

# **The effectiveness of interactive communication channels in facilitating two-way communication between employees at STC**

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## **Abstract:**

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of internal communication within the STC, the researcher used both questionnaire and interview methods. The aim of the conduction of questionnaire was to find out STC employees' perceptions about internal communication at STC in order to explore whether they were receiving right information about developments, achievement and issues related to the company.

Overall findings showed that internal communications within Saudi Telecom are mostly effective. Indeed, both management's and employees' views showed that Saudi Telecom pays significant attention to internal communications and has various channels for the communications such as e-mails and mail centre, STC magazine, STC e-Forum and special events conducted by the managements. However, findings of this study also indicated that there are some rooms for the improvement of internal communications within Sondi Telecom. In fact, interviews' results indicated that internal communications within Saudi Telecom sometimes effected by non-professionalism in the process. In this manner, it was claimed by interviewees that some of the employees working in PR department are not professional and thus affect the adequacy and effectiveness of internal communications.

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## **Introduction**

Exchange of Ideas and opinions becomes utmost priority for business world to stand out of crowd where social media networks have obtained a relevant presence. They permit participatory model of communication based on dialogue and conversation between company and customers. Many past researches also have shown essential characteristics of dialogic communication and opportunity to engage customers and build transparent relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Organizational culture is an essential element in the general system of organizations, in which the leaders and managers of organizations should understand its dimensions and elements because it is the environmental milieu in which organizations live, which affects the type of behavior with which they interact with others or with their employees. Organizational culture performs several functions for administrative organizations, and affects Its outputs positively or negatively affect the employees and leaders' feelings of satisfaction, solidarity, cooperation and belonging, especially since their characteristics are characterized by relative continuity, and affect the behavior and performance of individuals and the cohesion of the social structure of the organization.<sup>2</sup>

The importance of organizational culture comes from being a hidden force with a multifaceted influence on the organization's activities and operations and its role in the organization's effectiveness and levels of performance and organizational behavior represented in developing loyalty and belonging to the organization, achieving organizational stability, developing a sense of surrounding events and issues, predicting patterns of administrative behavior in difficult situations and crises. Enhancing leadership and advisory roles in the desired tone, establishing the foundations for allocating incentives and job positions, providing a self-regulatory tool for behavior and desired trends patterns.<sup>3</sup>

The Internet has become an important means of communication. To design and implement communication programs

in public relations. In the past few years, this medium has witnessed rapid and successive developments that made it one of the foundations on which communication strategies in public relations are built. Rather, these developments led to a reconsideration of communication strategies themselves, and the Internet provided public relations practitioners with the opportunity to present their basic public institutions. , and enabled them to build strategic relationships with these audiences by achieving communication and dialogue with them, and therefore the Internet has become a strategic choice for managing public relations, and the effectiveness of the Internet as a means of communication depends on the understanding of public relations practitioners in various institutions; How to benefit from it and integrate it into the communication strategy and programs.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the question about the importance and necessity of modern means of communication for public relations practitioners is no longer the subject of controversy or discussion, whether among practitioners of the profession or among communication researchers. Institutions with their various orientations and outputs, whether service or production, have become operating in a changing and evolving environment, and the success or failure of these institutions depends on the ability to adapt to this environment and its elements! different. Audiences with different tendencies, needs, and aspirations, government bodies, and legal and ethical restrictions, and therefore this adaptation requires monitoring and studying these changes, and developing effective communication programs to respond to them in a way that achieves common interests between institutions and their environment.

This study aims to shed light on this issue in the context of the Saudi Arabian Telecom (STC) Company, which is the foremost domestic telecommunications service provider of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. STC's specialism is telecom services not only land or mobile but also it includes internet services. The company arranged its operations in five business units which are "Al Hafit, Al Jawal, Sawa, Saudi Net and Saudi Data" , STC is not only the biggest telecom

company in Saudi Arabia but also the largest one in the Arab world ,The company has been subject to restructuring in order to increase its dynamism so that it would flexible enough to offer products and services satisfying continuously changing customer needs. These endeavours required maintaining employee motivation and productivity as high as possible. To overcome possible challenges from the employees side, the top management of the company, according to Abdullah M. Al Homendan who was interviewed by Teletimes International , claimed being engaging with their large workforce. Internal communication plays a critical role in successful implementation of structural change and employee engagement. To this end, the author takes the opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of internal communication within the context of STC.

### **Aim and Research Question**

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of internal communication within STC. In carrying out this research, the author adopts a multi-level approach and focuses on the investigation from the aspect of management as well as staff.

From an academic point view, a lack of research into public relations focused on the voices of target audiences in organisations. To this end, this study addresses the research question of "How effective are internal conication efforts in facilitating healthy and productive two-way communication at STC?" By answering this question, this study aims to fill a gap in the literature by examining the role of internal communication from a public relations aspect in respect of building effective communication between employees and the management of a Saudi firm, STC

### **Literature Review**

Internal communication is an on-going and dynamic organisational process covering a wide range of communication styles including the grapevine" and managed communication, The purpose of this research paper is to investigate managed communication within organisations and attempt to develop a theory to facilitate the management of

internal communication. The aim of this chapter is to develop the contextual framework for this study.

### 1- Electronic public relations

The study of **(Rasha Abdel Mohsen, 2023)**<sup>5</sup> indicated that “social media” is the most used means of public relations in the Ministry of Local Development with regard to development programs, and that there is a decline in the use of personal communication, and the study also proved the effectiveness of these means in achieving the goals of the ministry in The framework of the state plan to achieve sustainable development.

The study of **(Ghada Saif, 2023)**<sup>6</sup> revealed the use of chatbot technologies, electronic signature using the Emirates Identity application, stakeholder relationship management with artificial intelligence techniques, smart resource, metaverse technology, in managing government services.

