Building Digital Communication Effectiveness in Organizations

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ABSTRACT

In facing this digital era, organizations are faced with the challenge of understanding and fully utilizing the potential of digital communications in order to achieve optimal effectiveness. Digital communication includes a variety of tools, such as online collaboration platforms, email, social media, and other technology-based applications. The success of an organization not only depends on the adoption of this technology, but also on the extent to which the organization is able to manage and build the effectiveness of communication through these digital media. Therefore, this research aims to establish the effectiveness of digital communication in an organization. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results show that the implementation of digital communication in organizations has a positive impact on operational efficiency and productivity. Respondents highlighted that the use of digital communication tools, such as email and collaborative platforms, overcomes distance and time constraints, speeds up the exchange of information, and facilitates faster decision making. Employee engagement also increases through interactive communication channels, creating a more open and collaborative work environment. Despite this, challenges related to technological inadequacy and digital security issues remain major concerns that require strategic action in optimizing the benefits of digital communications within organizations.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Digital Communication, Organization, Information and Communication Technology

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are living dynamic entities, where individuals unite to achieve various goals, with a focus on achieving desired results (Effendhie, 2011). Effective communication is a crucial element in ensuring that an organization can mobilize all its resources to achieve its stated targets (Asriadi, 2020). Essentially, organizational communication includes a series of communication activities that occur within the organization (intra-organization) and also communication interactions between one organization and another organization (inter-organization) (Furqon, 2003)

Communication is not only a means of transmitting information, but also the foundation underlying cooperation, mutual understanding and coordination among organizational members (Harapan et al, 2022). An effective communication system is needed to ensure that the organization's vision, mission and strategy can be translated clearly to each member. Furthermore, intra-organizational communication plays an important role in building a healthy organizational culture and motivating employees to contribute optimally (Kuswarno, 2001). Meanwhile, communication between organizations is key in forming partnerships, carrying out collaboration, and ensuring alignment of goals amidst the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships in a complex business ecosystem (Rahmanto, 2004).

Organizational communication is essentially different from group communication, especially in terms of its formal nature, organized structure, and emphasis on the principle of efficiency in the course of communication (Nurdin, 2014). In contrast to group communication which tends to be functional, organizational communication has more formal structural characteristics, is bound by certain rules, and involves providing rewards and sanctions for its members. Organizational communication occurs all the time, involving at least one individual who occupies a certain position and members who are members of an organization (Ambarwati, 2021).

The main focus of organizational communication is the interactions that occur between members of an organization, and the emphasis is on analyzing interactions that take place within the organizational structure simultaneously (Mulawarman & Rosilawati, 2014). Organizational communication systems are quite complex because they involve the exchange of messages between

tens or even hundreds of individuals who have different duties and responsibilities within the organization (Ardiyanti, 2020). In this context, individual thoughts, decisions and behavior are regulated by the policies, regulations and ethical norms that apply within the organization. Thus, a deep understanding of organizational communication is crucial in understanding the dynamics that occur in a structural and organized work environment (Luthfie, 2018).

The development of technology and information, especially in the digital realm, is progressing rapidly every day, becoming the main driver in the transformation of society today. The digital era has become the main force that helps people overcome various difficulties in carrying out daily tasks (Putra & Irwansyah, 2020). Digital is not just a method, but a complex and flexible system that is at the core of human life (Aji, 2016). Nowadays, digital presence not only provides solutions for individuals in completing routine tasks, but also becomes an important tool in speeding up and simplifying organizational communications. Through digital media, or what is familiarly known as digital communication, organizations can easily and quickly convey information to the public, creating efficiency and effectiveness in disseminating important messages that support organizational goals (Kurmia, 2005).

Digital communication is a form of interaction that utilizes technology to communicate without direct physical presence. This includes the use of digital tools such as computers or smartphones equipped with various applications or social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp (Fauzi, 2017). With digital communication, individuals can connect with other people without having to meet in person, making geographic distance no longer an obstacle. Social media and instant messaging applications facilitate the exchange of information, updates and social interactions in text, image and video formats (Prasanti, 2016).

Furthermore, Digital Communication also refers to communication in a network context, where the sending and receiving of messages is carried out via the internet. This interaction allows for real-time communication, video conferencing, and sharing multimedia content very efficiently and effectively (Prabowo & Irwansyah, 2018). The main advantage of digital communication lies in its ability to overcome space and time barriers, allowing individuals and organizations to communicate quickly and easily without being constrained by geographical boundaries (Priyono, 2022).

