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## RIGHT SPEECH AND COMPASSION COMMUNICATION EFFECTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT VIA MINDFULNESS IN MABGI NORTH SUMATRA

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### Abstract

This study examines the effects of right speech and compassion communication on organizational commitment, with mindfulness serving as a mediating variable, within the Guang Ji Indonesian Buddhist Council (MABGI), North Sumatra Province. The research employed a quantitative explanatory design. The research population consisted of administrators and active members of MABGI who are directly involved in organizational activities. Using a purposive sampling technique, a sample of 170 respondents was selected based on their level of participation in organizational programs. The study utilized primary data, collected through a structured questionnaire distributed directly to respondents. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that right speech and compassion communication have positive and significant effects on mindfulness and organizational commitment. Furthermore, mindfulness positively influences organizational commitment and partially mediates the relationships between both right speech and organizational commitment, as well as compassion communication and organizational commitment. These findings suggest that communication practices grounded in ethical values and compassion enhance organizational commitment both directly and indirectly through increased mindful awareness. The study contributes theoretically by integrating the concept of right speech from Buddhist teachings into the fields of organizational communication and human resource management, while highlighting mindfulness as a key psychological mechanism in value-based non-profit organizations. Practically, the findings provide insights for Buddhist religious organizations in developing ethical, empathetic, and mindful communication practices to strengthen sustainable member commitment.

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### Keywords

Buddhist Religious Organization, Compassion Communication, Mindfulness, Organizational Commitment, Right Speech.

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## INTRODUCTION

Faith-based organizations demonstrate distinctive leadership patterns and human resource dynamics when compared to profit-oriented or public institutions, as organizational practices are deeply embedded in spiritual and moral values. In Buddhist religious organizations, ethical principles derived from Buddhist teachings play a central role in shaping harmonious, meaningful, and sustainable organizational relationships. One of the core ethical foundations within the Noble Eightfold Path is *Right Speech (Sammā Vācā)*, which emphasizes truthful, compassionate, non-harmful, and beneficial communication as a moral obligation in social and organizational life (Keown, 2020; Kottawattha, 2025; Rathore & Verma, 2012). In this sense, communication is not merely instrumental but represents a moral and educational process that reflects spiritual values in daily organizational interactions (Kulykovets, 2024; Molloy & Foust, 2016).

Within organizational contexts, right speech can be conceptualized as a form of ethical communication that promotes honesty, empathy, politeness, and moral responsibility among members (Ferri, 2017; Nassif et al., 2021). Previous studies highlight that ethical and meaningful communication functions as a critical mechanism for fostering trust, emotional attachment, and positive organizational attitudes (Men & Yue, 2019). In value-based and religious organizations, communication grounded in ethical principles is particularly important, as it supports value congruence between individuals and the organization, thereby strengthening organizational commitment (Héliot et al., 2020; Suwarsi et al., 2025).

Beyond right speech, *compassion communication* represents another essential dimension of value-based organizational interaction within Buddhist contexts. Rooted in the concept of *Karunā*, compassion communication reflects deep concern for others' suffering, accompanied by a sincere intention to alleviate it (Gunaratana, 2001). In organizational settings, compassion-based communication has been shown to enhance psychological safety, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and foster a sense of belonging among members (Lilius et al., 2008; Worline & Dutton, 2017). Such empathic communication is particularly relevant in non-profit and religious organizations, where service, care, and collective well-being constitute core organizational values (Han et al., 2020).

However, the influence of ethical and compassion-based communication on organizational commitment does not always occur directly. Organizational commitment, which encompasses affective, normative, and continuance dimensions (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010), is strongly shaped by individuals' internal psychological processes. In this regard, *mindfulness* emerges as a key

psychological mechanism that links communication values with organizational attitudes and behaviors. Mindfulness refers to present-moment awareness characterized by openness and a non-judgmental orientation (Anna et al., 2023; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Originating from Buddhist contemplative traditions, mindfulness has been widely adopted in organizational behavior and management research due to its capacity to enhance emotional regulation, empathy, interpersonal relationships, and organizational engagement (Dane & Brummel, 2014; Reb et al., 2015).