According to **Maryam, A (2021)**<sup>7</sup> The current research has been conducted to provide a model for customer experience management in the mobile banking industry for customers of commercial banks in Dubai. The study revealed Presenting a Model of Customer Experience Management in Mobile Banking Industry for Commercial Banks Customers in Dubai, **Georgios Lappas** <sup>8</sup>(2021) suggest that dialogic posts and posts that trigger offline participatory activities exerted significant influence on all forms of citizens’ online engagement. It is recommended that social media managers of local governments in Greece, as well as other countries with similar public administration styles and social media usage patterns, create dialogic loops with their citizenry by addressing users’ questions and concerns through Facebook posts. Moreover, they could publish rich media content on Facebook in the form of videos and posts that mobilise citizens to participate in various offline activities (e.g., events, council meetings)., **(Reena Patel** <sup>9</sup>2020) explores how various businesses use various resources and interaction tools at different levels to interact and engage in dialogue with their customers across sectors via social

media platforms in India and compare practices across sectors. Results illustrates that the businesses studied have maintained very frequent and good efforts to engage and build relations without losing any opportunity to respond and encourage communication on Facebook and twitter as most accepted social media for dialogic communication where level of activities and peoples' engagement on both the platforms varied as per resources used across businesses.

The study of (**Pavel Baranov ,2020**)<sup>10</sup> confirmed that the aim of using dialogic or interactive communication is to increase the link between the institution and between people and groups. Known as e-government, it also indicated that the employment of institutions for interactive communication is a result of the government's desire to apply ICT and modernize government services provided to the public in a way that guarantees speed and immediacy in providing services, which leads to gaining public confidence in government performance. As for the most important challenges It is the legislation and legal regulations that prevent some government institutions from conducting that dialogue communication, especially in some areas of the Russian Federation.

The study of (**Michail Vafeiadis ,2020**)<sup>11</sup> also found that there is a positive direct relationship between the company's credibility and trust in the electronic advertisements that it publishes, and this directly affects the company's mental image, and paid ads on the Internet and social networking sites contribute significantly In creating a good image of the institution and its seriousness in addressing the public and introducing it to the services and goods it provides and lead to an improvement in the mental image that is positively associated with an increase in the level of credibility of the company. By (**Ahmad Khaliq,2020**)<sup>12</sup> the advertisements of social networking sites, in order to improve the mental image of Islamic banks, and then increase the percentage of customers that enable these banks to achieve profits, and the study revealed that there is a positive direct relationship between the percentage of information in the advertisements of social networking sites Informativeness, and the improvement of the

increase in public demand for dealing With the Islamic banks under study, the study of **(Iesha Khajuria ,2020)**<sup>13</sup> showed that those in contact seek to use the wide spread of social networking sites as a result of the reliance of those sites on the content published by the users of those sites in promoting the image of the institution among those audiences or What is known as Consumer-Based Brand Equity, as the respondents' responses indicated that there is a positive direct relationship between the mental image of the institution and the influence on the purchasing decision of the public towards the use of that good or service, and the study of **(Usha Ramanathan 2020)**<sup>14</sup> showed that increasing public confidence is linked to a form There is a great deal of information contained in electronic advertisements, in addition to providing safety factors to ensure the completion of the sales process and the delivery of the commodity to the consumer in the fastest time, which contributes greatly to increasing trust, and then loyalty to the company, and the **(Rana Chowdhury,2020)**<sup>15</sup> study confirmed that site ads Social communication has greatly contributed to the prosperity of small companies operating in Bangladesh as a result of these advertisements improving the mental image of those companies, and then contributing to marketing the products of those companies and increasing the percentage of their sales and profits. The financial ability to bear the exorbitant costs of traditional media, and the study of **(Panagiotis Giannopoulos,2020)**<sup>16</sup> showed that the content of social networking sites provides a unique feature that is not characterized by traditional media advertisements, which is that such advertisements contribute significantly to alleviating public fears regarding Perceived Risk. Relates to flight risks or problems related to booking or flight delays, or compensation that can be obtained in the event of any damage to the customer.

Regarding the benefits of institutions employing social networking sites, and the benefits achieved from them, the study of **(Aizhan Tursunbayeva et al. 2017)**<sup>17</sup> referred to the benefits of using social networking sites by government health institutions, represented in: increasing their credibility, communicating information about the

institution itself and creating awareness of new updates In these institutions and familiarize citizens with the activities of the institutions, which can be described as one-way communication

With regard to the effectiveness of the sites and their impact on the practice of activities and the work of relationships, the results of the study of both **(Ilhem Allagui Et al2016)<sup>18</sup>** & **(Chiara Valentini ,2015)<sup>19</sup>** where they concluded that the use of public relations for social media in organizations is a good thing, and should even be at the heart of its activities, because it contributes to developing the organization's relations by engaging the public in dialogue that leads to strengthening social capital to preserve the brand Business and reputation management.

In the same context, the study of **(David Lynn Painter ,2015)<sup>20</sup>** examined the social networking sites "Facebook" and its interactive ability compared to websites for public practitioners, and the extent to which they are used in political elections, as the study sample reached (476) individuals from large colleges and research institutions in the south. The study concluded that Facebook is one of the best and most effective modern means of communication in electoral campaigns, due to its interactive tools and capabilities to build relationships, especially with users who engage in expressive behaviors. achieve greater gains in political trust than those exposed to official websites).

The study of **(Megan Amanda,2014)<sup>21</sup>** emphasized the importance of social media in public relations practices in organizations, because of its role in activating dialogue communications in order to build interactive relationships with the public. The study was conducted on eight non-profit organizations located in northern State of South Carolina, United States of America, using the semi-structured in-depth interview, and the content analysis tool with the comparison method. The study concluded that social media are low-cost tools that provide a large and broad audience, and contribute to education and awareness. As the largest percentage (59.6%) verified the principles of dialogue communication on the social networking sites of non-profit



organizations, while the principle of repeat visit was the lowest with a rate of (23.3%).

