

Internal Communication and Technology – The Secrets of Success

B. Nalina*

Vels University, Chennai – 600117, Tamil Nadu, India; nalinaganapathi@hotmail.com

Abstract

Objectives: The purposefulness of the paper is to examine the relevance of internal communication and technology in the Organizations and their vitality for the success. **Methods/Statistical Analysis:** A questionnaire-based survey has been carried out in a multicultural organization, based in Central Asia. About 100 regular contract employees were included in the survey and were made to respond their views about internal communication and technology in their organization. For the relevance of the study, a hypothesis – ‘There is no significant association between knowledge sharing and technology’ has been formulated to find out the association between the dependent variable, internal communication (knowledge sharing) and independent variable, technology. First and foremost, a reliability test has been conducted to check the reliability of factors of the independent variable, technology. Further, in support of the research, correlation, and regression analysis have been conducted to understand the in-depth association between the dependent variable and independent variable. **Findings:** This study is unique of its own kind. The alpha coefficient for the factors of technology is 0.828 that reveals that the factors of technology have relatively high internal consistency and reliability of the measures used in this study is considered excellent. The finding of correlation analysis reveals that there is a high positive correlation (.623) between the dependent variable internal communication (knowledge sharing) and the independent variable, technology. From the regression equation, it can be remarked that the independent variable, technology has a positive impact on the dependent variable, knowledge sharing, and an important component of internal communication. The findings of the research and based on the values obtained, the null hypothesis is rejected which means that the research supports that there is a significant association between internal communication (knowledge sharing) and technology. **Application/Improvement:** The future research could be done applying different statistical tools. As well it will be useful to conduct in other organizations on a larger scale by collecting responses from all employees irrespective of functionality and grade.

Keywords: Internal Communication, Knowledge Sharing, Organizations, Success, Technology

1. Introduction

The evolution of any organization depends on effective and efficient communication. It is a unique tool that is used to direct management and employees to act in a chosen way to attain the objective of the organization. Effective communication is vibrant not only to develop good human relationships but also helps organizations to develop in a positive manner. It connects the objective with the mechanisms used by a source of a message. Accordingly, internal communication becomes vital to

share information. Both verbal and non-verbal communication are considered to be greatly significant for the effective organizational climate as it links marketing, production, finance, human resources and other departments together and simplifies organizational success. Thus it becomes the responsibility of the management to help employees to understand the importance of internal communication within the organization.

In the 21st century, technology has a major role in personal and organizational lives, which have become indissoluble. As we move from the Stone Age to a modern age,

*Author for correspondence

different technological devices such as telephones, television, personal computers and all other become inevitably necessary. The world has become well organized with the invention and innovation of Internet and has become a 'global village'. No wonder that it has influenced interpersonal relationships and communication in many ways, both positive as well as negative. In cyberspace, communication and coordination are instant, cheap and global. Today, technology is a powerful tool for instant interactions. In the world where the information-based economy is in place, it is significant that the bond between technology and communication is unavoidable. The scope of the success of organizations to reach the objective and its prosperity depends on effective communication among employees at all levels. This depends on how effectively the organization provides training to its employees in a way for employees to be adaptable to use various communication tools.

2. Importance of Internal Communication in the Multicultural Setting

Today the corporate setting has become multidimensional and modest, products have become familiarity-based and the workforce has become culturally and academically diverse. Diversity naturally brings communication glitches to the workplace as the sender and the recipients of message belong to different cultures and backgrounds. As a result, misunderstanding can easily occur and effective internal communication approach could become a challenge, which makes communication more complicated¹. In such cases, understanding the cultural diversity and the importance of internal communication are the keys to success. Without a clear and operative internal communication existence, there is no external communication. As highlighted in a statement of a report by the informal working group to the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) published in February 1999 about internal communication,

"....Internal communication should be taken in a broad sense, involving information sharing, interaction, and cooperation among colleagues, working both through formal and informal channels in a complementary way. It is by definition a two-way street, encouraging dialogue, listening, networking and an exchange of ideas. It is only when we are able to communicate successfully with the Office that we can best convey the values and messages to the outside world".

By communicating effectively and understanding the importance of internal communication, the workplace becomes vibrant, worker-friendly and successful.

