Innovative Approaches to Communication Management for

International Project Teams

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ABSTRACT

Organization structures have been experiencing a shift towards geographically dispersed teams. Since communication management plays a significant role in the success of organizational performance, it was important to address the growing need for approaches for communication processes that would be appropriate and relevant to multinational teams. There was also a need to identify the factors that affected communication management approaches.

The study made use of a conceptual qualitative and an applied analytical research design of secondary data. The findings from the data analysis exposed the factors that were critical in considering communication processes for multinational teams. The scholarly literature provided significant material to construct approaches that were innovatively designed for international project teams. The approaches that were designed in this study were significantly based on existing research. Practices were provided to address the discovered needs and processes for international project management.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The ultimate mission of each organization would be to accomplish its set of goals. More often than not, the achievement of this goal is affected by the communication processes that are controlled by the management (Kester, Adegbite & Bankole, 2008). Not limited to organizations, communication is an essential process in human existence. It has bearing in every sphere of human endeavor. It is the medium by which relationships are initiated, established, extended, maintained and sustained (Kester et al., 2008).

Organizations are social systems that are composed of interdependent groups of people that functions as a team to achieve a common goal. All activities that are conducted in an organization involve human beings. Organizational communication is described as the understanding of how an organizational context can impact communication process and how the meaning of communication symbols differs from one organizational culture to another (Kester et al., 2008). While it is not given due regard in the management processes within an organization, communication plays a critical function in the accomplishment of organizational goals and the unity of relationships within a group.

The traditional form of communication in the organization is the downward communication system that normally takes the forms of memos, reports, staff meetings, departmental meetings, newsletters and official notices. It can almost be associated with a linear communication model, wherein feedback is lacking; if not for the seldom assessment and feedback opportunities. However, new organizations are expressing the necessity for a shift in the communication processes to include a continuous flow of information through an officially designated structure that is described to be multi-dimensional (Kester et al., 2008). This structure is envisioned to include upward, downward, horizontal and cross-channel flows of communication.

In the age of constant development, the survival of an organization is dependent on the success of implementing large-scale changes (Lewis, 2000). It is a trend for organizations to experiences rapid changes. It has been observed that planned change implementations efforts fail, as it encounters significant difficulties. Communication problems find a commonplace in organizational problems.

Information innovation approaches is core in transformation and change deemed possible into the operative areas of the organization. For instance, when the organization is threatened by several business environment changes, an outcome of information technology development as well as demand patterns of the business paradigm, the need for ample communication execution are to be applied and increased. Thus, as seen and viewed, it can be that, in certain high change situations, when the team building as well as manpower area of the organization needs to be initially involved into the communication assimilation of the organization, as communication is integral and serves as a major factor for organization success and development to always be in parallel with organization effectiveness and leadership over others. Furthermore, if the organization could utilize communication management more effectively and seen into a two-way process and a participative way, there is the need to create as well as organize ideal and positive relationships into key players of the organization, and the need to assume management of communication along with the need to transform and embrace change.

Human and organizational factors have been identified to be causes and contributors to failures, as well as implementation difficulties. For example, resistance during transition stages can lead to output reduction, quarreling, hostility, work slow down and a negative attitude towards the organization. It is significant to understand how communication affects the process of change in the organization (Lewis, 2000). Communication processes are viewed to increasingly take a central determinant for predicting positive outcomes to change

efforts. Each part of the change process in the organization requires the use of a communication model, such as the planning, the formulating of goals, the sharing of goals, the implementing of new polices, altering performance criteria, and assessing implementation outcomes (Lewis, 2000). Thus, managing the communication system has largely become a management function in the organization.

The changes that organizations have experienced in the 1990s relate the shift in the emphasis in the mass media and other forms of marketing communications (Prensky, McCarty & Lucas, 1996). Although these communication activities have always been a part of organizational processes for some time, the focus on their roles have increase significant attention in the recent years. The strategy and execution of communication efforts are generally considered to be a separate effort in the organization.

Since the organization is expanding into multinational teams, the communication processes also need to evolve to cater to such organizational structures. International teams require more complex and heterogeneous communication strategies in order to cater to the diversity of the teams. These needs present organizational and managerial issues that would most likely relate success to communication efforts.

Executives are expecting more alliances with headquarters from all over the globe (Epstein, 1998). The companies of tomorrow are predicted to be lean organizations that are drawing from a network of external relationships. According to a survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit and Andersen Consulting, the future organization will have teams from different regions of the world (Epstein, 1998). This calls for unconventional communication processes and people skills in the organizations from 2010 and beyond.

Statement of the Problem

In order to work well in multinational teams, organization members need to be prepared to be dynamic and to be ready to constant change. This requires careful planning

and thoughtful attention. Since multinational teams or International Project Teams have become a new trend in organizations, there has been limited communication management research that addressed the needs of geographically fragmented organizations. Nevertheless, executives are anticipating that their organizations will become more "virtual" in the years to come (Epstein, 1998).

There are obstacles along the way. There are predictions in the difficulty in managing people effectively and the problem for maintaining clear and frequent communications. There is a need to classify competencies that will be needed in order to address this rising trend in organizational structures. International relationships are being formed through inter-organization relationships. Joint ventures or temporary alliances are created in order to accomplish more for their organizations.

The landscape for organizational communication is changing and there has been a significant gap in communication management studies that can effectively provide communication approaches for multinational teams. While evidence exists for the role of the relationship of communication and management for organizational performance success, there had been no studies that provided innovative approaches as to how communication management strategies can be implemented for international project teams. There has been an over-reliance on merely understanding the communication model that consists of the sender, receiver, encoding, decoding and feedback, whereas there are no specific tools to master in the area of communication management competency (Frame, 1999). There needs to be vital approaches for communication management that will specifically address the changing and complex needs of multinational teams of organizations.

<div align="center">Theoretical Framework</div>

The enactment theory views individuals and organizations in constant processes of self-formation. In order to form themselves into an organization, personnel needs to attain

stability through the enactment of interaction cycles and the subsequent provision of rules and recipes for the appropriate organizational behavior (Heath, 1994). This theory treats life in general and organizations in particular as an undirected play, which captures the dynamism of people who brings companies to life.

The enactment theory captures the thoughtful processes that people need to achieve continuity and coordination. The roles and rules that grow from the expectations of the members of the organization in their coordination of activities with one another become more explicit. The enactment theory views organizations as a theater. In theater productions, members of the company must create and enact shared perspectives, scripts and themes. Thus, the theory provides an explanation for the activity. It allows for creativity and the consideration of the craft of the actors playing the characterizations (Heath, 1994). It allows for organizations' metaphorical tragedy and comedy and suggests for constraints of situation, which can affect any live performance. It also allows for inquiry regarding the link between the performance and what goes on backstage.

The enactment theory allows the researcher to view the organization and present scripts and directions by which the live performance can be improved. The actors operate within a stage wherein the researcher can observe and offer areas wherein they need to become better actors or to change the method of acting. In order to coordinate the efforts of the personnel, they need a playbook that contains scripts and plots. In this case, in order to direct communication management in the context of international project teams, there needs to be a fresh new set of innovative approaches that would be offered to address the unique stage of multinational team organizations.

The use of the enactment theory as a paradigm for organizational behavior refuted the conclusion that the organizational structure is static (Henry, 1994). The organization's nature is constantly engaged in a process of organizing. It undergoes constant changes. The structure

exists according to what the people in the organization do and think, together as a unit. Thus, people enact structure through the process of forming, maintaining and dissolving relationships (Henry, 1994). Enactment is a product of the people's consciousness of the relationships. Furthermore, it is out of the realization that organizations are in a continual state of falling apart and rebuilding. It transpires through communication processes that occur in stages such as acting, interacting and double interacting (Henry, 1994).

Enactment occurs in the realization that people perform roles and uses strategies to appropriate each role. It produces team members that know and are willing to enact strategies by employing compatible communication plan, styles and messages into logical designs. This research is based on the exploration the roles and the structures that are formed within an organization. According to Henry (1994), "Enactment theory embraces all of these perspectives. Whether as strategic and planned or routine ritual, it views organizational efforts as symbolic action, the dancing of an attitude" (p. 14). The formulation of innovative approaches to communication management is an enactment of the roles and strategies that are needed to perform the roles in the context of international project teams.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this conceptual qualitative and applied analytical research is to explore innovative approaches to communication management for international project teams. This research study will look into the communication ways and assimilation of the innovative processes, which can be found into transformed and changed organization, and to assess and discover patterns of how the organization operations will have to be managed by presence of communication. Research implications are to be drawn from the issues of innovation that will affect positively and or negatively to the organization. There links the contingency view of communication.