## **2- Organisational Communication**

A number of studies have dealt with some of the organizational and technological factors affecting the relations between employees in institutions, as well as the performance of the organization as a whole, and among these studies is what was indicated by the study of (Toendan, R. 2021)<sup>22</sup> which confirmed the impact of factors and organizational culture in organizations on their marketing methods and reliance on digital marketing To improve their performance, as the results of the study indicated that organizations and institutions cannot operate in the absence of external public satisfaction with the activities they carry out. Therefore, these organizations resort to harnessing digital means to communicate continuously with the public to ensure that satisfaction with regard to the organization's activity, which was indicated by the study (Call, L. 2021)<sup>23</sup> The existence of a positive direct relationship between the existing organizational factors and the adoption of reliance on digital marketing in its various practices. The more the organization has experience in how to deal with technology, this is an important factor in relying on digital marketing. (Wang, Y. 2021)<sup>24</sup> study indicated the role of organizational culture in organizations and its relationship to transformation Digital and reliance on marketing methods as a means to achieve market competition, as she confirmed that there is a direct positive relationship between the organizational vigilance of the senior management and the application of digital marketing in their dealings with the public due to the tendency of many organizations towards digital transformation in their dealings with the public, as digital marketing is one of The most important innovative activities that organizations have employed to communicate with the public and improve their image with them.

Researchers and academics emphasize the importance of organizational culture in organizations and institutions as it facilitates

collective commitment, in addition to its role in enhancing the stability of the institution or organization, as it contributes and works on integration among the members of the organization, and then some studies monitored the relationship between organizational culture and its relationship to identity, (**Zainab Saleh 2018**)<sup>25</sup> study Indicators of communication and organizational culture within telecommunications companies operating in Egypt, and determining their relationship to the formation of identity in its various stages. The communications focused on the direction of the workers themselves and their personality and ideas, while (**Dursun Bingol & others 2013**)<sup>26</sup> study confirmed the type of prevailing organizational culture affects the level of identity and image, in an attempt to understand the impact of culture on the level of organizational identity and image by measuring the perceptions of employees, managers and customers, while the study of (**Abdullatif Abdullatif and Mahfouz Jouda , 2010**)<sup>27</sup> reached Through their studies on the role of organizational in predicting the strength of organizational identity, they indicate that culture can classify the public into those who have a weak sense of organizational identity, and those who have a strong sense of it, because organizational culture works to establish the values and beliefs of the organization and with the passage of time becomes a feature of the organization, and then it can Recognizing the strength of identity by identifying the organizational culture.

While some studies focused on organizational culture in terms of its dimensions or in terms of its impact on organizational performance, so (the study of (**Asmaa Salah al-Din, 2019**)<sup>28</sup> concluded that the hierarchical culture pattern is the common and most applied culture in the public sector, followed by the flexible culture, while the flexible culture came It is the most applied in the private sector, followed by the group culture, while (the study of (**Nirvana Ahmed 2018**)<sup>29</sup> monitored the effect of the organizational culture pattern on change management communications in its various stages (before, during and after change). The family concept with an open communication structure and open, fast and collective communication systems

positively affect the efficiency of change management communications in its various stages, and that effective change management needs to follow the most effective and most positive communication strategies during organizational change management, and change management needs to use communication channels. The results of (Anuj Sinha & Others 2017)<sup>30</sup> study confirmed that the four dimensions of organizational culture “training and development, rewards and appreciation, teamwork among employees, and organizational communication” have an impact on increasing commitment employees towards their organizations, and that organizational culture gives a view to senior management of how to direct and improve organizational performance in an attempt to reveal the impact of organizational culture on employee commitment, through application to five homogeneous units of groups of companies operating in different Indian states, which is confirmed by study (Amin Nikpour 2017)<sup>31</sup> showed that there is a direct relationship between organizational culture and its dimensions and organizational performance and its dimensions in an attempt by the researcher to identify the ability of organizational culture to improve organizational performance, and the role of mediation in the organizational commitment of the employee regarding the relationship between organizational culture and organizational performance, while the study (Iman Taher Sayed Abbas, 2017)<sup>32</sup> confirmed that the organizational culture affects the efficiency of internal communications, which in turn affects the achievement of functional engagement, and there is an indirect relationship between the prevailing organizational culture in the organization and the achievement of functional engagement, through the intermediate variable, which is the efficiency of internal communications, Functional engagement is also a positive indicator of positive organizational performance, while the study (Ziplin Tarigan & Others, 2017)<sup>33</sup> focused on the impact of the company's commitment to building organizational culture through the process of functional integration to improve the company's performance, which concluded that management commitment has a positive impact on the

integration of operations Functional, and management commitment can be useful in shaping the organizational culture, which makes the employee carry out his duties and improve communications that will become part of its organizational culture later, while the study (Mohamed Saeed 2016)<sup>34</sup> sought to identify the extent of diversity and cultural difference and its impact on Work performance applied to a number of Egyptian and foreign private universities operating in Egypt, and concluded that the nature of the prevailing organization in most Egyptian private universities lacks constructive flexibility on the part of officials, free from discrimination in treatment between employees, free from monopoly and not encouraging continuity, and that the cultural background and the nature of The personality of the official and his way of dealing play a very important role in motivating workers at work, while a study (Taghreed Magdy, 2015)<sup>35</sup> confirmed that the hierarchical culture is the most prevalent culture in public business sector organizations and the market culture is the most prevalent culture in investment organizations, while Group culture and flexible culture are the two cultures that are least applied in the public business and investment sectors. She also emphasized the existence of a direct relationship between flexible culture within investment organizations and the processes of preparedness and planning for crises. This culture is considered effective for managing crises facing the organization through the introduction of early warning signals due to its interest in environmental scanning. While the study (Monica NITA, 2015)<sup>36</sup> dealt with the relationship between administrative communication and organizational culture, and the consequent effects on the organizational climate, and concluded that organizational culture affects the organization's management system, and contributes to effective administrative communication within the public in Al Ain, the organization's climate, which in turn stimulates performance, Administrative communication also plays a vital role in implementing the required change, while the study of (Nagham Dayikh Eid & Muhammad Fayez, 2013)<sup>37</sup> monitored the role of organizational

culture in enhancing organizational commitment; It concluded that organizational culture has a positive impact on employees.