3. Influence of Technology in the Multicultural Organizations

The influence of technology changes the way the organizations are structured when a new system is introduced and it can also reduce organizational complexity. Nevertheless, emerging communication technologies are speeding up decision-making and change the interactions in organizations. Technologies like the Internet are easy to deploy and they cost less yet they increase the effectiveness of communication within an organization as it facilitates better connections. Technology helps organizations to communicate worldwide very quickly or instantly anywhere in the world that helps to move things forward to achieve the objectives. It does not only help organizations in cost decreasing but also helps in coordination.

As an external factor, technology is one of the main factors that affect organizations. Technology dramatically influences the service markets of organizations' manufacturing processes and so on. Obviously, technology has transformed the way we communicate and the way we carry out business. Although there are numerous trends that affect employment relationships, lack of internal communication further distress organizations to achieve their goals through their employees.

4. Internal Communication and Technology

Internal communication is a fundamental process from where all other functions of the organizations originate. Thus, communication patterns have a meaningful power on the effectiveness of communication². The interruptions in the flow of communication bring upon barriers and, as a consequence, the organizational functions are affected. A communication barrier is anything that stops the process of transferring messages or thoughts or ideas from receiving and understanding. The message expressed is considered external whereas feelings and ideas are considered internal. The factors that are causing hindrance for effective communication could be environmental organizational, physical and psychological or emotional³.

Technology can be seen as a useful tool for fostering effective internal communication at all levels. Identifying technology as a tool is the first step to eliminating adverse effects of technology on interpersonal relations and the development of interpersonal skills. Technological communication is a double-edged sword. While it facilitates people to build network easily and to be connected to anything or anywhere in the world easily, but the fast developments in technology led unfriendly social contacts by spending more time with computers rather than direct face-to-face contacts with each other which creates a gap and unpleasant ambiance, steering to misunderstanding, and finally ends up to burnout situations⁴. These facts are supported by the fact that technology has had a striking impact on internal communication within organizations^{5,6}.

5. Research Methodology and Findings

For the relevance of the study, a hypothesis has been formulated to find out the association between the dependent variable, internal communication (knowledge sharing) and independent variable, technology.

H0 – There is no significant association between knowledge sharing and technology.

First and foremost, a reliability test has been conducted to check the reliability of factors of the independent variable, technology⁷. The reliability of scale items was tested by Cronbach's alpha test and that was conducted with the responses received to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Alpha values for the dimensions met the minimum criterion ($\alpha > 0.60$)⁸ and the scores obtained exceeded the minimum requirement 0.70. The alpha coefficient for the factors of technology is 0.828 that reveals that the factors of technology have relatively high internal consistency and reliability of the measures used in this study is considered excellent. Further, in support of the research, correlation, and regression analysis have been conducted to understand the in-depth association between dependent variable, knowledge sharing, an important component of internal communication and independent variable, technology⁹.

The finding of correlation analysis reveals that there is a high positive correlation (.623) between the dependent variable internal communication (knowledge sharing)

and the independent variable, technology. Further, the regression analysis has been conducted and explained below.

From the regression Tables 1 and 2 presented, the researcher concludes the following. The regression summarizes the model performance through the following statistics. The R-value of .481 (range lies between -1 and +1) is low which means that the dependent variable has a weak but a positive relationship. The R-square value of 0.025 (range lies between 0 and 1), 2.3 percent of the variation in communication is explained by technology. In other words, the independent variable, technology has been accounted for 48.1 per cent of variance ($t = 14.292$ and $sig = .000$) on the dependent variable, internal communication (knowledge sharing). The regression equation can be - Internal Communication (Knowledge Sharing) = $1.161 + 0.603$ (Technology). This is calculated based on the contribution of the tested elements to achieve internal communication effectively. From the regression equation, it can be remarked that the independent variable, technology has a positive impact on the dependent variable, knowledge sharing, and an important component of internal communication.