In Buddhist religious organizations such as the Indonesian Guang Ji Buddhist Council (Majelis Agama Buddha Guang Ji Indonesia-MABGI) in North Sumatra, mindfulness is not merely an individual practice but also a collective value that shapes communication patterns, responses to conflict, and interpretations of organizational roles.

In Buddhist religious organizations such as the Indonesian Guang Ji Buddhist Council (MABGI) in North Sumatra, mindfulness is expected to function not only as an individual practice but also as a collective value guiding organizational communication. However, preliminary observations and informal interviews suggest a gap between the normative emphasis on mindfulness and its consistent enactment in everyday interactions, particularly during coordination and interpersonal challenges. This discrepancy highlights the need for empirical investigation into how mindfulness operates as a mediating mechanism linking value-based communication to organizational commitment. Communication practices reflecting right speech and compassion communication are expected to elevate mindfulness among organizational members, enabling them to internalize ethical values more deeply and align their personal values with organizational goals (Jackson, 2018; Thairoongrojana & Junte, 2024). Consequently, mindfulness is anticipated to strengthen organizational commitment by fostering affective attachment, meaningful engagement, and loyalty to the organization (Gajda & Zbierowski, 2023; Ndubisi & Al-Shuridah, 2019).

Despite the growing body of literature on mindfulness, ethical communication, and organizational commitment, most empirical studies have focused on business or public sector organizations within Western contexts. Research that explicitly integrates Buddhist ethical teachings, particularly right speech, into organizational behavior frameworks within Indonesian Buddhist religious organizations remains limited. This gap highlights the need for context-sensitive research that examines how spiritual and ethical communication values operate within faith-based and multicultural organizational settings.

Addressing this gap, the present study integrates right speech and compassion communication as ethical communication constructs rooted in Buddhist teachings and examines their effects on organizational commitment through mindfulness as a mediating mechanism. By situating the model within a Buddhist religious organization, this study contributes theoretically to value-based leadership, ethical communication, and mindfulness literature from a non-Western and faith-based perspective. Empirically, it extends organizational commitment theory by demonstrating how spiritual communication values are internalized through mindfulness to shape commitment in religious and multicultural organizational contexts.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design and Approach**

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to explain the causal relationships between Right Speech and Compassion Communication on Organizational Commitment, with Mindfulness serving as a mediating variable. The quantitative approach was selected because it allows for objective and systematic hypothesis testing through the measurement of psychological and behavioral variables within the context of a Buddhist religious organization (Morgan, 2015).

### **Research Location and Object**

This study was conducted at the Indonesian Guang Ji Buddhist Council (Majelis Agama Buddha Guang Ji Indonesia-MABGI) of North Sumatra Province, a non-profit religious organization that plays a strategic role in fostering the Buddhist community. The research object encompasses the organizational structure of MABGI, including board members, religious activity organizers, and individuals who actively contribute to organizational activities. The selection of MABGI as the research site was based on its organizational characteristics, which uphold Buddhist values, particularly the principle of Right Speech and compassion-based communication practices. These characteristics make MABGI a relevant context for testing the proposed research model.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of this study consists of all administrators and active members of MABGI North Sumatra Province who are directly involved in organizational activities. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, with the following respondent criteria:

1. Registered as an administrator or active member of MABGI;
2. Actively involved in organizational activities for at least one year; and
3. Possess experience in interaction and communication within the organizational context.

The sample size was determined based on the requirements of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which recommends a minimum of 5–10 times the number of indicators used. Accordingly, the obtained number of respondents meets the minimum sample adequacy for structural model testing (Hair et al., 2019). This study utilized 17 indicators, resulting in a total sample of 170 respondents.

