How Can Mass Communication Strategies Align Ideas and Actions

To Facilitate Breakthroughs That Influence,

Persuade, and Guide Stakeholders toward Desired Outcomes?

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# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In the children’s game “Chinese whisper,” a message that reaches the last person may not even be intelligible, let alone resemble the original message. Communication undergirds all aspects of daily life, from RT America’s Able Archer strategy designed to reach American audiences to Rupert Murdoch’s conservative Fox News channel to Fusion’s TV strategy of news, pop culture and satire to attract Millennial audiences. Mass communication, in its broadest sense, refers to the imparting and exchanging of information on a large scale to a wide range of audiences. Mass communication can occur via newspaper, magazine, and book publishing, radio, television and film broadcasting, and through the internet.

Organizations must strive to communicate effectively by adopting methods that are concise and clear, despite the problems inherent in transmitting information across broad channels and to various stakeholders, while taking into consideration the context in which the receiver might be interpreted. Organizations that prioritize the accurate delivery of messages from upper management are more likely to influence and persuade stakeholders, and thus, achieve their outcomes.

Using qualitative analysis of relevant literature, this study will examine how strategic mass communication has evolved from its origins in the early 20th century, and how organizations qualify communication as "effective" based on models of either transmission or ritual. The transmission model states that communication takes place via technology, focusing on the composition of the messages and the analysis of their effects. The ritual model, by contrast, sees communication as a central, daily ritual that sustains communities.

Strategic communication is worthy of further inquiry, particularly as technological advances and new mediums of communication arise. A few theories worth consideration include the aforementioned transmission and ritual models, the co-creational model posited by Carl Botan, and the social communication model. Several major theories and their implications will be evaluated and discussed in this study.

# Discussion

## Statement of the problem

In the 21st century, strategic communication confronts a new set of challenges: the integration of efforts across digital communication platforms. While some companies have kept pace with technological advancements in communication, in most cases, gaps exist in the conveyance of information between stakeholders, management, employees, and members of the organization as a whole. This study will explore the methods by which the communications process can be strengthened throughout the value chain (Botan, 2017). Business organizations that communicate ineffectively face loss, low productivity, and subpar performance. In sum, the key to a successful business is effective communication.

## Conceptual framework

This study will examine various strategic communication theoretical frameworks, including central route persuasion, peripheral route persuasion, systems theory, situational theory, social exchange theory, framing theory, and agenda-setting theory. Each of these frameworks and theories describes methods to make communication effective and eradicate issues that may hinder effective communication.

# Purpose of the Study

## Research Question

1. How can mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders (internal and external, including groups of employees, users, advertisers, communities, governments, and investors) toward desired outcomes?
2. Which factors lead to the breakdown of strategic communication?
3. What are the perceptions of individuals regarding the alignment of communication strategies with stakeholder's interests and the company's objectives?

\* H0: Mass Communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes.

\* H1: Mass Communication strategies do not align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes.

## Discussion

Groups or teams often consist of individuals with different values, needs, visions, and even conflicting agendas. It is the responsibility of the leader/manager to align these factors and find overlap in order to achieve the organization’s objectives. Leaders should project and articulate a compelling vision of the future, one that inspires confidence as the most prudent and logical path toward the desired outcome.

Mass communication strategies can facilitate the guiding of outcomes if leaders are able to align constituents under a set of conditions that will allow management to influence and persuade stakeholders. A "guiding outcome" refers to the way leadership envisions the final result of their efforts. The concept of a guiding outcome can be applied to communication in the sense of leading a team through a series of predetermined steps toward a specific outcome. Successful mass communication strategies require leaders to identify the overlap between the needs and interests of different groups of constituents. When these needs and goals meet is where the leaders need to concentrate the crafting and executing messaging based on common ground.

It is generally observed in leadership that what you say is less important than how you say it. Influence is the cornerstone of strategic communication, allowing us to convince others, whether bosses, peers, superiors, or partners. For the purposes of this paper, influence is defined as the ability of a person to affect or shape the opinions and behaviors of other people, regardless of having formal authority over them. Influence is considered “soft power” and it is independent of one’s positional power (Botan, 2017). It is notable to mention that persuasion is associated with convincing others to agree to a commitment (Kearns, 2006). Before getting to this point, pre-work must be done. This is to say that there has to be a high level of certainty that the strategy being presented to stakeholders can be agreed upon as the best course of action after considering all data.

### Elaboration Likelihood Model

One of the most famous models of effective strategic communication is the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. It is a dual-process theory that describes a change in attitude. The model aims to explain the various ways of stimuli processing (the objects or events that elicit behavioral or sensory responses in the individual), the reason for their usage, and outcomes on the change in attitudes (see Appendix A, Figure *1.1*). There are two major routes of central persuasion: In central route persuasion, the persuasion is more likely the result of an individual’s thoughtful and careful consideration of the actual merits of the information that is present to support advocacy. This route engages a high level of message elaboration and cognition. The arguments are generated by the person who is the receiver of the message. Due to this, the result of a change in attitude will be resistant, predictive of the behavior, and enduring.

The central route of persuasion takes place when an individual is persuaded and acts on the basis of the arguments presented or the content of the message. In this example, it is evident that stakeholders should be influenced by a sophisticated presentation and accurate facts and figures. In peripheral route persuasion, the persuasion results from the association of the individual with negative or positive cues, or by making inferences regarding the merits of the position that is advocated. The individual receives these cues under the peripheral route, which are generally not related to the logical argument. The cues will be dependent on the involvement of factors such as the attractiveness or credibility of the sources that are used in the message, or the quality of content and production of the message. The likelihood of success will be identified by the source’s motivation and ability to advocate for the presented argument. There are several determinants of the central route of persuasion, including motivation and ability, which refers to the availability of cognitive resources (Kearns, 2006).

### Systems theory

Systems theory is another strategy for effective and innovative communication. The theory was initiated by George Hegel in the 19th century and was developed fully during the 20th century by the famous biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (Welch, 2007). Von Bertalanffy argued that the interconnected nature of reality merits study of the interconnectedness for a more profound understanding of systems. As such, this theory replaces other empirical approaches that study phenomena by merely observing individual components. For example, theorists who warn about global warming explain that climate change is the result of interlinked human activities.

When systems theory is applied to communication, it refers to seeking understanding of human communication systems rather than favoring just a single part; the basic idea on which systems theory is founded is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (see Appendix A, *Figure* *1.2*). For example, if all the ingredients of a cake are put together in a bowl, the resulting mess will still not be a cake unless all the ingredients are mixed together and cooked in a particular way.

This theory is used extensively in the field of corporate communication. Scholars and researchers of this specialization are usually interested in the ways people interact with each other for the creation of the organization. For example, Wal-Mart is different from Target not only because of the prices or products; the organizations' cultures have differences, and the way they function is different from others and each other as well. Individuals who view communication from the perspective of systems theory genuinely believe that it is the interaction among the participants that make organizations what it is, and thus, that every act of communication has a substantial impact on the system as a whole. In sum, a change in any one part changes the whole system to some extent.

There are several strengths and weaknesses of the systems theory paradigm. One strength is that the theory seeks an understanding that depicts a more precise picture through an examination of multiple layers while also noting isolated people or acts of communication. Systems theory is especially sensitive to the ways in which our communication is usually identified by culture and context. Identification of communication by culture and context does not generalize human communication but explains the totality of the interactions that take place among humans. The weakness of this theory is that it might be too broad in its scope and focus. The most common concern of critics is that if all things are interconnected, then how can the study be done and what should be the focus? Dynamic changes in systems will make it hard to identify the reasons for actions, and thus, studies conducted based on systems theory are not cost- or time-efficient.

### Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory was developed in the area of social psychology for explaining communication and factors that govern human interaction. Social exchange theory refers to a sociological and social-psychological perspective that explains social change and stability as specific processes of negotiated exchanges between parties (See Appendix A, Figure 1.3). For example, if a person comes to know that the negative impacts of a romantic relationship outweigh its benefits, then they will end that relationship. By considering the above-mentioned example, it seems evident that if stakeholders are not satisfied with the policies or changes that are to be made, they will not be interested in continuing their relationship with the company. It is therefore crucial that stakeholders believe that the business relationship will bring positive results; otherwise, they will put the business relationship to an end.

This theory is particularly influential in fields like sociology, psychology, and communication. , where the resources in question might be material goods, services, or any other exchange that has social value; the theory emphasizes the balancing of the costs incurred by the participants with the benefits. The analysis is subjective because different people give different values to resources, even if the resources are defined through a measurable system, like currency.

### Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-setting theory rests on two major assumptions. First, the media shapes and filters reality, rather than merely reflecting it. Second, the amount of attention given by the media to a certain issue will influence the public’s perception as well (Welch, 2007). In the context of the field of strategic communication, persuasion theory deals with messages aimed at subtly changing the attitudes of receivers. It complements the agenda-setting theory because influence and persuasion are the abilities of a person to affect or shape the opinions and behaviors of other people, regardless of having formal authority over them (Kearns, 2006). In most settings, groups or teams consist of individual people with different values, needs, visions, and often, agendas. Management and leadership need to project and articulate a compelling vision of the future and betterment of the business; agenda-setting in a persuasive and influential way entails convincing others to agree to a commitment (See Appendix A, Figure 1.4).

Strategic communication in the 21st century involves the integration of efforts across communication platforms; while organizations have kept pace with technological advancements in communication, gaps persist in the conveyance of information between stakeholders, management, employees, and members of the organization. The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion is the most suitable model for effective communication. It is a dual process theory that describes changes in attitude and aims to explain the various methods of stimuli processing, including the reasons for their usage and the outcomes (Welch, 2007).

There are two primary routes of central persuasion: the central persuasion route and the peripheral persuasion route. In the former, the persuasion more likely results from an individual’s thoughtful and careful consideration of the actual merits of the information they are presented with. This route engages a high level of message elaboration and cognition on the part of the receiver of the message. Due to this, the result of a change in attitude will be resistant, predictive of the behavior and enduring.

On the contrary, in the peripheral route, the persuasion results from the receiver’s associations or inferences based on the message’s negative or positive cues. The individual receives these cues via the peripheral route, and the cues are generally not related to logical qualities. Instead, the cues depend on the involvement of factors such as the attractiveness or credibility of the sources that are used in the message or quality of delivery.

# The significance of the study

This study demonstrates that ELM is a better theoretical model in the area of strategic communication; as a result, it will influence public opinion and impact policy. If applied, it will influence managers and CEOs, change the way marketers sell their products and services, and ultimately produce a positive impact on employees. The ELM model will create a unique opportunity for correction and adjustment of the messaging strategy, leading to the accomplishment of objectives and the improvement of co-creation communication (the process of involving consumers in the external communication process). The first step is bringing the message to them. The second step is letting the consumers respond. The third step is designing the final external communication practice.

Mass communication strategies in the 21st century involve the integration of efforts across communication platforms. The content of the messaging is one of the most significant parts of a company's day-to-day operations. The implementation of the proposed framework will increase the productivity and the performance of the organization as a whole.

# Limitations of the study

Every research work has some forms of limitations that encourage the ongoing process of the research. Improper representation of the target population is one of the basic limitations of this research study. The sample size for this research is small, which can affect the outcome of the study. For better results, one must consider a bigger sample size to get more reliable data. This research study is expensive and time-consuming due to the interpretation of a large quantity of data. Designated time for this research study was too limited due to which might affect its reliability. Ample time is needed to conduct such a research study.

# Summary

Mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes. By using the ELM model, management can easily influence all internal and external stakeholders. ELM is a better theoretical model in the area of communication because it can influence public opinion and impact policy. It has a framework that can support managers and CEOs, change the way people do their jobs, and have a positive impact on the organization and stakeholders. The ELM model can create a unique opportunity for correction and adjustment of any messaging strategy.

# CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Human relationships are about creating free space for sharing, and developing thoughts, visions and feelings in which respectful and appreciative encounters and broadening of personal horizons can take place. Communication is an integral aspect of life for individuals, groups, and societies. People who are unable to communicate effectively and efficiently are less likely to succeed in life. Communication is particularly crucial for businesses because they need to communicate their strategies and activities to their stakeholders (Botan, 2017).