There will be the need to create a framework for analyzing communication settings and the need to suggest an alternative communication approach to respond to problems, to be ethically motivated. Thus, presenting an innovative paradigm that will emerge as response to reality as well as to determine some threats of communication, relationship oriented and from communicative importance.

This research will lay out some theory grounded foundation for having certain transformation and change centered perspectives from within guiding principles to realize several approach problems of the communication discipline as it can go beyond the background of innovative multidisciplinary communication approaches. Thus, there can be specific approach towards new media through which to communicate is constantly being created, bringing information to everyone with an active interest in innovation and technological developments. Organizations that want to excel use communication management to assist in transformation and relationships within the environment. Communication players in the organization are also more likely to play a managerial and strategic role in the organization during times of instability (Stroh, 1998; D'Aprix, 1996). The research will reflect the significance of communication managers in the context of organizational change and transformations. It will also present innovative approaches for addressing the needs of international project teams in the context of communication management. This research embraces the nature of the changing organizations and offers strategies and approaches that would enable them to transition into multinational teams wherein diversity or heterogeneity will no longer be barriers to becoming a fully competent and functional organization.

Research Questions

The conceptual qualitative study was designed to address the following significant research questions:

1. What are the existing variables that impacts communication management in multinational organizations?

2. What is the significance of effective communication and management in multinational organizational success?

3. What innovative approaches to communication management can be implemented for international project teams?

Aim and Objectives

This conceptual qualitative research is aimed to design innovative approaches to communication management implementation for International Project Teams. This aim will be achieved through the following set of objectives:

1. To describe the existing variables that affects the communication management systems in multinational organizations.

   This objective involves the determination of points of entry by which the foundation of new approaches for communication management in multinational organizations could be based. The understanding of the variables that impact communication management could direct the research's exploration for avenues wherein innovations can be employed.

2. To discover the role of effective communication and management in multinational organization success from the scholarly body of literature available.

   The objective of the research to present the importance of communication and management in the organizational context will be expounded through this endeavor. Since communication has been disregarded as a priority in project management processes, the findings of this research will reveal their critical roles in organizational success.

3. To construct innovative approaches that can be effective and suitable for International Project Teams.

The goal for the research is to offer a set of innovative approaches that can be utilized in the context of multinational teams or International Project Teams. It will be based on the determinants, the needs and the strengths that can be discovered from secondary data analysis. This applied analytical research will provide solutions to the problem of communication management in the context discussed.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this research study will involve the use of secondary data analysis for the construction of innovative approaches for communication management in the context of International Project Teams. It will specifically explore the subject of communication and management in traditional and multinational organizations. The research will rely solely on secondary data analysis. The nature of this research is exploratory and analytical. It makes use of qualitative data analysis methods to discover points of entry for new discoveries. The limitations of this research remains in the fact that there is no primary data that will be provided in the research from insider-perspectives. The only primary data that can come from this research will be limited to the innovative approaches that will be constructed based on literature. There will be no validity testing that will be employed since the approaches that will be formulated will be based on evidence from the existing body of scholarly knowledge in organizational communication. The study will be limited to general observation for international teams and the communication processes that are involve in this organizational context.

Significance of the Study

This research is designed to explore the nature of communication management within organizations. The study of the determinants for communication management and the construction of innovative approaches for this project management practice will address the needs of international project teams. Since it has been the growing trend in organizational changes, it is necessary to provide substantial strategies that can cater to these changes.

This can influence actual organizational practice. Innovation is something that changing organizations are compelled to accept in order to survive and maintain productivity. Unconventional strategies are implemented because they address the complexities of heterogeneous organizations that traditional communication approaches can no longer cater to. It will be useful for managers in their selection for communication strategies and tactics (Lewis et al., 2006).

These innovative approaches will be based on an analysis of existing literature regarding the determinants for communication management and the needs of a changing organization. This will reflect relevant approaches that are constructed based on the needs of the new organizational structure. Practitioners and researchers will be able to gain new knowledge from the innovative change management guides and would allow for a good overview of the prevalent needs of the complex organization structure of today.

Summary

This section presented the foundations of this exploratory research. Since organizations are experiencing significant changes and shifts towards a geographically fragmented structure, it would be significant to address the needs of these organizations based on communication strategies. The section revealed the research questions by which this paper will be directed, together with the aims of objectives that will provide guidance for the study. The next section would provide an in-depth discussion on the process of communication. The

determinants of communication management would be identified. It would also expound on the relationship between communication and management, as well as the role of communication in the transformation and the change within the organization. The other sections included the literature review, the research methodology, the data analysis and discussion of findings, and would end with a discussion about the recommendations for international project teams' communication management strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Communication is a process that has a permanent presence within the organization. It is significant to lay the groundwork for understanding the process of communication by starting this review with a discussion to its regard. Regardless of the organizational structure or culture, communication maintains a critical role in every area of the organization. Communication management is viewed as the effective handling of the communication process. This section will also point out the determinants of communication management. Communication management serves as the dominant topic in this section. It will be understood in the context of both traditional and multinational organizations.

Afterwards, the discussion will continue to find the relationship between communication and management as important concepts in the organization. Furthermore, the relationship between transformation and communication will also be discussed. There will also be a significant area of discussion that focuses on the role of communication in change, and vice versa. Since the organizations are constantly undergoing rapid changes, it is important to recognize how communication management influences change. Furthermore, the study will reveal points wherein innovative approaches for communication management can be built up to address the purpose of this research.

The Process of Communication

The simple description of communication is understood as the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver in a manner wherein understanding takes place. Effective communication has immeasurable significance in the world of business, as well as in every sector of public and private life. In the corporate context, effective communication is mandatory because it accounts for the difference between the success and the failure in an

organization. Poor communication leads to the reduction of quality and the weakening of productivity, which could lead to disunity within the organization.

In order to take understand what makes communication effective, the communication process needs to be understood. The sharing of common meaning between the sender and the receiver is made possible because of the process of communication. This process has four major components. These components are encoding, medium of transmission, decoding and feedback (Burnett & Dollar, 1989). Furthermore, there are two factors that are present in the communication process, the sender and the receiver.

The sender is the individual, group or organization that initiates the communication processes. The source is the one that holds primary responsibility for the success of the sending of the message. It is significant that the written or spoken words, or the nonverbal language that is selected will be interpreted in a manner that the receiver is able to understand (Burnett & Dollar, 1989).

The encoding process involves translating the information into a message in the form of symbols that represents and idea or a concept. This is the process that turns the idea or the message into a coded message that will be communicated. The symbols that can be used to encode a message could be in the form of language, words, and even gestures. The relevance of the symbols to the receiver will be significant in the understanding of the message.

The sender has the power to decide what he or she wants to transmit in the encoding process. Thus, the assumptions of the sender about the receiver should have a high level of accuracy for the message to be received the way it was intended. The sender must be able to use symbols that the receiver is familiar with in order to get the desired idea or message across.

The transmission of the message undergoes a channel or a medium. The channel is the mode or the means by which the message is sent. Visual channels are becoming more

common as communication technology expands. Basic channels are oral or written. They include the telephone, letters, the television and the radio. The effectiveness of the channels also depends on the characteristic of the communication and the nature of the receiver.

When immediate feedback is needed, oral communication channels are more effective in order to avoid any uncertainties. However, when a message is delivered to a larger audience, written channels are effective. There are different factors that influences channel selections such as urgency, the necessity for an immediate feedback, the requirement for documentation, the complexity of the content, the level of privacy, the location of the receiver and so on (Burnett & Dollar, 1989). Channels make a difference in the communication process (Adler et al., 2004). For example, a typewritten love letter cannot have the same effect as handwritten one. The choice of channels is chosen according to the time required for feedback, amount of information conveyed, sender's control over how the message is composed, the control over receiver's attention and the effectiveness of detailed messages (Adler et al., 2004). Figure 3 depicts a table that shows a tabular comparison of these differences.