### Operational Definitions and Measurement of Variables

The independent variables in this study consist of Right Speech and Compassion Communication. Right Speech was measured using indicators of honesty, politeness, delivering beneficial messages, good intentions, and appropriate timing in communication in accordance with Buddhist teachings. Compassion Communication was measured through indicators of empathy, care, emotional sensitivity, and supportive communicative responses that do not cause harm to others. The mediating variable, Mindfulness, was measured based on levels of full awareness, attention to the present moment, and non-reactive as well as non-judgmental attitudes in carrying out organizational roles. Meanwhile, the dependent variable, Organizational Commitment, was measured through emotional attachment, sense of belonging, willingness to contribute, and intention to remain involved in the religious organization.

**Table 1.** Operational Definitions

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicators	Scale
Right Speech (X1) Rahula (1974);	Communication practices within the organization that are grounded in Buddhist teachings on Right Speech, namely, communication that is honest, beneficial, well-intentioned, and does not cause harm to others	Conveying information accurately and without being misleading Communicating using polite and respectful language, without harsh or offensive expressions Delivering messages that are beneficial to the organization; Communicating with the intention to build and support, rather than to undermine others Conveying messages at appropriate times and in suitable situations so as to avoid misunderstandings.	Likert 1–5
Compassion	The individual’s ability to convey	Demonstrating the ability to understand the feelings and	Likert 1–5

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicators	Scale
Communication (X2) Dutton et al. (2014); Lilius et al. (2008)	messages empathetically, with care and concern, and to understand the emotional conditions of others within an organizational context.	perspectives of other members Showing attentiveness to the needs and difficulties of others Adjusting communication styles in accordance with the emotional conditions of the interlocutors; Using communication as a means to strengthen and provide support to others.	
Mindfulness (Z) Kabat-Zinn (2003); Reb et al. (2019)	The individual's level of full awareness in attending to present-moment experiences consciously, in a non-reactive and non-judgmental manner, during organizational activities.	Maintaining focus and being fully present in organizational activities Being aware of one's thoughts and emotions during interactions Refraining from impulsive reactions in communication situations Accepting differing perspectives without judgment.	Likert 1-5
Organizational Commitment (Y) Meyer & Allen (1997)	The individual's level of psychological attachment to the religious organization, as reflected in a sense of belonging, loyalty, and the intention to continue contributing to the organization	Feeling proud of and emotionally attached to the organization; Perceiving alignment between personal values and organizational values Being willing to devote time and effort to the organization Intending to remain actively involved in the organization in the future	Likert 1-5

Source: Secondary data processed by the researcher (2026)

### Data Analysis Technique

The study applied Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using statistical software, given its effectiveness in analyzing predictive models with latent variables and its capacity to assess mediating relationships without requiring normally distributed data. The analysis was conducted through a two-stage process, including the assessment of the measurement (outer) model and the structural (inner) model. The evaluation of the measurement model encompassed convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. Meanwhile, the inner model evaluation was performed to assess the strength and direction of relationships among variables through path coefficients, coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ), and hypothesis significance testing using the bootstrapping technique.

## Data Collection Technique

Research data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed both directly and online to respondents (Sekaran, 2016). The research instrument was developed by adapting measurement scales from relevant previous studies and was tailored to the context of a Buddhist religious organization. A five-point agreement scale was employed to assess all items, ranging from strong disagreement (1) to strong agreement (5).