Digital communication not only changes the way we interact, but also opens the door to innovation in delivering messages and exchanging information in this digital era. The potential of Digital Communication was in the spotlight during the pandemic (Syarif, 2019). Businesses without a Digital Communication strategy fail to survive at that time. Video conferencing becomes a communication channel, email becomes a new way of conveying messages. Digital Communication is also important for various other reasons given such as better employee engagement, comfortable and enjoyable experience, universal acceptance, transparency in the organization, and saving time, effort and money (Ginting et al, 2021).

The problem formulation in this research includes identifying obstacles that may occur in implementing digital communication within an organization. The main focus of this research is to identify the importance of digital communication in organizations, the obstacles that may hinder the effectiveness of digital communication and the extent to which it is related to achieving organizational goals. By understanding these obstacles, this research aims to provide in-depth insight into the effectiveness of digital communication and how it can influence the overall achievement of organizational goals. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the understanding of digital communication in an organizational context and provide recommendations for organizations to increase the effectiveness of digital communication.

METHOD

The research methodology employed in this study adopts a qualitative approach with descriptive methods, as outlined by Moleong (2014). A qualitative approach involves the collection of descriptive data through words or statements obtained from individuals and observations of their behavior. Qualitative data sources include verbal or written expressions witnessed by researchers, as well as in-

depth examination of objects to extract their conveyed meanings. The research falls under the category of descriptive research, which seeks to elucidate solutions to existing problems based on gathered data, aiming to identify, analyze, and address specific issues. The qualitative descriptive research design chosen for this study aims to gather insights into the effectiveness of digital communication within organizations. The researcher employs observational techniques, encompassing systematic observation and documentation, to collect data. Interviews, involving oral question-and-answer sessions between two individuals, are used as another data collection method. Documentation involves retrieving information from various documents and tends to gather secondary data, while observations and interviews focus on obtaining primary data directly from the parties involved (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). Following data collection, the analysis proceeds through several steps: 1) Collating all collected data from both primary and secondary sources; 2) Organizing data into problem units based on the stated issues; 3) Analyzing the components of the argument used to address the problems; and 4) Drawing conclusions based on the results of the problem analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Importance of Digital Communication in Organizations

Digital communication has a very important role in the organizational context, especially in this modern era. Here are some reasons why it is important:

a. Distance and time efficiency

Digital communication brings a revolution in terms of time and distance efficiency in the organizational context. By using digital tools such as email, instant messaging, or online collaborative platforms, organizations can overcome time and geographic barriers that may hinder traditional communications. For example, the use of email or chat groups enables instant messaging, speeds up the exchange of information, and allows employees to respond quickly without waiting for a face-to-face meeting. Additionally, video conferencing platforms facilitate virtual meetings and discussions, eliminating the need to be physically present, which becomes crucial especially during a pandemic or in emergency situations.

b. Accelerate handling of problems and making organizational decisions

By adopting digital communications, organizations are able to increase efficiency in handling problems and making decisions. Digital platforms such as email, instant messaging, and video conferencing allow stakeholders to connect and communicate instantly, speeding up workflows in responding to emerging issues. This speed in communication provides significant benefits in the context of decision making, where information can be conveyed quickly and in a timely manner. As a result, organizations become more responsive to changes in the dynamic business environment. The ability to quickly respond to new problems or opportunities opens up opportunities for organizations to remain adaptive and competitive amidst rapid change .

c. Employee Engagement

Digital communications plays a central role in increasing employee engagement by creating more interactive and accessible communication channels. Through digital platforms such as internal social media, online discussion forums, or team collaboration tools, organizations can facilitate a more active exchange of ideas, feedback, and participation from all team members. The ability to share information in real-time builds a sense of engagement and bonding among employees, regardless of physical location or time zone. Additionally, digital communication provides an opportunity to celebrate team achievements, stimulate collaboration, and increase individual motivation. However, to achieve optimal employee engagement, organizations need to pay attention to the importance of conveying messages clearly, creating an environment that supports the open exchange of ideas, and providing a platform that allows employees to contribute comfortably.

d. Organizational transparency

Digital communication is the main pillar in creating transparency in the organizational structure. By utilizing digital platforms, organizations can provide open access to information to all team members, opening more direct lines of communication between management and employees. Internal

