plays in maintaining the culture of the organization (Garnett et al., 2008; Lazidou, 2008). A gap exists in the literature on the degree of influence that the communication of the leaders has on the culture and level of employee engagement of the organization.

Summary

The review of the literature on leadership, communication, employee engagement, and culture revealed support for a relationship between culture, employee engagement, and leadership communication. Chapter 2 included a background of the areas of leadership, communication, employee engagement and culture, including generally accepted frameworks and implications for conducting future research. Regardless of the leadership model in the organization, the style used by the leader to communicate affected the culture and the way employees engage the firm.

This study was an attempt to narrow a gap in the existing literature, and to add to the number of studies devoted to understanding the relationship between organizational

culture, leadership communication, and employee engagement. Communication by the leaders of their values to the organization, and as reflected in the leaders' behavior and style of communication creates alignment (Covey, 1992). Chapter 2 contained a historical review of the germinal works and evolving literature in leadership communication, culture, and employee engagement. The aim of chapter 3 will be to provide a detailed discussion of the research design. The quantitative correlational design includes six hypotheses that were formed from the three research questions.

Chapter 3: Method

The purpose of this quantitative correlation research study was to investigate the degree to which the communication style of leaders influences the culture and level of employee engagement of organizations. The aim of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures that were used in the study. The following elements are explained in detail: the research design, instruments used in the study, the appropriateness of the method selected, population, sampling, and data collection procedures. Detailed primary data on the communication style of leaders of private, public, and nonprofit organizations located in Barbados were compared with each organization's culture and level of employee engagement.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

The study was conducted utilizing a quantitative correlation method. A feature of quantitative research is that it is used to explain and describe, while qualitative methods are used to investigate for understanding (Creswell, 2002). Quantitative research is done using a predetermined instrument whereas qualitative research has emerging protocol (Sekeran, 2003).

Quantitative studies employ descriptive, experimental or causal-comparative designs (Creswell, 2002). Descriptive studies are undertaken to describe the characteristics of the variables being studied in order to understand their relevant aspects from the perspective of the organization (Sekeran, 2003). Quantitative, descriptive research is more formulaic and definite, possibly reducing researcher bias, while qualitative research may be more adjustable and biased (Creswell, 2002).

Qualitative research is an inquiry approach that is useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative research involves the use of methods of systematic inquiry that aid in the understanding of humans and the nature of their transactions with themselves and with their surroundings (Polit & Beck, 2009). Qualitative methods are appropriate when the purpose of the research is to explain and describe, explore and interpret, or build a theory (Creswell, 2002).

Quantitative research entails the testing of hypotheses that begin with concepts presented as distinct variables which evolve into measures that are systematically created before the data are collected (Neuman, 2006). Data presented in the form of numbers allow for precise measurement. Theory is predominantly causal and deductive, the procedures for collection are standard, and these factors allow replication (Neuman, 2006). Analysis of the data is accommodated by using statistics, tables or charts and discussion embraces how these relationships adhere to the hypotheses (Neuman, 2006).

Quantitative researchers apply a technical perspective, utilize logic, and follow a linear research approach (Hopper, 2008). Quantitative researchers refer to hypotheses and variables and accentuate the precise nature of these variables and test hypotheses that provide a link to general causal explanations (Campo & Lichtman, 2008). In using a quantitative approach, the literature is a significant aspect of the research that assists in justifying the problem and providing a need for the direction (Creswell, 2002). In qualitative research, the literature plays a minor role in justifying the problem. The aim of this study was to provide an extensive literature review in order to establish direction and identify the necessity for the research purpose.

If the purpose of the research is to establish that the relationship is definitively cause-and-effect, then a causal study is required. The purpose of this study was to identify the degree to which the communication style of a leader influences the culture and the level of employee engagement in the organization, so that if the communication style is changed, a change also occurs in the organizational culture and the level of employee engagement. Since multiple factors influence both the communication and the culture in organizations, the limited aim of the research was to focus on the independent variable communication style and its degree of influence on the culture and employee engagement in the organization (Sekeran, 2003). These variables are suitable measures for a quantitative, descriptive, correlation design.

The research was conducted utilizing a quantitative method instead of a qualitative approach because hypothesis testing research was used to examine the nature of the relationship among variables to predict organizational outcomes (Creswell, 2002). The study was conducted using a descriptive, correlation approach. Several instruments have been identified to measure communication in organizations.

No instrument was identified as satisfactory to measure the leadership communication style, culture, and employee engagement for this study. The Norton Communication Style Measure (CSM) is the most widely used in the field of leader communication. The Richmond and McCroskey Management Communication Style Scale (MCS) (McCroskey & Richmond, 1995) and the Klauss and Bass Focal Person's Communications Survey/ Colleagues Communication Survey were designed to examine communication in organizations (Downs et al., 1988). The Duran and Wheeless Communicative Adaptability Scale: Self-Reference Measure focuses on the relationship

between leader communication style and leader competence (Downs et al., 1988). Mok's Communication Styles Survey was based on the psychology of Carl Jung and the transactional analysis of Eric Berne (Downs et al., 1988).

The Norton's Communication Style Measure (CSM) is a general, broad, holistic instrument. In Norton's instrument the dependent variable is communicator image while in this study the dependent variables are organizational culture and employee engagement. The CMS has been applied successfully to different contexts such as teacher effectiveness and the relationship between superior and subordinate self-perceptions of communication style (Downs et al., 1988).

Richmond and McCroskey's Management Communication Style Scale (MCS) (McCroskey & Richmond, 1995) measures employee satisfaction on a continuum, ranging from *boss centered to subordinate centered*. The MCS Scale has been used by several researchers but its validity for different populations has not been fully established (Downs et al., 1988). The MCS specifically addresses issues in an organizational environment and it has only three questions in which respondents classify themselves in one of four categories. The published research that uses the MCS is limited.

The Communicative Adaptability Scale Self-Reference (CAS-SR) by Duran was designed to focus on the social constructs of (a) empathy, (b) adaptability, (c) social experience, and (d) rewarding impression (Downs et al., 1988). Each item is scored using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 5 denoting that the statement is always true, to 1 that signifies that the statement is never true. The survey may be completed in 25 minutes. Each item is a statement of the communication behavior of the individual

who indicates the way the style is demonstrated in most social situations. The CAS-SR instrument was not suitable for use in this study.

Mok's Communication Styles Survey was created on a foundation of Jungian psychology and Eric Berne's transactional analysis (Downs et al., 1988). Mok's instrument provides 18 hypothetical personal statements for self-evaluation and four options to describe four communication styles (Nadel, 2008). The instrument has been used to evaluate how the four communication styles supplement each other. The Communication Styles Survey was not suitable for this study.

Klauss and Bass' Focal Person's Communications survey and Colleague Communication Questionnaire (FPC/CCS) is used to evaluate how communication style and perception affect the credibility of the speaker (Downs et al., 1988). The instrument grouped communication style into five dimensions that describe specific behaviors. The survey instrument relied on an evaluation of the speaker's credibility by both the speaker and the audience. The Focal Person's Communication Survey/ Colleague Questionnaire did not readily adapt to hypothetical evaluation of communication style traits by third parties. The instrument was not suitable for this study.

A survey, the Organizational Culture Diagnose instrument by Harrison and Stokes identified the following elements or organizational culture: (a) sources of authority and influence, (b) the basis of assignment of work, (c) managerial expectations, (d) employee expectations, (e) collaboration between sections of the organization, and (f) responses to occurrences in the external environment (Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007). Other elements to be included in the survey include (a) interpersonal relations, (b) work motivation, (c) decision-making factors, (d) conflict-resolution, and (e) survival skills.

The 1992 survey instrument by Harrison and Stokes has specific advantages as an interpretive tool. One of the benefits is its brevity. The instructions in the instrument are easily understood and the wording is unambiguous (Fleenor & Braddy, 2009).

The survey, developed in 1972, revised in the 1980s, and updated in 1992, is a generally recognized instrument for recognizing perceptions of organizational culture (Fleenor & Braddy, 2009). The alternative to the instrument devised by Harrison and Stokes in 1992 is that developed by Handy in 1996, and is an adaptation of the survey by Harrison and Stokes (Fleenor & Braddy, 2009). The Handy instrument concentrated on the commonality between the choice of individuals in terms of organizational culture and the perception of the current organizational culture (Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007).

None of the instruments described is used to examine the relationship between the communication style of the leader, the culture in the organization, and the level of engagement of the employees. A new instrument was developed to test the strength of the relationship between leadership communication style, culture, and employee engagement (Appendix A). A pilot test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to test its reliability before it was applied to the research.

The research design for this quantitative research was descriptive, correlational. The purpose of this research was to examine if there is a relationship between the leadership communication style, the culture, and level of employee engagement of 103 selected organizational members in private, public, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados. All participants were fluent in English, the only language that is used on the island. The independent variable was communication style of leaders and the dependent variables were the organizational culture and employee engagement.

According to Sekeran (2003), correlational designs are used for predicting and are conducted in the natural environment of the organization, with as little interference as possible from the researcher. Correlational designs are considered to be most expedient when the predictor variables are visualized in their natural surroundings (Creswell, 2002). Correlational designs are also best suited when combinations of the independent or predictor variables predict the dependent or criterion variables (Neuman, 2006).

Descriptive statistics were generated from the demographic data and the information gathered from a survey instrument that was developed and tested to gather the data. The results of the findings may contribute to scholarly findings of the leadership communication paradigm. The findings may enhance the literature as it relates to the concept that leadership communication affects the culture and level of employee engagement within organizations. The investigation may pinpoint whether or not there is a positive relationship between the communication style used by organizational leaders, the culture, and level of employee engagement that is found within the entity. Since the aim of the study was to examine the relationship between the predictor and criterion variables in a natural setting, the descriptive, correlational design was appropriate (Campo & Lichtman, 2008; Creswell, 2002).