**Table 2.** Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents (n = 170)

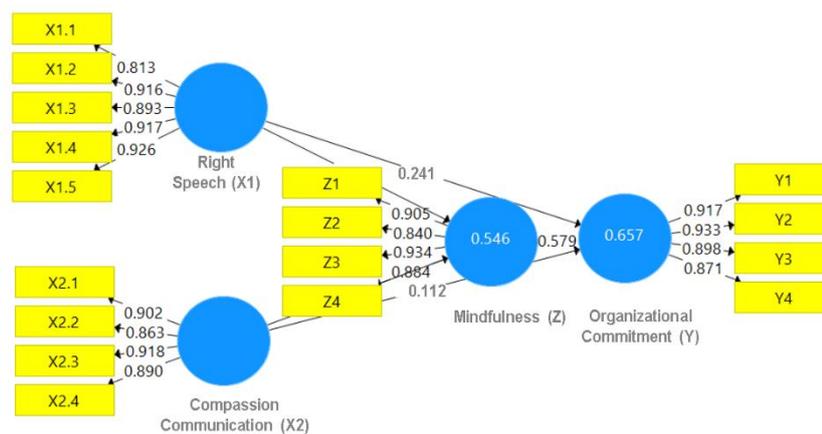
Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	98	57.6
	Female	72	42.4
Age	< 25 years	18	10.6
	25–34 years	54	31.8
	35–44 years	60	35.3
	≥ 45 years	38	22.3
Highest Education	Senior High School	40	23.5
	Diploma	28	16.5
	Bachelor's Degree	76	44.7
	Postgraduate (Master's/Doctoral)	26	15.3
Organizational Status	Management/Board Members	62	36.5
	Active Members	108	63.5
Length of Organizational Involvement	< 3 years	32	18.8
	3–5 years	54	31.8
	6–10 years	52	30.6
	> 10 years	32	18.8
Intensity of Activity Involvement	Low	26	15.3
	Moderate	74	43.5
	High	70	41.2

*Source: Primary data processed by the authors (2025)*

Table 2 summarizes the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (n=170). More than half of the respondents were male (57.6%), and a large majority were within the 25–44-year age range, representing 67.1% of the sample. In terms of education, the majority held a bachelor's degree (44.7%), indicating an adequate educational background to engage with organizational values and communication practices. Regarding organizational roles, 63.5% were active members, while 36.5% served as board or management members. Most respondents had been involved in the organization for more than three years, with 62.4% reporting 3–10 years of participation. Furthermore, a high proportion of respondents demonstrated moderate to high levels of activity involvement (84.7%), reflecting strong organizational engagement.

### Measurement Model

The measurement model was employed to assess the validity and reliability of the research constructs prior to conducting the structural analysis. Convergent validity was evaluated using factor loading values and average variance extracted (AVE), with acceptable thresholds of factor loadings  $\geq 0.70$  and  $AVE \geq 0.50$ . Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), with values of 0.70 or higher indicating satisfactory internal consistency.



**Figure 2.** Standardized measurement model  
 Source: Research findings, 2026 (processed data)

Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence discussed above, seven hypotheses were formulated: (1) Right Speech positively influences Organizational Commitment; (2) Compassion Communication has a positive effect on Organizational Commitment; (3) Right Speech has a positive effect on Mindfulness; (4) Compassion Communication has a positive effect on Mindfulness; (5) Mindfulness has a positive effect on Organizational Commitment; Mindfulness mediates the effect of Right Speech on Organizational Commitment; (7) Mindfulness mediates the effect of Compassion Communication on Organizational Commitment.

The respondents in this study consist of administrators and active members of the Guang Ji Indonesian Buddhist Council (MABGI), North Sumatra Province, who are directly involved in organizational activities. A detailed description of the respondents' sociodemographic characteristics is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents (n = 170)

Variable	Indicators	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Right Speech (X1)</b>	X1.1	0.813	0.792	0.950	0.934
	X1.2	0.916			
	X1.3	0.893			
	X1.4	0.917			
	X1.5	0.926			
<b>Compassion Communication (X2)</b>	X2.1	0.902	0.797	0.940	0.915
	X2.2	0.863			
	X2.3	0.918			
	X2.4	0.890			
<b>Mindfulness (Z)</b>	Z1	0.905	0.780	0.946	0.928
	Z2	0.840			
	Z3	0.934			
	Z4	0.884			
<b>Organizational Commitment (Y)</b>	Y1	0.917	0.816	0.947	0.924
	Y2	0.933			
	Y3	0.898			
	Y4	0.871			