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social media or digital information portals allow information about organizational goals, strategies and developments to be easily accessed by all team members, without the barriers of traditional hierarchies. This transparency creates an open work environment that supports collaboration, reduces information gaps, and provides clarity regarding the organization's direction and goals.

e. Flexibility and Scalability

The importance of digital communications in an organizational context is reflected through its ability to provide flexibility and scalability. Digital communications enable organizational members to interact via multiple devices and platforms, including computers, smartphones, or tablets, without compromising communication efficiency. The existence of a digital platform that can be accessed flexibly allows team members to communicate and collaborate anywhere, anytime. Additionally, an organization's ability to quickly scale digital communications according to growth or changing needs is key to maintaining adaptability. With flexible and customizable digital communications, organizations can maximize communication effectiveness, increase productivity, and ensure that team members can stay connected without being constrained by physical boundaries or specific infrastructure.

Barriers that Disrupt the Effectiveness of Digital Communication in Organizations

The effectiveness of digital communication in organizations can be hampered by several things. Some obstacles that are generally faced include:

a. Technological Inadequacy

Technical barriers can pose significant challenges to the effectiveness of digital communications within an organization. Network disruptions or software instability can result in communication breakdowns, slow response, and even harm smooth workflow. In addition, dependence on complex technology or lack of understanding of digital communication tools is a serious obstacle. When organizational members do not have sufficient understanding of how to use or maximize the features of a digital communications platform, this can reduce efficiency and hinder the optimal potential of the tool. Therefore, organizations need to prioritize training and technical support to ensure that employees have an adequate understanding of the technology used and can overcome technical obstacles more effectively.

b. Security and privacy

Concerns related to data security and privacy play a crucial role as major barriers in the adoption of digital communications within organizations. In an era where information exchange occurs digitally, these concerns include potential threats such as data leaks, cyber attacks, or misuse of personal information. Organizations are required to address these security challenges by implementing careful measures to protect the integrity and confidentiality of communicated information. This includes the use of encryption, strict access control settings, and the implementation of clear data security policies. Therefore, organizational efforts to maintain security and privacy are key factors in building organizational members' trust in the use of digital communications, thereby minimizing risks and facilitating wider adoption.

c. Lack of engagement and training

Low employee involvement or lack of training in the use of digital communication technology can be a serious obstacle in optimizing the potential of these tools within the organization. Employees unfamiliar with technology may have difficulty mastering digital communication tools, limiting their ability to actively participate in those interactions. Additionally, a lack of understanding of the specific features offered by digital communication platforms can be detrimental to communication effectiveness. Not only can it hinder productivity, but it can also create a gap between employees who are skilled in using technology and those who are less experienced. Therefore, it is important for organizations to provide adequate training to employees, build digital literacy, and provide continuous support so that employees can better integrate digital communication technology in their work routines, making it a useful asset in achieving organizational goals.

d. Information Overload

Large fluctuations in the volume of information received in the digital communications era can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of communications within organizations. When

employees or team members are flooded with excessive amounts of information, especially through various digital platforms, the risk of information overload increases. This information overload can cause difficulties in processing the messages received, so that key messages are often overlooked or distorted. Information overload can also cloud priorities and urgency, leading to inappropriate decision making or less efficient problem handling. Therefore, organizations need to develop an effective information management strategy, including the application of filters or information curation, to ensure that the messages conveyed remain focused, relevant, and can be processed well by team members. Thus, judicious handling of volumes of digital information can improve communication effectiveness and help prevent the negative impacts of information overload.

e. Cultural and linguistic differences

Cultural or linguistic diversity within organizational teams, although bringing the potential for a richness of ideas and perspectives, often presents obstacles to understanding and interpreting messages. Organizations with culturally diverse teams can experience challenges in managing cultural differences that include different communication norms, use of body language, or even symbolic understanding. Language differences can also be a significant barrier affecting collaboration and communication effectiveness. Misunderstandings may arise due to differences in interpretation or different cultural contexts, which in turn can slow progress and hinder project success. Therefore, to overcome these barriers, organizations need to foster an inclusive culture, provide cross-cultural training, and utilize tools such as translators or cross-language communication resources. In this way, organizations can maximize the potential of team diversity and make it an enriching asset, not an obstacle, in achieving common goals.