### 3- Internal Communications

The amount of internal communication research has flourished during the past decade, and scholars have examined the role of internal communication in affecting employee and organizational outcomes, Research has emphasized the importance of organizations being strategic to compete and survive successfully in their environments and highlights the role of employees as a resource foundation for organizational competitive advantage , Organizations use internal communication to support employee understanding of organizational goals , and what is needed in terms of workplace attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors to support organizational performance, Internal communication therefore becomes a key tool to enable employees to act in ways that contribute to organizational success .

(Suemay Arif, &All,2023)<sup>38</sup> determines what attributes constitute a strategic employee and develops a strategic employee attribute scale. Data from a survey of 530 employees in a government organization in Malaysia investigated the relationship between internal communication and employee engagement and examined their role in supporting strategic employee attributes within an organizational context. Data were analyzed using factor analyses and partial least square structural equation modelling. The results suggest that meaningful internal communication positively influenced employees to enact strategic behaviors, characterized by understanding of their organizational goals, And (Cen April Yue ' Patrick D. Thelen,2023)<sup>39</sup> study explored the status of internal communication in Latin America through the lens of 20 experienced internal communication professionals from nine Latin American countries. Taking a multi-iteration consensus-building approach, this Delphi study enabled the expert panel to individually elaborate and collectively evaluate shared observations regarding the definition, characteristics, importance, and current reality of the field. Specifically, this study examined how practitioners define and

understand internal communication, the skills and knowledge needed to perform internal communication, (**Ana Tkalac Verčić<sup>a b</sup>, Linjuan Rita Men ,2023**)<sup>40</sup> study through A survey of 3457 employees in Croatian organizations showed that internal communication satisfaction positively influenced employee engagement, and that this influence was mediated by employer attractiveness and, to a much smaller extent, perceived organizational support. These findings help clarify how internal communication strengthens employee organizational engagement.

According to (**Sarah Ecklebe, Natascha Löffler,2022**)<sup>41</sup> By integrating internal social media as a form of digital networking, organizations can establish ties to their digitally aware employees and foster social and communicative interactions and digital collaboration. Individual, technological, social, and organizational factors were used to perform a cluster analysis. In the end, four different user types were identified: Basic Rejecters, Average Users, Active Supporters, and The Reserved. According to (**Xiaochen Angela Zhang,2022**)<sup>42</sup> Findings indicated that most of the IDEA communication on Facebook focused on gender and racial/ethnicity diversity, employee, and community stakeholders. The IDEA communication was almost equally value- and performance-driven and reflected external promotion level of investment. External stakeholders engaged more with performance-driven and external promotion IDEA communication. The volume of IDEA posts reflected corporate internal diversity practice and was positively related with Glassdoor ratings of the corporation by African American, Middle Eastern, and LGBTQ+ employees.

with (**Patrick D. Thelen,2020**)<sup>43</sup> The interviewees emphasized that employee advocacy can positively impact growth and sales, Employee advocacy positively impacts human capital in several ways, including talent acquisition, employee retention, engagement, and productivity. Participants stipulated that employee advocacy helps to shape an organization's reputation and plays an important role in issues management.

According to (Yeunjae Lee,2020)<sup>44</sup>The results of an online survey with full-time employees in the United States showed that a positive EOR influenced by transparent communication increased the employees' perceived benefits and decreased the employees' perceived risks for disclosing their health information to their supervisor. Perceived risks and benefits were both significantly associated with employees' intentions to disclose their physical health problems, to reinforce that result study OF(Anisu K. Vergheese, 2017)<sup>45</sup> indicate that internal communication is viewed as important to organizational success although there are barriers that currently prevent the function from flourishing. Overall, the sentiments are positive about how internal communication is perceived among practitioners. This study is limited to the Asia Pacific region with a bias towards India since a majority of the responses were from the country. Therefore, the results can't be generalized across the practice in the same framework (Jan Lies,2012)<sup>46</sup> Study showed that 60 PR-agencies in Germany have been polled, as to how they assess the possibilities and reality of change communications. The result illustrates a torn of the agency scene between service and consulting claims, which emphasizes the question, if (internal) communication means the organization of messages and its delivery or also becomes part of behavioral economics with the idea to control the power of management

### **The theoretical frame of the study ( Systems Theory)**

**fOR Von Bertalaffy** systems theory as the interaction between the elements and parts of a particular system. Therefore, the basic idea on which this theory relies is on interaction. In the simplest sense, the theory is based on developing the relationships between the parts of a particular system, whether it is an institution or a company, which leads to stimulating behavior. Positive based on integration, cooperation and harmony between those parts or departments within that institution, which contributes to achieving the general or strategic objective of that institution.<sup>47</sup>

For this reason, this theory differentiates between two systems followed in the institutions in society. The first system is the open system. It adopts a great deal of consolidation of relations with society and the surrounding environment in it, whether it is other organizations, the public, or even government agencies with regard to the exchange of information or interests between the institution. And society, on the contrary, there is the closed system, which does not want to activate cooperation and exchange of information in the surrounding devices in society.<sup>48</sup>

**Christopher** adds another dimension with regard to systems theory, which is the practical system approach (VSA), which consists of two parts. I have to activate and coordinate the relationships between the organization and the surrounding environment, or what is known as supra-systems.<sup>49</sup>

#### **Hypotheses of systems theory:<sup>50</sup>**

Systems theory is based on a number of key assumptions, which include:

- 1- The institutions and entities in society consist of a group of small units and departments.
- 2- There is a reciprocal relationship between those internal departments within the institutions.
- 3- The interrelationship between these departments is characterized by harmony, synergy and integration.
- 4- There is a reciprocal relationship between the institution and the surrounding environment.