The decoding stage follows transmission. The receiver conducts the decoding of the message. Once the message is received, a stimulus is sent to the brain for interpretation in order to assign meaning to it. The decoding of the message is described as processing of the message (Burnett & Dollar, 1989). The process by which the symbols are interpreted by the individual in order to make sense of them or to make them meaningful is the decoding stage of the process. The correct interpretation of the message means a successful communication has taken place. Messages do not have meaning in themselves. Meaning is created in the way people express and interpret them (Adler, Rosenfield & Proctor, 2004).

The extent by which the receiver understands the message or interprets it accurately also depends on different determinants. One of the factors will be how much an individual or

the individuals know about the topic, their receptivity to the message, the relationship and as well as the trust that exists between the sender and the receiver. Interpretations of the message are also affected by the experiences, attitudes, knowledge, skills, perception and culture of the receiver. This has been observed with how senders encode messages (Burnett & Dollar, 1989).

Feedback is the final stage of the communication process. The receipt of the message may or may not compel the receiver to respond in some way, which signals a response to the sender. The signal could be in the form of a spoken comment, a non-verbal action, a written message, and a wide variety of other actions. According to Bovee and Thill (1992), the lack of a response also constitutes to a form of response. For example, the cliché "silence means yes" illustrates how the lack of response still meant something. Feedback is an important part of the communication process. It tells the sender if the message was sent effectively. It provides an opportunity for the sender to take actions to correct misunderstood messages if the medium allows it. Feedback can also be impacted by a series of communication barriers such as differential background, varied interpretations of words, as well as different emotional reactions and states (Bovee & Thill, 1992).

Even if the process of communication is easily understood and can be simple. The essence of this process is not. There exist numerous barriers throughout the communication process. These barriers can impede the message from being effectively sent. Common examples of barriers include inappropriate mediums, incorrect grammars, wrong word usage, conflicting verbal and non-verbal language and the improper use of technical jargon.

According to Bovee & Thill (1992), noise is a common barrier in the said process. It can occur at any stage of the process. It can distort the message from its interference in the communication process. It can also take up different forms such as external and internal factors. The channel is also subjected to various sources of noise wherein the message can be

distorted along the way (Garza, 2009). Environment and noise affects the communication process. Problems could arise if the communicators are in different environments or contexts (Adler et al., 2004). Figures 1 and 2 can better illustrate the communication process.

According to Garza (2009), there are different kinds of communication processes according to its purpose, namely, the linear model, the interactive model and the transactive model. The linear process is observed with ancient texts or communications that are constructed for some time ago, wherein no feedback loop can be allowed for correction. An example of such a process is when people read the Bible. Both transactive and interactive models have emphasized on a "give and take" relationship in the process (Adler et a., 2004). Communication is like a partner dance wherein the success depends on the involvement of the partner. Even if the sender is an expert, if he or she does not adapt to the receiver's skill level the coordination will still be a failure.

Earlier forms of communication process included a simplistic approach wherein only the sender encodes and the receiver decodes through a one-way communication process or a linear model (Adler et al., 2004). Later models illustrate a communication process that is like a ping-pong game with different encoders and decoders due to the feedback process (Adler et al., 2004). Garza (2009) pointed out that the lack of similarities in terms of culture, historical time period, geographical location, and language can lower the possibility of a successful communication process.

Other important considerations in the communication process involve the fact that communication is irreversible and unrepeatable. The first description of communication process describes how the communication process cannot be erased and replaced. When it came to communicating, reversal is not possible. While clarifications can clear up confusion or an apology can heal hurt feelings, but it is impossible to "unreceive" a message, as words said and deeds done cannot be retrieved (Adler et al., 2004).

In a similar description, communication is unrepeatable. Since communication is an on-going process, an event cannot be repeated. It is impossible to recreate an event even if the same avenue, participants and activities are present. Behavior cannot be duplicated exactly in different periods of time (Adler et al., 2004).

<div align="center">Determinants to Communication Management</div>

Communication management is one of the competencies of project management (Frame, 1999). It lies in the heart of effective project management. Basic areas that are considered in this competency involves an understanding of the communication process, an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of different communication approaches, as well as knowledge of the appropriate communication strategies according to the organizations needs.

Communication management exists in the realm of public relations. It is related to the strategic function of this field. It is an organizational concept that helps the organization achieve the research goals in the identification and building of healthy relationships within strategic constituencies. There are internal and external determinants to communication management that needs to be considered in order to present avenues for presenting an innovative approach for the implementation of this context. The evolution of organizations brought about a need for an integrated communications effort. Communication efforts need to be integrated and coordinated in relevant manner in order to provide appropriate management strategies.

Individual Strategic Goals versus Strategy Familiarity

One of the internal determinants of communication management involves the organization's own strategic goals (Prensky et al., 1996). Organizations exist with a purpose to serve. Business organizations serve their clients and their business interests. Relationships within the organizations and the characteristics of the individual firms will have a significant

impact on the integrated communication strategies that can be implemented. Especially for firms that have inter-organizational relationships in terms of international project groups, it is important to consolidate a unified goal with the other communication providers.

Organizational characteristics are also important to seek provide a full range of different communication functions internally (Prensky et al., 1996). The goal of maintaining profitability and stability are major influences in the firm's communication management, especially in the context of multinational team (MNT) organizations. Different teams can provide different forms of communications because of their team's own strategic goals. Even if each team will consider the most effective communication methods to achieve the goals of the organization, they will emphasize on whatever form of communication they are capable to provide. Thus, aside from attaining the goals of the teams, the familiarity of the communication strategy is also considered.

In the context of familiarity, teams also avoid conflicts and implement communication strategies that top management teams or clients prefer (Prensky et al., 1996). There are two alternatives that are presented to avoid conflicts in communication management strategies. The first alternative involves the development of in-house functional groups that provide a wide range of communication services for all the teams involved in a project. This team will be responsible for the matters of communication management. The second option involves merging with organizations or teams that provide communication services. In this alternative, teaming up with an organization that specializes in this service can experience communication management. These alternative approaches offer higher productivity in terms of communication management and even greater financial stability (Prensky et al., 1996).

Communication Skills

While there are no specific communication management tools that can be categorized in comparison to other project management competencies, key players must understand the

communication model in order to effectively implement communication management (Frame, 1999). Thus, the availability and level of communication skills are important determinants for communication management. Effective communication skills enable the articulation of needs and requirements of the organization (Frame, 1999). It also involves the establishment of realistic expectations of the team members, the provision of status updates for projects, requesting of resources and the ability to write documents, such as memos, proposals, and technical reports.

The significance of having high levels of communication skills can be overemphasized. One of the reasons for this includes the flexibility and broadness of the communication management approaches that can be utilized if members of the organization are good communicators. This will enable them to adapt different communication strategies because they have the skills to implement them properly.

More than the possession of communication skills, it is also important to consider the organizational perception of communication management. According to Frame (1999), there are a few organizations that place significant weight on communication competencies in project management processes. Ignoring communication management skills can have critical effects on the organization. Since members of the organizations spend scores of hours communicating with their managers, fellow team members, as well as customers, it is foolish to disregard communication management skills (Frame, 1999).

Organizational Characteristics

Organizational characteristics are significant determinants for communication management. Each organization has unique characters because of their differential purposes, preferences and nature. These characteristics will be described in order to expound how they affect the organization's communication management.

Organizational Structure. Structure deals with the consideration of tasks that can be classified according to departments. Beyond this, organizational structures describe the process of "who reports to whom, and the formal coordinating mechanisms and interaction patterns that will be followed" (Grunig 1992, p. 468). The structure of the organization is complex; furthermore, it critically reflects the role of the communication manager, among other things.

Structural dimensions present variables for comparisons among different organizational types, as well as the interdependencies between each structural variable. These variables also predict the communication management process or strategy that is applied. The flows of resources and information are affected by inter-organizational structure (Prensky et al., 1996). The goals of the organization and the working arrangements that are needed will mandate the structure of the organization. The integration of the work flows with different firms and teams will also impact the effectiveness of the communications program that is needed. Centralization, formalization and complexity in relationships within the organizations are the primary dimensions to be considered within an organizational structure (Grunig, 1992; Prensky et al., 1996).

One of the variables, centralization, is defined as the extent by which decision-making is concentrated in the top levels of the organizational hierarchy (Grunig, 1992). Furthermore, it is also viewed as the level and variety of the participation in the strategic decisions by groups that are relative to the number of groups in the organization. Centralization is a characteristic for organizations that are rigidly structured and assign little decision-making power to groups in lower levels of the hierarchy. This highly impacts communication management and would possibly reflect linear communication models.