Research Questions

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between the communication of organizational leaders in organizations, located in Barbados and the culture and level of employee engagement of the organizations. The following were the research questions:

(a) To what degree does the style of communication by leaders influence the culture of the organization? (b) To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the level of employee engagement in the organization? (c) To what degree does the culture of the organization influence the level of employee engagement in the organization? Each of these research questions was framed in the following section as hypotheses in their null and alternative formats:

$H1_0$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the culture of the organization.

$H1_A$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does influence the culture of the organization.

$H2_0$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the level of employee engagement.

$H2_A$ – The communication style of corporate leaders does influence the level of employee engagement.

$H3_)$ – The culture of the organization does not influence the level of employee engagement.

$H3_A$ – The culture of the organization does influence the level of employee engagement.

Population

The focus of this study was on leader communication and the effects on the culture and employee engagement within the organization. The scope of this study was limited to private, public, and nonprofit organizations based in Barbados. Only persons who were employed by companies in these categories were eligible.

Thirty persons were selected from private organizations, 40 from public, and 33 from nonprofit companies for the sample of 103 organizational members. The sample was selected from the membership list of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity. The 103 participants were selected from a total of 42,063 individuals from 2,361 companies.

Sampling Frame

The term population is used in reference to a total group of objects or persons being examined (Creswell, 2002). Sampling allows the researcher to make statements about the population without having to examine all the elements in that population. Sampling is the process of selecting a suitably representative portion of a population in order to determine parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Creswell, 2002). The physical impossibility of including all the elements of the population as well as the cost of checking all elements in the population make sampling necessary.

According to Creswell (2002), probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the two methods available. Probability sampling takes place if all the elements in the population have a chance of being selected. The researcher may answer questions that necessitate statistical estimation of the characteristics of the population from the sample (Saunders et al., 2007). Non-probability sampling occurs when the elements included in the sample are the result of the judgment of the person selecting the sample (Creswell, 2002; Saunders et al., 2007). Probability sampling is most often used with survey-based research approaches where the researcher is seeking to make inferences from the sample about the population to answer the research question (Saunders et al., 2007).

The four common types of probability sampling are (a) simple random sampling, (b) systematic sampling, (c) stratified sampling, and (d) cluster sampling (Blumberg et al., 2005; Saunders et al., 2007). With a simple random sample, each element has an equal chance of being included in the sample. In a systematic sample, the elements in the population are numbered sequentially (1, 2, 3, etc.).

Stratified samples are used to divide the population into subgroups or strata and a sample is drawn from each stratum. Cluster sampling is also used to divide the population into clusters or any naturally occurring grouping. The sample frame is the complete list of the clusters rather than the individual elements in the cluster (Saunders et al., 2007). A few clusters are then selected using simple random sampling and data are collected from each case within the clusters selected.

Stratified random sampling was used to select the participants. Persons were classified according to the category of the employer (private, public, or nonprofit). Persons in each category had an equal probability of being selected. Stratified random sampling was used because simple random sampling or systematic sampling would have resulted in a higher probability of selection for the sector that contained the highest number of employees. Three categories were being examined so cluster sampling was not appropriate.

The 103 organizational members were representative of private, public, and nonprofit organizations. The assumption was that the investigator was able to apply the central limit theorem for a minimum sample size of 30 from each type of organization so that the sample mean would approximate the distribution of the population (Creswell, 2002). The sample was restricted to Barbados because of the cost involved in collecting

information from a variety of different islands. The membership list of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity was used to select the participants for the study.

Permission was granted from the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity for the use of its membership list for the study. A copy of the permission letter is included in Appendix B. The surveys were distributed to the personal email of each participant. Companies were randomly selected according to classification (private, public or nonprofit), and participants were chosen from the selected businesses.

Informed Consent

An introductory letter was sent to all the potential participants to seek their participation. The goal of the letter was to describe the research, and explain that there are no foreseeable risks or benefits for participation. The letter was used to explain that participation was voluntary and that participants could withdraw their participation without penalty at any time.

Potential participants were sent an Informed Consent form that required them to indicate their understanding of the nature of the study, the confidentiality procedures, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The consent form required potential participants to indicate if they were members of any protected group and that their consent was voluntary. Consenting participants were then sent a letter of instruction and the survey. An informed consent form is included in Appendix C.

Confidentiality

The letter of consent was used to explain that the identity of the participants would remain confidential and that the data collected from them would also remain

confidential. Confidentiality of participation is essential in protecting the identity of research participants and in increasing participation (Creswell, 2002; Sekeran, 2003). Completed survey documents were safely stored and protected during and after the study. These documents were locked in a cabinet. After a three year period, all documents will be shredded.

Participants who received initial consent letters were informed of the importance of confidentiality and advised that although the researcher would know who had responded, the data would not be reported in any manner that would divulge either their identity or the content of the individual responses. Participants were asked if they were willing to be personally contacted for additional information or clarification if necessary. Apart from the initial emailing of the letter of consent, the instructions and the survey instrument, participants were requested to provide alternative contact information of a telephone number.

Geographic Location

The research was conducted to examine the relationship between the communication style of organizational leaders, the culture, and level of employee engagement in companies located in Barbados. The sampling frame was 103 organizational members from private, public, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados. The sample was not extended to other islands of the Caribbean. The identity of the participants or organizations was not revealed.

Data Collection

The targeted participants received an introductory letter, a letter of consent, and the survey instrument. To encourage responses, a follow-up telephone call was made

within five days of delivery of the questionnaires to the persons who consented and received the surveys. E-mails were sent to persons who did not respond within five days of the follow-up telephone calls.

A second survey was sent to participants who indicated that they needed a duplicate. Data collection took approximately six weeks from the date of distributing the first communication. Results of the survey were sent to participants upon request.

Demographic data on age and gender were collected from each participant. The survey was used to collect data on the communication style that is predominately used by the leader of the organization and the effects that this style has on the culture of the organization and the level of engagement of employees. Information was also sought on the effects of the culture of the organization on the level of employee engagement. By using a correlational design, data collected may be analyzed quantitatively relatively more efficiently than with other design techniques such as interviews or focus groups.

Instrumentation

Downs et al. (1988) examined five separate survey and analysis instruments that were frequently used to measure the communication style of organizational leaders prior to and at that time. The aim of the study was to evaluate the impact of varying communication styles as well as the attributes of each style. Norton's Communicator Style Measure was described as being the most widely researched instrument in the conduct of research on leader communication style. Richmond and McCroskey's Management Communication Style Scale was cited as the instrument used for measuring communication style attributes within organizations. Duran and Wheeless offered their Communicative Adaptability Scale: Self-Reference Measures as a measure of the

relationship between leader communication style and leader competence (Downs et al., 1988).

Mok's Communication Styles Survey was based on the psychology of Carl Jung and the transactional analysis of Eric Berne (Downs et al., 1988). Klauss and Bass developed the Focal Person's Communications Survey/Colleagues' Communication Survey, an instrument to examine interpersonal communication in organizations. Harrison and Stokes developed the Organizational Culture Diagnose instrument to examine the elements of organizational culture.

Norton's 1978 Communicator Style Measure continues to be popular because it is a general, holistic, self-reporting instrument (Downs et al., 1988). The goal of the instrument is to identify nine categories of leader communication style attributes, including (a) dominance, (b) drama, (c) contentiousness, (d) animation, (e) relaxation, and (f) impressiveness. It is also used to identify the leader's attentiveness, openness, and friendliness. A tenth attribute is the leaders' self-awareness of the quality of their communication style and the appropriateness and subsequent effectiveness of that style.

The revised instrument consists of five items for each of the ten attributes, measured on a four-point Likert-type scale indicating degree of agreement with statements provided. A sixth item was provided for each entry for the respondent to self-rank based upon perception of relationship to typical communicator. The questionnaire was estimated to take ten minutes to complete. The structural reliability of the instrument was established by comparing the structure using a subroutine in smallest space analysis based on the Schoenemann-Carroll algorithm (Downs et al., 1988).

Stability was consistent with several studies. Internal reliability coefficients were established in more than 500 cases. The coefficients ranged from .37 to .82, dependent on the category. Norton (1983) later suggested that construct and content validity may be improved for the categories with low scores by using an expanded version of the instrument in those areas.

The survey was found to be most effective at 50 questions, after a reduction from more than 100 previously. Norton's (1983) instrument is conditional, based on context, situation, and time. The survey was designed for self evaluation and would have needed substantial adaptation for use in this study.

Richmond and McCroskey developed the Management Communication Style Scale (McCroskey & Richmond, 1995) and instrument to predict employee satisfaction. The instrument was based on the 1958 leadership position of Tannenbaum and Schmidt and is used to measure employee satisfaction on a continuum from boss-centered to subordinate-centered (Downs et al., 1988). Only four categories of subordinate and superior interaction were measured to determine the style of the manager (tells, sells, consults, joins). The instrument offered little insight to the reasons for those evaluations, and would not be readily adaptable as an instrument for measuring the effect of communication style on organizational culture or employee engagement. Specifically, since it consists of only three questions, the instrument is deficient in the required granularity for evaluating style components for effects on culture and its sub-categories (Downs et al., 1988).

Duran (1983) initially developed the Social Management Scale (SMS) to measure (a) empathy, (b) adaptability, (c) social experience, and (d) rewarding impression. The

SMS was refined and resulted in the Communicative Adaptability Scale Self-Reference (CAS-SR) (Duran, 1983). With the CAS-SR, Duran added items to test (a) social composure, (b) wit, (c) appropriate disclosure, and (d) articulation. The final measure consists of 30 items, with questions on each of six dimensions, focused mainly on social constructs that comprise (a) empathy, (b) adaptability, (c) social experience, and (d) rewarding impression.