#### **Research Design**

The resech carried out in this dissertation is of an exploratory nature which is aimed at developing an understanding of as to whether internal communications efforts are effective in facilitating communication within a Sandi company. To fulfil this purpose, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used by



adopting semi-structured interviews with managers and semi-structured questionnaires with employees.

However, qualitative researches do not provide statistical messes Quantitative research takes the opposite stance of qualitative research as it is mostly concerned with identifying and ascertaining the relationship between variables related to the subject at hand , In doing this, different than qualitative research, quantitative research follows the routes utilised by the natural sciences and therefore, its main concerns are objectivity in research, applying statistical tests and reaching a generalised conclusion backed up with solid facts .

The weakest elements of quantitative research methods are the inability to provide great detail with regard to patterns of human behaviours, attitudes and motivations and the fact that it renders insignificant the individuality and intellectual capacity of people.

In this study, quantitative methods were employed to measure the effectiveness of internal communication efforts within STC. In order to develop a better understanding on the abovementioned issue, the design of this research was built upon the pillars of combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Following this approach allowed the author in overcoming the limitations of above mentioned research methods when they used separately.

### **Research Instruments**

In this study, two research methods were used: interviews and questionnaires. These are explained below.

#### **1. Interviews**

an interview is a process focused on the collection of descriptive data relating to the participant's real world in consideration of interpreted meanings of phenomena described. In this study, internet-based interviewing was used. Technological advancement has produced a wide variety of computer-mediated communications (CMC) tools. CMC is a process using electronic channels to deliver communications between sender and receiver in real time or

independent of time and location, Email and chat applications such as MSN Messenger are examples of CMC tools which can also be used as interview tools, In this study, interviews were carried out through emailing questions to the managers of STC.

The questions prepared for the interviews were of open-ended. Open-ended questions have blank spaces for responses after each question and this enables the respondents to reply in their own words instead of pro-determined ones.

The interview questions were developed to capture the perceptions and beliefs of managers working at STC with regards to internal communications carried out within the company.

## 2. Questionnaires

This study also utilised questionnaires for the collection of primary data. A questionnaire is a research instrument which contains list of questions that are developed according to the specific objectives of a research and is delivered in written format to the participants, The objective of using questionnaires is to gather ideas, opinion, experiences and emotions of sampled participants by asking questions with pre-determined answers or free answer questions , In designing the questionnaire for this study, both close- ended and open-ended questions were used. A close-ended questionnaire has a multiple-choice scale format, The respondents choose from the various choices of answers or responses given to them after each question, Close-ended questions are often the kind used in quantitative research to produce statistical answers .

### **Sample OF STUDY:**

This study has two populations for the collection of data. The first one was the managers and the second one the employees working at STC. The author preferred to interview managers because questioning organisational heads can provide that particular organisation's point of view regarding the issue at hand. Through interviewing managers, the author had the chance to develop a deep insight about the internal

communications approach of the STC in flow of information within the company.

The employees were also included into the investigation in this study because, it was necessary to explore what employees of STC perceive about the internal communications efforts of the top management.

In gaining access to the employees and managers of STC, the author used his acquaintances when he gained during his internship at the company. This allowed the author using snowball sampling, as he sent the interview questions and questionnaires to the manager of public relation in STC - the person trained the author during his internship. As a result of his efforts, the author obtained answers from five managers for the interview questions and surveyed 53 employees of the company. Data collection process took three weeks starting from the third week of July and ended in the second week of August 2012

### **Methods for Data Analysis**

The employment of both qualitative and quantitative research methods required two different methods for the analysis of collected data. Bradley (2010) suggests that in the narrative data a set of occurrences is narrated in a sequence and therefore it is generally incorporated with storytelling. Narrative data have a significant importance as it contains impressions of the narrative's environment , Therefore, narrative analysis is conducted in order to gain an understanding of the outer world in terms of ramstor's interactions with it This analysis is suitable for organisations, as by interviewing people in the organisation with significant roles it is possible to extract deep insights, This analysis is considered to provide information in regards to the approach of the organisation as well as approaches of individuals for particular issues regarding the fact that the actions and opinions of people are affected by the environment of the organization.

In the analysis of data collected via questionnaires, the author used frequency analysis to show the general tendency of STC employees with regard to internal communications at STC and then the author

employed student-t test to determine as to whether the findings were statistically significant. Student-test was used since this type of analysis works effectively in small number of cases.

## **Data Analysis**

### **1. Interview Analysis**

In this study, 5 interviews were conducted and results obtained from interviews will be set out in this part.

#### **1.1. Brief Information about Interviewees**

Table 1: Brief Information about Interviewees

Interviewee	Position	Length of Working	Education Level
A	Manager	More than 15 years	Bachelor degree- Media-PR
B	Media manager	16 Years	Business administration
C	Public Relations Specialist and communication	12 Years	MBA
D	Public Relations manager	10 Years	BA in Marketing
E			MBA

#### **1. 2. Opinions about Internal Communication**

This part examines interviewees' opinions about internal communication. In this regard Interviewee A claimed that positive communication between staff and institutions increases organisational performance. In this perspective, Interviewee A. believes that informal relations between management and employees are more important than formal relations since informal relations improve the friendliness of the work atmosphere which in turn increases employee motivation.

Interviewee B on the other hand stated that internal communications are the communications carried out within the organisations. Interviewee B further stated that effective internal communications is a crucial part of organisational success and therefore it should be improved especially between the departments of the organisation. In

this perspective, Interviewee B was different to Interviewee A. Furthermore, Interviewee B believes that effective internal communications not only increases employee motivation but also increases customer satisfaction. However, Interviewee B also believes that a supportive organisational culture and structure are crucial for the effective implementation of internal communication.