Decentralization is therefore understood as the dispersion of information and decision-making throughout the organization (Grunig, 1992). It allows for organizations to

require communication management that responds quickly to changing environments and for more input in the decisions. More than decision-making, the level of centralization in organizational structures affects information management.

Another variable that determines organizational structure is stratification. This variable is a way by which rewards are distributed within an organization (Grunig, 1992). The differences in the income and prestige among the jobs within the organization and the rate of mobility between low and high-ranking positions are indicators of stratification. The lines that divided the members of the team along status levels and upward mobility represent the stratification of an organization. This affects communication management because status levels influences communication models and affects creative collaborations.

Formalization variable is determined by the level of importance of rules in the organization, as well as the degree by which they are enforced (Grunig, 1992). This also highly influenced the communication process, similar to the degree of centralization. It has been observed that innovations in the processes is discouraged in highly rules-driven organizations.

Finally, complexity is defined as the number of occupational specialties that can be found in an organization and the level of training required for such a specialty (Grunig, 1992). It also includes the level of professionalism. Measures of complexity include the number of departments, job titles, level of training, the extent of professional activity, degrees held and routineness of task performance. Upward communication is associated with complexity, more than the other structural variables, because it describes the complexity of the organizational environment and the extent of the communication (Grunig, 1992). The level of complexity, as well as the size of the organization elevates the problems of successful communication management.

Traditional organizations are described to have small-scale operations with low levels of complexity. Mechanical organizations are those that have large-scale operations with low levels of complexity, but have a large personnel base. Organic organizations are those that have high levels of complexity but are small in scale. This is due to the presence of highly skilled professionals. Mixed mechanical and organic organizations are large in scale and have high levels of complexity. Mechanical organizations are described to emphasize on public information and organic organizations needs two-way symmetrical communication (Grunig, 1992). International project teams can be classified as organic organizations if they are composed of small teams in different locations. The scattered teams can be highly specialized in their tasks, which serve as reason for international teaming.

Organizational Environment. Sociologists pointed out to the importance of organizations and their environments. Organizations are observed to adapt to their external setting. They must adapt in order to increase their effectiveness and to survive (Grunig, 1992). The environment involves the factors that are outside of the organization. It involves the forces and institutions that affect the performance of organization that it has little control over. The environment serves as a specific factor in different organizations as it includes the economic conditions, the legal and social system, as well as the culture. This has significant impact on the organization's survival, growth and attainment of goals.

Organizational Culture. The differences that are observed when it came to organizational culture affect the interrelationships between the teams and departments in an organization. The type of relationships that exists within an organization will ultimately determine the communication processes that are relevant. According to the communication model, the type of relationship between the sender and the receiver of the message will also impact the flow of communication in the encoding and decoding stages of the process (Burnett & Dollar, 1989).

The effect of different cultures operates on the different cognitive processes that are implemented by managers or leaders in the organization. The culture impacts the underlying assumptions of actions of these leaders (Prensky et al., 1996). Cultural influences are powerful and result in the uniqueness in the operation systems and work experiences, as well as interrelated structural and political differences. Employees integrate social milieu and skills of the organizational culture that make those firms successful into his or her cultural background. Communication management views culture as a significant variable that affects the action of the firm. Culture also serves as a metaphor for cognition, symbolism and psychological processes (Prensky et al., 1996). The cultural aspects of the receiver influence the decoding process and this includes organizational culture (Burnett & Dollar, 1989).

Organizational Politics. Political struggles are also experienced in the effort to gain a large share of the communication process and the power in the organization (Prensky et al., 1996). Struggles can also occur in trying to control strategic direction of the communication management. The commitment to a particular form of communication and the struggle to protect self-interests is associated to political conflicts within an organization. This organizational dimension is often viewed with conflicts between teams and departments. Political conflict amongst different functions also has the same genesis (Prensky et al., 1996). The politics in an organization can determine the budget allocated for communication management.

Team Issues

The health of a communication environment is dependent in the synchronization of teamwork in an organization. The unity in the team serves as the primary means for successful decision-making in organizations. Teamwork enables strategy to be developed for the strategies of the organization. The presence of communication infrastructure and employee programs could foster communication skills, however, they are not enough to

guarantee effective communication management and organizational success (Johnston, Reed, Lawrence & Onken, 2007). There is a significant need to focus on relationships between the members of the organization. A major determinant in communication management is the quality of teamwork or relationships that existed within the organization. Since communication is significantly related to the organization's quantitative outcomes, it is important to make the relationships in the organization strong to foster better communication processes.

Group Heterogeneity vs. Homogeneity. Teamwork can be characterized by group heterogeneity and group attraction. A heterogeneous group is composed of individuals with different educations and organizational functions, as well as different periods of organizational tenure (Johnston et al., 2007). The presence of diversity does not necessarily mean teamwork will suffer. The diversity in groups provides an avenue for various ideas, perspectives, knowledge, and skills that can improve problem solving and effectiveness within an organization. Even the presence of differences in race and ethnicity should be looked upon in a favorable manner as different individuals can offer something unique to the organization and the communication process. The important factor is for a culture to encourage group diversity and for the members of the groups to value and respect the members of the organization. The result can be from the implementation of a norm of interpersonal reciprocity. People that receive information and resources in an agreeable manner are likely to return them in consideration (Johnston et al., 2007).

On the other hand, Earley & Gibson (2002) emphasized on the fact that positive impact of team similarity on team effectiveness and interpersonal attraction. While heterogeneous teams have important benefits for teamwork, homogenous team members are reported to have stronger affinity in their teams. Attitude similarity and demographic homogeneity are strongly related to group cohesiveness (Earley & Gibson, 2002). This is

revealed through statistics for high job satisfaction and lower levels of absenteeism and turnover.

While group heterogeneity contributes to an increase in ideas, perspectives and performance diversity in an organization, Earley & Gibson (2002) shows that cultural diversity generates more conflict. This in turn reduces the ability of the group to maintain cohesiveness and to satisfy the experiences of its members. Furthermore, the research showed that cultural distance for each other also influenced the group receptiveness. It is important to work on the provision of better encoding, decoding and feedback processes in order to address the needs of culturally diverse groups (Earley & Gibson, 2002). Especially for heterogeneous groups, information processing is significant to increasing team discussions and reaching a collective understanding of the information within an organization. Thus, the nature of teams serves as a major determinant for communication management.

The type of team tasks also determines the effectiveness of cultural heterogeneous organizations. According to Earley & Gibson (2002), "non-routine task performance may be facilitated by multiculturalism, whereas performance on routine tasks should either be unaffected possibly even negatively impacted" (p. 23). However, positive effects are feasible if the group has learned to manage its conflict and the dimension of diversity holds relevance in the tasks of the organizations.

Aside from the tasks, it is also important to consider team tenure. The length of time a team has existed to work together is an important determinant for communication management approaches. According to Earley & Gibson (2002), "the negative effects of value dissimilarity on cohesion weaken over time, and in long term groups..., become insignificant" (p. 24). Thus, diverse groups learn to work beyond their dissimilarities and soon they function similarly to a homogenous group as time goes by. Heterogeneity only

harms the progress of newly formed teams. However, as time goes by diverse groups have the capability to outperform homogenous groups (Earley & Gibson, 2002).

Group Attraction. Group attraction is described as the direct orientation, which can be described in sign or intensity (Johnston et al., 2007). This means people associate a group's attractiveness according to their level of orientation with the group. Individuals link social identity with group performance. Teamwork can be dependent on the social contextual features in organizations. The determinant of collective performance improvement's feasibility will be based on the identification of the members to the organization. It is important for members to feel like they belong to the organization to view them to be attractive (Johnston et al., 2007). This widely influences the communication management, as the same time, effective communication process could enable them to identify to the organization.

Specifically in the context of multinational teams, the demography and team composition, as well as the relative differences in the observable characteristics highlights the strategic implications of multinational teaming and focusing firm-level outcomes of the interaction in between teams within the context of communication management (Earley & Gibson, 2002).