Answers are scored using a five-point Likert-type Scale, and the survey takes approximately 25 minutes to complete. Reliability ranged from 0.70 to 0.89, with an alpha for the entire scale of 0.81. Additional research by Duran and Zakahi (1984) and Caldwell, Dodd, and Wilkes (2008) indicated that communication style and communication competence are distinct variables. The CAS-SR instrument would have needed substantial modification for use in this study.

Mok's Communication Styles Survey was based on Jungian psychology and Eric Berne's transactional analysis and uses the premise that each person displays some level of four styles of communication (sensing, thinking, intuition, and feeling) (Downs et al., 1988). These same constructs were offered in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator that measured personality profile and related preferences (Nadel, 2008). To indicate preference, Mok's instrument provided 18 hypothetical personal statements for self evaluation, followed by four options that describe four styles.

The instrument takes 30 to 45 minutes to complete and has been used to determine how the four identified styles supplement each other. The instrument may be used (a) to advise when and how respondents should use each style, and (b) as a self-diagnostic tool to interpret individual style. No statistical reliability or validity test has

been published for this instrument but it has face validity for each of the concepts and has been successfully used as a developmental tool in human resources. The Communications Styles Survey was not appropriate for this study.

Klauss and Bass' Focal Person's Communications Survey and Colleague Questionnaire (FPC/CCS) (Downs et al., 1988) concentrates on the impact of communication style and perception on the credibility of the speaker. Since the instrument dealt extensively with self-perception, it combined self-measurement with assessment by others within the organization. The measure grouped style into five dimensions: (a) careful transmitter, (b) open and two-way, (c) frank, (d) careful listener, and (e) informal. Outcomes describe credibility in terms of trustworthiness, the extent to which the speaker was informative, and dynamic attributes. Role clarity, job satisfaction, and satisfaction with the focal person's attributes were outcomes of the self-assessment portion of the instrument.

Seventy-three questions with seven-point Likert-type scale answers were used to describe specific behaviors, along with two questions on role effectiveness. A shortened instrument consisting of 25 questions resulted in scale reliability of all items was 0.76 or higher, and stability ranged from 0.56 to 0.92, on a test of 37 participants. Klauss and Bass' Focal Person's Communications Survey/Colleague Questionnaire relied on an evaluation of the speaker's credibility by both the speaker and the audience members (receivers). It did not readily adapt to hypothetical evaluation of communication style traits by third parties.

The Organizational Culture Diagnose instrument by Harrison and Stokes identified several elements of culture and has specific advantages as an interpretive tool

(Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007). Brevity is one of the benefits the instrument is easily understood, and the wording is unambiguous. The instrument is generally acknowledged for recognizing perceptions of organizational culture (Fleenor & Braddy, 2009). The instrument was later revised and concentrated on the commonality of the choices made by individuals according to their perception of the current culture (Marcinkoniene & Kekäle, 2007). The Organizational Culture Diagnose instrument was not suitable for this study.

In their overall discussion of the communication style instruments described above, Downs et al. (1988) highlighted the substantial and significant variance in defining communication style and attendant attributes. Communication style was described as a highly subjective topic, with content that varied even within these six instruments. Carefully establishing the context of any study will best describe the meaning of communication style in that context.

The Norton and the Richmond and McCroskey instruments suggested that it may be appropriate to use of parts of various validated instruments to capture the needs of any particular study (McCroskey, Valence, & Richmond, 2008; Richmond & McCroskey, 1997). This type of customization produced context-specific instrumentation and results. Norton's and McCroskey's (McCroskey et al., 2008; Richmond & McCroskey, 1997) influence is evident in much, if not most current studies of communication style, all with variations of the basic theme. That theme accepts that communication style was broadly defined, and when specifics were sought, the context must be used to select constructs appropriately. Evidence of their approach to customizing the content of instruments for varying definitions of communication style was found in several studies.

According to Downs et al. (1988), modified instruments were found in several works. McCroskey or Norton was cited in more than 30 various communication style studies using modified instruments between 1980 and 2004. Downs et al. discussed the need for appropriate instrument selection that considers factors other than its content and context.

For example, the use of Norton's 1978 instrument for self-assessment yielded results that cannot be applied to a more general population since that instrument was not designed to accommodate perspective and self-bias. Instruments such as Mok's 1975 Communications Styles Survey was specifically intended and validated to provide self-measure, and was better suited to introspection and self-learning than evaluating a leader of an organization's communication style its effectiveness (Downs et al., 1988). Mok assigned communicators in broad preferred style categories, whereas Norton (1983), and Richmond and McCroskey (1997), created distinct categories of communication style attributes for leaders.

The predominance of references to Norton's work by others from the 1970s through the present time indicates the germinal nature of Norton's work (Richmond & McCroskey, 1997). Communication style is described as crucial to both the manner and matter of communication. By using communication style, a leader's uniqueness and singularity was revealed. The content of communication was shown to develop from the way persons communicated within their natural and/or chosen styles. As the focal element of interpersonal communication, other essential parts of communication concentrated on style.

Norton described two interdependent concepts of style evident in social literature, both manifesting the effects of communication style on self-identity and the perception of the individual by others (Richmond & McCroskey, 1997). None of the aforementioned instruments was found to be adequate to measure the link between leadership communication, culture, and level of employee engagement in organizations. A new survey instrument was developed for the study.

A quantitative survey instrument consisting of 24 questions was developed, using a combination of Likert-type formatted and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire contained five sections. Section I was designed to request information that related to the background of the participants. Section II was designed to seek information on the participants' view of the organization's leader.

Section III was designed to request information on the participants' perception of how the leader's communication style affected the culture of the organization. The aim of Section IV was to seek the views of the participants on how the leader's communication style influenced the level of employee engagement. The aim of Section V was to request information on how the participants perceived that the culture affected the level of employee engagement.

A pilot test was conducted and Cronbach's alpha was used to test its reliability. A measure is reliable to the extent that that the results it supplies are consistent. Reliability is necessary if an instrument is to be valid but reliability does not guarantee validity (Blumberg et al., 2005).

Validity and Reliability

  Internal validity. Internal validity of the survey instrument refers to the ability of the questionnaire to measure what it intends to measure. Content validity relates to the degree to which the instrument adequately covers the questions that should be asked (Blumberg et al., 2005). The adequacy of the questions is determined by the content of the literature reviewed (Saunders et al., 2007).

  Criterion validity, referred to as predictive validity, is centered on the ability of the questions to make accurate predictions (Saunders et al., 2007). Criterion validity is assessed by comparing the data from the questionnaire with the data derived from analysis such as correlation (Saunders et al., 2007). Construct validity refers to the degree to which the measurement questions actually measure the presence of the constructs they are intended to measure (Blumberg et al., 2005).

  External validity. External validity is concerned with the extent to which the results of the study may be equally applicable to other research settings. Transferability corresponds to external validity, and references the extent to which findings can be generalized or applied to other settings. The ability to generalize is statistically meaningful but offers little application to single cases falling outside the norm.

  Reliability. When using a new survey instrument in research, a pilot study is useful (Sekeran, 2003). Sekeran explained that the purpose of the pilot study is to enact a trial run to identify in advance any areas in which the researcher could fail and to check for any redundancy, ambiguity, and misleading questions in the instrument. The focus of this pilot study was to evaluate the survey instrument. Three major criteria for evaluating a measurement tool are validity, reliability and practicality (Blumberg et al., 2005).

Cronbach's alpha is used to measure how well a set of variables measures a single construct (Sijtsma, 2009). Cronbach's alpha is not a statistical test, but a numerical coefficient of reliability or consistency (Sijtsma, 2009). Alpha is computed based on the reliability of a test relative to other tests with the same number of items, and measuring the same construct of interest (Santos, 1999).

The value of the alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1 and may be used to describe the reliability of factors taken from formatted questionnaires with multiple points or scales, such as Likert-type scales (Santos, 1999). The higher the score, the more reliable the generated scale is. Survey items having a Cronbach's alpha of .70 or greater are deemed to be reliable (Matutina, Newman, & Jenkins, 2010; Symons, Swanson, McGuigan, Orrange, & Elie, 2009).

Data Analysis

The data were entered into the Microsoft Excel 2007 statistical software and were analyzed in two stages. During the first phase statistics were calculated on the variables from the demographic data and calculations were completed on the variables. An interval scale represents quantity and has equal units. The quantities are direct and measurable, and zero does not represent the lowest value (Saunders et al., 2007).

A nominal scale is a list of categories into which objects may be classified. Data are described as categorical if the observations or values are capable of being sorted into categories. Each value is chosen from a set of mutually exclusive categories (Saunders et al., 2007). Correlation analysis was done as opposed to other statistical techniques because, apart from learning the mean and standard deviation of the dependent and independent variables, knowing how the variables relate to each other was essential. The

nature, direction, and significance of the relationships of the variables are important in examining if the independent variables influence the dependent variable (Sekeran, 2003).

The correlation was derived by calculating the variations in one variable as another variable also varies. In theory, a perfect positive correlation is possible between two variables, or a perfect negative correlation. The aim of the study was to determine if any relationship found between the variables was significant or not. A significance of $p = .05$ was used for this study. The goal of the t-test is to consider the means and standard deviations of the two variables and examine if the numerical difference in the mean is significantly different from zero as postulated in the null hypotheses (Sekeran, 2003).

Summary

A review of the research methodology was provided in chapter 3. The study was conducted using a quantitative correlation method. The purpose of this study was to identify the degree to which the communication style of a leader influences the culture and the level of employee engagement in the organization. Several instruments have been identified to measure communication in organizations. No instrument was identified as satisfactory to measure the leadership communication, culture, and employee engagement for this study.

A new survey instrument was developed to test the strength of the relationship between leadership communication style, culture, and employee engagement. A pilot test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to test its reliability before it was applied to the research. The survey was conducted with 103 organizational members who were representative of private, public, and nonprofit organizations in Barbados. The research

was conducted in Barbados but should be easily replicated in other research settings and should be readily applied to wider audiences. The objective of chapter 4 is to present the statistical analysis of the data for the current study, using the methods outlined in chapter 3.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis Of Data

The purpose of chapter 4 is to provide a detailed analysis of the statistical methods and procedures that were used to translate the collected survey data into a valid conclusion in response to the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 4 contains the data collection process and validation methods used in the study. Chapter 4 is presented sequentially, by hypothesis.