### **1.3. Views about Organisational Culture in Saudi Telecom**

This part examines interviewees' opinions about organisational culture in Sandi Telecom According to all interviewees, the organisational structure of Saudi Telecom is hierarchical In the context of organisational structure, Interviewee E claimed that management style within the organisation falls into autocratic management in which subordinates have to follow what they are told by the management without a discussion. Organisational culture within Saudi Telecom on the other hand stated by the Interviewee A who claimed that it relies on a set of criteria and visions, values. Interviewee B further stated his opinions with regards to organisational culture and said that there is a strong management in Saudi Telecom which manages the administrative process. Interviewee C and D commonly stated that the organisational culture of Saudi Telecom is mostly customer focussed.

### **1. 4. Channels of Communication Used in Saudi Telecom**

This part examines interviewees' opinions about the channels of communication which are used in Saudi Telecom. From the results of the interviews it was identified that e-mails, the mail centre, STC magazine, STC e-Forum and special events are the mostly widely used communication channels within Saudi Telecom.

### **1. 5. Occurrence of Internal Communication in Saudi Telecom**

This section examines interviewees opinions about the occurrence of internal communication in Saudi Telecom. According to Interviewee A. within Saudi Telecom internal communications start with what is being raised in the company's e-Forum. From this perspective, Interviewee B claimed that despite the fact that management's opinion

is the final and the only decision, the management team of Sandi Telecom also listens to employees to understand what is going well and what is wrong within Saudi Telecom. Therefore the e- Forum is very important for internal communication. Interviewee D claimed that management also use the e-Forum to explain developments within Saudi Telecom. In addition, Interviewee E claimed that e-mails are used for the communication when necessary. Interviewee E further claimed that e-mails are mostly used when there is an announcement of special events within or outside the company. Interviewee C on the other hand stated that the internal communication process is very important to increase awareness among employees about events within the organisation. According to all interviewees, the General Administration of Public Media and Media Affairs is responsible for internal communication within Sanchi Telecom.

#### **1. 6. The Aim of Internal Communication in Saudi Telecom**

This part examines interviewees opinions about the aims of internal communications within Saudi Telecom. According to Interviewees A, C and D the development of relations between staff and the management team is the main aim of internal communications in Sondi Telecom. Interviewee B claimed that "speed of decision-making in a timely manner" is the main aim of internal communications within Saudi Telecom. Interviewee E on the other hand stated that "to provide the news about the company to the employees" is the main aim of the internal communications within Saudi Telecom. Within the context of the aim of internal communications, all interviewees claimed that internal communication takes place at all level of the organisation from top to bottom.

#### **1.7. Benefits of Internal Communications in Saudi Telecom**

This part examines interviewees opinions about perceived benefits of internal communication in Saudi Telecom. In this section, the benefits of internal communication commonly regarded by interviewees as; (i) developing and strengthening relations between employees and the management team and (ii) improving employee motivation and

satisfaction. In addition Interviewee E claimed that "internal communications increases the employee loyalty" (sic)

### **1.8. Significance of Internal Communication Efforts in Saudi Telecom**

This part examines interviewees opinions about the significance of internal communication efforts in Saudi Telecom. According to Interviewee B, Saudi Telecom pays significant attention to internal communications and therefore the management tries to implement continuous development in its internal communications efforts and methods. Interviewees C and E also agree with this view and accordingly they claimed that internal communications in Saudi Telecom are important for the management and they are very effective. However, Interviewee C claimed that the internal communication plan should be improved by the management and there should be clear strategy that leads communications objectives. In this way, by improving the current situation within Saudi Telecom, Interviewees D and E claimed that continuous training programmes should be implemented by the management Interestingly, Interviewee B believes that the organisational structure of Sandi Telecom should be changed in order for internall communications to be more effective.

### **2. Analysis of Questionnaire**

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which internal communication within STC is effective in response to the question "How effective are internal communication efforts in facilitating healthy and productive two-way communication at Saudi Telecom Company?"

## 2. 1. Perceptions towards communication at Saudi Telecom

**Figure 1: Employees' impression of communication at Sandi Telecom**

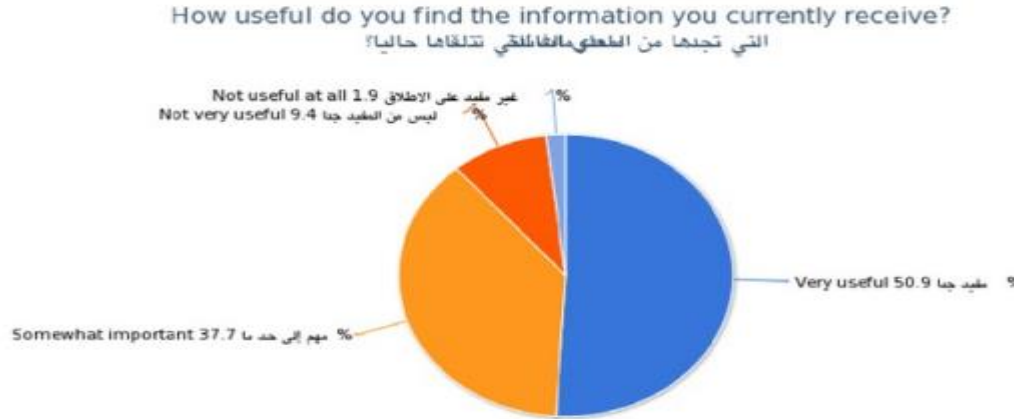


In exploring how STC employees perceive internal communication at STC, employees (N- 53) were requested to indicate their thoughts about communications at STC. The employees were give five alternatives and asked to select one of them which measures whether communications at Sauch Telecom present enough information to them. The previous pie chart and tables present the responses from the employees. As seen, most participants, 20 (38%) of them, indicated that communications at Saudi Telecom "keeps them fully informed while 19 (36%) participants pointed that communications at Sandi Telecom "keeps them fairly informed". Besides, 11 (21%) participants stated that communications "keep them adequately informed". The number of participants who state that communications at Sand Telecom do not provide information at all is very low. Specifically, only 2 (4%) participants stated that Saadi Telecom "gives them only a limited amount of information" and 1 (2%) of them pointed that Saud Telecom "doesn't tell me much at all about what's going on"