Source: Research findings, 2026 (processed data)

The results of the measurement model evaluation indicate that all indicators have outer loading values greater than 0.70, thereby satisfying the criteria for convergent validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs exceed the threshold of 0.50, indicating that the constructs adequately explain the variance of their indicators. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables are above 0.70, leading to the conclusion that the research instrument demonstrates excellent internal reliability and is suitable for structural model testing.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

The analysis of the research results was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach to examine the relationships among variables in the developed conceptual model. The analysis stages included the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). All indicators of the research variables were confirmed to be valid and reliable after meeting the criteria for factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha in accordance with established standards.

Subsequently, the structural model evaluation was performed to assess the strength of the relationships among variables through the estimation of path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values based on the bootstrapping technique. The hypothesis testing results indicate significant relationships across most of the proposed paths in the model, including both direct and indirect effects. The empirical

findings of the direct effects testing (Hypotheses 1 to 5) are presented in the following table.

**Table 4.** Direct Effects (Hypotheses 1 to 5)

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-Statistics	p-Values	Decisions
H1	Right Speech → Mindfulness	0.241	2.317	0.021	Accepted
H2	Compassion Communication → Mindfulness	0.112	2.041	0.042	Accepted
H3	Right Speech → Organizational Commitment	0.579	6.842	0.000	Accepted
H4	Compassion Communication → Organizational Commitment	0.241	2.668	0.008	Accepted
H5	Mindfulness → Organizational Commitment	0.579	7.214	0.000	Accepted

Source: Research findings, 2026 (processed data)

The analysis provides evidence that Right Speech is a significant positive predictor of Mindfulness ( $\beta = 0.241$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, Compassion Communication also exerts a significant influence on Mindfulness ( $\beta = 0.112$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). These findings suggest that communication practices grounded in ethical values and compassion contribute to enhanced mindful awareness in the context of religious organizational activities.

Furthermore, both Right Speech and Compassion Communication are found to have positive effects on Organizational Commitment, both directly and indirectly. Mindfulness demonstrates a strong and significant effect on Organizational Commitment ( $\beta = 0.579$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), underscoring its role as a crucial psychological mechanism in strengthening individuals' attachment to the organization.

**Table 5.** Indirect Effects (Hypotheses 6 and 7)

Hypotheses	Relationship	Indirect Effect	t-Statistics	P Values	Decision
H6	Right Speech → Mindfulness → Organizational Commitment	0.139	2.186	0.029	Accepted
H7	Compassion Communication → Mindfulness → Organizational Commitment	0.065	2.004	0.046	Accepted

Source: Research findings, 2026 (processed data)

The mediation analysis results indicate that Mindfulness partially mediates the relationship between Right Speech and Organizational Commitment, as well as the relationship between Compassion Communication and Organizational Commitment. These findings suggest that Buddhist value-based communication not only exerts a direct influence on organizational commitment but also operates through enhanced individual awareness and meaning-making regarding one's organizational role.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that Right Speech has a positive and significant effect on Mindfulness. This result confirms that communication practices characterized by honesty, politeness, usefulness, and appropriate timing are able to enhance individuals' full awareness in carrying out their organizational roles. From a theoretical perspective, the Buddhist teaching of *Sammā Vācā* emphasizes that right speech is not only evaluated based on its content but also on the intention and awareness underlying the act of communication (Rathore & Verma, 2012). In organizational contexts, ethical and mindful communication creates a conducive psychological space that enables individuals to remain present-moment awareness (Khoury et al., 2025). The present results corroborate the findings of previous investigations by (Good et al., 2016; Hülshager et al., 2013), which demonstrates that work environments supporting ethical communication contribute to higher levels of individual mindfulness.

The second hypothesis is supported, indicating that Compassion Communication has a positive effect on Mindfulness. Empathic and compassionate communication encourages individuals to become more aware of their own emotions as well as those of others during interpersonal interactions. Conceptually, compassion requires full presence and emotional sensitivity, which are core elements of mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). This finding aligns with prior research by (Lilius et al., 2011; Rynes et al., 2012), which highlights that empathic workplace interactions strengthen reflective awareness and emotional balance.