The key to delivering a clear message is the right communication plan or process. As determined by Dahiya & Gayatri (2018), organizations are keen to synergize disparate communication disciplines, including public relations, management communication, advertisement, and others. Woisetschläger, Hartleb, & Blut (2008) noted that strategic communication necessitates that every stakeholder in an organization develops a collaborative vision between a firm's employees and consumers to achieve its desired outcomes. This chapter aims to lay out a detailed literature review discussing strategic communication and the factors leading to its breakdown.

**Mass communication**

Mass communication, in its broadest sense, refers to the imparting and exchanging of information on a large scale to a wide range of audiences via newspaper, magazine, and book publishing, as well as radio, television, film, and the internet. Using qualitative analysis of relevant literature, this study will examine how mass communication strategies have evolved from their origins in the early 20th century, and how organizations qualify communication as "effective" based on models of either transmission or ritual. In the transmission model, communication takes place via technology. In the ritual model, communication is a central ritual which takes place daily and helps information and sustaining the communities.

Organizations must strive to communicate effectively by adopting methods that are concise and clear while transmitting information across broad channels and to various stakeholders and taking into consideration the context in which this information might be interpreted by the receiver. Strategic communication is worthy of further inquiry, particularly as technology advances and new mediums of communication arise. Several major theories and their implications will be evaluated and discussed in this study: transmission and ritual, the co-creational model and the social communication model.

Meisenbach (2008) defined strategic communication as an emerging area in communication and management; recently, it has become the attention of academic discipline. The focus on strategic communication is set to work on management strategies based on developing theories and frameworks to support firms in planning its organizational structure and plan its processes. According to Hollenbeck & Zinkhan (2010), strategic communication helps a firm to facilitate planning and communication using different mediums in developing a network within a firm to work on coordinated actions in planning commercial and non-commercial goals. Fogel (2017) stated that working with strategic communication strategies assist the firm to work on communication management processes in bringing a balance in a company’s operations. This is achieved using three factors: (1) the message, (2) the media channels, and (3) the audience to build a communication flow within the professional work setting. As stated by Downs & Adrian (2012), communication strategies in organizational setting involve mission, vision, and values to strategically position the firm in building competitive advantage in the firm’s respective industries.

The nature of strategic communication is very broad and helps a firm to fulfill its mission using defined framework by laying out the objectives of communication to the audience (which in the case of the firm are employees and consumers) (Fogel, 2017). Coombs (2015) comprehended that strategic communication assists a firm in implementing balanced strategies in achieving business goals clearly. Meanwhile, using technological frameworks, firms are able to involve diverse mediums to increase the efficiency of their communication goals, vision, mission, and others. Self (2014) determined that adopting accelerating communication mediums (aligned with technology) assists the firms to communicate its message with consumers and employees. Accelerating communication mediums assist the firms to reach their communication goals aligned with traditional communication strategies suiting their demands and needs of industry with a balanced approach. Meisenbach (2008) noted that the change in business industries across the world has created the urge for companies to set challenging business goals to develop and achieve long-term employee-employer relationship using communication strategies adequately.

**Literature Review**

1. **Communication and feedback**

Mass communication strategies can facilitate the guiding of outcomes by allowing leaders to align constituents under a specific set of conditions and thereby influence and persuade stakeholders. Citation a "guiding outcome" refers to the way leadership envisions the final course of action that will be implemented towards a goal. The concept of a guiding outcome can be applied to communication as it relates to leading a team through a series of predetermined steps towards a specific outcome.

Strategic communication must be done via proper communication channels to ensure the expected outcomes from all the stakeholders. "Proper" refers to clear information that is free of any ambiguity. Persistent persuasion is achieved when arguments are based on the relevant information; a high level of elaboration produces a high level of attitude and behavior correlation. Similarly, for a lower level of elaboration, there are chances or reduced or no correlation of attitude and behavioral change of stakeholders. Another important factor to consider in this regard is that there is a natural tendency to resist counter-persuasive views (Botan, 2017). If information or a way of communication proved to be impressively persuasive at a particular time, then it will not be that effective at a later point in time, as the state of mind of stakeholders might be different later and several other factors may intervene. Business trust among stakeholders can only be established via strategic communication. Being truthful to the stakeholders must be a part of the strategic plan of the company, even if it may not give instant results; in the long run, the results will be astonishing. Truthfulness is not only required while marketing a product to gain consumer trust, but it is also required while discussing issues that may arise with the stakeholders as well (Cavana, 2001). The consumers need information that is related to the product only; for example, if the product has any harmful side effects. While stakeholders, on the other hand, need all kind of information in which they are interested. The most successful companies today are proactive in their communications rather than reactive.

Feedback is always helpful and serves as the most significant means for improvement in communication. It is essential that the feedback is taken from the stakeholders so that stakeholders believe that they are important to the organization and their suggestions are valued. Also, the strategic communication process of the organization improves. There is always room for improvement in communication patterns. There will be no improvement if there is no welcoming environment for feedback, either positive or negative. Effectively communicating the strategic plans of the business and conveying how the work of employees and stakeholders is directly related to the goals of the organization will favor the organization in accomplishing its long-term goals.

1. **Leadership and influence**

Each individual in a group or team has diverse values, visions, needs, and conflicting agendas. It is the responsibility of the leader/manager to align these factors and find overlap to achieve the organization’s objectives. Leaders should project and articulate a compelling vision of the future, one that inspires confidence as the most prudent and logical path toward the desired outcome (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000).

Influence is considered "soft power," and it is independent of one's positional power (Botan, 2017). Working in tandem with influence, persuasion involves convincing others to agree to a commitment (Kearns, 2006). There is a difference between influence and persuasion. For instance, it is selecting phrases and words for communication of ideas that hit a responsive chord in the marked audience. Persuasion presents a case to control the opinion of others, make the marked audience believe the information or motivates a decision. (Chen, M. W., & Rybak, 2017). On the other hand, influence is having a vision about optimum results for any situation or the organization. This is done without any coercion and tries to motivate the people to work as a team in high spirits to make that vision turn into reality. Persuasion can be used to spur the people to act or to make a decision without earning their genuine buy-in, while influence dedicates time to earning such a mind-share (Kearns, 2006).

A business case studied by Hackworth, Cooksey, DePalma, & Kahn, combines’ leadership impact on profitability with true enterprise profitability and leadership performance. Based on this calculation, companies have an average 27% increase in their profitability via the leverage management improvement. The prerequisite for this: a significantly higher proportion of executives would have to provide better leadership performance. Such calculations are of course a bit rough. Leadership has no direct or mechanistic direct impact. Of course, there is sufficient evidence from theory and practice, as leadership behavior, decisions or communication to factors that in turn contribute to the company's success. Leadership has the most substantial and most direct influence on culture and employee engagement. (Hackworth, Cooksey, DePalma, & Kahn, 2018).

Objective elaboration of arguments while communicating with business stakeholders is crucial. Project managers evaluate their arguments empirically because it is important to judge that up to which extent a variable is affecting the objectiveness of an argument. In resolving conditions of conflicts, an argument strictly scrutinized for stable objective variables will make active agreements. The approach helps in obtaining desired results from stakeholders and all the involved parties. A message or argument having weak variables will produce little or no agreement even if the scrutiny is very high for the choice of variables. Therefore, objective variables play an essential; role in making the conflict situation favorable or against the mutual interest of stakeholders (Botan, 2017). For example, financial information is given to the communities, and they raise concerns that the organization is earning a lot but not doing anything for corporate social responsibility, but the presenter uses the objective variables and provides solid information than the conflict will be settled. If a chosen variable tends to enhance argument processing of the target audience, the attitudes of the subject's will be more polarized as compared to the absence of the variable. If the variable is reducing the processing of argument, the attitudes of the subjects will be less polarized.

1. **Active listening process and distractions**

Distraction can be any factor that diverts the attention of the listeners and is another critical factor affecting the persuasive capabilities of an agreement. Persuasive capabilities are the traits of the argument that persuade the listeners. Distraction can enhance the subject's persuasion towards a weak argument, or it can reduce the level of persuasion of a resilient argument. It must be kept in mind while addressing the post-conflict situations that the distraction variables might be personal or present at the time of the meeting are enhancing the persuasion power of weak arguments instead of decreasing it even for the strong arguments. Distraction variables can be personal distractions, loss of interest due to irrelevance or any other such factors. Distraction can disrupt the thoughts and affect the capacity of reaching an acceptable solution (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017).

Distraction can be regarded as an umbrella concept, including a variety of variables that can affect the motivation and persuasion of the subject. When there are strong variables that might be facts and figures to improve the quality of the argument used in processing the argument, the persuasion of the subject is increased along with an increase in scrutiny because the subject is more exciting and attentive regarding the information or arguments presented. However, if there are weak variables in the processing of the arguments, the persuasion of the subject will be reduced with a decrease in scrutiny.

Personal relevance can play the role of an effective valid variable in the processing of argument. Stakeholders will start attaching their emotions to the situations. The stakeholder's relevance must also be considered. Information not successfully tied to the interests and goals of the stakeholder will create a distraction, which reduces the motivation level of even a strong message. Information that is personally irrelevant is, therefore, distracting and must be avoided at all costs (Botan, 2017).

The flow of information from all the related sources must be controlled. In meetings with stakeholders where informative reports written for stakeholders are presented, their interest must be considered up to a reasonable extent. It serves a critical factor in achieving the motivation and persuasion to expect the desired outcome from a group of stakeholders for even a large-scale project. Biased information can cause severe harm to the stakeholders. The situation can be worse if the stakeholders are from different cultural or economic backgrounds. The diversity will lead to severe problems in creating a favorable attitude. For example, the use of body gestures; Thumbs up is considered a positive gesture in most of the countries, but in some countries, it’s a negative body gesture. If this sign is used in the meeting where such stakeholders are present might cause a huge problem. Biased information mostly initiates due to personal issues of someone. If a biased report or information in any matter bypasses all the scrutiny steps and reach the stakeholders, then it will be nearly impossible to change their initial perception built by the biased facts. (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017).

Even though the biased information should not be used but if the situation gets out of hand and it can cause serious harm to the organizations then having firm control of the environment can turn the biased information into a useful tool towards achieving better motivation of stakeholders. If the stakeholders are actively coming up with strong and weak arguments for a situation, then a little biased created in a controlled fashion for the strong arguments will favor in enhancing the motivation because then they will tend to think differently and their attitudes towards the situation will also be altered. However, a biased situation created in favor of the weak arguments will render the strongly processed arguments ineffective as well. It will cause a more significant loss in the form of attention loss and focus on a situation.

1. **ELM and attitude**

ELM can have a different impact on different people. Consequences of elaboration on attitude changes of stakeholders can be diverse. It is hard to understand all the consequences that can arise from the elaboration of a particular situation. Attitude changes of the stakeholders are hard because they are based on thoughtful considerations of information shared with them. If the information related to an attitude is readily available to stakeholder, then there are chances that the same attitude will be observed over time. Motivational factors may also be relevant to attitude changes. Increased elaborations of the information related to the issues will favor the opinion change and more persistent attitudes of stakeholders. Role-playing is also considered as the influence paradigm to increase persuasion in situations requiring more insight into the situation. Timeline of the information being provided is also a major factor towards the attitude change. Information sharing with stakeholders must be planned strategically. Outdated information will not only create more problems; it will also affect the proper functioning of all of the related entities.

**Communication Theories**

1. **Elaboration Likelihood Model**

One of the most famous models of effective strategic communication is the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. The model aims to explain the various methods of stimuli processing (the objects or events that elicit behavioral or sensory responses in the individual), the reason for their usage, and outcomes on the change in attitudes (See Appendix A, Figure 1.1). It is a dual process theory that describes the change in the attitudes accruing to the two chief paths of persuasion, i.e., central and peripheral persuasion. This route engages a high level of message elaboration and cognition regarding the arguments on the part of the person receiving then the message (Cavana, 2001). Due to this whole process, the result of a change in attitude will be resistant, predictive of the behavior and enduring. There are several determinants of the central route of persuasion which include; motivation and ability which refers to the availability of the cognitive resources (Kearns, 2006). So, if this method is applied, then strategic communication will be as innovative and practical as well. For example, Jack Ma is the captain of a basketball team in the school. He sees a shoe advertisement in which the company claims that their shoes' extra soft and comfortable heel and increase the height of a jump. The commercial also provides some research findings to support their claim. Jack Ma believes that the shoes will help in her performance so; he orders a pair on Alibaba. Therefore, Jack Ma is convinced because the central route of persuasion takes place when an individual is persuaded by the arguments presented or the content of the message. In light of this example, it is quite obvious that the stakeholders should be influenced by the excellent presentation and accurate facts and figures. The presenter always communicates the facts and figures along with the presentation which is properly and accurately cited. For Example, the company has provided a scholarship to some employees for further studies, and the presenter plays their video messages, then there would not be any suspicion.