The purpose of this quantitative, correlation research study was to identify if relationships existed between the communication style used by organizational leaders, and the culture and level of employee engagement in private, public, and nonprofit organizations. The intent of this study was to compare leadership communication style in the workplace as identified by the literature, with the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement. The intent of this study was also to compare the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement.

Validation of the Survey Instrument

A quantitative survey instrument consisting of 24 questions was developed using a combination of Likert-type formatted and closed ended interval questions (Appendix A). The questionnaire contained five sections. The intent of Section I was to request demographic information about the participants. The intent of Section II was to address the participants' view of the organization's leader.

The intent of Section III was to examine the participants' perception of how the leader's communication style affected the culture of the organization. The intent of Section IV was to ask participants to give their views of the influence of the leader's communication style on the level of employee engagement. The intent of Section V was

to request information on how the participants perceived that the culture affected the level of employee engagement.

Before administering the survey, a panel of experts was selected and asked to examine the validity of the instrument. A pilot study was conducted after all panel members expressed confidence in the survey material. The pilot test was conducted to confirm that the survey instrument was understandable and free of bias.

Field Testing of Survey Instrument

Field testing followed the development of the survey instrument. Field testing was conducted to determine the validity of the questionnaire. Five experts were selected to field test the survey instrument.

Three of the persons selected to field test the instrument hold doctorate degrees and are actively involved in education and research at the doctoral level. The final two members selected for field testing were involved in commercial research. One member heads the research unit of an international consulting firm and the final member is the market research director for a telecommunications company.

Field Testing Results

The survey instrument was emailed to each person selected to participate in the field testing. After reviewing the questionnaire, each person provided feedback and made suggestions for improving the questionnaire. Suggestions for improving the survey instrument included revising the wording of the instructions to make the intended meaning clearer, including additional options to capture more data, eliminating all technical jargon from the questions, and including an open-ended question to allow

participants to provide additional information. The rating scale was removed from some questions to allow one answer to be chosen. No grammatical errors were found.

The suggested changes were integrated and the questionnaire was again emailed to each individual for review and suggestions for additional changes. Replies from each of the field testers indicated no additional changes. Arrangements were made subsequently to pilot test the questionnaire.

Pilot Testing of Survey Instrument

Before administering the survey, two pilot tests were carried out. The purpose of pilot testing the survey instrument was to evaluate its face validity and to test the sampling and data collection methods before using the questionnaire. Pilot testing of the questionnaire consisted of administering the questionnaire to three persons from the public service, three persons from the private sector, and three persons from nonprofit organizations, selected from the research population.

The selected participants were contacted via email and provided with a copy of the introductory letter, a notice of informed consent, and the questionnaire. The intent of the first test was to eliminate misunderstandings and to focus on the intended subject matter.

An additional notice was included in the email with the explanation that the study was a pilot and had not yet been administered. The intent of the statement was to advise that the researcher was ensuring that the survey statements were understood. Respondents were asked to read each statement and indicate either that they understood or did not understand. Each statement was listed with the choices *I understand this*

statement or *I do not understand this statement*. An area was provided for respondents to enter comments.

The second test was administered to two persons from the public service, three persons from the private sector, and five persons from nonprofit organizations, selected from the research population. New participants were recruited for the second test. None of these participants were allowed to respond to the final survey. The participants were contacted via email and provided an introductory letter, a notice of informed consent, and the questionnaire.

Pilot Test Results

The nine participants in the first test each indicated that all statements were understood. One category in Question 6 was included twice. The repetition was removed. No further changes were made to the survey instrument. Statistical testing of the pilot results was completed using Cronbach's alpha.

Cronbach's alpha is used to measure how well a set of variables measures a single construct. Survey items having a Cronbach's alpha of .70 or greater are deemed to be reliable (Blumberg et al., 2005). The Cronbach's alpha test was conducted on the results of the ten participants from the second pilot test and included all 24 questions from the survey instrument. The results of the pilot test produced a score of .70. The survey instrument was agreed to be reliable as was administered to the sample for the study.

Data Collection

Subsequent to the pilot tests the questionnaires were emailed to 40 persons in each of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Participants were contacted via email and provided with a copy of the introductory letter, a notice of informed consent, and the

questionnaire. Follow up telephone calls were made two weeks later to persons who had not returned the questionnaire.

At the end of the sixth week the data collection efforts were formally ended. The data were entered into an Excel Spreadsheet and reviewed prior to analysis. The review was conducted to ensure the accuracy of the data entered, and to certify that the coding was consistent.

Analysis of Demographic Data

The preliminary review of the data revealed that 40 participants responded in the public sector for an overall response rate of 100%. In the private sector 32 participants completed the survey for a response rate of 80% and in the nonprofit sector 33 persons responded for a response rate of 82.5%. Two questionnaires were not included in the private sector because they were incomplete.

In both incomplete survey instruments, Section 1, demographic data, was omitted. A total of 120 survey instruments were distributed and 105 were returned, resulting in an overall response rate of 87.5%. Subtracting the two questionnaires that were not included, the useful responses were 103 for a useful response rate of 85.8%.

The data analysis involved the use of statistical software. The analysis included frequency counts for responses, performing t-tests with a .05 level of significance, and correlation analysis. Tests were performed on the complete data set and by sector. Each test produced a critical value at each level of significance which was used to examine the relationship between each pair of variables. The t-test is used to determine the statistical significance between a sample distribution mean and a parameter (Blumberg et al., 2005).

Demographic Data

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the respondents by sector. Table 2 displays the characteristics of the respondents. In the private sector respondents were 70% men who were 4.5 years younger, and had 3.4 years less experience than the average. In the private sector 23% of the respondents were managers while the overall average was 40.50%. In the public sector 35% of the respondents were men compared to the average of 52% and 50% of all respondents were managers, compared to the average of 40.50%. The demographic profile of the nonprofit sector was similar to the overall demographics.

Table 1

Respondents by Sector

	Private	Public	Nonprofit	All
Respondents	30	40	33	103

Table 2
Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Private	Public	Non profit	All
Approximate Average Age	39	45	45	43.5
% Male Respondents	70%	35%	55%	52%
Average Years Employed	8	12.5	13	11.4
% Management	23%	50%	45%	40.50%

Table 3 displays the characteristics of the leaders. The weighted average age of leaders was calculated as the midpoints of the age ranges, times the number of respondents choosing each range. The mode of the education level was the most frequently selected choice by respondents in each category as well as overall.

In all sectors 94% of leaders were men. In the nonprofit sector the leaders were significantly younger (25 years) than leaders in the private and public sectors. Leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors had earned masters level degrees while leaders in the private sector had lower level qualifications with bachelor level degrees. The differences in the results in the three sectors indicated that the hypotheses should be tested for all respondents as well as for respondents for each of the three sectors.

Table 3

Characteristics of Leaders

Characteristics	Private	Public	Non-Profit	All
% Male Leaders	90%	98%	94%	94%
Average Age of Leader	56	55	30	47
Average Education Level Mode	Bachelors	Masters	Masters	Masters

Distinct demographic differences appear in Tables 1-3 among the respondents from the various sectors included in this study. Although it was not initially anticipated, these differences prompted the researcher to run tests to determine if differences also existed in the relationships among leader communication styles, organizational cultures, and levels of employee engagement among these sectors. In the analysis of the survey data that follow, statistics are run for the overall sample of respondents as well as for those in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

Analysis of Survey Data

There were three primary constructs in this research that were reflected in a single index, derived from various sub-constructs reflected in specific questions. The first construct was leader communication style. The second construct was organizational culture, and the third construct was employee engagement.

Each construct was measured using multiple sub-constructs that were transformed into indices that could be tested using correlation analysis. The first construct, leader communication style, included the sub-constructs that represented people-oriented approaches such as those that encourage and maintain relationships, supporting values, optimism, and willingness. Leader communication styles also included sub-constructs that represented task-oriented approaches such as those focusing totally on controlling, dominating behaviors, task progress (results), and maintaining social distance.

As seen in Table 4, the sub-constructs for each of these two generic leader communication styles were positively correlated with one another and negatively correlated with the sub-constructs of the other generic style. In the data analysis, the leader communication style that represented people-oriented approaches were given a numerical value of 10 while the leader communication style that represented task-oriented approaches were given the numerical value of 1. These values were assigned to test their level of correlation with the other indices used in this study.

The index for leader communication style was determined to be the product of the sub-construct weight (either 10 or 1), times the degree to which that sub-construct was represented in the leader's communication style. Almost Always was assigned as 5, and Almost Never was assigned as 1. An extremely high leader communication style index reflects that a very people-oriented communication style is used by the leader. An extremely low leader communication style index reflects that a very task-oriented communication style is used by the leader.

The second construct, organizational culture, included sub-constructs that represented an active culture. Those sub-constructs were synergistic, dynamic, supportive, and innovative. These sub-categories were each given a numerical value of 5.

Organizational culture also had two sub-categories that represent an inactive culture. Those sub-constructs were static and bureaucratic. These sub-categories were each given the numerical value of 1. Therefore an organizational culture index of 5 shows an active culture while an index of 1 shows an inactive culture.

The third construct, employee engagement, included measures of how the leader's communication style and the organization's culture influenced employee engagement. In each case the highest positive response (the least negative) were given the value of 5 and the lowest positive (the most negative) responses were given the value of 1. The resultant indices for leader communication style, organizational culture, and employee engagement influenced by leader communication style and the organizational culture were used to answer the three research questions posed in this study. These indices were created to facilitate the use of correlation for testing the strength of the relationships among these variables.

