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How can mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes?

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## **Overview of the chapter**

This chapter will deal with the topic of strategic communication and the factors that can lead it to its ultimate downfall. It will also identify aspects that can lead the organizations towards incremental change if strategic communication is utilized appropriately.

Without the arrangement of an appropriate communication facility, the entire organization may suffer from a lack of transparency and clarification. Implementing strategy in business communication can ensure effectiveness and identify areas of concern.

In business, strategic communication involves strategies or activities that can aid in reaching an organization’s goals. This paper includes qualitative analysis to examine the evolution of strategic communication at the corporate level and its effectiveness within the firm. The factors that lead to ineffectiveness or downfall of strategic communication will be analyzed (Adler & Elmhorst, 2012). Several adopted methods will be tested in this dissertation including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodology to determine which of them fits the study effectively.

The results reported in chapter four will be based on this chapter’s methodology. This chapter will also critically engage with each chosen procedure to explicate the appropriate results.

## **Critical analysis of the chosen methodology**

This dissertation’s methodology is qualitative including open-ended interview questions. This was chosen because it's a better fit for the topic being studied versus the quantitative methodology would have made the research more complicated when the information could be obtained otherwise (Smith, 2015). The technique’s primary advantage over a quantitative approach is that it provides answers beyond a simple ‘yes or ‘no.' The quantitative methodology provides subtleties that cannot be seen with the other technique. The researcher's unique observation skills are critical in this regard. The quantitative study usually deals more with the concept of variables, with two variables being compared to get results. The concept of strategic communication, however, deals more with the experiences and cultural aspect of an organization rather than the concept of variables, which are usually used in quantitative methodology. Furthermore, the purpose of this dissertation is about strengthening the strategic communication value chain; all along the process.

Qualitative methodology is results- rather than process-oriented. Since quantitative methodology deals mostly with the specific technique of data collection, it would find inappropriate information if the survey questions were answered incorrectly. The qualitative methodology would not be able to provide accuracy to the answers about the utilization of strategic communication factor in the real-time phenomenon (Morse, 2015).

The qualitative methodology may seem more prone to interference from individual bias or perception of particular information or issues (Turner III, 2010). However, this can be a strength; a gathering of individual opinion data can enable researchers to get predictive information with appropriate details behind the issue, offering deeper information.

# **Details of methodology**

Due to the reasons mentioned above, qualitative methodology is a better option for obtaining information about strategic communication. The qualitative methodology deals with the factor of details and exploration factor. This was the primary reason behind choosing this particular aspect. The research needed to find the details about how strategic communication is used in the real-time phenomenon (Berger, 2019). For this reason, the researcher used open-ended questions about how and when strategic communication should be utilized. As a result, the researcher has a better understanding of the process.

YouTube was selected because of its vast fame and ability to reach audiences as well as its availability. The researcher interviewed several YouTube employees including supervisors and discussed the development of strategic communication processes with respondents.

**Target population and sampling method**

The primary objective for sampling was to choose an Organization like YouTube because it excels in the field of broadcast communication space. For confidentiality, the names of the respondents are not revealed in this dissertation. Sampling was done randomly. The organization was chosen by the researcher, and the employees were selected randomly from all employees who were willing to respond.

In the end, 25 respondents were surveyed from YouTube. Several sampling methods had been considered, including sophisticated and formal methods, such as probability sampling as well as non-probability models which were found to be ineffective concerning the sampling (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 2014). Instead, a Likert scale was used.

Furthermore, this particular dissertation is intended to strengthen the strategic communication value chain of large-scale organizations after implementing this method as a guide to follow business can have an overall improvement in the area of strategic communication. As a result, it will produce the desired outcomes for stakeholders. This dissertation sought to produce literature that can improve the goals of business part and parcel of that is creating the culture of transparency in the organization that can enable firms to progress by having open and honest discussions of their current situation. The researcher’s open-ended questioning approach turned out to be cost and time efficient.

The primary problem observed in this study includes the lack of knowledge about the utilization of strategic communication in the industries today. This study is meant to provide effective means of knowledge about the proper use of the strategic communication that can ensure the achievement of objectives of the organization appropriately. Coombs (2015) stated that strategic communication is an effective means of achievement of goals in the firms today. However, many are still unaware of the actual methods of the primary utilization of strategic communication in a practical sense. This particular aspect utilizes ground theory as the primary factor behind the qualitative methodology. According to Gilgun (2015), the ground theory is meant to establish the theory and explanation behind the observed and acquired results. Certainly, the answers obtained through this study would be used in the provision of an efficient explanation of the occurrences concerning strategic communication. Holloway & Galvin (2016) used ground theory in qualitative research of their study concerning nursing homes. The authors observed to have effective utilization of the research method and the answers obtained had been efficient enough to have the provision of better answers.