In peripheral route persuasion, the individual receives cues under the peripheral route that are not related to logic but instead depends on the attractiveness or credibility of the sources or the production quality of the message (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017). This route to persuasion takes place when the subject decides to agree or disagree with the message, and it is based on the cues along with the strength of the ideas of the arguments. For instance, the target audience may agree with the message as the source appears to be attractive or expert. Sometimes, the listeners are persuaded because they notice that there are several arguments but lack the motivation or abilities to think about them.

1. **Systems theory**

Systems theory is another strategy for an effective and innovative communication strategy. It was initiated by George Hegel and was developed fully during the 20th century by the famous biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (year). It was argued by Ludwig von Bertalanffy(year) that because everything is connected, we need to study the system as a whole rather than merely observing the individual components. The scientific study of global warming is an example of a systems theory approach, in that scientists must study the way all parts of a system interact instead of focusing on just one (See Appendix A, Figure 1.2).

Viewing the communication from a perspective of systems theory identifies that every act of communication has a strong impact on the system as a whole. If a change occurs in any one part, it changes the whole system to an extent. For example, the presenter is communicating a message regarding environment-friendly policies. A stakeholder shares a concern, and the presenter seems to get nervous when it is quite possible that the whole meeting turns ineffective. Therefore, the whole system of strategic communication will be affected.

There are several strengths and weaknesses of the systems theory paradigm. The theory seeks an understanding that depicts a clearer picture through an examination of multiple layers of the communication as interconnected, despite viewing it as isolated people or acts of communication. In other words, it means that the whole

On the other hand, the systems theory might be too broad in its scope and focus. If all things are interconnected, how the study can be done? Specifically, when studying the communication system, what should be the focus? Due to dynamic changes in the systems, it will be hard to identify the reasons for actions.

1. **Social Exchange Theory**

Social exchange theory was developed in the area of social psychology by George Homans to explain the interaction, communication, and factors that govern human interaction. Social exchange theory views communication as a specific process of negotiated exchanges that take place between multiple parties. A party receiving the short end of the stick may choose to end the exchange, as when a person breaks up with a romantic partner after realizing that the relationship’s adverse effects outweigh the positive. In the context of strategic communication stakeholders who become dissatisfied with the organizational policies or changes may similarly end the change, it is therefore that stakeholders remain convinced that a business relationship will bring them positive results (See Appendix A, Figure 1.3).

This theory has a stronger and massive impact on several fields like sociology, psychology, and communication. These areas also influenced the development of the theory with time. This theory is dependent on reciprocity, especially when the outcomes can be easily calculated. The analysis is subjective and varies from person to person because different persons give different values to resources. Even the resources are defined through a measurable system, like currency.

1. **Agenda-Setting Theory**

Agenda-setting theory refers to the ability of the news media to highlight the importance of the topics that are related to public agenda. Agenda setting theory is a theory of social science, and it makes predictions or assumptions. Agenda-setting theory rests on two major assumptions: The media shapes and filters reality, rather than simply reflecting it; and that the amount of attention given by the media to the certain issue will influence the public perceptions as well (Welch, 2007). Specifically, when we see this in the context of strategic business communication. Agenda setting in a persuasive and influential way entails convincing others to agree to a commitment (See Appendix A, Figure 1.4).

# The Best Approach for Effective Strategic Communication

In the light of the above discussion, it can be observed that the ELM model of persuasion is the most effective approach that can be used to persuade the stakeholder the reason behind choosing this as the most effective option is that the other theories have several fallbacks, but the ELM does not have much. The systems theory is too broad, and while dealing with the stakeholders, even a small risk cannot be taken. It is noteworthy to mention the liability social exchange theory to deal with various matters where resources are defined and through proper and accurate measurable systems. The agenda-setting theory mainly focuses the news media only even though it is right but still cannot cater to all the aspects of strategic communication with the stakeholders. Stakeholders are the most significant part of the organization, as the stakeholder theory is the most effective and ethical approach to management it is essential for the more significant benefit of the business (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017). If the stakeholders are satisfied, then it will enhance the brand value and brand image. It is the dream of every business organization to have high brand value and extraordinary brand loyalty. In the current period the competition is at its peak and the competitors most of the time spread rumors. Even if the rumors are merely rumors and are not based on reality but still can harm the brand image and brand value. The number of customers might fall which as well will ultimately end up in low sales and low profits or might be a loss. Even in worse scenarios, it might pose a threat to the existence of the brand and the business organization (Cooper, 2006). So, if the stakeholders are satisfied and they are well communicating about the strategies and activities of the business organization, then these rumors will not affect the goodwill of the business organization.

**The Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion**

The Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion is mainly a theory that gives a proper detail about the thinking process and the factors that affect the thinking process as compared to other theories. In the general or annual meetings, the managers give a presentation to the stakeholders in which they provide all the necessary information that should be primarily known to them according to the business organization. Here comes the practical application of ELM for persuasion in effective strategic communication because the theory elaborates that the thought process that might transpire when the presenter attempts to change the attitude of the person through the means of communication, there are various effects that certain variables of persuasion that are involved throughout the communication and persuasion processes.

The ELM model assumes that the personalities can differentiate in up to which extent the object or behavior is advocating the message and the position of the presenter. It is the body gestures and the facts and figures that in combination, persuade the viewer (Eden, 1998). It means that the level of elaboration or thinking an individual does regarding an issue or a message can be from low to high along an elaboration continuum.

**ELM a comprehensive model of attitude change**

As stated in the beginning, the ELM is a very comprehensive model of attitude change. It allows the integration of many different aspects of this research area. The individual components have often been empirically tested and confirmed. However, there are also some critics of this model. For example, Kruglanski, referring to the "uni model" of persuasion he conceived, replicated and reinterpreted some of Petty & Cacioppo’s experiments, highlighting weak points and inconsistent elements. He argues that there are not two different modes of processing, but that they are just the poles on a continuum. Thus, complexity can also be varied by, for example, the information about the expert status of a communicator is designed to be different or short (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017). Complexity alone can influence the processing without having to differentiate between cue and argument explicitly. Nonetheless, the ELM is still the most widely accepted change of attitude through communication.

The quantity of thinking varies from person to person. It can be a lot, moderate or very little regarding the message that is conveyed. This is the reason that before starting any formal session or meeting the ice-breaking activities are performed, these are all the tactics that are used by the presenters to attain the attention and motivate the viewers (Morsing, 2006). The quantity of thinking the individuals engage is extremely significant in explaining what they mean in turn this will optimize the number of individuals that will be persuaded. When people fall along the elaboration continuum then they can be determined to be persuadable and as a result process the message that has been delivered and is more motivated to understanding and follows the presenter call to action. The motivation of the individual can be influenced by diverse variables, for example, the perceived personal relevance of the issue to the individual, amount of enjoyment that a person attains from thinking, there are some individuals who like to think more than others and they enjoy thinking a lot. One other variable is being personally responsible for message processing.

For instance, an individual with a family history of diabetes will be more motivated to carefully listen to the information given about new insulin injecting methods that are less painful. The person will be more interested if he or she is charged with sharing the received information with other members of the family who are looking for someone to guide them (Fishbein, 2011). Notably, the children in the family who might be facing many issues while injecting insulin with the syringes. However, if there are some ways to inject insulin without the syringe, it will be great information for that individual. The abilities include time available for getting involved in the message, intelligence and the level of perceived or actual knowledge of a person. For instance, if an individual is aware and has a pre-existing knowledge about the topic of the presenter, then he or she is likely to respond and elaborate more.

**Motivation and Attitude**

Motivation and ability, in turn, are influenced by various individual and situational factors. If individuals are motivated and capable of intensive, cognitive information processing, the central path of information elaboration is more likely (likelihood). Attitudes become this way through an intensive, critical mental argument formed and changed with the information. If motivation or ability for intensive information processing is low, there may be attitude formation and change via the peripheral path even without intensive information processing. In this case, attitudes are influenced by peripheral cues 2, which can be based on both cognitive mechanisms, such as heuristics and effective mechanisms, such as classical and operant conditioning. Attitudes formed by the central path of information processing are more stable in time, more resistant to change, and better predictors of behavior than attitudes conceived via the more fleeting, peripheral path. (Falkheimer, Heide, Nothhaft, von Platen, Simonsson & Andersson, 2017).

There are other factors too, such as the distraction in the environment of the communication it affects the ability to think, most of the people cannot concentrate on the message if the environment is noisy. Then some people lose interest when there is extensive message repetition, but on the other hand, there are some people who are able to understand, analyze and recollection of the arguments that are conveyed in the message better with repetition of the message (Fishbein, 2011). There are other factors too that significantly influence the ability and motivation might be specific to the context of the communication or possibly internal to the individual. Altogether when high motivation is combined with high ability to think, then the people tend towards the "central route of persuasion". It can be observed on the left-hand side of Appendix A, Figure 2.1. However, when the motivational level is low then the ability to process and understand is hindered, individuals tend toward the "peripheral route to personation" it can be observed on the right-hand side of Appendix A, Figure 2.1.

With this juxtaposition, one can see to what extent interests align with the interests of those important to your Stakeholders. One can use the similarities targeted in communication with the stakeholders and win them in support of the organization. With different interests or fears of the stakeholders, one can develop communication strategies to reduce the fear and provide arguments, if necessary, to the stakeholders "To get on board" or to appease with time stakeholders'' demands and expectations have changed. Now they are not simply interested in the best products or services; they may advocate for CSR (corporate social responsibility), demanding that the organization not be involved in any activities that might harm the citizens or environment (Scott, 2000). Sometimes, the competitors spread rumors about being involved in the inappropriate activities if the stakeholders are not well aware then it might pose a considerable threat to the organization, but if the business organization has applied the stakeholder approach, then the organization will not have to suffer at all (Ford, 1998). The business organizations need to make sure that the stakeholders are conveying the information frequently, so communication strategy follows corporate strategy.

With strategic communication, we create the necessary room for maneuver to achieve corporate goals. Strategy planning is not a one-off act that ends with a finished concept but a process. Communication strategies reflect the business environment and explore this for opportunities and risks. They not only react to external and internal changes as well as influences but initiate and shape them. Through strategic communication, we strengthen the most critical assets of your company: credibility and positive perception among the reference groups. The concept of strategic communication pays off in a good reputation and significantly influences whether one can see the entrepreneurial room for maneuver.

## Factors Leading to Communication Breakdown

The implementation of a strategic communication plan offers a mechanism to top management of an organization to deliver a clear and concise message to its employees. However, it is vital to underpin other perspectives of strategic communication in this literature review. The section highlights the factors leading to communication breakdown using relevant articles, books, and journal articles to set a focus and form a perspective. The factors are as follow,

## Perceptual and Language Differences

Holtzhausen & Zerfass (2013) stated that perception generally determines how individuals interpret different elements around them. It directly determines how individuals perceive the message delivered to them; it also regulates the inconsistent behavior and response of individual if the message is against their perceived value. Proper consideration of perception is an essential factor leading to communication breakdown in a firm. For example, if 25 employees are working in a team or on the same project, they need to consider the message delivered to them from the same scale and work on the same page. However, it is not always possible for all of them to perceive the message from the same criteria or scenario presented by the manager. Furthermore, Mazzei, Kim, & Dell'Oro (2012) have highlighted cultural diversity and language difference as another factor of communication breakdown in organizations. In a competitive industry, firms are keen to hire employees from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to increase innovation in their strategic formation.

Fredriksson & Pallas (2015) indicated that companies, for example, McDonalds and others that are working across the world, have a diverse employee set in different franchises. Diverse employees in a workplace have the potential to increase the chance of internal conflict if managers are unable to deliver a clear message to all these employees. Meisenbach (2008) stated that in a professional setting, managers are suggested to avoid discussing the sensitive topic in front of employees that might develop opinion style of communication. Downs & Adrian (2012) observed that normally, these individuals usually utilize their own set of values and judgment that might be due to contradictory beliefs of individuals. Furthermore, Woisetschläger, Hartleb, & Blut (2008) determined that the adoption of relevant communication style helps a firm to perform according to their defined skill set. Considering a date-based position, it is important for managers to understand the skill set of employees as it will help the managers design and draft a clear and concise message for their employees/team to help them understand the values of the firm and act accordingly.