## 2. 2. Usefulness of Information Received by Employees

Figure 2: Usefulness of information received by employees



As presented, half of the participants, 27 (51%) of them, said that the information they currently received is "very useful" while 20 (38%) employees stated that it is "somewhat important". On the other hand, 5 (9%) employees evaluate the information that they currently received as "not very useful" and 1 (2%) of them stated that it is "not useful at all".

## 2.3 Media used for Delivery of Information

Figure 3: Media used for delivery of information



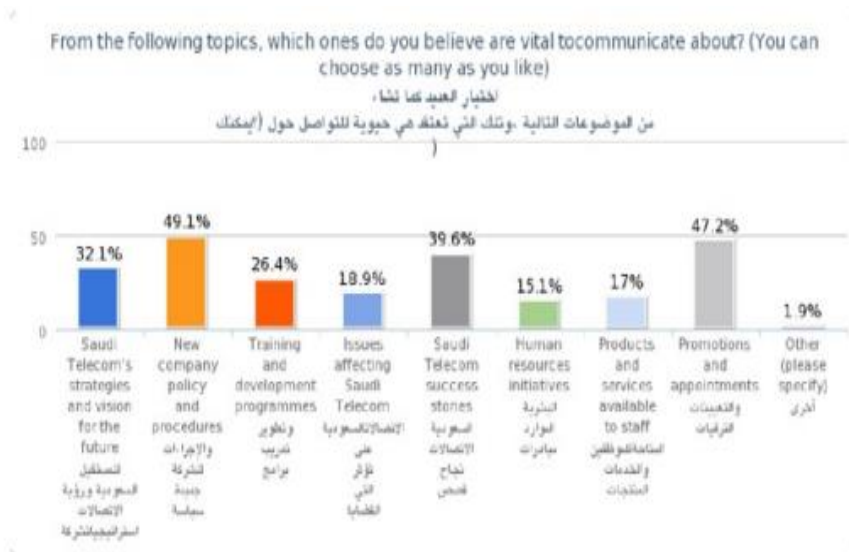
As seen, various sources of information were indicated. "Staff emails" were the primary source of information according to the majority of

the participants. 33 (62%) of them. indicated "staff emails" as source of information and "my supervisor manager" was highlighted by 27 (51%) participants 13 (25%) employees cited the "intranet" for receiving information. Participants also took the advantage of "staff meetings" to obtain information, 12 (23%) participants indicated meetings were a source of information.

Besides, 11 (21%) employees indicated that they obtain information from "informal networks" while 9 (17%) of them indicated internal external publications". Lastly. 7 (13%) participants noted that the "newsletter" was a source of information while 4 (8%) of them observed that they have other sources of information.

#### 2.4. Vitality of Information Received

**Figure 4 Vitality of information received**



As seen, the most vital topic was "new company policy and procedures", it was selected by 26 (49%) participants. "Promotions and appointments" followed it, 25 (47%) participants specified it as an important topic to communicate.

Among the other topics, "Saudi Telecom success stories" was indicated as vital by 21 (40%) participants and "Saudi Telecom's

strategies and vision for the future" was indicated as vital topic to communicate by 17 (32%) participants. "Training and development programs was stated as vital by 14 (26%) participants and issues affecting Saudi Telecom" was stated as vital by 10 (19%) participants 9 (17%) employees pointed "products and services available to staff as vital topic and 8 (15%) employees pointed "human resources initiatives". Lastly, 1 (2%) employees indicated another topic as vital.

## 2.5. Effectiveness of Internal Communication at Saudi Telecom

**Table 2: Effectiveness of internal communication at Saudi Telecom**

	1- All or almost all the time غالبًا كل الاوقات	2- Most of the time غالبًا كل الاوقات	3- Some of the time بعض الوقت	4- Hardly ever بعض اصعب الاوقات	5- Never بتاتا	Responses	
In Saudi Telecom, management genuinely listens to when employees want to speak. في شركة الاتصالات السعودية، الإدارة تستمع بصدق إلى الموظفين عندما يريدون ان يتحدثون	15.1% 8	17.0% 9	7.5% 4	47.2% 25	9.4% 5	3.8% 2	53
In Saudi Telecom, the management tells us about important things happening in the organization. في شركة الاتصالات السعودية، الإدارة تخبرنا عن أشياء مهمة تحدث في التنظيم	15.1% 8	11.3% 6	17.0% 9	41.5% 22	7.5% 4	7.5% 4	53
In Saudi Telecom, managers communicate clearly to us what their expectations are. في شركة الاتصالات السعودية، يبين مديري التواصل بوضوح ما هي توقعاتهم	13.5% 7	17.3% 9	21.2% 11	26.9% 14	17.3% 9	3.8% 2	52
In Saudi Telecom, the management consult with all appropriate team members before they make important decisions. في شركة الاتصالات السعودية، يجتمع مستشار الإدارة مع جميع أعضاء فريق العمل المختص قبل اتخاذ اي قرارات مهمة	11.3% 6	22.6% 12	37.7% 20	11.3% 6	13.2% 7	3.8% 2	53
In Saudi Telecom, managers communicate team member views and concerns up the line effectively. في شركة الاتصالات السعودية، مديري فريق الاتصالات يشاركون بإبداء الآراء والاهتمام على نحو فعال	11.3% 6	20.8% 11	41.5% 22	9.4% 5	13.2% 7	3.8% 2	53
Managers in Saudi Telecom act appropriately as a leader in the organisation. المديرين في شركة الاتصالات السعودية تعمل بشكل مناسب كشركة رائدة في المنظمة	15.4% 8	25.0% 13	40.4% 21	11.5% 6	3.8% 2	3.8% 2	52