The researcher asked the following questions to each respondent:

* RQ1: What cues are most effective in getting viewers to engage with ads played before YouTube videos?
* RQ2: What cues are most effective in making a YouTube advertisement memorable?
* RQ3: What cues are most effective in communicating the advertisement’s message?
* RQ4: Does feedback mechanism that is used by the organization to get appropriate information from the users increase positive perception of the advertisement?

*The following source is studied thoroughly, and the above four questions were extracted by analyzing the findings of the research mentioned below*:

The effectiveness of YouTube Advertising: A Study of Audience Analysis Paula R. Rodriguez

For the purposes of this paper, “cues” are defined as “the multiple ways a message can be communicated, such as with nonverbal cues like facial expressions and verbal cues such as tone of voice.” (Dennis & Kinney, 1998) The more cues a medium can provide and the receiver perceive, the richer the medium is considered. When verbal or nonverbal cues are removed, it can take longer and be more difficult to understand a message fully.

Following the interview, the data were analyzed on the same day by the researcher to ensure its accuracy, uniformity, and coherence.

## **Instrumentation**

Instrumentation is the tools or means by which by investigators attempt to measure variables or data collection. It is a critical aspect in an interview that can enable the researcher to obtain appropriate tools for further data collection. (Roberts, 2010). The primary instrument that furthered this research was the researcher himself the researchers are involved in several tasks, such as talking to the individuals on the phone call and writing down important points that will be shown in the findings section. Several skills were utilized such as interactive competence, steering, attention, and technical competence. (Herr & Anderson, 2014).

Technical competence, the ability to organize the interviews, was the most important skill (Sampson, 2012). This included the explanation of confidentiality matters and preparation of consent forms. Even though it was the first time the researcher performed such a critical and difficult task, with much-appreciated help, the researcher was able to conduct instrumentation effectively.

At first, the interviewer contacted YouTube through their helpline number, and, after describing the dissertation to them, the managers gave permission for the displacement of respective research activities with the promise of keeping the names confidential. During the waiting period, reports, journals, and articles were reviewed to ensure that the researcher had better knowledge while dealing with employees effectively.

After that, the company manager was contacted through the same helpline number to get a list of names and contact information of the employees, to explain more details of the dissertation concerning ethical issues that will be discussed below. Twenty-five employees were selected as the sample size for this dissertation. These employees voluntarily joined the study, and further email correspondence occurred regarding confidentiality, discrimination, and information sharing so that they were comfortable while providing valuable answers.

During the interview, these employees were the first asked to talk about their daily lives, hobbies, education, etc. This was to make sure the employees felt more comfortable providing information to the researcher (Chenail, 2011). The opening stage of a conversation is critical; inefficiency in this skill would alienate participants. Interview management and initiation skills enabled the researcher to ensure that the participants’ negative non-verbal signals and silence were ignored. However, the task was challenging for the interviewer, so the data transcription included information about the skills obtained during the process.

## **Data collection**

Several kinds of interviews were identified from literature for this dissertation: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured (Gordon, 2012). Utilization of these methods has allowed many researchers to balance flexibility and formalness. This dissertation required the researcher to focus on one aspect at a time and diverge more in the interview to get appropriate details. The researcher got the opportunity to ask questions within a certain formal range while enabling himself to go more in-depth as needed. This approach provided a deeper understanding of the subject matter, enabling the interviewee and the researcher to garner surprising details about the effectiveness of communication strategies within the organizations (Katz, 2015).

Since communication is a sensitive topic, the utilization of appropriate interview techniques was required to ensure success (Seidman, 2013). Therefore, the interview questions were designed such that they enabled employees to be free in providing appropriate answers to the research questions without being afraid of breaking the company’s confidentiality regulations. The questions had been carefully asked the employees so that they can freely provide critical details with full confidence in giving appropriate answers.

Employees were contacted to ascertain their preferred interview location. The majority were most comfortable at the work location after working hours. For some employees, timing concerns led us to cancel the face-to-face interview in favor of a phone call. Telephone interviews were taken individually on two consecutive days to ensure that the employees do not contact others (Lichtman, 2012). They were not given details about other respondents, to prevent further contact or to reveal the specifics about the interview process, especially the questions.

Before starting the interview process, the objectives and introduction of this dissertation, and its potential to help in identifying areas of development in communication, were explained to every respondent. During the interview, critical points were written down to fulfill the research objectives. Every interview took about 20 minutes to accomplish.

The researcher divided all information obtained from the interview into various themes and categories. The respective answers and the themes will be stated in the results section (Silverman, 2011).