It is found by Dulek & Campbell (2015) that working on cross-communication styles in a professional setting is unavoidable when it comes to sustaining a firm's communication setting. Using cross-communication style, managers are able to handle language differences and expand the need to interact with people in the firm. Practical applications of cross-communication assist the firm to support people in perceiving and communicating information as clearly possible. Macnamara & Zerfass (2012) stated that using cross-communication style; managers are able to work on different styles and adapt them accordingly. It is the reason that managers are encouraged to understand individual personalities and try their best to incorporate their communication approach and message in a manner that assists the managers to improve their conversation (communication) to achieve its required results. As defined by Holtzhausen & Zerfass (2013) the chances of inevitable miscommunication arise that result in negative consequences for managers regarding flawed results. Therefore, it is important for organizations to remedy workplace communication issues in their relative cases to achieve their targets successfully.

## Excessive Information

The reasons why communication breakdown occurs has been discussed in many research papers, books, and others. Among other common reasons, excessive information has been emphasized by researchers in both academic and non-academic disciplines. Excessive information or infobesity, information anxiety is a key reason that increases the change for conflict or communication among employees working in a firm. Mazzei, Kim, & Dell'Oro (2012) defined information overload as a reason to develop confusion among employees that lead them to face difficulty in understanding a situation or issue that lead them to face difficulty in taking or making the decision to handle a situation. In a professional setting, information overload is more likely to happen when managers are collecting an excessive quantity of information daily. Fredriksson & Pallas (2015) stated that the concept had been originated from information theory that works on storage, preservation, communication, compression, and extraction of information. Information overload does not only affect employees, but it also affects managerial level people in making decisions for the welfare of the firm.

In recent time, Woisetschläger, Hartleb, & Blut (2008) outlines that information overload does not only influence the state of decision-making, but it also develops confusion among decision-makers with a vast set of information. In case of organizations, these information sets entail a raw material cost, contradiction, and other relevant information for managers to take the best possible decision for a firm to handle probability of achieving their required results. Macnamara & Zerfass (2012) stated that in the age of modern information technology, managers are able to work on primary drivers of information to be used in multiple fronts in managing quality production, ease of dissemination, and reach its audience successfully. Potential benefits of modern information technology further involve the stakeholders of the organization to utilize social media and attention economy to connect consumers and employees. It will also assist the managers to avoid using excessive information by filtering their required information before taking any decision or drafting a message as noted by Dulek & Campbell (2015).

Fredriksson & Pallas (2005) determines that in the age of digital technologies, issues related to excessive information can be handled easily; there are Google Analytics, Informative, Internet Culture, and others that help the firm to handle over-exposure, excessive consumption, and abundance of information. Data culture in technological era helps the firm to filter down the information according to the need of the situation, helping them avoiding overexposure and unnecessary confusion of information at managerial level. Meanwhile, from an employee perspective, Holtzhausen & Zerfass (2013) found that offering excessive information to employees lead the employees in understanding their job description, especially when they have to work on a project. The most effective way to handle information is to outline the areas for employees that they should consider while they are working on a project. Outlining potential areas for employees is recommended by Dulek & Campbell (2015) as the researcher believes that information overload can lead the organization to face multiple issues considering their employees.

It has been highlighted by Self (2014) that with increased production of information, firms are required to adopt continuous news culture that leads to a competitive advantage in their production quality and employee involvement in the strategic making, but it also affects the quality of news stories reported in a different scenario. Furthermore, Fogel (2017) stated that it increases the change of information duplication and transmission of information, especially if it is done across the internet medium. On a positive side, it increases the exposure of the firm to use different channels aligned with technology, for example, internet phone lines, video calls, email, messages, RSS, and others. Fredriksson & Pallas (2015) critique on data mining or information-digging in a way that researchers or employees are working on different sources of information is usually found working with historical information which in many cases affect the results of the project. Therefore, organizations need to work on quality information filtered according to the need and demand for the project. It will reduce the complexity of data for employees so that they can work on processed information.

## Complexity in Organizational Structure

Even in most common cases, organizations are found working with four types of organizational structure that dominate their business practices and landscape especially, in managing the flow of information in a firm setting. With any change in organizational structure, managers are found struggling with communication-based challenges to control employee activities and their involvement in decision-making (Downs & Adrian, 2012). Loosening control of information because of organizational structure also lead the firms to develop conflicting situation among their employees which in general affect a firm’s performance. In functional organizational structure (the most common one in the business of all sizes), there are high chances that employees will be grouped by function or department and report to their respective authority (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2013). In this type of organizational structure, there are high chances in loosening communication processes. It is the reason that employers emphasize employees to consult their respective supervisor, team leader, or manager. Generally, in these types of organizations, supervisors and managers are keen to work on open-door policy for their employees to work on task-related issues and avoid any chance of conflict influencing their operational facilities (Woisetschläger, Hartleb, & Blut, 2008).

In the case of the divisional structure, employees are generally clustered by their division and report to their supervisors. However, the difference in this structure from the functional structure is that the supervisors are keen to work with autonomy to control their resources and work on a high growth mode (Dahiya & Gayatri, 2018). The concept of autonomy directly influences organizational structure in case of communication, especially while employees are working on team projects. To overcome communication challenges in this scenario, it is essential for managers to adopt effective communication procedures to support collaborative options (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2013). It is also suggested to a firm to encourage regular communication, this support exchange of ideas and innovation in managing the firm's operations successfully. In the case of matrix structure, managers are keen to bind multiple types of organizational structure to support multiple projects at one time. In order to extract exact results, however, employees are required to work with multiple supervisors (Coombs, 2015).

In this structure, managers are keen to support open communication with employees to exchange ideas, talk with other people openly, and overcome their personal and professional issues easily. This structure supports collaborative operations and reduces any chance of conflict among the employees (Fogel, 2017). It can present difficulties for managers who may end up competing over whose work is progressively imperative. Then again, this structure holds the guarantee of widening a worker's range of abilities and sharing his extended learning base with associates (Meisenbach, 2008). To overcome this scenario, it is recommended for managers to leave no uncertainty in the psyche of the chiefs about which work is one’s need. This can be achieved by forming a framework to share regular updates or monitoring a venture's development in the organizational portal to help relieve communication breakdowns (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2010).

## Google’s Strategic Communication Strategies

Same as that for example, if the customers give positive feedback and the business organization gives a bonus to the employees then the external stakeholders, i.e., customers will influence the internal stakeholders, i.e., the employees. Google treats strategic communication extremely carefully. Google’s decisions are highly influenced by activist groups, governments, and the media. The company uses different communication strategies for each party. So, it is highly important that strategic communication is effective, and all the stakeholders are on the same page.

In the figure, the communication is based on the point of interest of the stakeholders. The interest of stakeholders is the reason for Google’s huge success; although the competition is tough, Google avoids its stakeholders’ displeasure at all costs. Google is well aware that the flow of information from all of the related sources must be controlled. It is a known fact that any stakeholder will put more attention to the information related to his or her interests (Appendix B, Table 2.1).

For the customers, the message is conveyed that Google is recruiting talent of China and it will benefit them as Google will be providing entire Google services in Mainland China and create services that will be Chinese characterized in the future (Saunders, & Lewis, 2012). Additionally, global customers will be benefited through the diversification of Google contents and services. For instance, in the Google search engine Chinese results, Chinese content on YouTube and data in Chinese on the Google map (Appendix A, Table 2.2).

The message that is conveyed to the shareholders is that it is an opportunity for re-entry in the Chinese market and it provides a path to step up in context with globalization and more significantly the revenue will be increased as well shortly. So, this information is conveyed to this specific group of stakeholders, and it adds value to the organization. So, it is essential that the right information is conveyed with facts and figures to the right group of stakeholders. For instance, the financial information was given to another group of stakeholders' then it would have been useless because the shareholders are interested in the opportunities that increase their wealth. The shareholders are persuaded and are influenced that the path to a global market is opened and it will benefit them financially as well. So, the shareholders are also persuaded and stay loyal to the brand.

The message conveyed to the employees is that new blood is going to join the family of Google. The employees are influenced that new members are joining and the organization encourages and promotes diversity, which is an outstanding practice. To the media group of stakeholders, the message is conveyed that they will have many news stories and several angles will be created for publishing news and articles. The message conveyed to the government is that the tax will be contributed which boost the economy and new job positions will be created for the economy. The communities have conveyed the message that the employment opportunities will be provided to the people of China.

## The integration of corporate communications

Also, the integration of corporate communications is useful because strategic management can benefit from the know-how of communication experts. Corporate communication applies, for example, to the phase of strategic analysis and forecasting. Here, there are only insufficient concepts for the recommended investigation of the wider corporate environment and social stakeholders within the framework of management theory. The research results of Gurning et al. can help to conceptualize the corporate relations much better, and the findings of Issues Management can be used for early strategic education (Welch & Jackson, 2007).

However also, in the phase of strategy formulation and evaluation, integration of communication experts makes sense. Ultimately, companies have only two options to respond to changes in the corporate environment. They can; a) Reactively adapt and develop new market strategies, or they can b) proactively try to influence the business environment in the interests of the company's goals. For the second option, corporate communications would be necessarily important. However, even with the first option, communicative questions play a role that should not be underestimated. Whenever entrepreneurial actions are not communicatively legitimized, corporate strategies must be revisable in the interests of conflict prevention. "The principle applies, which is not negotiable, is not enforceable and thus, not profitable designed" (Saunders, & Lewis, 2012). With the anticipation of possible conflicts, sensitization of the decision-makers for interests of the reference groups is achieved at the same time.

# Summary

Strategic communication entails many perspectives, mediums, and frameworks for firms around the world to set a focus and achieve their targets. In the case of the competitive industry, it is important for organizations to work on collaborative measures and strategies in achieving its objectives. However, it is discussed that if the managers are unable to deliver a clear message to its employees or a team, they face issues in creating a balance among its team that leads the firm to face various issues in achieving its collaborative objectives. The other section of the literature has discussed various factors leading to communication breakdown, among which the focus is toward perceptual believe and language difference. The increasing trend of diversity in the industry has created the urge for companies to work on strategies in overcoming communication breakdown to achieve their targets successfully.

# CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

**Chapter Overview**

This chapter’s focus was on collecting data on strategic communication and the factors that can lead to its breakdown. It also identified the aspects of strategic communication that, if utilized appropriately, lead an organization toward incremental change in strategic communication. Specifically, this chapter focused on how organizations can incorporate strategic communication factors to avoid breaking down the firm’s operations. Without the arrangement of an appropriate communication plan, the entire organization may suffer from a lack of transparency and clarification (Tuck, 2014). 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. Additionally, the factors that lead to ineffectiveness or weakening of strategic communication were analyzed. The qualitative analysis was used to analyze various aspects of to determine the effectiveness of strategic communication and its relations to corporate performance.

**Critical Analysis of the Chosen Methodology**

This dissertation’s methodology is qualitative and utilizes open-ended interview questions. This method was selected because of its flexible nature in data collection; qualitative research methodology provides more independence to researchers because it focuses more on subtleties than metrics. The qualitative research process is also open-ended, making the process fluid and easy to follow (Smith, 2015). It also makes the process more accurate and is preferred by many researchers. It will, therefore, be used as the research methodology to establish the impact of strategic communication on the performance of an organization. The case study's design is a useful tool that investigates trends; therefore, it would provide the best descriptive analysis of strategic communication value chain in order to improve an organization's performance. The researcher's observation skills are critical in this regard. The concept of strategic communication deals more with the experiences, and cultural aspect of an organization such as artifacts, those aspects such as dress which may be easy to discern, however, may be hard to understand beneath artifacts are espoused values which are conscious strategies, goals and philosophies. 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 strength; a gathering of individual opinion data can enable researchers to obtain predictive information with relevant details behind the issue, offering more in-depth information.