Consumer Behavior and Marketing Situation. In the context of business organizations, consumer behavior and marketing context are important considerations when it came to communication management. The changes in the consumer attitude and behavior, the marketplace and other providers could widely affect the operations of the organization (Varey, 2001). It is important for such organizations to provide what the consumer needs. Shifting trends could change the needs of the consumers and they must act to adapt to the frequently changing marketplace.

Marketing communication is an area for business organizations that receive significant attention. It is the area of communication management that deals with the client of the organization. There are even specific communication managers that function solely to service the communication process between the organization and the clients. Marketing trends and consumer behavior are considered as determinants for communication management approaches in business organizations (Varey, 2001).

The changing communication process that the consumers' impacts involved shifts in the marketing trends in the industry. Growth in the advertising and promotion industry, the emergence of a global consumer, the development of integrated marketing communication, direct marketing, database marketing, internet advertising and e-commerce, and process oriented control and coordination are concepts determine communication management with concerns for the organization's clientele.

Communication and Management

Aside from identifying the different factors that affected communication management in organizations, it is also significant to understand the relationship between communication and management matters. This section will stress on the significant relationship between communication and management in organizations. According to Johnston et al. (2007) communication impacts the quantitative organizational outcomes. While there are numerous studies that focused on how to improve communication skills, there is little empirical evidence that shows the link between communication and organization-level financial performances (Johnston et al., 2007). This reflects that communication is under emphasized as a management function.

Public relations, communication management, as well as relationship management have important roles within strategic management. The management of communication is often equated to public relations, which is the management of communication between

organizations and its publics (Stroh, 1998). Communication management widely encompasses the relationship management in its strategic function because of how organizational direction and purposes are affected by relationships.

Communication is a tool used to achieve healthy relationships within an organization that is essential in achieving healthy relationships (Stroh, 1998). This competency leads to the achievement of goals and objectives of the organization:

> "The managerial ethic has fostered a bureaucratic culture that minimizes imaginative capacity and the ability to visualize purposes and to generate values at work, all important attributes of leaders who interact with followers" (Zaleznik 1983, p. 27).

There is a need to define what management is in the 21st century. The old assumptions of management is primarily based on the assumption that "management is management of business, and business is unique and the exception in society" (Drucker 1977, p. 26). However, organizations are changing. Management can no longer be confined in atypical, isolated institutions of the economic sphere or the business enterprise. The old notions of management focused on the economic concerns of organizations, as opposed to the human concerns. Profitability is a management concept that breaks down the distinction between economic and human needs (Drucker, 1977).

Since the society is rapidly changing, organizations now view the "quality of life" of their employees to be included in their concerns in terms of the fulfillment of the basic social values (Drucker, 1977). Management functions did not merely focus on the economic aspects of the workplace and learned to include "quality of life," as one of their main tasks. This is not something that merely satisfied the workforce. Including human concerns in the management function is considered as a business opportunity and can be converted by management into a profitable business. It involves the ability of the management to turn the individual's values and aspirations redound to organizational energy and performance (Drucker, 1977).

The manager is seen as a person with practical responsibilities and perceives problems in such a manner that people from different levels of responsibility will continue to contribute in an efficient manner to the organization. There was a need to move away from events and to focus on decision-making tasks that involves interaction and collaboration with people (Zaleznik, 1983). This explains the growing significance of the implementation of effective communication processes within the organization.

Communication is a vital part of human life. The quality of the communication systems can widely influence the social needs of the organization. In the same manner, communication is currently viewed as an aspect that brings the organization success and enables it to achieve effective performance. There is a critical link between communication and outcomes of job performance, organizational commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction (Johnston et al., 2007).

Organizational results do not emerge form the exchange of merely two employees. It is an interactive process between each employee with a group of others. Thus, group communication is something that is organized by a management function. The team member's level of satisfaction with the nature and content of the communication can potentially derail or enhance the outcomes of organizational performance (Johnston et al., 2007).

In management, organizational identities and culture also accounts for the organization communication. Frameworks provide organization members with attributes of the organization. It presents shared meanings, assumptions, and values. Signs and ceremonies within an organization are reflections of the schema of understanding that exists in an organization. It is important for communication to be relevant to the core set of attributes that comprises of the organization, in other words, the essence of an organization (Poole, 1998).

Since the new assumptions for the new role of the managers include the manager's task for make sure the employees are satisfied in their workplaces, communication satisfaction is one of the factors that the managers work to protect and to enhance. Satisfaction is determined by the social interaction within a work group. When members of a team experience their expectations for the relational style wherein their responsibilities and rewards communicated, they will feel satisfied with the communication environment (Johnston et al., 2007). Organizational satisfaction is experienced from different factors such as flexible work arrangements, quality of leader-member exchange, and the organizational structure. Furthermore, individual dispositions such as friendliness, attentiveness, and other affirming communication attributes also impacts communication satisfaction, in the same manner that apprehension, loneliness and personal styles have their own influences. The unique nature of the organization can be discovered through communication systems. The managers of the organization can influence these systems; more than that, communication satisfaction has become a part of the new manager's responsibility. Managers are within the organization such as planning, decision making, coordinating responsible for different tasks, confidence-building, information sharing. These different processes reflect the relationship of communication and management within organizations.

Johnson et al. (2007) points out that group processes involves a variety of collective and interrelated behaviors in a group wherein members engage. The first stage of group processes, planning, clarifies the direction of the team, coordinates member tasks and creates team cohesion to strive for a common goal. In this stage of project management, communication is already a critical aspect. The inability to communicate the direction, the tasks and the vision for the project will place the team at risk for failure. Effective communication and information sharing provides goal clarity. Project teams that manage their group processes, including communication aspects, to develop cooperative goals experience

high reflexivity and innovation (Johnston et al., 2007). Task cohesion stems from the unity within the group goals and the nurturing of cooperation among the team members. Group goals have a positive correlation to group productivity and job satisfaction (Johnston et al., 2007).

Group decisions, action and results are products of effective team planning and coordination activities. The effect of group project management can be reflected in the evolution of group potency and performance. Group potency is defined as the collective belief that a group can be effective. Furthermore, Group process of communication and cooperation are strongly associated with higher potency and subsequent higher self-reported performance (Johnston et al., 2007). However, conflict occurs when diverse individuals argue and decide on a single group direction. The progression of the group towards a goal reflects changes in decision making from responsibilities, timelines, formats and presentations. This testifies the consistently dynamic nature of the organization that requires management and communication processes that are sustainable to any kind of change.

Transformation and Communication Processes

Through periods of stress and conflicts, organizations experience the inherent tension between the need for both managers and leaders, consequently, for stability and for innovation (Zaleznik, 1983). It is also through times of change wherein symptoms of deficiencies are observed for either stability or innovation within an organization.

Change and Communication

Human and organizational factors are attributed to be the causes and contributors to failures and difficulties in the process of implementing planned changed (Lewis, 2000). Communication is used to introduce program and to encourage people to participate. It influences the employees' perception of the programs and implementation activities. There

are significant communication problems that are common to planned implementation. There are four significant areas wherein communication plays a major role in the process of change: the creation and communication of a vision, sense making and feedback, establishment of legitimacy, and communication goal achievements (Lewis, 2000).

Change is not planned and implemented if it would not cause improvement in the organization. Quality improvement programs are common in the business, education, industry and government agencies. There are key principles in total quality development, namely, customer focus, continuous improvement and teamwork (Lewis, 2000). The problems encountered with change processes usually entailed the improvement of staff morale through empowerment, increased participation in decision making, and increased access to management.

There is no set formula to implement and plan change in an organization. In most case, the initial set of needs indicates the need for quality improvement. Once structures for change, such as setting up committee, procedural rules, guidelines, mission statements, goal statements and communicative structures, are in place and set into motion, the next step is to address the next need on the list. The direction that will be taken depends on the kind of needs that the organizations has. It is also up to the organizations to determine which needs should be prioritized over others. However, it would be significant to make sure the faith of the members of the organization on the change is upheld, the energy is devoted to the new set of goals, and a sense of purpose is maintained (Lewis, 2000).

Problem Areas in Change Processes

It has already been established that communication is an essential tool for accomplishing change. It is a tool that can easily be poorly or thoughtfully used. Thus, the neglect of communication could ultimately lead to angry and resentful members of the organization. It is easy to develop frustration towards the job if there is a poor degree of

effective communication in the organization. Furthermore, if the communication problems are not addressed it could lead to fear and resistance to change (D'Aprix, 1996).