## **Data analysis**

Data was analyzed using three primary steps: interview procedure, note-taking, and dividing the information obtained into main headings and themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The ground rules in the qualitative analysis (for instance, confidentiality) were critical for establishing limitations for the dissertation.

Two main approaches are critical for the establishment of proper research: inductive and deductive. The former is based on the unstructured framework of the interview, where the researcher is involved in finding answers to unstructured interview questions, which might take time. Since this dissertation needed less time more structured answers, the inductive approach was not chosen (de Casterle et al., 2012). The procedure was rather deductive in that the researcher was involved in deducing the answers by using open-ended, semi-structured questions.

The following steps that were involved in having data analysis are mentioned below:

1. The first step that was organized by the researcher to move ahead in the particular research included the interview procedure itself. Even the structured interviews, sometimes, seems to be unstructured while listening to the interviews all over again. At this time, transcription can enable the organization to have higher growth concerning the development of both organizations and participants.

2. To enable further benefit through the process of qualitative methodology, the data was divided into several themes depending on the research objectives. These themes will become the main headings and subheadings of the findings and discussion section.

Descriptive coding method was used to summarize the main points of the entire research.

The next critical step in the procedure of data analysis was the validation of information explained in the section below.

Furthermore, to find more appropriate results, the method of triangulation was used to promote better results. The results obtained was further evaluated by a third-party group of individuals professional in the group. Palinkas et al. (2015) explained the benefit of using triangulation in the qualitative research method. The authors explained that the purposeful evaluation of results is promoted effectively by the identification of ways to analyze the results effectively. The results concerning the interpretation of answers were compared with the ones obtained in this study. The process, however, took much time period and effort from the side of both the authors and the individuals involved in triangulation.

## **Limitations and validity**

As expressed above, qualitative study is effective for obtaining information about strategic communication, but a few disadvantages exist. Primarily, the data quality that was obtained from about 25 participants had been subjectively impacted based on the perception of a particular researcher. This makes the data rigidity less certain.

Additionally, as compared to the quantitative methodology, qualitative research requires more time. Results could have been had more quickly by choosing a quantitative technique of research. The unpredictable and semi-structured nature of the interviews is another concern. The perception of the reader and the researcher over the same subject matter can be different.

Qualitative methodology is results-oriented, rather than process. Furthermore, the qualitative research technique deals mostly with the detailed approach of categorizing and measuring the answers to the research question. If the information fails to produce the required results, the researcher may choose another direction that can successfully provide information. Such aspects provide more room for the qualitative methodology to enable the researcher to gain access to details by finding more evidence and clues concerning strategic communication without having a limited approach. However, the utilization of qualitative research falls short concerning the predictive approach. Even though this study did not involve the use of prediction, such an approach could have provided the researcher and reader with appropriate statistics concerning the utilization of strategic communication in real-life scenarios.

Furthermore, validity was obtained in this study by comparing these results with those of journals utilizing similar methods of data analysis and collection. The data in this study involved similar results insofar that having a strong strategic communication system in place improves the likelihood of desired outcomes.

The results were shared with the respondents and their management to check that the final result had been rendered correctly. The organization members reported that the results were accurate, and were especially happy that they could improve their business using the results.

## **Expected findings**

The expected findings were that the results would provide appropriate information about the aspects of communication that may enable the stakeholders toward the organization’s objectives. In short, the results would provide insight into the efficacy of strategic communication processes can produce desired outcomes.

## **Ethical issues**

One of the ethical issues that troubled the research throughout was confidentiality. Efforts were made to ensure that the research paper would include the names of employees involved, at the least. However, the efforts were in vain, as the request was denied because the employees did not want their names to be involved in any research. However, without being held back due to the issue of confidentiality, the researcher could have had achieved higher validity for the particular project.

Another ethical issue was discrimination among the organizational members during the interview. The research did not want to discriminate between the employees while taking the interviews as it could have resulted in having distorted responses. YouTube contained people of many races and backgrounds. It was observed that the interviews had to be taken considering all the diverse cultural nationalities and accent considerations with utter respect for diversity if this procedure had been ignored, the nuance of respondents answers would have been lost in translation and or language barriers.

In the end, the researcher gave all appropriate information to the participants to ensure good trust and faithfulness. If the researcher had ignored this particular step, the professional relationship between the respondents and the researcher could have had suffered.

## **Summary**

For this study, 25 respondents from YouTube were selected using a randomized procedure. After having finalized respondents, they were all provided with appropriate details and an invitation letter to join the interview process. The obtained results were divided into several sections based on the objectives that enabled other readers to have easier access to the findings with a descriptive summary. However, the process of qualitative methodology had certain limitations, potentially calling into question the validity of these results. Still, the results obtained matched with those of other literature proving their validity and reliability.

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