## Research Design

This study seeks to assess how can mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes. Using a qualitative approach, the researchers used open-ended interview questions and narrative analysis to answer research questions about the significance of strategic communication. It is important to mention that the researcher administered open-ended interview questions in which 25 YouTube employees responded to the questions.

## Sample

The study will focus on businesses that deal with online services in the United States. There are numerous business organizations of this type, but only YouTube has been selected for the sample. The major reason behind the selection of YouTube was its large number of audiences. It is one of the largest video-sharing websites. In order to get the information regarding the significance of strategic communication, employees of YouTube were selected. By using a random sampling technique, the researcher gathered information from 25 YouTube employees for this research study.

## Participants

The participants were YouTube employees YouTube was selected because of its prominence and broad audience, 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 that excels in the field of broadcast communication. The names of the respondents have been kept confidential in the dissertation. For this research, the random sampling method was used to collect data from the target population. The organization was chosen by the researcher; the employees were selected randomly from all employees who were willing to respond. According to Creswell (2012), interviews are an effective data gathering method that involves the transferring of information from interviewee to interviewer in a more comprehensive and detailed manner. In this context, the criteria developed by Lincoln and Guba were considered extensively, affirming the constructivist and naturalistic assumptions. The authenticities, as well as criteria for the participants, were based on ontological, educative, tactical, and catalytic authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Adopting this approach ensures that participants become responsible for cultural reproduction of the research inquiry in which they have a part and therefore have a stronger investment in ensuring that the outcome of the research is authentic.

## Qualitative Interpretation

The consensual qualitative research (CQR) method was used to interpret the data. (Hill et al., 2005; Hill et al., 1997) Consensual qualitative research was used, following the open-ended questions. Consensual qualitative research is defined as the use of open-ended interview questions, which provides consistent and in-depth information regarding the opinion and experiences of the individual (Hill et al., 1997). In the study, “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 the sender of the communication offers, the richer and effective the communication will be. When verbal or nonverbal cues are removed, it can take longer and be more challenging to understand a message.

## Instrumentation

Instrumentation is the tools or means, by which investigators attempt to measure variables or data collection. It is a critical aspect of 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 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). Interactive competence is the ability to communicate in setting specific ways jointly; it is about using communicative resources to co-construct understanding whereas, Technical competence includes knowledge and skills, which are utilized to achieve specific goals; therefore, these aspects are essential for the completion of the research.

Technical competence, the ability to organize the interviews, was the most critical skill (Sampson, 2012). Technical competence was put into practice by explaining matters of confidentiality to the participants and by preparing consent forms. Even though it was the first time the researcher performed such a critical and challenging task, with much-appreciated help, the researcher was able to conduct instrumentation effectively.

Precise design of this research study was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to get their approval for this research study. After getting approval from the IRB, the interviewer contacted YouTube through their helpline number, and after describing the dissertation to them, the managers permitted the commencement of research activities with the promise of confidentiality. After that, the company's manager was contacted through the same helpline number to get a list of names and contact information of the employees, to explain the dissertation in more detail concerning ethical issues that will be discussed below. It is important to mention that the manager provided the interviewer with the contact information of 100 employees. Random sampling technique was then used to select twenty-five employees as the sample size for this dissertation. An informed consent (Appendix B) was signed by all the participants before participating in this research study. 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, and education, in order to make the employees comfortable while discussing personal information with 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 skills obtained during the process.

**Step-By-Step Guide for Interview**

* First, the more extensive research queries regarding the study were described, along with an outline of the broader scope.
* After that, questions were developed by focusing on the previously described areas. Such questions were further refined to comply with the specification of the respondents. The main objective was to attain insight into respondents’ expertise and experience regarding the knowledge area.
* Once the questions and their scope were developed, the language was adjusted according to the understanding and cultural backgrounds of the respondents.
* In order to attain more in-depth insight into the sample’s perspective, most of the questions were formulated using the word “how,” rather than “why”. In this regard, the approach of open questions was applied.
* After the development of questions, the format and structure of content were evaluated by considering the cultural implications and comprehension level of respondents. Warm-up questions were also devised.
* Subsequently, the flow of questions was decided.

**Data Collection**

Several types of interviews were identified from the literature for this dissertation: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured (Gordon, 2012), Utilization of these methods has allowed many researchers to balance flexibility and formality. This dissertation required the researcher to focus on one aspect at a time, and diverge more in the interview to get adequate details. The researcher got the opportunity to ask questions within a specific formal range while enabling him 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.

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 the researcher 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.

Prior to 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 one hour to accomplish.

**Theme**

According to renowned anthropologist Morris Opler, it is imperative to recognize themes in order to analyze cultural intricacies (Bernard & Ryan, 2003). It is also asserted that every culture features certain declarations that can be defined as themes. Thematic expressions then help researchers delve more deeply into the considered topic of strategic communication. Primary thematic expressions may include repetition of particular ideas and words, silence regarding seemingly audacious questions, or usage of cultural vocabulary or language connectors.

Throughout the data collection, interviews were conducted and evaluated by considering the prominent themes. For this purpose, coded interviews and index cards were used. The underlying reasons for the interview were considered throughout to pinpoint the required findings. Moreover, for all the questions, expected responses were jotted down after brainstorming. After the interviews, the index cards of participants’ responses were analyzed one by one in a comparative manner. Similar answers were stacked together to assess the strength of a particular response. After sorting out all index cards accordingly, the themes could be clearly identified. A comparative analysis was conducted that matched the actual and expected responses. In order to determine the next steps, as well as the underlying outcomes of research findings, it is significant to focus on the themes of what most participants said. Any biases were avoided, and the researcher included even unexpected responses in the research, regardless of presumed responses. Following the stacking, reflection, and summarization, it was now time to demonstrate the thematic results. For this purpose, all the themes were separated, and through an assessment, the trends of responses were described. The researcher highlighted what became more apparent after the process and what changes had to be made to previous perceptions. Moreover, any new questions that arose were also considered.

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using three primary steps: interview procedure, note-taking, and dividing the information obtained into main headings and themes (Marshall and Rossman, 2014).

The ground rules in the qualitative analysis (for instance, confidentiality) were critical for establishing limitations in the dissertation.

Two main approaches are critical for establishing the research: inductive and deductive. The former is based on the unstructured framework of the interview and the generation of a new theory emerging from the data, whereas deductive approach is aimed at testing the theory by developing a hypothesis and then designing a strategy to test the hypothesis. 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 were involved in data analysis:

1. The researcher first listened to structured and unstructured interviews again to outline emerging themes.
2. The data was then divided into several themes depending on the research objectives. These themes will become the main headings and subheadings of the findings and discussion section.
3. The main points of the research were summarized, using the descriptive coding method.
4. Finally, the data was validated, as explained in the section below.

## Limitations and Validity

As expressed above, the qualitative research method is suitable to obtain 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 the individual researcher. Additionally, as compared to the quantitative methodology, qualitative research requires more time. 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 enabling the researcher to gain access to details by finding more evidence and clues concerning strategic communication without having a limited 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. The results gathered through open-ended interview questions are analyzed with the existing literature. Comparing the results from open-ended interview questions and that of existing literature provided a better understanding of strategic communication. Validation of gathered data through open-ended interview questions was acquired by comparing it with those of journals utilizing similar methods of data analysis and collection. Response shared by the participants was analyzed through narrative analysis and compared with previous literature to find out some significant trend. A critical examination of gathered data and existing literature provided similar results insofar that having a robust strategic communication system in place improves the likelihood of desired outcomes.

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

## Ethical Issues

One of the main ethical issues was discrimination among the organizational members during the interview. The researcher 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 the respondent’s answers would have been lost in translation and, or due to language barriers. In the end, the researcher gave all appropriate information to the participants to ensure trust. 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. Participation of these individuals was finalized after they completed informed consent. These individuals were all provided with appropriate details and an invitation letter to join the open-ended interview questions. 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. Gathered results by interviewing 25 respondents from YouTube was compared and matched with existing literature, proving their validity and reliability.

# CHAPTER 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter provides a clear presentation of the data and the data analysis to answer the question: How can mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes? It reports the findings of the study regarding YouTube’s communication strategy. The results were analyzed to determine the strategic communication methods being utilized by YouTube based on employees’ perspectives.

The term “strategic communication” is defined by researchers as a combination of approaches, such as public relations, management communication, and advertising, to satisfy a company’s short- and long-term goals (Adler & Elmhurst, 2012). For the purposes of this study, strategic communication techniques, such as the social communication model and the correlation theory, have been developed by leading scholars to motivate employees and support innovation. The study of communication strategies has received attention in academia recently due to its promise to deliver corporate growth; companies often produce higher rates of growth after utilizing the techniques. This study aims to present strategic communication’s revolutionary formula that can enable organizations to increase growth and attain other objectives (Coombs, 2015).

This chapter will provide an overview of the results obtained by utilizing the methodology discussed in the previous chapter, namely qualitative analysis via telephone interview. Presentation of the data in its entirety would not be possible in this dissertation due to spatial concerns; therefore, a summary will be presented. To organize the findings for readers, the data have been divided into several themes that were selected after answers were obtained.

## Mode of Google’s YouTube communication with the audience

The analysis of the data established that 65% of employees interviewed use Video (YouTube) to communicate with the audience. Based on the survey, 95% of YouTube customers provide immediate feedback on the video. The study also indicates that over 85% of the audience responds by commenting on the YouTube video. For instance, an employee indicated that “Traditionally, communication about the particular service or product enables the customers to know only after the company has produced the product. However, the world has changed, thanks to growing technology. On YouTube, the product itself is involved in the communication factor that enables the viewers to look through the stuff. That means the videos are both the product and the method of communication. For example, the search engine is one of the services provided by the company where the users can communicate with us and utilize their valuable time to ask whatever they wanted to see.” The result of the study demonstrates that YouTube achieves long-lasting communication with customers in order to maintain an active customer base. YouTube’s 24/7 availability has cultivated a sense of community among viewers around the world. Several answers were relatively similar, except for one shown below.

It is also important to note that the results indicated that 55% of employees communicate using comments, reports, and helpline. This finding means that the majority of YouTube employees engage with viewers through YouTube's videos. It also means that the best channel of communication explored by YouTube's staffs in video communication. Video communication has made communication between the company and other companies to be very effective and more productive (Pedersen, 201). The analysis of responses also indicates that an estimated 75% of employees prefer the comments and helpline to engage customers and viewers because of the quick responses. Most participants responded that give the essence- the main idea- and then say as one purpose stated, “*We communicate with the users through the comments, report section, and the helpline. We are well aware of the fact that the users are able to maintain their entertainment desire by choosing the search engine for finding the best videos among the sea of them. However, certain videos are also reported by the users to use, which enables them to develop faith and loyalty because of our quick response. In a sense, our communication method involves a close connection with customers to answer their queries. One more thing: the customers also report hateful comments that are either blocked or removed by YouTube developers or with permission of the video uploader themselves. If the particular section or video does not cater to our terms and agreements, we simply remove them. So yeah, the best solution we have observed includes the quickest response. This is the way our platform works."*

## Internal and external communication tools

The results also indicate that 58% of employees agreed that emotions are essential than the message in an advertisement. The majority of the employees, about 20 of them, stated that YouTube enhances the customers’ experience by using strategic communication. Therefore, YouTube as a company utilizes improved search algorithms and artificial intelligence to sift through over 80 billion submissions of feedback daily, enabling the right video to reach the right viewer at the right time, and therefore, it is one of the communication strategies being explored by YouTube. Externally, the organization provides company contact information and avenues for reporting inappropriate videos. The findings also established that YouTube uses improved search algorithms and artificial intelligence to sift through over 80 billion submissions of feedback daily, enabling the right video to reach the right viewer at the right time. Externally, the organization provides avenues for reporting inappropriate videos and company contact information, allowing You Tubers to participate in official communication. Such efforts enable employees to achieve organizational goals, such as customer satisfaction, and thereby a greater income for the company. As one of the employees said, *“Efforts put on by the company, such as a better search engine, enable more customer engagement.”*

Internal communication is vital for the organization to meet the demands of viewers and clients. Ten employees commented that many employees enjoy working in the company, while others stated that colleagues can connect well to share innovative ideas. Twenty-one employees stated that managers communicate well with employees to provide support. Employees are even given the opportunity to share their innovative ideas with managers and other senior team members.