Purpose. The real purpose of communication in an organization is to achieve a common understanding and focus on what it is trying to achieve. Change can usually spawn confusion, anger, and skepticism. It is important to have a powerful rationale to help people understand why they must embrace change. Survival is not reason enough to convince people that change is needed. In fact, it is ineffective to threaten the jobs of the people and it is also not enough to appeal to the people's loyalty.

The only argument that is strong enough to encourage people to embrace change is rooted in the "marketplace" (D'Aprix, 1996). If the customer insists on change, the organization has no alternative but to implement it. To ignore the needs and the wants of the group that the organization is servicing makes the organization irrelevant and insolvent. The need for change is something that can emerge in different ways. The trick is to take that reality and convert it into a vision that the members of the organization can be excited about (D'Aprix, 1996). The purpose for change should motivate the members of the organization. They need to view the issues that propel change to be issues that were bigger than themselves. It is important to properly communicate a relevant meaning for the people regarding the products of change.

Connections. Organization members can be resistant to change because it meant breaking away from what is familiar. Change means people will have to step out of their comfort zones into something that are completely new at (D'Aprix, 1996). It is important for managers of change to establish a new connective tissue. It is important to maintain or to create connections amidst change in order to keep the organization safe from falling into chaos and alienation.

Unfortunately, the problem can be observed in the satisfaction for a top-down model of communication (D'Aprix, 1996). In this model, management communicates with the members of the organization if they feel there is something to report. If they feel that there is no action or event that is worthy to inform their subordinates about, there is no coordination. The members of the organization are left with little information to utilize and leave them to these pieces of information for them to draw their own conclusions from.

Strategic communication should be implemented instead. In this form, leadership should deliberately manage communication processes in a proactive manner. This means the communication process is open, candid and focused on achieving the organization's goals. In this process, the members of the organization are regarded as critical agents in the change process. They are viewed to need raw information and to permit them to collaborate with others through effective communication processes (D'Aprix, 1996).

Intended Audience. Everyone in the organization facing change plays a critical role in the process. Different people have different responsibilities and accountabilities in the change implementation. People at the top of the organization hierarchy play a more significant role in how the organization with perceive and deal with change (D'Aprix, 1996). It is important to view the process of communication in a period of change to require collaborations between the different change managers, such as the senior leadership, the human resource managers and the communication professionals.

Senior members of the organization see effective communication to be essential in making change work to their advantage. They view communication tools to dispel the doubts of their subordinates and for them to be enthusiastic about the change, at the same time, dampen the cynicism and suspicion they fear when they propose significant changes (D'Aprix, 1996). They want communication tools to empower their subordinates to see change the way they see it. However, they often show predilection for the techniques for the

good public relations people use to win the support from public audiences, who generally have limited stakes in the fortunes of the organization and limited firsthand experience with it. They misperceive these employees, whereas employees are informed insiders that can compare the leader's words and actions on a daily basis. Furthermore, they also have an intimate connection with the fate of the organizations they belonged to.

Staff communication professionals' function without adequate access and support from their senior management. The lack of structure has a lot to do with report relationships and the like, as well as due to mutual misunderstandings. Leaders often decline to ask for counsel from communication managers on message formulation and communication strategy because they perceive them to lack knowledge regarding the realities of the organization (D'Aprix, 1996). Communication professionals can often be regarded as outsiders in the organizations, especially if the organization is not media-related in nature.

Human resource people in the organization that faces the change often take on the mediator role for the organization's change efforts (D'Aprix, 1996). In the worst cases, they mirror the communication views of the senior leadership and cooperate with keeping the communication professionals out of the process. It is also possible and unfortunate if they have little understanding for the tools that communication professional bring to the table.

Organizational Culture and Meanings

More than bricks and mortar, organizational charts and company manuals, organizations are widely made up of cognitive frameworks (Poole, 1998). In times wherein change is needed in an organization, it will be the culture or the identity of the organization that will be the target of change. It could be the in form of refraining, cognitive reorientation, or a paradigm shift. Organization transformation can be presented in many guises. Existing cognitive structures are in jeopardy because the transformed organization will never be the same as its predecessor (Poole, 1998).

Many forces are at work within a change process. Articulations for the intended change by the top management can be observed through different activities such as conversations and other symbolic actions. In the culture or the identity of an organization, there are embedded guidelines that members of the organization use as a formula for interpretation and behavior during a period of transformation (Poole, 1998).

The intent of executives to transform the organization needs to consider the pre-existing set of organization guidelines and knowledge structures in order to communication the change processes in a more efficient manner. This is basically based in the simple communication process. In order for a message for be decoded effectively, the sender needs to encode a message that has meaning for the receiver. The message and process of change needs to be translated according to the existing organizational culture and identity, otherwise it will not be accepted and it will not be implemented properly. These guidelines evolve over time and are utilized by the members of the organization to interpret organization activities and guide their behavior.

In order to become effective managers of change, executives need to become culturally aware and understand their organizational culture. They need to convey consistent messages for the members. It is not possible to influence the organizational culture if the executives do not know and understand it in the first place (Poole, 1998). In a transforming organization, members exchange knowledge about the changes in order to provide interpretation and meaning to the changes they are experiencing. Changes in the organization identity can be experienced by members in two ways: the statement of the top managements or their words and the actions taken by top management or their deeds (Poole, 1998).

With or without change processes, organization leaders should have established their personal credibility in terms of practicing what they preached in the areas of enhance

organizational effectiveness, communication and satisfaction. Consistency and congruency of words and deeds is a major contributor for manager credibility (Poole, 1998).

Change Models

Organization transformation can change the meaning of schema-based words, making the guidelines of the past increasingly irrelevant. The traditional perspective of change management involves helping large corporations adapt to the new realities of business due to a new software application, merger acquisitions, and reorganizations (Sims, 2002). Practitioners have focused in adapting mechanisms that will resolve organizational issues such as transformations. It seems like aside from the organization, management change models are also experiencing transformation.

In the old change model, the role of change agents is to facilitate change in the people process in order for changes to be accepted due to reengineering and organizational restructuring (Sims, 2002). However, the role of the change agents in the new models still involved facilitation. In this phase, change is already an accepted element in doing business and transformation is viewed as a driving force to success. Change management models are not about building acceptance and working through resistance any longer (Sims, 2002). They are now focused on managing energies for transformation. Innovation is highly desired and change agents need to use their skills to manage the people in the organization to maintain consistent focus of specific tasks.

Communications is an essential element in transformation. In change projects, communication frameworks are planned out in order to reach stakeholders and help them understand the purpose and the process for change (Sims, 2002). In the case of international project teams, the Internet is a major avenue for communication. It is important to focus on communicating core messages through this medium. The options for communications vehicles can expand quickly and the focus on communication needs can switch to different

stakeholders. Furthermore, during the change process the level of confidence for new relationships should also be established (Sims, 2002).

The issue of involvement during transition stages in the old models averted resistance issues and getting the members to see that change is good. In the new model, the challenge is to mobilize the workforce to become more aggressive and to cooperate to work together towards goals of achieving future objectives (Sims, 2002). The concern is the speed by which the organization can build up the momentum to compete effectively once the transformation has been implemented.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This section provided the groundwork for data analysis. It discussed the process of communication that can be applied in simple or complex contexts. The section identified the determinants of communication management. These determinants would be used to create the innovative approaches that would be relevant for international project teams. Furthermore, the relationship of change and management was also discussed in the context of the organization. Reviewed literature reflected the significance of considering communication as a critical project management competency. Furthermore, the relationship of change and transformation with communication was also addressed and expounded. These studies would be analyzed and applied in the creation of innovative approaches for communication management. The next section would present the research methodology that was utilized to conduct this research. It would reveal methods for data collection and analysis. The other sections remaining would include the discussion of findings and the conclusion section.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research was created to construct innovative approaches to communication management for international project teams. The nature of the study would be exploratory as would be further discussed in the section for research design. Today's organizational structure experienced significant heterogenization due to the trend towards geographically fragmented project teams. There had been an increasing need to provide communication management approaches that would be relevant and effective for multinational teams. Most of the existing research on communication and management still focused on traditional structures of organization because it was only in the recent studies that there had been massive realization for the critical significance of communication for organizational performance. Exist homogenous research were also viewed in the context of organizations with single or close geographic proximities. The research addressed the concept of communication management according to the needs of a more unconventional organizational structure.