The results further demonstrate that Right Speech has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Commitment. Communication grounded in honesty, politeness, and good intentions enhances psychological safety and trust in the organization, which ultimately strengthens individuals' affective attachment. This finding supports (Allen & Meyer, 1993) organizational commitment theory, which posits that positive interaction experiences within organizations contribute to the development of affective commitment. Empirically, this result is consistent with the study by (Rego & Pina E Cunha, 2008), which found that ethical communication practices play a critical role in fostering commitment in value-based organizations.

The fourth hypothesis is also supported, showing that Compassion Communication positively influences Organizational Commitment. When individuals experience empathic and supportive communication, they are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and loyalty toward the organization. In the context of non-profit religious organizations, compassionate communication

reinforces the meaning of service and dedication, thereby enhancing participatory commitment (Chen et al., 2021; Ramos Salazar, 2022). This finding is in line with the studies of (Dutton et al., 2014; Lilius et al., 2008), which suggest that compassion in the workplace increases engagement and positive organizational attitudes.

The analysis confirms that higher levels of Mindfulness are associated with stronger Organizational Commitment, as mindful individuals tend to experience a deeper and more value-congruent understanding of their organizational roles. Theoretically, mindfulness enables individuals to manage emotions and organizational pressures more adaptively, thereby strengthening psychological attachment (Abaker et al., 2025; Brown & Ryan, 2003). This result supports previous findings by (Hülshager et al., 2013; Reb et al., 2014), which indicates that mindfulness contributes to positive work attitudes and organizational commitment.

The mediation analysis indicates that Mindfulness partially mediates the relationship between Right Speech and Organizational Commitment. This suggests that right communication practices not only exert a direct influence on organizational commitment but also operate through enhanced individual awareness. When communication is conducted honestly and mindfully, individuals are better able to internalize organizational values, which in turn strengthens their commitment. This finding extends the literature by positioning mindfulness as a key psychological mechanism in the context of ethical organizational communication.

Finally, the seventh hypothesis is supported, demonstrating that Mindfulness partially mediates the relationship between Compassion Communication and Organizational Commitment. Compassion communication that is experienced mindfully enables individuals to internalize empathic experiences more deeply and sustainably. As mindfulness increases, compassionate communication experiences become enduring rather than momentary, shaping long-term positive attitudes toward the organization. This finding is consistent with the broaden-and-build theory, which posits that positive emotional states broaden individuals' cognitive and emotional repertoires and build enduring personal resources (Fredrickson, 2001)(Fredrickson, 2001), as well as with the findings of (Saraç & Akdeniz Balyemezler, 2026), who demonstrate that mindfulness enhances the impact of positive experiences on work-related attitudes and commitment.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Right Speech and Compassion Communication play a significant role in enhancing Organizational Commitment, both directly and indirectly through Mindfulness, within the Indonesian Guang Ji Buddhist Council (MABGI) of North Sumatra Province. The findings confirm that ethical and compassionate communication grounded in Buddhist values strengthens individual awareness and psychological attachment in religious organizations, while mindfulness serves as a key psychological mechanism through which these values are internalized and translated into sustained commitment. By integrating the concept of Right Speech into organizational communication and human resource management perspectives, this study contributes to the ethical communication literature and extends understanding of value internalization processes in spiritually oriented non-profit organizations, particularly within an underexplored Indonesian Buddhist context. Practically, the results suggest that leaders and administrators of religious organizations should prioritize honest, respectful, and empathetic communication practices, alongside the cultivation of mindfulness through reflective routines and leadership role modeling, as strategic efforts to foster sustainable organizational commitment. Future research is encouraged to extend this model to different religious or cultural contexts and to employ longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to further capture the dynamic processes of value-based communication and mindfulness in organizational life.

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