The most important part of YouTube’s communication strategy is the viewers’ perception. As stated by one employee, *“the entire focus of the maintenance of internal and external strategic communication is to enable customer satisfaction.”* Customers can be frustrated by an over-saturation of advertisements. Therefore, as another employee stated, the *“organization ensures that not too many ads are presented before the video goes on.”* The company has recorded viewers’ perceptions about advertisements through feedback sessions or via periodic surveys, discovering that some viewers feel frustrated and even disturbed because of the constant intrusion of advertising between and during videos.

A harmonious and flexible work environment is critical for the development of an effective communication strategy. An additional employee stated that *“among internal tools, effective communication and transparency is one of the ways that our leaders use to ensure that the customers are well received.”* About 20 employees stated that strategic communication includes the involvement of better professional relationships between the workforce and their superiors, and the willingness of leaders to give opportunities and freedom.

Almost all employees stated that strategic communication is one of the techniques the organization utilizes to ensure customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction depends on the superiority of services provided by the company; if internal and external communication aspects are handled clearly, the viewers will be satisfied at large.

# Summary of results obtained

YouTube's communication strategy is centred on customer satisfaction. Employees stated that better services, in the form of faster-loading videos and a superior search engine, enhance communication, leading to a higher rate of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the provision of customer service via the report section and direct helpline number allows the company to practice effective means of strategic communication, along with direct communication with customers through the channel and social media.

Clients (advertisers) are just as critical as customers (viewers). An employee provided the following response: *Clients provide necessary ratings or traffic that can be used to earn more income from companies seeking to buy advertising*. To accomplish this, the company makes itself available to advertisers in a variety of industries, including television channels, movies, musicians, and even Netflix, all of which pay the company to show advertisements. The company uses faster video loading, better suggestions, and many other facilities to engage users. Viewers may also take advantage of premium membership, television broadcasting, gaming, and other engaging features. Such aspects are involved in utilizing better strategic communication with customers. In these ways, the organization maintains effective internal and external communication to ensure that the consumers are satisfied and the company achieves its objectives.

# Hypothesis Analysis

H0: Mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes. With reference to the first hypotheses, three (3) questions were put forth to test the study's hypothesis. The first question was "What are the internal and external communication tools used by the organization?" The second question was, "What are the models of communication used by Google YouTube? The last question was, "What is the effectiveness of the tools of communication used by Google YouTube?" These three questions were applied to discern the themes relevant to the hypothesis of the study. Several themes emerged from the participants' responses to these questions. The first theme was the types of internal and external communication tools applied by Google YouTube. The second theme that emerged was Google YouTube's mode of communication with the audience. The third theme established was the effectiveness of comment-based feedbacks as a strategic communication technique. Employees stated that YouTube's primary focus is the company's development through the fulfilment of viewers' video-watching demands. To accomplish this, YouTube Google ensures that customers can effectively communicate with the company through its official website, toll number, and social media accounts. YouTube incorporates internal strategies, such as building strong relationships between employees, to maintain an ideal environment so that the entire workforce can focus on the advancement of customer satisfaction. Simultaneously, YouTube uses external strategies, like customer engagement through feedback sessions, to ensure customer satisfaction. The company's focus on effective strategic communication techniques, such as perfecting its search engine, and fostering a stable relationship with clients, facilitates the achievement of organizational goals.

H1: Mass communication strategies fail to provide benefits to the organization concerning effective internal management.

This hypothesis was found to be untrue, since, as stated above, YouTube utilizes strategic communication as a means to advance the organization both internally and externally. The firm utilizes many tactics to ensure that employees are satisfied with management techniques, such as giving incentives and, promotions and prioritizing internal team building. 58% of participants stated that YouTube uses strategic communication to engage its clients and stakeholders. Additionally, 72% of participants believed that viewer comments and the company's quick response time are crucial ways of moderating the customer-organization relationship. Participants indicated that "YouTube provides detailed information and immediate responses" to its audience and advertisers and that this is an effective strategy to ensure engagement.

# Summary

This section provides an overview of the results obtained by utilizing the methodology described in the third chapter. Qualitative analysis during the interview process enabled the researcher to obtain results and analyze them effectively. The discussions of the results have been presented to inform the reader and contribute to the field at large. Due to spatial constraints, the presentation of all the answers was not possible in this dissertation; research was instead divided into several themes chosen after the answers were obtained. Finally, this chapter enabled the reader to understand present-day strategic communication techniques by showing a summary of all the results presented.

# CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Strategic communication is a critical topic for the development of businesses in a variety of fields. Once a communication strategy has been thoroughly developed, the organization can achieve success effectively with minimal need for external resources. This dissertation aims to provide information regarding effective strategic communication techniques. This study is structured around questions and answers regarding specific topics within the field of strategic communication. This section will conclude the research by providing a discussion of the results described in the previous section.

In a broad sense, the concept of strategic communication is meant to provide a strategy for the effective conveyance of specific content among individuals in an organization. Utilization of a particular course of action is meant to lead the company toward the desired outcome. Through the utilization of qualitative analysis, this study has enabled readers to utilize strategic communication in their present circumstances by presenting the techniques used by YouTube employees. The primary aim of this dissertation is to identify ways strategic communication can enable an organization to effectively share critical information among stakeholders such that the company ends up progressing more quickly toward its desired goals. For this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach because of the need for an in-depth exploration of the topic, which would not be possible using a quantitative methodology. Telephone interviews were conducted with a pool of 25 YouTube employees.

Chapter 5 is organized such that the results can be understood concisely. The first section contains a summary of the findings described in the previous chapter. These summarized findings will be accompanied by a general discussion that addresses this study’s research questions. Finally, the limitations of this study will be discussed in this chapter, as well as the conclusion.

# Summary of the findings

The interviewed YouTube employees observed that their company has an organized method for utilizing strategic communication. Some employees stated that YouTube’s communication strategy involved the provision of better search engine services, enabling consumers to find their favorite videos instantly. Additionally, the presence of a report section and helpline number allows consumers to connect with the organization. The employees mentioned that they must provide a fast reply to consumers to keep them satisfied. Employees also stated that they were involved in ensuring that customers are given superior services, such as faster-loading videos, fewer advertisements, and compelling video suggestions.

YouTube’s social media presence and official website are the organization’s other vectors of communication. Employees post regular updates about YouTube and add-ons on social media. YouTube is a well-positioned company thanks to its growing numbers of customers and viewers. This was possible because of effective communication with the consumers.

Employees also provided answers concerning the communication strategies used with clients, including suppliers, advertisers, and television channels, such as Fox News, MSNBC, and RT America. YouTube shows ads between videos to fulfill organizational objectives. Many employees mentioned that in order to accomplish this, employees must have effective communication with clients. Others stated that employees often attempt such communication with clients using a variety of methods, including face-to-face meetings, Skype, emails, and phone calls. For YouTube, the convenience to the client matters the most. Such factors indicate that the employees and the organization are concerned with the betterment of the client and customers. Internal and external communications are critical intertwined factors for the company. Employees communicate effectively and openly with management in order to share innovative ideas within the organization.

One employee stated that the overall goal of internal and external communication is customer satisfaction. For instance, it was observed that customers might get frustrated if there are too many advertisements between videos. On the other hand, since YouTube’s services are free to consumers, advertisements are critical to the company’s growth. Therefore, viewers are provided with a limited number of ads before videos, sometimes even reduced to one ad per video. YouTube uses small feedback sessions to attain this information.

# Discussion of the findings

The primary purpose of strategic communication is the integration of the company’s short- and long-term plans, programs, advocacy efforts, and public education.

This dissertation identifies effective strategic communication techniques for readers. The first part of the findings includes the benefits, need, importance, and procedure used for effective communication with customers. Three primary themes had been recognized in this study: communication techniques, consumer engagement, and internal and external tools for communication. These factors will be analyzed and discussed in the literature section.

## Communication strategy

Communication primarily occurs between consumers and the organization. Devising a communication strategy to manage such interactions between organization and customer is vital in determining the organization’s ability to listen to users’ desires or complaints. Companies can use large-scale communication technology such as social media and email to maintain a direct connection with consumers. Consumers can read direct reviews and information about products with the aid of such communication media. Similarly, YouTube has been able to use the search engine tool to advance the satisfaction of viewers.

Regular company news updates on social media are critical for effective communication with customers. For instance, if a particular company is able to communicate with customers and keep them updated about the latest software or technology, consumers are likely to feel cared for by the organization. Such demonstrations of concern by the organization’s employees ultimately augment potential customers’ confidence and loyalty. Loyal clients eventually lead business organizations to success.

However, the most critical factor for effective communication with customers is the active involvement of organizational members (Conrad and Terry 2015). In YouTube's case, the customer service team is readily available to hear the demands and complaints of viewers via comments, reports, the helpline number, social media, and email. As a result, the company satisfies its viewers by giving them better recommendations in their feeds. The company designed its system based on viewers' desires, indicating that listening to consumer's desires and complaints are critical in strategic communication.

Similar findings regarding organizations' customer-oriented communication strategies have been observed by Coombs (2015). An organization centred on consumers and that actively satisfies their demand achieves more significant success. Organizations can satisfy people's innate need to belong and connect by ensuring effective communication. Social media also plays a vital aspect of customer satisfaction at large. Zerfass & Holtzhausen (2014) stated that social media has made it easier for organizations to connect directly with consumers. Social media helps organizations track real-time reviews of their products. Before the advent of social media, such data was harder to find.

An organization can also succeed by focusing on clients since they enable customer satisfaction on a larger scale. The more the clients are satisfied, the better the results for the organization. Several techniques have been used by YouTube to effectively communicate with clients.

Zerfab et al. (2014) observed that customers are highly satisfied with the efforts of mobile media organizations when it comes to the maintenance of products or service. For YouTube, this means providing videos and recommendations while removing hateful and blasphemous content. Such goals are attained by adopting the idea of acquiring higher-quality raw materials. It is important that YouTube actively communicate with all stakeholders to develop consensus. Such active communication is necessary to handle concerns such as hateful and blasphemous content effectively. The approach of business communication between YouTube and Netflix can be considered as an example of strategic communication: YouTube uses clients such as Netflix as a revenue source in order to pay professionals who are responsible for contributing innovations and ideas.

## User engagement

Strategic communication is directly or indirectly centered on user engagement. If consumers are found to be positively engaged with the organization's products or services, the company can attain higher growth. The more products beloved by customers, the more the company can produce.

However, the flickering focus of customers and the threat of rival organizations can cause problems for companies, even those that initially retain competitive advantages. Feedback sessions can help an organization gauge customer satisfaction through live reviews, which go on to shape the services offered. It is, therefore, also critical for organizations to be able to measure a given product or service’s performance with consumers. YouTube can measure such customer feedback with every click.

Similar findings have been observed by Rossmann, Ranjan, and Sugathan (2016) regarding how communication strategies have helped organizations engage users via the utilization of customer support systems.

## Internal and external communication tools

Internal communication (between managers and employees) and external communication (between company and employees) are critical and allow the company to achieve customer satisfaction on a larger scale. Internal and external communication is equally important. Internal communication comes from having motivated and satisfied employees who can produce for the organization more effectively. Ultimately, the primary tool for the satisfaction of consumers involves the motivation of employees.

Such strategies can be enacted by enabling senior members of the company to effectively communicate with employees, who in turn reciprocate the efforts made by the company. Managers of organizations should also be able to attain the benefits of effective communication. However, the mere availability of effective communication is not always enough to produce better leaders and managers; the company must also provide training concerning the management of employees so that they can reap the benefits of strategic communication (Wenzel & Koch, 2018). Heath et al. (2018) observed that the organization’s main priority should be to initiate strategies that can motivate employees to work harder. Strategic communication was described as the main method to motivate the workforce to innovate.

A thorough assessment of existing research clearly indicates that strategic communication positively correlated with employees’ motivation level. Communication has a profound impact on employee motivation. Information conveyed with clarity eliminates the possibility of misunderstandings. Companies that adopt effective communication techniques are more likely to build a positive work environment, leading to increases in productivity and growth. As such, the integration of Google with YouTube will allow the latter organization to improve the interaction between employees and management, which will provide a competitive advantage against rival companies.