Leader Communication Style

Leader communication style was used to examine the communication style used by leaders of organizations. The survey question for this construct was designed to ask participants to identify how frequently the leader demonstrated specific styles in communicating. The styles include encouraging relationships, optimism, control of others, and focusing on results rather than on people.

There were two research questions for this construct. Research Question 1 was developed to ask, To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the culture of the organization? Research Question 2 was developed to ask, To what degree does the communication style of the leader influence the level of employee engagement in the organization?

Research Question 1. Research Question 1 was developed to ask, To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the culture of the organization? $H1_0$ stated – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the culture of the organization. Descriptive statistics, a t-test, and correlations were calculated to analyze the data. Tables 4-6 display the findings relative to Research Question 1.

Table 4

Correlations of Communication Styles for Respondents from all 3 Sectors

	Relations	Values	Optimism	Willingness	Control	Results	Distant
Relations	1						
Values	.86	1					
Optimism	.78	.78	1				
Willingness	.74	.72	.75	1			
Control	-.63	.53	-.38	-.40	1		
Results	-.62	-.54	-.42	-.44	.61	1	
Distant	-.58	-.45	-.45	-.45	.44	.45	1

Note. All of the *r* values are significant at the .05 level.

The communication styles of (a) encouraging and maintaining relations, (b) encouraging supporting values, (c) displaying optimism, and (d) willingness were all positively correlated with one another. The styles of (a) dominating and controlling others, (b) focusing on results rather than people, and (c) maintaining distance were all positively correlated with one another. The communication styles of (a) encouraging and

maintaining relations, (b) encouraging supporting values, (c) displaying optimism, and (d) willingness were all negatively correlated with the styles of (a) dominating and controlling others, (b) focusing on results rather than people, and (c) maintaining distance.

Table 5

All Respondents – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Style Rating – Summary Data

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent	Average Leader Communication Style Index
Positive	23	22.33%	122.8
Negative	80	77.67%	76.4
All	103	100.00%	86.8

Communication styles break down into two categories: (1) Relations, Values, Optimism, Willingness; and (2) Control, Results, Distant. Culture breaks down into two categories: (1) Supportive, Synergistic, Dynamic, Innovative; and (2) Static and Bureaucratic. Category 1 communication styles and cultures are positive and Category 2 communication styles and cultures are negative as shown in Table 5.

The findings from all respondents indicated that the leaders' communication style is related to the culture of the organization. Category 1 of communication styles was positively related to Category 1 of the culture. The strength of the relationship shown in Table 6 was significant above the .05 level of significance. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be .39 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.15. Therefore, about 15% of the culture was explained by the leaders' communication style.

Table 6

All Respondents – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Rating – Correlations

	Culture	Communication Style
Culture	1.00	
Communication Style	.39	1.00

Note. Sample size 103

     Critical Value .05 (two tail) - ± .19

     Critical Value .01 (two tail) - ± .25

Private Sector Tables 7 through 9 display the results obtained in the analysis of the

private sector for Research Question 1.

Table 7

Private Sector Correlations

	Leader Communication Style					
	Relations	Values	Optimism	Willingness	Control	Results
Relations	1					
Values	8477	1				
Optimism	.79	.72	1			
Willingness	.71	.68	.74	1		
Control	-.79	-.66	-.52	-.49	1	
Results	-.83	-.66	-.58	-.54	.86	1
Distant	-.57	-.37	-.48	-.43	.60	.68

Note. All the *r* values are significant at the 0.05 level.

    All the Category 1 communication styles are positively correlated with one

another. All the Category 2 communication styles are positively correlated with one

another. The Category 1 communication styles are negatively correlated with the

Category 2 communication styles.

Table 8

Private Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Style Rating – Summary

Data

Category	Number	Percent	Average Leader Communication Style Index
1	4	13.33%	142.0
2	26	86.67%	86.0
All	30	100.00%	93.5

Table 9

Private Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Rating – Correlations

	Culture	Communication Style
Culture	1.00	
Communication Style	.36	1.00

Note. Sample size 30

Critical Value .05 (two tail) - ± .36

Critical Value .01 (two tail) - ± .46

The findings from the private sector indicated that the leaders' communication style is related to the culture of the organization. Category 1 of communication styles was positively related to Category 1 of the culture. The strength of the relationship was significant above the .05 level. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.36 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.13. Therefore, about 13% of the culture was explained by the leaders' communication style.

Public Sector Tables 10 to 12 display the results obtained in the analysis of the private sector for Research Question 1.

Table 10

Public Sector Correlations

	Relations	Values	Optimism	Willingness	Control	Results
Relations	1					
Values	.88	1				
Optimism	.80	.87	1			
Willingness	.80	.82	.86	1		
Control	-.50	-.37	-.31	-.34	1	
Results	-.49	-.47	-.45	-.45	.38	1
Distant	-.71	-.63	-.47	-.54	.51	.42

Note. All of the *r* values except 1 are significant at the 0.05 level.

All the Category 1 communication styles are positively correlated with one another. All the Category 2 communication styles are positively correlated with one another. The Category 1 communication styles are negatively correlated with the Category 2 communication styles. No significant relationship was found between the communication styles of Optimism and Control.

Table 11

Public Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Style Rating – Summary

Category	Number	Percent	Average leader communication style index
1	11	27.50%	133.0
2	29	72.50%	65.7
All	40	100.00%	84.2

Table 12

Public Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Rating – Correlations

	Culture	Communication style
Culture	1.00	
Communication Style	.57	1.00

Note. Sample size 40

Critical Value .05 (two tail) - ± .31

Critical Value .01 (two tail) - ± .40

The findings from the public sector indicated that the leaders' communication style is related to the culture of the organization. Category 1 of communication styles was positively related to Category 1 of the culture. The strength of the relationship was significant above the .05 level. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.57 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.32. Therefore, about 32% of the culture was explained by the leaders' communication style.

Nonprofit sector - Tables 13 to 15 display the results obtained in the analysis of the nonprofit sector for Research Question 1.

Table 13

Nonprofit Sector Correlations

	Relations	Values	Optimism	Willingness	Control	Results
Relations	1					
Values	.87	1				
Optimism	.72	.73	1			
Willingness	.71	.64	.56	1		
Control	-.84	-.80	-.54	-.68	1	
Results	-.71	-.59	-.37	-.47	.66	1
Distant	-.43	-.20	-.33	-.25	.42	.48

Note. All of the *r* values except 3 are significant at the 0.05 level.

All the Category 1 communication styles are positively correlated with one another. All the Category 2 communication styles are positively correlated with one another. The Category 1 communication styles are negatively correlated with the Category 2 communication styles. No significant relationship was found between the communication styles of Values and Distant, Optimism and Distant, and Willingness and Distant.

Table 14

Nonprofit Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Style Rating – Summary

Data

Category	Number	Percent	Average leader communication style index
1	8	24.24%	99.3
2	25	75.76%	78.8
All	33	100.00%	83.8

Table 15

Nonprofit Sector – Culture Breakdown versus Communication Rating – Correlations

	Culture	Communication style
Culture	1.00	
Communication style	.21	1.00

Note. Sample size 33

Critical Value .05 (two tail) - ± .34

Critical Value .01 (two tail) - ± .44

The findings from the nonprofit sector indicated that the leaders' communication style is not significantly related to the culture of the organization. Category 1 of communication styles was positively related to Category 1 of the culture. The strength of the relationship was not significant above the .05 level.

The leaders' communication styles for all respondents are related to the culture of the organization. In the private sector the relationship is somewhat weaker than for the overall sample. In the public sector the relationship is stronger than for the overall sample. In the nonprofit sector no relationship was found between the leaders' communication style and the culture of the organization. In summary, across the culture

sample, the leaders' communication styles are positively related to the culture of the organization.

Research Question 2. Research Question 2 was developed to ask, To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the level of employee engagement in the organization? $H2_0$ stated – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the level of employee engagement in the organization. An index of communication styles is observed against the employee rating of Employee Engagement from high to low engagement to answer Research Question 2. Tables 16 through 19 display the results of the analysis of communication style and the level of employee engagement.

Table 16

Matrix of Communication Style, Employee Engagement and Culture for All Respondents

	Resultant culture	Leader communication style index	Employee level of engagement
Resultant culture	1.00		
Leader communication Style index	.39	1.00	
Employee level of engagement	.46	.31	1.00

Note. 103 sample size
± .34 critical value .05 (two-tail)
± .44 critical value .01 (two tail)

There was no statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the communication style of the leaders and the level of employee engagement for the overall sample. The more positive the leader's communication style, did not correlate with the perception of the employees as to the level of employee engagement.

Private sector – There is a statistically significant relationship (at the 0.05 level) between the communication style of the leaders and the level of employee engagement in the private sector. The coefficient for this relationship was found to be 0.53 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.28. Therefore, about 28% of employee engagement was explained by the leaders' communication style. The relationship is stronger than for the overall sample. The more positive the leader's communication style, the more engaged the employees are reported to be in the private sector.

Table 17

Matrix of Communication Style, Employee Engagement and Culture for the Private Sector

	Resultant culture	Leader communication style index	Employee level of engagement
Resultant culture	1.00		
Leader communication style index	.36	1.00	
Employee level of engagement	.45	.53	1.00

Note. 30 sample size
$\pm$ .36 critical value .05 (two-tail)
$\pm$ .46 critical value .01 (two tail)

Public Sector - There is no statistically significant relationship (at the 0.05 level) between the communication style of the leaders and the level of employee engagement in the public sector. A more positive leader communication style does not yield a more engaged employee in the public sector.

Table 18

Matrix of Communication Style, Employee Engagement and Culture for the Public Sector

	Resultant culture	Leader communication style index	Employee level of engagement
Resultant culture	1.00		
Leader communication style index	.57	1.00	
Employee level of engagement	.36	.26	1.00

Note. 40 sample size

    ± .31 critical value .05 (two-tail)

    ± .40 critical value .01 (two tail)

Nonprofit Sector - There is no statistically significant relationship (at the 0.05

level) between the communication style of the leaders and the level of employee

engagement in the nonprofit sector. A more positive leader communication style does

not yield a more engaged employee in the nonprofit sector.