The first item measured employees opinions about whether the managers genuine listen to their employees. According to the Table, 8 (15%) employees stated that their managers listen them "all the time" when they want to speak, 9 (17%) of them stated that they were listened "almost all the time" while 4 (8%) employees said that they were listened "most of the time" and almost half of the participants, 25 (47%), said that their managers listen them "some of the time". On the other hand, 5 (9%) participants stated that their managers "hardly ever" listen to them and 2 (4%) participants stated that managers never listen to them. In the next item, employees' opinions about whether managers inform the employees about the important things that the organisation experience was explored.

As it is revealed on the Table, 8 (15%) employees stated that their managers inform them "all the time" when there is an important event, 6 (11%) of them stated that they were informed "almost all the time" while 9 (17%) employees said that they were informed "most of the time" and almost half of the participants, 22 (42%), said that their managers inform them "some of the time". On the other hand. 4 (8%) participants stated that their managers "hardly ever" inform them and 4 (8%) participants stated that managers never inform them about important events and occurrences in the organisation.

The third item explored employees' opinions about whether managers communicate their expectations to employees. According to the Table. 7 (14%) employees stated that their managers tell them their expectations "all the time", 9 (17%) of them stated "almost all the time" while 11 (21%) employees said that managers communicate their expectations "most of the time" and 14 (27%) employees said that their managers communicate their expectations "some of the time". On the other hand, 9 (17%) participants stated that their managers "hardly ever communicate their expectations and 4 (8%) participants stated that managers never communicate. The next item measured employees' opinions about whether employees were consulted by managers before making important decisions

### **Summary of the Findings**

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of internal communication within the STC. To this end, this study addressed the research question of "How effective do internal communication efforts in facilitating healthy and productive two-way communication at STC?" In determining the objective and answering the research question, qualitative and quantitative research methods were used together in order to overcome the limitations related to when they used separately. In this manner, in primary data collection, the researcher used both questionnaire and interview methods. The aim of the conduction of questionnaire was to find out STC employees' perceptions about internal communication at STC in order to explore whether they were receiving right information about developments, achievement and issues related to the company. The interviews questions on the other hand were developed to capture the perceptions and beliefs of managers working at STC with regards to internal communications carried out within the company.

Findings showed that first of all, more than half of the employees agreed that communications at Saudi Telecom provides enough information. In fact, only 6% participants stated that communications at Saudi Telecom gives either limited amount of information or no information. Again, majority of the participants evaluated the information shared by the company through internal communication channels as useful; in fact, only small amount of them regarded the information as not useful.

For strategic direction at Saudi Telecom, majority of the participants stated that they were very knowledgeable while some stated that they were not knowledgeable at all. For policies and procedures at Saudi Telecom, even though some participants stated that they were very knowledgeable, a big number of participants stated that they were moderately knowledgeable while some others stated that they were not knowledgeable at all. In terms of ongoing accomplishments, employees mostly stated that they were knowledgeable however these

were still some participants who indicate that they were not knowledgeable about ongoing accomplishments at Saudi Telecom. Lastly, for issues facing the company, majority of the participants indicated that they were either moderately or very knowledgeable while there were some participants stating they were not knowledgeable.

Despite the fact that various sources of information were provided through various internal communication channels, employees mostly gain information from staff emails, their supervisor/manager, intranet, and staff meetings. Employees also found as in belief that "new company policy and procedures", "promotions and appointments", and "Saudi Telecom success stories" are the most vital topics that needs to be communicated by the management.

In terms of the effectiveness of internal communications, first of all, employees reported that managers generally listen to them and inform them at least most of the time about the developments within Saudi Telecom. Nevertheless, there were some employees who said that managers do not inform them about the important things in the organisation. From the findings, it was also understood that managers communicate their expectations at least most of the time to the employees. Besides, majority of the employees indicated that their managers consult them at least most of the time about the decisions made by them.

Overall findings showed that internal communications within Saudi Telecom are mostly effective. Indeed, both management's and employees' views showed that Saudi Telecom pays significant attention to internal communications and has various channels for the communications such as e-mails and mail centre, STC magazine, STC e-Forum and special events conducted by the managements. However, findings of this study also indicated that there are some rooms for the improvement of internal communications within Sondi Telecom. In fact, interviews' results indicated that internal communications within Saudi Telecom sometimes effected by non-professionalism in the

process. In this manner, it was claimed by interviewees that some of the employees working in PR department are not professional and thus affect the adequacy and effectiveness of internal communications.

In fact, according to findings, increasing the number of implemented training and development programmes can be given as first recommendation to the company. This issue was stated also by one of the interviewee. In this manner STC should be more focusing on increasing its training programmes with regards to internal communications. Internal communication training can also take part in the induction trainings where the new employees are given first information about the company. This can improve the effectiveness of internal communications among the newly started employees. Increased number of training and development programmes can also increase employee satisfaction and motivation as well as their commitment to organisation. Secondly, knowledge of PR employees should be increased through enabling them to take part in PR courses. This can also help in improving their professionalism towards their jobs. Thirdly, two way communications must be improved in STC. In fact, not taking the opinion of employees is not a good idea in today's business environment. In fact, since the employees are the ones that face with customers, they can be very helpful for being customer oriented company and being innovative company. Management of STC therefore, definitely be listening its employees to improve the effectiveness and profitability of the company. In this perspective, employees' voice can be listening through facilitating feedback boses, or employees meetings. From time to time, employee surveys can also be conducted to understand employees' opinions.

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