## Consideration of Videos as a Tool of Communication

The findings of this study revealed that electronic meetings could be a powerful communication strategy, providing opportunities for information to be shared immediately. Platforms such as Skype provide inclusive platforms for arranging meetings. Electronic meetings create a collaborative environment where employees and leaders can share their views and concerns (Bishop, Press, Mendelsohn, & Casalino, 2013). The ability for people to communicate over long-distance means that such technology can save time and cost. Video sharing is also used by YouTube to enhance communication between suppliers and potential customers. Undoubtedly, video sharing can successfully replace face-to-face communication. Different organizations can use video- and photo-sharing platforms to enhance understanding between groups. Features like downloading and commenting allow employees to retain a copy of the meeting (Bishop, Press, Mendelsohn, & Casalino, 2013) to be referenced later. High-quality conferencing software can be rented or purchased. Employees have the opportunity to rapidly connect with each other and communicate business targets efficiently. Videos also allow workers to actively communicate specific needs.

Companies can also build positive relationships and manage communication with clients through online platforms. Online platforms can also be used to take feedback or listen to clients’ concerns. This can also be an effective strategy for building customer loyalty. Online communication is always available to the customer, allowing them to connect to the company at any time to place an order or give valuable feedback. Electronic platforms allow clients to save time and money and remove the trouble of traveling. The findings of this study revealed that employees and customers exhibit a high level of satisfaction with electronic and online communications (Gordon Bowen, 2014).

Social media is used by YouTube as an aggressive marketing tool. This is an effective tool for targeting a larger customer base across the world. Popular social media sites used by the company include Twitter and Facebook (Schaupp & Bélanger, 2014). This allows for maintaining constant communication with followers. YouTube has the ability to promote itself by crossing over into other forms of social media. The addition of eye-catching celebrity photos is one example of a way to use social media to attract customers. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) can be used to enhance the visibility of the company's official webpage on different social media sites. Community building involves conducting direct online conversations over these platforms to identify potential customers’ needs. YouTube also responds to the posts of followers to improve their relationship with customers. Cross-channel campaigns are also used on these platforms to find new customers (Oinas-Kukkonen, Lyytinen, & Yoo, 2010). Brand campaign strategies can include sharing a powerful quote or story.

# Limitations and implications

## Limitations

Even though the study identified the benefits of strategic communication and the ways in which organizations can utilize such techniques, it is also important to illustrate the potential limitations of the study. The main limitation appeared in this particular case is that is qualitative research study is a time-consuming process that requires immense attention. numerous details are linked with the broad spectrum of the research. and it is beyond the scope of this research to address all the aspects associated with the implication of communication strategies. The researcher has to collect different forms of information and attain the most suitable resources according to the actual requirements of the research process, which is one time-consuming procedure. Another major limitation appeared in the case of this research work is that the researcher only adopted the strategy of conducting interviews from the respondents to gain desired information. There are many other methods of qualitative research that can be considered by the researcher to get the required form of information.

## The implications of the results

The results, if put into practice, would enable an organization to change its communication strategies and attain higher growth. Individuals who wish to launch a company can learn to get more information about the management of both customers and employees by reading this study. Employees can find additional information about the nature and utilization of strategic communication so that they can have better and effective results. The study indicated that strategic communication has the ability to ensure higher customer satisfaction.

# Recommendations for future research and conclusion

The primary purpose of this research is to ensure that information about strategic communication can aid in producing desired outcomes for organizations, along with the satisfaction of the organization’s internal and external parties, such as employees and customers. This section is meant to provide recommendations for future researchers designing their own studies on strategic communication. Practitioners should carefully read the following five outlines in order to obtain superior results.

**Quantitative approach**

Researchers should utilize the quantitative approach. This recommendation is essential because it would ensure the accuracy of results. Quantitative research can allow an organization to track the effectiveness of a given strategic communication technique.

**Face-to-face interviews**

Face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to gain more information about strategic communication. The mixed research method is another option that can be used by the researcher to blend quantitative and qualitative research effectively. The quantitative approach would provide accuracy while the qualitative nature would provide details about the concepts.

### Better data collection techniques

The authors should use recordings of interviews and other Statistical Package for the Social Sciences tools for data analysis. Utilization of tools such as a voice recorder and transcriber would lead to clearer findings.

### Ample time

Time constraints are another factor that restricted this researcher from applying different research methods. The quantitative research method is a time-consuming procedure that requires systematic considerations.

### More respondents

The inclusion of more than one organization and/or focus group would allow for better triangulation of the study. Such efforts can be undertaken with cooperation from other organizations. Additional respondents would bolster the results’ accuracy and provide a wider variety of ideas about the subject matter.

# Discussion

Adoption of mass communication strategies is vital for organizations to achieve maximum profitability. Many companies prioritize the development of value-based communication frameworks according to their setting and specific requirements. Consideration of such frameworks will eventually ensure better interaction between investors, partners, clients, and workers (Andrews & Shimp, 2017). Active communication between these shareholders is essential to determining the actual marketing position and implementing a business plan accordingly. Development of a communication framework makes it easy for all entities involved to evaluate and collaborate on their objectives.

Development of a suitable communication strategy requires active consideration of various aligned features. These specific factors can be identified in the forms of the main aims and objectives of the communication plan developed by the management of the organization. It is critical for the business organizations that such a communication plan is completely aligned with the actual vision of the company. To make such a communication plan, a few factors need to be considered, such as the purpose and objectives of the communication strategy and the company’s vision. The company also needs to reflect on how the communication strategy will allow it to reflect its values. These decisions will influence the format, channels, and strategies for the delivery of the message. The realization of a successful strategy is challenging work (Belasen & Belasen, 2018).

A practical approach for any company should include comprehensive documentation of all the strategic plans. This particular prospect can also effectively apply in the case of YouTube, which was selected for this study. The company must align all the strategies of communication in one detailed plan to meet the actual standards and objectives. Proper adoption of this specific approach guides to all the responsible entities to perform their tasks within the deadlines. The company should strive to create a positive, attractive experience for clients by accomplishing all the actions documented in this plan. The organization's management of customers should incorporate a web-based workflow tool that provides an auditable trail of printed documents. The management of the organization needs to create and update products according to the demands set by the customers (Burger, 2016).

Adoption of the most suitable communication model guides organizations to achieve sustainable market success by reducing costs and achieving better profits. Adoption of the vertical model of communication is one suitable approach for transmitting information from one stakeholder to the other.

Organizations must invest in attracting new customers more than merely satisfying their existing customer base. This specific objective can only be obtained through the development of a proper and effective communication plan that will support the timely exploration of clients’ preferences and maintaining relationships with customers.

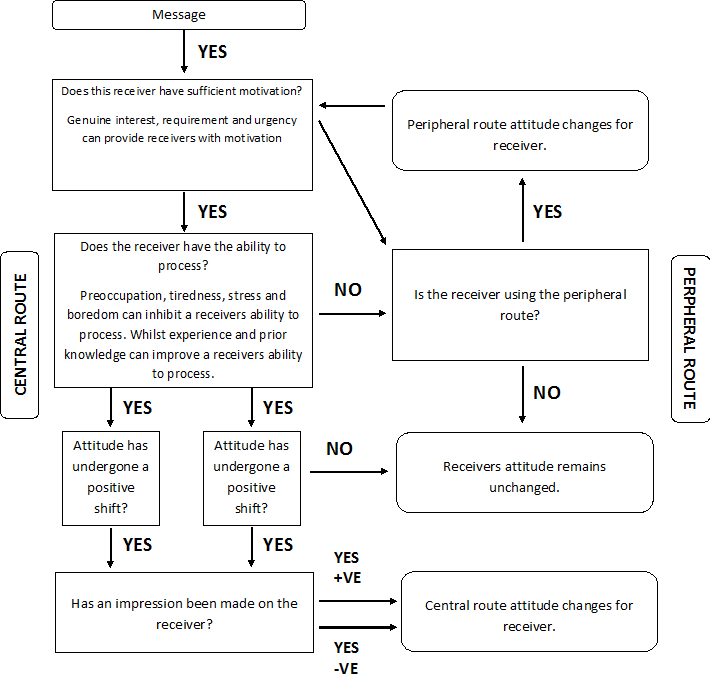
Following these recommendations will allow companies to explore alternative marketing practices, like the integration of communication, relationship with management, services, and marketing. Proper incorporation of these concepts will help shareholders identify the actual spectrums of the businesses. A better form of relationship with management is also only possible when workers have active channels of communication. Adoption of suitable communication also makes it easy for management to develop better forms of marketing by receiving input about products and services from customers. Various organizations usually outsource these functions to specialists and coordinate their communication through brand ambassadors or managers.

Consideration of a communication plan is integral to meet the objectives of consistency and clarity. Advertising, corporate communication, product packaging and word-of-mouth are significant elements of any communication strategy. These factors help managers determine how the brand attracts various groups and gauge their product’s relevance in the market (Willis et al., 2017). Companies must be consumer-centric and should use outside-in planning to focus on the experience of the consumer. In other words, the client’s objectives must be matched with the corporations. Organizations such as YouTube derive most of their profits from clients. The convergence of traditional marketing approaches with a technologically-minded business will eventually grow their profits.

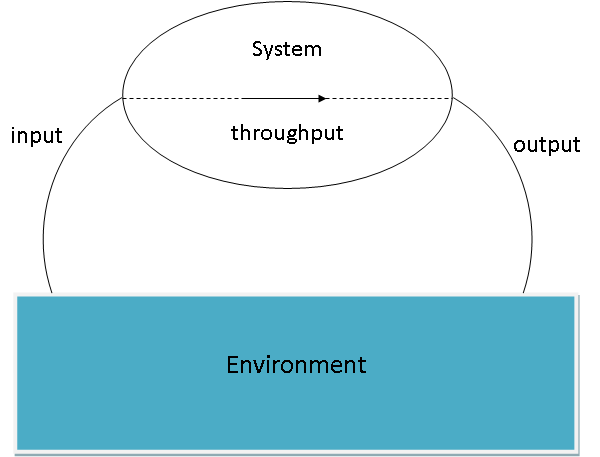
# Conclusion

The alignment of communication strategies with a company’s ideas and actions will influence stakeholders and allow the company to achieve its objectives. Companies should assume a customer-oriented approach in order to benefit their business and enhance their brand. After all, without a customer, there can be no market.

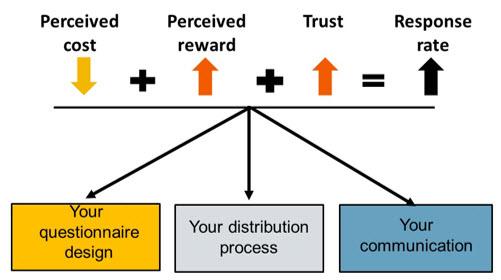
# APPENDIX A



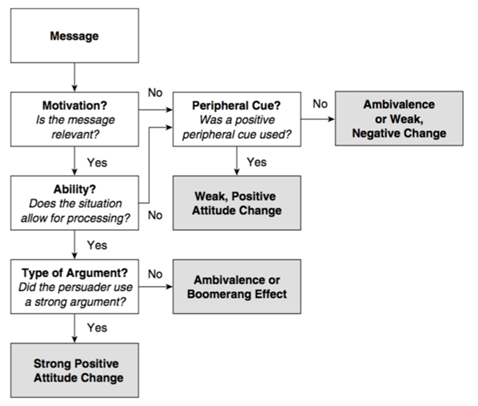
***Figure 1.1: Elaboration Likelihood Model***



***Figure 1.2: System Theory***



***Figure 1.3: Social Exchange Theory***



***Figure 1.4: Persuasion Theory***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Meet their needs**  **Customers**  **Employee** | **Key Players**  **Board of Directors**  **Shareholders**  **Government**  **Industry Association**  **Universities** |
| **Least Important**  **Activist Groups**  **Competitor**  **Board of Directors** | **Show Consideration**  **Media**  **Community** |

***Figure 2.2: Power Versus Interest Grid***

# APPENDIX B

**Consent Form**

Thank you for reading the information sheet about this research study. If you are happy to participate then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Please Initial box:*** |
| I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions. |  |
| I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. |  |
| I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research. |  |
| I agree to participate in this research study. I understand that the information that has been taken will be used only for analysis and may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the provided information without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original information. |  |
| I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study. |  |
| I agree to take part in this research. |  |