Table 19

Matrix of Communication Style, Employee Engagement and Culture for the Nonprofit

Sector

	Resultant culture	Leader communication Style Index	Employee level of engagement
Resultant culture	1.00		
Leader communication style index	.21	1.00	
Employee level of engagement	.59	.27	1.00

Note. 33 sample size

    ± .34 critical value .05 (two-tail)

    ± .44 critical value .01 (two tail)

The leaders' communication styles for all respondents were not related to the level of employee engagement. In the private sector the relationship is significant and is stronger than for the overall sample. There was no significant relationship between the communication styles of the leaders and the level of employee engagement in the public or nonprofit sectors. In summary, the only significant relationship was found in the private sector.

Research Question 3. Research Question 3 was developed to ask, To what degree does the culture of the organization influence the level of employee engagement? $H3_0$ stated – The culture of the organization does not influence the level of employee engagement. Tables 16 through 19 display the results of the analysis of organizational culture and employee level of engagement.

As shown in Table 16, there is a statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement for the overall sample. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.46 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.21. Therefore, about 21% of employee engagement was explained by the culture of the organization. A more positive culture resulted in more engaged employees in the overall sample of respondents. The results of the overall sample were similar in the other three sectors.

Private Sector - As shown in Table 17, there is a significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement for the private sector sample. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.45 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.20. Therefore,

about 20% of employee engagement was explained by the culture of the organization. A more positive culture resulted in more engaged employees in the private sector.

Public Sector - As shown in Table 18, there is a statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement for the public sector sample. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.36 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.13. Therefore, about 13% of employee engagement was explained by the culture of the organization. A more positive culture resulted in more engaged employees in the public sector.

Nonprofit Sector - As shown in Table 19, there is a statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement for the nonprofit sector sample. The coefficient of correlation for this relationship was found to be 0.59 and the coefficient of determination was found to be 0.35. Therefore, about 34% of employee engagement was explained by the culture of the organization. A more positive culture resulted in more engaged employees in the nonprofit sector.

The culture for all respondents was related to the level of employee engagement. In the private and public sectors the relationship is somewhat weaker than for the overall sample. In the nonprofit sector the relationship is stronger than for the overall sample. In summary, significant relationships were found in the overall sample and all three sectors between the culture and the level of employee engagement in the organization.

Summary

Correlation analysis was used to investigate the relationships between the communication styles of leaders and organizational culture and the level of employee engagement. Correlation analysis was also used to investigate the relationship between the organizational culture and the level of employee engagement. T-tests and correlation analysis were utilized to examine the relationship between the communication style of the leader and the culture of the organization, between the communication style of the leader and the level of employee engagement and between the culture and the level of employee engagement. Chapter 4 contained a report on the survey design, the process by which the survey was tested and administered, and a presentation of the survey results.

Table 20

Summary of Results for Research Questions

Research Question	All respondents (r^2)	Private sector (r^2)	Public sector (r^2)	Nonprofit sector (r^2)
RQ 1 – Leader communication style to Organizational culture	0.15	.01	0.32	n/s
RQ 2 – Leader communication Style to employee Engagement	n/s	0.28	n/s	n/s
RQ 3 – Organizational culture to Employee engagement	0.21	0.20	0.13	0.35

All Respondents – The communication styles of the leaders for all respondents are related to the culture of the organization. No significant relationship was found between

the communication styles of the leaders and the level of employee engagement. The culture of the organization was related to the level of employee engagement.

Private Sector – In the private sector, the relationship between the leaders' communication styles and the culture of the organization was somewhat weaker than for the overall sample. A relationship that was stronger than the overall sample was found between the leaders' communication style and the level of employee engagement. The relationship between the culture and the level of employee engagement was weaker than for the overall sample.

Public Sector – In the public sector, the relationship between the communication styles of the leaders is stronger than for the overall sample. No significant relationship was found between the style of communication of the leader and the level of employee engagement. The relationship between the culture and the level of employee engagement was somewhat weaker than for the overall sample.

Nonprofit Sector – In the nonprofit sector no significant relationship was found between the leaders' communication style and the culture of the organization. No significant relationship was found between the communication style of the leader and the level of employee engagement. A relationship that was stronger than the overall sample was found between the culture and the level of employee engagement.

In summary, across the sample, the leaders' communication styles are positively related to the culture of the organization. The only significant relationship between the leaders' communication style and the level of employee engagement was in the private sector. Significant relationships were found in the overall sample and in all three sectors between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement.

As shown in Table 20, the communication style of the leader was most related to the culture in the public sector. Leaders' communication style was most related to the level of employee engagement in the private sector. Culture was most related to the level of employee engagement in the nonprofit sector.

Chapter 4 contained the findings of the research study. The goal of chapter 5 will be to present insight gained from the study, identify and interpret the results, and make recommendations for future research. Findings related to the significance of the relationships between the communication styles of organizational leaders, the culture, and the level of employee engagement will be discussed. Finally, the contribution of this research to leadership will be specified.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Organizational leaders may use their communication as a tool to influence the human resources and influence the culture of the organization (McLaurin, 2006a). Communication is not received by members of the organization in a neutral environment, but according to the context of the environment of the company. When leaders ensure that the messages sent are clear and consistent, the climate of the organization encourages employees to be more engaged or involved in the business (Trahant, 2008).

The purpose of this correlation, descriptive study was to examine the influence that the communication style used by corporate leaders has on the culture and level of employee engagement in the organization. The analysis was also used to investigate the effect that the culture has on the level of employee engagement in organizations. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and t-tests were used to examine the relationships and to explore the research objectives, while attempting to provide explanations. Data were entered into Excel 2007.

The findings from chapter 4 revealed that for the overall sample, the style of communication used by leaders was positively related to the organization's culture, with the most significant relation in the public sector. The leaders' communication style demonstrated a significant relationship with the level of employee engagement only in the private sector. Significant relationships were found in the overall sample and in all three sectors between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement. Culture was most related to the level of employee engagement in the nonprofit sector. The following areas are addressed in chapter 5: (a) findings and

interpretations, (b) recommendations for action by leaders, and (c) suggestions for further research.

Findings and Interpretations

   Demographics. Private sector employees were younger men, with 3.4 years less experience and were fewer managers than the overall sample. In the public sector respondents were fewer men but more persons were in management positions. Workers in the public service and nonprofit organizations were employed by the organizations for longer periods than those in the private sector. One possible explanation is that private sector workers may be more likely to be separated from organizations that are not performing well. Public and nonprofit organizations often guarantee tenure to persons who are appointed to positions.

   The dominance of male leaders in the sample was significant. Ninety-four percent of all organizational leaders were men. In the public sector 98% of the leaders were men. Women represented 48% of the sample and 6% of the leaders. Female leadership appears to be inconsequential in the organizations surveyed, regardless of sector.

   The leaders in the private and public sectors were significantly older (25 years) than the leaders in the nonprofit sector. In the total sample 50% of leaders had earned masters level degrees. In the private sector the leaders had earned mainly Bachelor degrees.

   Leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors had a higher level of education than those in the private sector. Public sector leaders were older with a higher level of education in contrast to the nonprofit sector leaders who were significantly younger but

had the same level of education. Private sector leaders were older but had not attained Masters level education.

Leader Communication Style

Leader communication style was used to examine the communication style used by leaders of organizations. The survey question for this construct was developed to ask participants to identify how frequently the leader demonstrated specific styles in communicating. The styles were broken down into two categories: (1) encouraging and maintaining relationships, encouraging supporting values, optimistic and enthusiastic, demonstrating willingness; and (2) dominating and controlling others, focusing on results rather than on people, maintaining distance.

Category 1 was given a value of 5 and Category 2 was given a value of 1. Category 1 was deemed to be positive and Category 2 as negative. Responses that indicated a rating of 3 (sometimes displaying the style) were removed from the data as not representing a strong enough opinion to warrant inclusion in the Leader Communication Style Index.

Category 1 styles were found to be positively correlated with one another and Category 2 styles were positively correlated with one another. Category 1 styles were negatively correlated with Category 2 styles. Leaders who demonstrated one positive style displayed all the other positive styles and leaders who used one negative style used the other negative styles in their communication. Leaders were not identified as using both negative and positive communication styles. Respondents placed the communication style of the leaders into one specific category, either positive or negative.

Research Question 1. Research Question 1 was developed to ask, To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the culture of the organization? $H1_0$ stated – The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the culture of the organization. Organizational cultures were broken down into two categories: (1) Supportive, Synergistic, Dynamic, Innovative; and (2) Static, Bureaucratic. Category 1 was given a value of 5 and was deemed to be positive. Category 2 was given a value of 1 and was considered to be negative.

Category 1 of the communication styles was positively related to Category 1 of the culture. Category 2 of the communication styles was positively related to Category 2 of the culture. The strength of the relationships was significant above the 0.05 level and about 15% of the culture was explained by the communication style of the leader.

In the overall sample leaders' communication was reported to be negative 77.66% of the time. Leaders who displayed a positive communication style led organizations that maintained a positive culture. Leaders with a negative communication style managed organizations with a negative culture. Claver-Cortes et al. (2007) argued that communication and culture are interdependent, but the culture of the organization may also be determined by the leaders. The results of this study are similar to the belief that a relationship exists between the communication of the leaders and the culture of the organization.

In the private sector the results were similar to the overall sample. A total of 86.7% of leaders were reported to have negative communication styles. About 13% of the culture was explained by the communication style used by the leader.

In the public sector the relationship between the communication style of the leader and the culture was significant. A total of 72.5% of the leaders display a negative style of communicating. About 32% of the culture was attributed to the leader's communications style. In the nonprofit sector the Category 1 communication styles were positively correlated to the Category 1 cultures. The strength of the relationship was not significant at the 0.05 level. A total of 75.8% of the leaders' communications were negative.