Table 1. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.481 ^a	.231	.230	.60954

^a Predictors: (Constant), Technology

Table 2. Co-efficients^a

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients			t		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.161	.165			7.019	.000
Technology	.603	.042	.481		14.292	.000

^a Dependent Variable: Knowledge Sharing

The findings of the research and based on the values obtained, the null hypothesis is rejected which means that the research supports that there is a significant association between internal communication (knowledge sharing) and technology.

6. Conclusion

Every organization, in spite of their size, functions, product always requires a decent level of internal communication. Effective internal and external communication is the essential factors for the success of the business. It helps not only for the socialization of employees but also for delivering effective problem solving and decision-making. Without efficient internal communication, there is no effective external communication.

Internal communication is vital in any organization as it is the building block of the culture of the organization⁶. It is one of the main driving factors that allow humans to understand one another and lays a platform for the organization. In the organizations, the success is assessed by its productivity and for this, effective internal communication is extremely imperative. Communication is what keeps internal processes efficient and helps to obtain positive relations with external clients. Successful internal communication is a two-way road, which allows the exchange of information flow smooth. As well it influences job satisfaction and better performance of the employees¹⁰⁻¹⁴. Many internal communication problems occur either due to lack of clarity or lack of faultless understanding the message, as the process in organizations pass-through hierarchical channels. For a sustainable organizational growth, the stable communication process is extremely important. Further, when organizations are faced with difficulties in managing change, ineffective internal communication is most often blamed⁵.

Internet and information technology have enabled organizations to become more competitive by cutting costs. Entities such as manufacturers, banks, and retailers have successfully connected to computer technology to reduce their costs and deliver satisfying goods and services to customers at a remarkable speed. The use of the Internet for business transactions has become appropriate for both large and small companies and e-commerce is rapidly becoming the organizational challenge. Furthermore, electronic message system known as e-mail has established itself as a free, fast and an expedient method to receive and send messages replacing traditional mail processes. This kind of ease in communication has many profound effects. In today's world, communication can be easily made through e-mails, video-conferencing, and webinars. Above all, mobile phone and Internet technology have made it feasible for people to check and send messages allowing them to be connected all day long. In

other words, technology has brought forth a revolutionary transformation in the way we communicate.

Although we are more connected in today's globalized world but are incongruously isolated as a result of new technologies from the information age. To be more precise, the ease of communication may have improved but lives have become more impersonal. We have virtual relationships more than real ones due to the advanced technological communication systems. Technology has indeed made an incredible impact on society as well as on internal communication in the organizations. While it is believed that technology has condensed the level of face-to-face interpersonal communication, replacing it with telephone or email messaging or other, it is also believed that technology increases effective interpersonal communication by spreading the physical limits of the workstation, substituting it with a virtual workstation.

The cumulative impact of new technology is prominent and the organizations are changing the way they do business, which has ruined many low-level jobs. Augmented mechanization has reduced employee headcounts globally. The pressure to remain cost-effective has also compelled many organizations by cutting down at the managerial level. The wave of fusion and acquisition activity in recent times has often left the newly combined companies to downsize operations ruthlessly. The downside to communication technology is that even as we communicate with more and more people using various technologies, some people feel more isolated than connected. Thus communication technology should be used to facilitate and not replace face-to-face communication. For instance, emails and phone calls should be used to schedule meetings rather than acting as the medium for the meeting. The effects of workplace communication can be replaced by working together or in a group that facilitates face-to-face conversation to improve the understanding to reach the objective. Therefore, the findings of the balance between communication technology and personal interaction would be most suitable and to be more socialize to create a communicative ambiance for the welfare of the human and organization.

It is clear that internal communication plays a significant role in the employee performance in the organizations. From the findings, it is understandable that internal communication in the organization and the technology are inseparable which is highly in requisite in the competitive world of today. With the help of advancing technology, in the organizations, internal

communication can be further enhanced by the management by trusting, motivating and timely recognizing of employees, as well encouraging more informal communication as wanted by the respondents (80% of the respondents responded that their preferred style of communication is 'informal'). The employees can help the organization to grow in a more stable and a successful manner by having an in-depth understanding of the goals of the organization and adhering to it and also by sharing knowledge.

7. Recommendations

The future research could be done applying different statistical tools. As well it will be useful to conduct in other organizations on a larger scale by collecting responses from all employees irrespective of functionality and grade.

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