Research Design

A conceptual qualitative research and an applied analytical design were utilized to conduct this research. The study was designed to be an exploratory study to present viable strategies for communication management that can be applicable for international project teams. A conceptual research method is related to abstract ideas or theories from scholarly literature and relies purely on research (Sridhar, 2008). This research method is widely dependent on the data that is gathered from research. In other words, the data collection for this research study widely focuses on secondary data retrieval. It employs a qualitative research design that involves describing the quality or kind of communication strategies that

exists in traditional organizations, as well as evaluates the problems or the needs for new organizational structures, which are the multinational team organizations.

An applied research is the type of method that finds a solution for an immediate problem to be applied in specific conditions (Sridhar, 2008). This is a method that is selected because there is a need to develop innovative communication management approach for international project groups. The communication approach is something that is specific to the multinational teams, wherein the different teams come from different regions of the world but work together to achieve a unified purpose. This research method includes designs that are both analytical and fundamental (Sridhar, 2008). The former design is used to use facts or information that is already available to make a critical evaluation about the need or the existing problem. On the other hand, this research also functioned within a fundamental design, wherein there is a general concern to understand communication management in the context of multinational teams.

It has two phases, the literature and the qualitative phase. The literature review created the groundwork for data needed to understand the context of communication management and the determinants for the approaches that must be implemented. The information obtained from this phase is used to create conceptual recommendations for innovation approaches for communication management in international project teams

Data was gathered from different scholarly sources that spoke about communication, management and organizational processes. These sources included books, scholarly journals and magazine articles. The subject searched focused on communication management and organizational communication. These sources were reviewed extensively. The methodology begins with the analysis the existing body of knowledge about communication management in organizations. Notes, quotations and lists of critical elements of advice within different categories were gathered in order to form innovative approaches. The main purpose for this

research design is to allow the researcher flexibility in discovering points of entries to new discoveries in terms of finding news approaches to communication management.

Problems and Purposes Overview

The landscape for organizational communication has experienced changed and there was a significant gap in communication management studies that addressed the needs for innovative communication approaches for multinational teams. While evidence exists for the role of the relationship of communication and management for organizational performance success, there had been no studies that provided innovative approaches as to how communication management strategies can be implemented for international project teams. Organizations managers were contented with understanding communication models that consisted of the sender, receiver, encoding, decoding and feedback, whereas there were no specific tools to master in the area of communication management competency (Frame, 1999). The construction of vital approaches for communication management that would specifically address the changing and complex needs of multinational teams of organizations was needed.

The intent of this conceptual qualitative and applied analytical research was to explore innovative approaches to communication management for international project teams. This research study looked into the communication ways and assimilation of the innovative processes, which was widely needed in geographically fragmented organizations, and to assess and discover patterns of how the organization operations needed to be managed through communication strategies.

Research Questions

The conceptual qualitative study was designed to address the following significant research questions:

4. What are the existing variables that impacts communication management in multinational organizations?

5. What is the significance of effective communication and management in multinational organization success?

6. What innovative approaches to communication management can be implemented for international project teams?

<center>Data Analysis</center>

The process of data analysis does not start when data collection ends. It is considered as a continuous task in the research process throughout the entire study (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Preliminary analysis takes place when new ideas emerge. Since the qualitative design is a flexible method for research, it does not restrict the research from exploring areas that were not originally intended for be studied. The data analysis process that was utilized in this research is flexible and exploratory. This qualitative data analysis is based on the search for innovative communication management practices that are based on the review of scholarly research evidence. Reviewing the research is an analytical design in itself. It is through reviewing the literature wherein common themes will emerge and can be used in the development of the early concepts of communication management innovation.

In this data analysis process, concepts were considered as abstract and general ideas that described a particular issue or subject. The preliminary analysis is simple. However, it m moved to a more complex analysis of data as the study evolved (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). The research process is consisted of the continuous search for themes, categories and clusters in the data from all of the sources gathered. A significant data analysis process is the development of inter-linkages between the sources gathered in the formation of viable approaches for communication management. The data analysis process is best used for finding points of entry into new inquiries, wherein concepts grow naturally out of an

interaction of what has been discovered from research and the personal experiences of the researcher.

      This research method primarily makes use of secondary data analysis. This is conducted when the data analyzed has been primarily collected by someone else (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). While it lacked the insider understanding of the context of the organization, this data analysis method will suffice in a research that has a primary goal of exploring areas of innovation for communication management. While there was little control over the data that were available, different interpretations were gathered and analyzed from different perspectives.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The trend for increasing geographic fragmentation of organizations was observed and presented the necessity to create approaches to communication management that would cater to their complex needs. New models of change and communication management emerged. These new models should remain relevant for each other in order to satisfy the goals of an organization. This section would address the significant research questions that were presented in the beginning of the paper. Since the research methods that were used are conceptual qualitative and applied analytical research designs, the data was collected from the scholarly body literature available for communication management. This section will present a qualitative data analysis of secondary data to answer the questions that were posed. Furthermore, an application of communication management concepts would be conducted in the construction of innovative approaches for communication management.

Research Findings

Research Question 1

What are the existing variables that impacts communication management in multinational organizations?

There are different forces that impact multinational team communication; they include the strategic goals of the organization, existing communication skills and processes, organizational characteristics, and team factors. Geography is a specific consideration for multi national teams. The distance of the different team locations represent a major concern for the MNTs (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). The quality of the communication network and the internal knowledge flow within the MNT are affected by accelerated globalization and attempts for high synergies from far-flung operations.

Strategic Goals. The strategic goals of an organization were mentioned as an internal determinant for communication management approaches (Prensky et al., 1996). There is a reason why organizations have multinational teams. The creation of international project teams would always cater to the purposes of the organizations. This presented the necessity to consolidate the purposes of the teams to address the ultimate goal of the parent organization through communication approaches.

The goal of maintaining both profitability and stability remain to impact the organization's communication management for MNTs. Different teams required different communication strategies according to the goals that need to be addressed. The strategic goals served as a variable for communication management since this factor provided a guiding force for all the processes in the organizations.

Communication Skills and Processes. Individuals could not give what they do not have. The availability of communication tools and the level of communication skills widely dictated the process of communication management in organizations. There was a more specialized communication requirement for members of MNTs since communication is primarily done via the Internet. First and foremost, communication skills needed to include the capability of the member to use the computer and to navigate the World Wide Web.

In the midst of a diverse community, language serves as the key ingredient in the flow, which shapes organizational change processes, information exchange, competitive activities, global coordination and inter-corporate value creation (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). MNTs consist of diverse and geographical dispersed subunits that encounter language barriers when communicating within their network.

Effective communication skills would allow members of the organization to articulate needs and requirements that would pave the way for effective performance. Members of the team must at least be fluent technical writers in order to write adequate status reports,

resource request letters, and other necessary documents such as memorandums, proposals and other reports. There could not be a negative side to having high levels of communication skills. In fact, members of the organization must work to improve this competency to make them better.

There will be instances wherein team members from other regions of the world do not speak fluent English. This can be challenging in the dissemination of the policies and tasks. Value creation can also be more difficult for multinational teams. Language barriers between the home and host countries are part of the liability of experiencing foreignness, which becomes an impediment to effective negotiations and alliance evolution (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). It is through language and communication skills that develop strategies and policies to disseminate and implement change processes.

Communication skills enable a person to use language as a strategic tool that aligns operations with MNT strategy across shifting multiple environments in which it operates (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). Language design involves the development of a language system wherein the parent functional language, commonly English, and subunit functional language are concurrently used and recursively related through the communication network of the MNTs. Proper language design can improve intra-network communication, inter-unit learning, parent-subsidiary coordination and integration, and intra-unit value creation, in a network that is geographically dispersed (Luo & Shenkar, 2006).

MNT s need to present necessary conditions in order to provide a functional language system:

"… To build a globally interacted language system so that its parent functional language aligns properly with its strategy, structure, and level of internationalization, while each subsidiary's functional languages configures with its strategic role, organizational positioning, and expatriate deployment" (Luo & Shenkar 2006, p. 321).