In the overall sample and in all three sectors, Category 1 of the communication styles was related to Category 1 of the culture. In the overall sample, the communication style of the leader was significantly related to the culture of the organization at the 0.05 level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question 2. Research Question 2 was developed to ask, To what degree does the style of communication used by the leader influence the level of employee engagement in the organization? $H1_0$ stated –The communication style of corporate leaders does not influence the level of employee engagement in the organization. Communication styles break down into two mutually exclusive categories and employee engagement is divided into four mutually exclusive levels of engagement. Employee engagement was rated on a scale of (a) 10 for actively engaged, (b) 7 for engaged, (c) 4 for actively non-engaged, and (d) 1 for obligated. An index of communication styles was observed against the employee ratings of employee engagement.

In the overall sample, a statistically significant (at the 0.05 level) relationship was found between the communication style of the leader and the level of employee

engagement. The more positive the leader's communication style, the more engaged the employees are perceived to be. In organizations where the communication style of the leader was described as negative, the employees were found to be less engaged.

Trahant (2008) pointed out that the communication of effective organizational leaders is designed to increase the level of employee engagement. In the sample, 72.5% of the participants reported that the leader's communication style was negative. Sixty-four percent of the overall sample reported that the leader's communication style influenced the level of engagement. The level of employee engagement in the organizations surveyed may be therefore, influenced negatively as a result of the style of communication chosen by the leaders.

In the private sector the relationship between the leaders' communication style and the level of employee engagement was stronger than in the overall sample. The communication style of the leaders had a more significant effect to how engaged employees were with the organization. Organizational effectiveness in the private sector may be influenced more negatively than in the other sectors.

No statistically significant relationships were found in the public sector or the nonprofit sector. If leaders were more positive, the level of engagement by employees did not change. More negative leaders did not result in a change in the level of employee engagement in either the public or nonprofit sectors. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 3. Research Question 3 was developed to ask, To what degree does the culture of the organization influence the level of employee engagement? $H1_0$ stated –The culture of the organization does not influence the level of employee

engagement. An index of culture was observed against the employee ratings of employee engagement.

In the overall sample a statistically significant relationship (at the 0.05 level) was found between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement. Employees were more engaged in organizations described as having a more positive culture. In each sector, a significant relationship was found between the culture of the organization and the degree to which employees were engaged. The relationship was strongest in the nonprofit sector.

According to L. Schein (2004), research regarding the connection between leader communication, organizational culture, and employee engagement shows that a link exists. M. L. Fleming and Kayser-Jones (2008) pointed out that organizational cultures that support involvement will develop more engaged employees. A link was seen between the culture of the organization and the degree to which employees are engaged in private, public, and nonprofit organizations in the sample. A negative culture may therefore, have a negative impact on the engagement of the employees in the organization. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Recommendations for Action by Leaders

The objective of chapter 5 is to incorporate the findings acknowledged in chapter 4 during the investigation analysis within the context of the existing research identified in chapter 2. The findings from the study provided a construct for paying attention to communication as it relates to organizational culture and employee engagement. The significance of the study for corporate leaders, managers, employees, and other interested stakeholders, is that the results suggested further information regarding the effects of

leadership communication in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors and may form the basis for further research. The current study showed that when leaders employed a positive communication style the culture of the organization was also positive. The culture significantly influenced the level of employee engagement.

Recommendations for Leadership

D'Aprix (2008) argued that the current changes taking place have brought the opportunities and challenges of leadership from the pedestal of management down to the individual employee. A more intimate knowledge of the communication style of leadership, organizational culture, and employee engagement are essential for identifying the possible issues for leaders (Fleming & Kayser-Jones, 2008). This study may be significant for organizational leaders in helping them to recognize their communication style and understand the effect it has on the culture and the engagement of employees in their companies.

Webster (2005) suggested that leaders who displayed a more positive style practice behaviors that encourage a positive culture and maintain a positive relationship with employees. Lazidou (2008) insisted that leadership is essential for creating the culture of the organization and for communicating the essential elements to organizational members. The information from this study may enable leaders to make adjustments to ensure that a more positive communication style is demonstrated in their organizations. A positive style indicates to employees that they are valued and that their involvement is important for the organization. Leaders who support involvement will develop more engaged employees (Fleming et al., 2005).

Leadership communication is a mature field of study and is supported by scholarly literature that includes examination of the communication of leaders as a part of communication theory and as a separate construct. The field of leadership communication and its relation to culture and employee engagement in the Caribbean is less mature. This study may assist organizational leaders in the Caribbean in assessing their particular communication style and evaluating how the style influences the culture. Caribbean organizational leaders may also use the study to assess if their communication affects the degree to which employees are engaged with the organization.

In the overall sample the communication style of leaders was reported to be negative 77.66% of the time. Leaders who displayed a negative communication style led organizations that were reported to have a negative culture. In the private sector 86.7% of leaders were reported to have negative communication styles.

Since 32% of the culture was attributed to the leader's communications style, the conclusion may be drawn that the negative style of communicating was partially responsible for creating a negative culture. About 28% of employee engagement was explained by the leaders' communication style in the private sector. The leaders' communication styles appear to contribute significantly to the level of engagement of employees in the private sector.

In the sample, the average age of employees was 43.5 years compared to 39 years for those in the private sector. Women represented an average of 52% of the participants and the persons were employed for an average of 11.4 years. In the private sector, respondents were 70% men and were employed for 8 years. These factors may have

contributed to the views expressed by participants about the effect of the leaders' communication on the level of engagement.

Employees in the private sector were mainly men who had spent 8 years at the organization. The private sector employees were with organizations that were led by 90% men who had earned bachelors level degrees. The leaders in the private sector were 56 years old, nine years older than the average sample. The combination of older, less academically qualified leaders and younger employees may be responsible for the perception that the communication style of the leader influenced the degree to which the employees were engaged in the private sector.

The finding that the communication style of the leader did not affect the level of employee engagement in the public and nonprofit sectors is significant. The average respondent's age in the public sector was 45 years. Respondents had been employed for 12.5 years.

In the public sector 50% of the respondents were in management positions. The average age of the leader in the public sector was 55 years and the average education level was a Masters degree. One explanation for the insignificant level of influence could be that both respondents and leaders were mature and at senior levels in the organization.

In the nonprofit sector the average respondent's age was 45 years. Respondents had been employed for 13 years and 45% were in management positions. The average age of the leader in the nonprofit sector was 30 years and the average education level was a Masters degree. The workers were about 15 years older than the leader. The insignificant level of influence by the leaders may possibly be that the leaders are younger than the respondents who were primarily at the management level.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) argued that leaders cannot completely control the culture or the way employees interact with the organization but they help to shape it by being role models. In the public and nonprofit sectors where the leaders had earned Masters level degrees their influence was less significant than in the private sector where the leaders had earned Bachelor degrees. Participants in the public and nonprofit sectors were older and may have determined their level of engagement over time rather than by being influenced by the way the leader communicated.

Leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors may recognize that older employees do not determine how engaged they will be based on the communications of the leader. Leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors may consider that as workers become more senior in the organization, the communication of the leader is less influential in determining the actions of workers. Leaders in the private sector may determine if younger workers are more easily influenced by the communication style of the leader.

Griffin (2009) pointed out that where the culture was dominated by the leaders, communication problems, hostility between older and younger persons and difficulties with engagement were evident. Organizational leaders may want to examine the way they communicate and the influence that the communication can have on the organization. Leaders in the private sector may concentrate on using their communication style to create a positive influence on the younger employees.

Nonprofit and public sector employees are more connected to the organization than are for-profit workers who pay more attention to the product of the business (Watts, 2010). In addition to the influence of age and tenure, public and nonprofit sector workers may possibly be more focused on the service the organization provides. Profit becomes

less significant and the communication style of the leader exerts less influence than in the private sector.

There is a statistically significant relationship (at the .05 level) between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement for the overall sample and in all three sectors. A more positive culture resulted in more engaged employees. Respondents reported that 78% of leaders used a negative style of communicating. Leaders may consider that their communication style may influence the culture of the organization and that the culture influences the degree to which employees are engaged. The internal communication of the leader is closely correlated with the performance of the organization (Pickering, 2009).

The relationship between communication, culture, and employee engagement is not simple. The communication of the leaders affects way the organization operates, the values, beliefs, and behaviors of employees. The survey results indicated that the communication style of organizational leaders influences the culture of the organization and the level of engagement of employees.

The information from this study may assist organizations in determining the choice of leader when a change is being made. Leaders may be able to identify their communication style and make improvements where possible. Employees may be able to recognize if their level of engagement is influenced by the communication style of the leader and the organizational culture. Employees may consider the degree to which they will be influenced by the leaders and the culture.

Suggestions for Further Research

Theorists have asserted for several years that a substantial link exists between organizational culture and communication (Garnett et al., 2008). The methods that have been identified for cementing the culture of the organization are dependent on communication. The methods include the emphasis that the leaders place on employee development and involvement, control, and relationships.

The organizations in this study represented private, public, and nonprofit entities in Barbados. Some of the results of this study were unexpected. The communication style of the leader did not significantly influence the level of engagement in the private or nonprofit sectors.

The influence in the private sector was significant. Future researchers may examine the reasons for the differences. Future researchers may consider the influence of participant age, level in the organization, and length of service to examine if these factors affect the way employees interact with the organization.

Future researcher may examine if the culture is initially impacted by the communication style of the leader and is then manifested through the engagement of the employees. Future researcher may study if, in the private sector, the leader's communication style firstly affects the level of employee engagement which then impacts on the culture of the organization. Researchers may develop models where the culture is the central factor, initially impacted by the leader's communication style, yet experienced through the culture by engaged employees.