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant Date Signature

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator Date Signature

# APPENDIX C

***Table 2.1: Stakeholder Analysis Matrix***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Stakeholder | Stakeholder Interests | Power and Influence |
| Media | The news towards the company. | Reputation |
| Employee | Salaries and wages, Job security, Job satisfaction, Status, Diversity. | Long-term development of Chinese market, Service quality. |
| Customers | Product availability, Reliable quality, Customer service. | Revenue, Company Reputation, Word of mouth. |
| Suppliers | Long term contracts, prompt payment, Growth of purchasing. | Price, Quality, Product availability. |
| Shareholders | Profit growth, Share price growth, Dividends. | Election of Directors. |
| Community | Environment, Local jobs, Local impact | Reputation, Goodwill, Government relationship. |
| Universities | More job positions and a new choice of career path. | Offer information, support the campaign. |

***Table 3.1: Interview Guide***

|  |
| --- |
| **RQ1: What cues are most effective in getting viewers to engage with the 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: Are emotions more important than messages in advertisements?** |
| **RQ5: How does psychology work in making an advertisement effective?** |
| **RQ6: Does symbolic advertisement get more attention?** |
| **RQ7: Does feedback mechanism used by the organization to get information from the users increase positive perception of the advertisement?** |
| **RQ8: Does YouTube advertisement feedback impart positive impact in promoting the product?** |
| **RQ9: What is the best source for getting customers’ feedback?** |

# Table 3.2: Qualitative Interpretation Using the Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) Method

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Domains and Responses | Categories of frequencies |
| **Introduction** |  |
| RQ1: What cues are most effective in getting viewers to engage with the ads played before YouTube videos?   1. The narration of the advertisement is the most significant cue that diverts the attention of the viewer. The video’s narration starts with the caption: “how,” “what,” and “when,” phrases make the viewer feel invested in the advertisement. A few examples include: How should I clean a machine? What are the most effective ways to earn online? When will I get glowing skin, or long and thick hair? Advertisements that start with “How to” statements get 70% more traffic than other advertisements. An interesting caption can also be a means of engaging the viewer and getting them to watch the video. 2. According to some participants, repetition is important to produce an image of the product in the consumer’s mind. The use of specific images and logos creates a sense of familiarity with the product. 3. According to respondents, repetitive use of the same image may instill the feeling of boredom in the viewer; therefore, different visual representations for the same product may enhance the advertisement's attractiveness.   RQ2: What cues are most effective in making a YouTube advertisement memorable?   1. Music imparts an emotional impact on the viewer, triggering memories and making the advertisement attractive. It can evoke emotional responses to elicit positive associations with the advertised product. 2. The physical appearance of the actors can also benefit the product’s reception. The audience may feel compelled to follow the actor’s advice to purchase the advertised product. 3. The scenery and background, utilizing an attractive color scheme, can also have an impact on the audience. 4. Advertisements that address the audience’s latest needs were found to be effective. 5. Advertisements that evoke the viewer's pleasant memories make the advertisement more attractive. 6. The advertisement’s color palette can have an important influence on the buyer’s mood. Effective color combinations enhance the product’s visual representation. According to some participants, viewers prefer to watch a video or advertisement with color selection reported to be consistent with certain emotions: red evokes love and compassion, green represents life, and black shows sexuality. 7. Non-verbal cues, such as the characters’ standing posture, style, gestures, and confidence, enhance the effectiveness of the advertisement. The harmonious use of gestures, body movement, and facial expression compels the audience to watch the advertisement. | General  Rare  General  Rare |
| **Effective message delivery** |  |
| RQ3: What cues are most effective in communicating the advertisement’s message?   1. According to participants, an effective way to communicate the advertiser’s message is by using customer- or audience-targeted language. If the message has been delivered in this way, the audience will show interest in the product. 2. Other respondents stated that an advertiser’s message should effectively fulfill the psychological needs of the customer; for example, safety, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, etc. 3. Positive concepts in advertisements were reported to be effective in communicating the advertiser’s message. A pleasant message attracts the audience more than a negative one.   RQ4: Are emotions more important than messages in advertisements?   1. The majority of participants responded that emotions play a more vital role in the advertisement than the message. The emotional interplay between words, plot, and music can evoke particular emotions among viewers. 2. A few respondents stated that the messages are more important than emotion-evoking statements in the advertisement.   RQ5: How does psychology work in making an advertisement effective?   1. Participants responded that an advertisement that addresses psychological needs, such as a sense of belonging, enhances the self-esteem of the participants. Purchasing a product of the latest trend may also boost the buyers’ self-esteem. 2. According to other participants, effective advertisements play with the psychology of the targeted audience’s mind, causing the audience to be compelled to purchase the product. 3. A few participants responded that psychological suffering might also influence the advertisement’s effectiveness. For example, if a woman is depressed due to acne issues, an advertisement introducing the acne solution may be effective. This effectiveness increases further if the advertisement features a woman with the same issue happily discussing her successful use of the product. Similarly, an advertisement related to career-conscious people or blog lovers may direct the audience to watch an advertisement relevant to earning. 4. Appealing to the viewer’s sense of self-worth is a very significant component of an advertisement. Products that enhance the self-worth of the participants, either physically or psychologically, work better. 5. Some participants suggested that story-based advertisements were more effective, as the audience wants to see the climax of the story. 6. Advertisements full of suspense, horror, or curiosity are also considered effective in promoting products.   RQ6: Does symbolic advertisement get more attention?   1. According to the minority of participants, symbolism can distill a complex idea into a simple message for the audience. For example, diamonds and water suggest the concept of purity; a lion represents strength; wide roads symbolize freedom. 2. In contrast, a few respondents stated that symbolism is not as effective as the majority of viewers will not understand the idea of the advertisement. Not all audiences are familiar with the same symbols. Instead, this approach can only be used in a higher-ordered advertisement. | General  Rare  General  Rare |
| **Feedback Mechanism** |  |
| RQ7: Does the feedback mechanism used by the organization to get information from the users lead to a more positive perception of the advertisement?  1. According to the majority of participants, feedback mechanisms increase positive perception of the advertisement, as the customer may share opinions with the advertiser.  2. On the other hand, a few respondents stated that feedback mechanisms might decrease the rating of the product if users post a negative comment. Sometimes consumers will reject that product after reading negative comments.  RQ8: Does a YouTube advertisement feedback impart a positive impact on promoting the product?  The majority of respondents stated that YouTube’s feedback mechanism imparts a positive impact on the promotion of the product.  A few respondents did not agree.  RQ9: What is the best source for getting customers’ feedback?  According to respondents, the symbolic method of feedback, such as a star-based rating system, is more effective than verbal or written feedback.  In contrast, a few respondents stated that written feedback is better than symbolic.  A few stated that verbal interviews or surveys are most effective. | General  Rare  General  Rare  General  Rare |

***Table 4.2: Demographics***

The frequencies and percentages of the demographics are as follows (n= 25)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Male**  **M (%)** | **Female**  **F (%)** | **Total**  **T (%)** |
| **Gender** | 15 (60) | 10 (40) | 25 (100) |
| **Age** |  |  |  |
| **22 or below** | 4 (16) | 5 (20) | 9 (36) |
| **23 or above** | 10 (40) | 8 (32) | 16 (64) |
| **Discipline** |  |  |  |
| **Television** | 5 (20) | 6 (24) | 11 (44) |
| **Radio** | 10 (40) | 4 (16) | 14 (56) |

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**Botan, C. H. (2017). Strategic Communication Theory and Practice: The Co creational Model. Wiley.**

The major focus of the book is communication theory and it states that the communication is a core function of all the humanitarian organizations and when you communicate you work with the core of organizations. The book argues for a field of strategic communication that is founded on the three larger core subfields of marketing communication, health communication and public relations and the strategic communicators as well who are working in other subfields like issues management, social movements etc. The strategic communication in theory and practice is formulated around a co-creational model that aims to shift the focus of organizational needs and the communicative messages that are crafted to attain them to a more public centered view which put the public and their abilities to co-create new meanings in the strategic communication theory and practice. The strategic communication explained and focused on the book only refers to planned campaigns that understand that what the public think and want.

**Ford, D., Gadde, L.-E., Håkansson, H., Lundgren, A., Snehota, I., Turnbull, P., … Group, I. M. and P. (1998). Managing business relationships. J. Wiley.**

The business markets in general terms are defined as the markets where buyer and sellers both are businesses or other organizations. In the business markets, not only sellers and buyers are important in fact the customers and other organizations also play a vital role in the developed economies of the world. So, it is important for all the business organizations to make sure that the stakeholders both internal and external are influenced and the strategic communication aligns ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes which are the betterment for both buyers, sellers and along with them the customers and economies on the larger scale.

**Kearns, G. S., & Sabherwal, R. (2006). Strategic alignment between business and information technology: a knowledge-based view of behaviors, outcome, and consequences. Journal of management information systems, 23(3), 129-162.**

The senior executives have concerns regarding the factors that influence the effect of the information technology on the business and business-related activities. Researchers have shown and argued that the business information technology strategic alignment helps the business effect of IT and the contextual factors impact the business-IT strategic alignment. The role of knowledge considerations in the relationship among the alignment and contextual factors is exceptionally significant along with the role of IT projects. Now, it is important that the stakeholders are influenced and maintain their level of participation and interest in the business. If the organization is not utilizing and adopting the new technologies, then the stakeholders might lose interest as they will believe that the organization does not adapt to new technologies so they should invest in some other organization which adapts to new technology. So, it is necessary that the stakeholders are communicated about policies and new adoptions.

**Morsing, M. (2006). Strategic CSR communication.**

The requests and demands of the stakeholders are getting sophisticated and critical which engage the companies in corporate social responsibility. Activities and efforts that are related to the corporate social responsibility should be held and communicated to the stakeholders as well in an efficient and effective manner. The communities are really concerned about the activities and efforts of the business organization because they should be well aligned with the welfare of the environment and humanity. It is important that the business organizations have effectively and efficiently communicated their activities that are related to the corporate social responsibility. The ELM or persuasion theory is extremely required because it is necessary that the stakeholders are influenced and persuaded with proper facts and figures.

**Ostroff, C., & Bowen, D. E. (2000). Moving HR to a higher level: HR practices and organizational effectiveness.**

The study has integrated the three primary and major streams of researches, first are the individual level, second is the organizational level and the third is the multilevel approach which refers to a cohesive multilevel framework. The chapter provides a detail understanding links between the performance of the organization and the HR practices. The study has proposed that the HR practices assist in shaping the skills, behaviors, attitudes, and skills that increase the performance level of the organization as a whole. Efficient and effective HR practices have a direct positive effect on the performance as it creates structural and operational efficiencies.

**Wright, P. M., Gardner, T. M., Moynihan, L. M., & Allen, M. R. (2005). The relationship between HR practices and firm performance: Examining causal order. Personnel Psychology, 58(2), 409-446.**

The major focus of the research has been devoted to the examination of the relationship between HR practices and the performance of the organization. The research has assumed the HR as a causal variable. The data used in the study is retrieved from 45 business units and examined the relation between HR practices and their correlation with the past, current and future operational performance. The results of the study have proven that the correlations with the performance measured at all the three-time spans are invariant and high.

**Nishii, L. H., Lepak, D. P., & Schneider, B. (2008). Employee attributions of the "why" of HR practices: Their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction. Personnel Psychology, 61(3), 503-545.**

This study introduced the construct of HR attributions. The study has focused on the attributions that the HR practices have an impact on the attitudes, behavior, and performance. It is quite obvious that the HR practices have a strong impact on the employees because all the policies are formulated for managing the workforce. According to the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it is quite understandable that the performance levels are affected by the way employees are treated and are satisfied with their jobs.

**Otley, D. (1999). Performance management: a framework for management control systems research. Management accounting research, 10(4), 363-382.**

The study has proposed a framework for the analysis of the operations of the management control systems and the central issues that are faced. The issues are related to strategies, objectives, and plans for attainment, incentive and reward structures, target or goals setting and feedback loops. The major focal point of this study is the organizational performance.

**Mone, E. M., & London, M. (2018). Employee engagement through effective performance management: A practical guide for managers. Routledge.**

The book is helpful for the managers as it serves as a practical guide. It helps the managers to support the employees and increase the employee engagement through several and stronger tools for performance management. The book has explained several aspects related to employee engagement and retention. The book further explained that the HR practices assist in shaping the skills, behaviors, attitudes, and skills that increase the performance level of the organization as a whole.

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