Strategy to improve Digital communication in Organizations

Improving the effectiveness of digital communication in an organization is an effort to improve the flow of information, understanding and collaboration between organizational members. This aims to create a more efficient, productive and harmonious work environment. The following are several strategies to increase the effectiveness of digital communication in organizations:

a. Open communication

The first strategy to increase the effectiveness of digital communications in an organization is to ensure clear and open communication. This involves conveying the message in a way that is easy to understand, avoiding ambiguity or technical terms that may be confusing. Additionally, encouraging an open culture that welcomes questions, feedback, and discussion helps create a two-way communication channel that builds trust. Using simple language and transparency in conveying information can help avoid misunderstandings and maintain openness among team members. By emphasizing clear and open communication, organizations can ensure that information conveyed via digital media is well understood by all team members, helping to create a more coherent and efficient work environment.

b. Active listening

The second strategy to increase the effectiveness of digital communications in organizations is through the practice of active listening. Listening is not just about receiving information, but also understanding the meaning behind it. By focusing attention on messages conveyed by coworkers or leaders, team members can respond more appropriately and provide more meaningful feedback. Active listening involves understanding the context of the message, asking relevant questions, and providing confirmation to ensure correct understanding. In the context of digital communications, this includes quick responses to messages, demonstrating presence via online communication platforms, and creating space for deeper discussions. By integrating active listening practices, organizations can improve the quality of digital interactions, strengthen team relationships, and build the foundation for more effective communication within the work environment.

c. Two-way communication

The third strategy to increase the effectiveness of digital communication in organizations is to promote two-way communication. Two-way communication creates a channel of interaction that allows team members to not only receive information, but also actively participate by providing feedback, asking questions, or proposing ideas. Through digital platforms, such as online forums, group

chats, or video conference sessions, organizations can create a space for team members to contribute, share views, and feel heard. Two-way communication not only strengthens bonds between team members, but also helps prevent misunderstandings or ambiguities. By rewarding individual contributions and facilitating open dialogue, organizations create an environment where each team member feels like they have an active role in the communication process, creating better collaboration and increasing the effectiveness of working together.

d.   Openness and transparency

The fourth strategy to increase the effectiveness of digital communications in organizations is to promote openness and transparency. Openness involves clarity in conveying information, while transparency involves providing open access to team members regarding organizational policies, goals, and developments. By implementing openness and transparency in digital communications, organizations can create an environment where team members feel given enough information to understand the context and goals of their work. This can include providing regular updates, communicating management decisions, and opening discussion channels for questions or clarification. This openness creates a foundation of trust among team members and motivates more active engagement, while transparency helps build an organizational culture that is open to the innovative ideas and solutions that can emerge from team collaboration. Thus, openness and transparency in digital communications not only helps strengthen relationships among team members, but also strengthens the overall health of the organization.

e.   Training and development of organizational skills

The fifth strategy to increase the effectiveness of digital communication in organizations is through training and developing communication skills. Providing targeted and ongoing training to team members in using digital communication tools, understanding the nuances of online communication, and practicing digital etiquette can help significantly improve their communication skills. This training not only covers the technical aspects of using digital platforms, but also focuses on developing listening skills, providing effective feedback, and conveying messages clearly and persuasively. By empowering team members with strong digital communication skills, organizations can improve their ability to communicate effectively, minimize the risk of misunderstandings, and ensure that the information conveyed is well understood by the entire team. This training also helps create an environment where digital communication becomes a more effective tool in achieving organizational goals and supports the growth of individual skills in this digital era.

CONCLUSION

In the modern era, the role of digital communication is very crucial for the success of an organization. Success is no longer determined only by products or services, but also by the extent to which internal communications are effective. Digital communication provides efficiency in overcoming distance and time constraints, speeds up problem handling, and facilitates fast decision making. Additionally, employee engagement is enhanced through interactive communication channels, while organizational transparency is realized through open access to information. However, several barriers arise, such as technological inadequacies, security and privacy issues, and lack of engagement and training. Strategies such as ensuring open communication, active listening, promoting two-way communication, and increasing openness and transparency, are key to overcoming these barriers. By adopting this approach, organizations can increase the effectiveness of digital communications, creating a more efficient, productive and adaptive work environment in the face of dynamic business changes. Digital communication is not just a tool to convey messages, but a foundation for building trust and strong collaboration in facing challenges in an ever-evolving work environment.

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