Demographic data that include the size of the organization could be used to determine if relationships exist between the size of the company and the influence of the

leader. Data that include the education level of the employees could be included to examine if the communication style of the leader exerts varying degrees of influence according to the education level of the employees. Analysis of correlation for demographic variables may indicate associations in relation to demographic characteristics and academic achievement.

Results from this study varied among the private, public, and private sectors. Future studies may be conducted for each sector to examine the influence of the leaders' communication within each sector. Differences may be found in the type of leader that is attracted to the various sectors.

Employees may be attracted to the different sectors for specific reasons. The reason for the attraction may influence the level of engagement. Other factors such as the ease with which employees may be dismissed may also influence the culture and engagement in organizations.

The intent of this study was not to consider if the leaders aim to influence the culture and the level of employee engagement in the organization. The intent of this study was not to deliberate if the leaders purposefully used the style of communication to influence the organization. A qualitative study may be useful to investigate how leaders use their communication style to alter the culture and the level of employee engagement in their organizations.

A possible inverse relationship may exist between the communication style of leaders and organizational culture. One consideration is that the culture of the organization determines or significantly influences the communication style used by the leader. The degree to which employees are engaged with the organization may also

affect the communication of the leader. A study in the future may be conducted to examine this relationship.

The intent of this study was not to investigate if each type of organizational culture resulted in a different level of employee engagement. No emphasis was placed on if employees were more engaged in specific types of organizational cultures and less engaged in other cultures. A qualitative study may be undertaken to investigate the relationship between specific organizational cultures and employee engagement.

Summary

Chapter 5 concludes this quantitative, correlation study. The findings revealed that men dominated as organizational leaders. The leaders in the private and public sectors were significantly older than the leaders in the nonprofit sector.

Leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors had a higher level of education than those in the private sector. Leaders who used one positive style displayed all the other positive styles and leaders who used one negative style employed the other negative styles in their communication. Leaders were not identified as using both negative and positive communication styles.

In the overall sample leaders' communication was reported to be negative 77.66% of the time. Leaders with a negative communication style managed organizations with a negative culture. In the overall sample, the communication style of the leader was significantly related to the culture of the organization.

In the overall sample, a statistically significant relationship was found between the communication style of the leader and the level of employee engagement. In organizations where the communication style of the leader was described as negative, the

employees were found to be less engaged. No statistically significant relationships were found in the public sector or the nonprofit sector. If leaders were more positive, the level of engagement by employees did not change.

In the overall sample a statistically significant relationship was found between the culture of the organization and the level of employee engagement. Employees were more engaged in organizations described as having a more positive culture. In each sector, a significant relationship was found between the culture of the organization and the degree to which employees were engaged.

The purpose of the current study was to show that when leaders employed a positive communication style the culture of the organization was also positive. This study may be significant for organizational leaders in helping them to recognize their communication style. Organizational leaders may understand the effect their communication style has on the culture and the engagement of employees in their companies.

The information from this study may assist leaders in making adjustments to ensure that a more positive communication style is demonstrated in their organizations. The finding that the communication style of the leader did not affect the level of employee engagement in the public and nonprofit sectors is significant. One possible explanation for the insignificant level of influence could be that both respondents and leaders were mature and at senior levels in the organization.

Future researchers may consider the influence of participant age, level in the organization, and length of service to examine if these factors affect the way employees interact with the organization. Future researchers may consider an evaluation of each

sector to examine the influence of the leaders' communication within each sector. A study may be conducted to see if the culture of the organization determines the communication style of the leaders.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

COMMUNICATION STYLE SURVEY

This survey has five sections. Section I asks for background information. Section II seeks your perceptions or views of the communication style of the leader of your organization. Section III asks for your perceptions of the effects of the communication style of the leader on the culture of your organization. Section IV seeks your views of the effects of the communication style of the leader on the level of employee engagement in your organization. Section V asks for your perceptions of the influence of the culture on the level of employee engagement in your organization.

Be candid and honest in your answers. They represent your perceptions and views and are critical in the research.

There are 32 questions. It is anticipated that the survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Section I – Background Information

Directions for Section I

Section I asks four background questions that are important to the research. Answer these questions the best you can.

1. What is your age?   Under 20 ☐   21-30 ☐   31-40 ☐   41-50 ☐

    51-60 ☐   Over 60 ☐

2. What is your sex?   Male ☐   Female: ☐

3. How many years have you been employed at this organization?

    Under one ☐   1-5 yrs ☐   6-10 ☐   10-15 ☐   16-20 ☐

    Over 20 ☐

4. What is the gender of the leader of your organization?   Male ☐   Female ☐

5. How would you classify your organization?

   Private ☐   Public ☐   Nonprofit   ☐

Section II – Leadership Communication Style

Directions for Section II

Section Ii asks you to assess the communication style of the leader of your organization. You will see nine statements describing his or her communication style. Read each statement carefully and, suing the rating scale below, ask yourself "How frequently does the leader demonstrate the communication style described?"

Rating Scale

The Rating Scale runs from 1 to 5. Choose a number that best applies to each of the nine statements.

   1 -   Almost never

   2 -   Once in a while

   3 -   Sometimes

   4 -   Usually

   5 -   Almost always

Guidelines for assessing the leader of your organization

1. Answer as honestly and accurately as you can.

2. Do not answer in terms of how you would like to see the leader behave or in terms of how you think the leader should behave.

3. Do answer in terms of how the leader normally behaves on most days and with most people.

The leader's communication style is…

1. POSITIVE – encourages and maintains relationships ☐

2. NEGATIVE – dominates and controls others ☐

3. SPIRITED – optimistic and enthusiastic ☐

4. TECHNICAL – focuses on results rather than on people ☐

5. STRAIGHTFORWARD – passionate, powerful and energetic ☐

6. ALIGNING – encourages supporting values ☐

7. ACCOMMODATING – disagrees politely, willing to adjust ☐

8. POLARIZING – maintains distance ☐

Section III – Effects of Leadership Communication Style on Culture

Directions for Section III, IV and V

Section III asks you to assess the effects that the leader's style of communication has on the culture of the organization. Read each statement carefully and then choose a number from 1 to 5, based on the Rating Scale below, that best applies to the culture in your organization.

Rating Scale

The Rating Scale runs from 1 to 5. Choose the number that best applies to each of the statements.

1. Strongly disagree

2. Disagree

3. Undecided

4. Agree

5. Strongly agree

The communication style of the leader of your organization encourages a culture that is …

1. SYNERGISTIC – persons collaborate and cooperate ☐

2. DYNAMIC – developmental, social and flexible ☐

3. STATIC – formal, maintaining the status quo ☐

4. BUREAUCRATIC – focus on power, regulations, procedures ☐

5. SUPPORTIVE – relationships built on trust, atmosphere is open ☐

6. INNOVATIVE – focus on being creative and ambitious ☐

Section IV – Effects of leadership Communication Style on Employee

Engagement

The communication style of the leader encourages employees to be…

1. ACTIVELY ENGAGED – involved, satisfied with and enthusiastic about their work. ☐

2. ENGAGED – display a sense of confidence, integrity, pride in their work. ☐

3. ACTIVELY NON-ENGAGED – not involved with the job, feeling of apathy toward their work. ☐

4. OBLIGATED – respond to economic and other resources from the organization ☐

Section V – Effect of Culture on Employee Engagement

The organization….

1. Designs programs to engage employees to play an active role in the company
   ☐

2. Encourages employees to share suggestions on how to get work done
   ☐

3. Encourages the development of employees
   ☐

4. Encourages employees to internalize the values of the company
   ☐

5. Encourages building employee loyalty
   ☐

6. Aims to retain its employees
   ☐

Appendix B – Permission to Use Premises

BIMAP

BARBADOS INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY
BIMAP DRIVE • WILDEY • ST. MICHAEL BB14007 • BARBADOS
TEL: (246) 431-4200 • FAX: (246) 429-6733
E-mail office@bimap.com.bb • Website http://www.bimap.com.bb

University of Phoenix

Monday, August 31st, 2009

INFORMED CONSENT

PERMISSION TO USE PREMISES, NAME, AND/OR SUBJECTS

I hereby authorize SONIA GREENIDGE, a student of the University of Phoenix, to use the premises and members' database of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) to conduct a study entitled: "Leadership Communication Style: Effects on Culture and Employment Engagement".

Permission is given with the understanding that the information from the database will not be sold or otherwise distributed.

Sincerely,

R.W. Gibbons
Executive Director

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

Confidentiality and Participation Agreement

INFORMED CONSENT TO ACT AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT

My name is ( ) and I am a student at the University of Phoenix working on a doctor of business administration degree. I am conducting a research study entitled Leadership Communication Style: Effects on Culture and Employee Engagement. The purpose of the research study is to specifically examine what effect, if any, the style of communication used by organizational leaders has on the culture and level of employee engagement. It is hoped that the ability to select and/or train leaders in the future will be enhanced through this study.

Your participation involves completing a short electronic survey (about 5 minutes). Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty to yourself. The results of the study may be published but your identity will not be collected or disclosed, and your anonymity will be protected in all data gathering and reporting procedures. In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you.

The consent form may be completed by checking the appropriate box. On completion, the form should be returned to the sender's email address. The forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet for three years and shredded at the end of this time.

If you have any questions or research-related concerns, please contact me at the email and/or telephone numbers below. The chair of the committee overseeing my research is ( ), who can be reached at ( ).

I fully understand the nature of the study, the potential risks and benefits of participation, the confidentiality procedures that will be used and that I may cease my participation in the study without penalty at any time. ☐

I am not a member of any protected group (i.e. - under 18 years of age, pregnant woman, prisoner, cognitively impaired) and I hereby indicate my willingness to volunteer to participate in this study by clicking on the button below and completing the survey. ☐

By signing this form I acknowledge that I understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to me as a participant, and the means by which my identity will be kept confidential. My signature on this form also indicates that I am 18 years or older and that I give my permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described. ☐