Organizational Characteristics. Each organization could be considered as a unique unit that possessed purposes, preferences and nature. These characteristics made organization different from others. Communication management should be relevant to the needs of the unique organization. Organizational structure was defined through the tasks that can be classified according to departments. They were processes for the operations within the group. It also affected the flow of resources and information between MNTs. The goal of the organization affected the structure of the organization. The interaction between the teams and the firms also impacted the effectiveness of communication programs that were needed. According to the research reviewed, centralization, formalization and complexity in the relationships within the organizations were primary dimensions for organizational structure (Grunig, 1992; Prensky et al., 1996).

Furthermore, the organizational culture also influenced the communication management. Culture could dictate value creation and meaning (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). Different organizational cultures could affect how the organization members decoded messages. The communication process would show that culture has a major role in the encoding and decoding of messages. This was relevant for communication activities in the organization.

The politics within an organization also affected communication management (Prensky et al., 1996). Since communication was a powerful tool to influence people, its management was bound to face political processes. This protected the system, as well as individuals, in order to keep the organization functioning accordingly. However, it could also provide for restrictions might dampen the freedom of the members to communicate.

In the context of MNTs, communication could be exposed to political issues because the medium for communication can be highly controlled and monitored. There could be little

privacy in the communicated messages that members of the team would express due to the increased use of Internet websites and programs.

Team Factors. Synchronized teams across the country functioning as one organization reflected healthy communication structures. In the same way, team unity allowed for successful decision making and communications in the organizations. Team work enabled strategies to develop communication processes and to improve approaches that worked. While the medium for communication can be present, like a website and video conference phones, these were not enough to guarantee effective communication practices could take place (Johnston et al., 2007).

The heterogeneity and homogeneity of the group was a major factor in communication management. Each characteristic possessed advantages along with disadvantages. On one hand, homogeneity made bonding and relationship building easier since there were already established similarities in the organization, such as similar workplaces, languages, cultural values, and so on (Earley & Gibson, 2002). On the other hand, heterogeneity allowed for diversity in ideas, perspectives and performance dimensions (Johnston et al., 2007).

MNTs were more heterogeneous than homogeneous because the teams were located in different regions of the world. Multiculturalism and geographic dispersion were major variables that worked against effective communication practices. It was harder to connect with someone who was miles away, than to form a relationship with someone who was in the next cubicle. Nevertheless, research showed that heterogeneity disadvantages decreases over time or as teams experience tenure (Earley & Gibson, 2002). Therefore, as teams learn to adjust and to overcome the birth pains of new relationships and setup, the benefits of multicultural perspectives and diverse ideas could be experienced. Furthermore, teams would be more well-rounded in terms of their skills and exposures to people from all walks of life.

Research Question 2

What is the significance of effective communication and management in organizational success?

From within communication management of organizations, effectiveness is achieved when organizations attain their goals, but the goals must be appropriate in relation to the organization's environment. Communication management helps the organization achieve research goals by identifying and building healthy relationships with the strategic constituencies. The healthier the relationships are, the more likely the organization will be successfully achieving what it sets out to achieve. The quality of relationships determines the effectiveness of the public relations function within the organization, to achieve creativity and innovation.

Communication managers could fulfill the bridging functions and facilitate interaction and network building, as well as contributing to management, by helping the corporation adjust to this change by creating understanding and making knowledge more productive (Grunig, 1992; Dozier et al., 1996). The role of communication management is becoming increasingly relevant, if not invaluable. The core responsibility of communication management is the maintenance of relationships and the facilitation of interaction. Then, the communication becomes the basic requirement for organization and communication management becomes the strategic tool to manage the interactions (Grunig, 1992; Dozier et al., 1996). The critical link between communication and organization performance established the role of communication management in project management activities.

Communication was an essential element in the transformation and change processes in an organization. Change projects required communication managers to plan out frameworks for communication before, after and throughout the process of change (Sims,

2002). There were numerous of options to be used for communication vehicles and the selection of one depended on the changing needs in communication.

Research Question 3

What innovative approaches to communication management can be implemented for international project teams?

An online portal website can be created to facilitate most of the communication processes between international project teams. An online portal is website that institutions use to facilitate with people from different areas of the globe. It is commonly used in online schools. A portal website commonly has pages for forums, announcements, team profile, status live streams, instant messaging, private messaging, databases and video calling. These are available new media that serve as tools for communication and relationship management.

Teambuilding. Since members of the team are still in the transition process, it is important to establish relationships. D' Aprix (1996) emphasized on the importance to establish new connections in the organization in the midst of changes. While team members are experiencing a new organization structure, wherein the team will become heterogeneous in different aspects such as geographical locations, cultural identities, and skills level among others, the relationships between the team members must be founded.

Team building can be done through the company portal wherein team members can introduce themselves. They can create member pages that they could customize to include photographs, educational achievements and work experiences. These member pages should also introduce hobbies and recreational activities that each team member enjoys. As in a traditional organization, the team members experience team building activities as an icebreaker for the team and to get to know the personality of their colleagues. It will be a significant aspect of relationship management (Stroh, 1998). The lack of proximity should not be an excuse to neglect friendships between co- team members. Ultimately, it would be

these friendships that would allow for the organization to exhibit effective communication practices (Stroh, 1998).

Online Coffee Shop. In a traditional organization, members can go out after work hours and socialize with each other. Socialization activities are important in order foster unity within the group. Workplace interactions are not enough to build the team; what more for international teams that never get to physically interact with each other. It is important put up a forum dedicated as a socialization avenue for the members of the team.

All of the discussions in this forum-like avenue would be non-work related. This would allow the members to get to know the person they are working in outside the context of projects and responsibilities. In this avenue, they "don't have to" interact but they could do so as an effort to make the group strong as a team. This bonds the employees beyond the work. It establishes trust within the team members that cannot be created in the confines of online work interactions. Trust was a significant factor for in organizations (Sims, 2002). Building trust was widely associated in building the team members' confidence in the organization and their teammates. It was important to develop a relationship beyond work in order to achieve this central communication function.

According to Sims (2002), much of what could be considered, as effective communications in an organization is an extension of the communications that one would experience in a casual situation. Following this assumption, MNT members need to experience and develop casual communication outside of the business of the organization in order to determine how they can interact effectively with the other team members. The options and the media has expanded in a dramatic fashion that there was a greater need to exert effort in communicating core messages as well. It is important for managers and executives to constantly keep the project exciting. They could motivate the team members to

work if they have something new and fun to offer, which could deviate from the monotony of work (Sims, 2002).

Forums and Databases. A bulk of the work could be discussed through forums that are created for specific tasks. Since organizational identities dictate the tasks and the responsibilities of the members, the level of discussion that team members could conduct depend on the organizational culture. The important communication approach would be to open forum threads or pages that would open tasks or projects for discussion. Databases also allowed for members of the team to transfer soft copies of files from one team member to another. An online database could be provided for project development. However, since organizations have the tendency to upload and download confidential files, the website needs to have member username and password protection.

While the online coffee shop is created for socialization concerns, work-related forums can be classified according to tasks and schedules that concern achieving the goal of the organization. Brainstorming activities would be the central purpose for forums. Team leaders and executives could post concerns, agenda and targets through forums and team members could interact with each other.

It is through forums that sense-making and feedback can be communicated. Avenues wherein feedback can be heard would serve as a channel for improvement within organizations (Lewis, 2001). Forums can have a section dedicated for feedback for suggestions, comments and innovation. It is a way to grow and to benefit from listening to the opinion of other members of the team.

Organizational structures that catered to MNT needs to have a more fluid flow of communication. Decision making should be allowed in different levels in order to hasten the process of completing projects. Decentralized organizational structures could be more ideal of international project teams because it allows organizations to have dispersed information

and decision making processes (Grunig, 1992). Since the teams were geographically dispersed or fragmented, it would take more time for teams to work within extremely bureaucratic systems.

Organizations with MNTs need to allow higher levels of autonomy for the team to be able to perform more effectively (Grunig, 1992). This is under the assumption that members of MNT were selected to be a part of the organization because they are selected for their maturity and expertise for the project. This means that the selection of members for MNT should be able to self-manage and to be discipline to work without supervision. Decentralization is therefore understood as the dispersion of information and decision.

Announcement Boards. Similar to the geographically-intact organizations, leaders or executives provide top-down communication (Luo & Shenkar, 2006; Adler et al., 2004). This is still needed for MNTs, although it would be ideal to keep it at a minimum. It was still important for executives to personally announce significant news through the public board of the portal. Such websites could be designed to put up pages wherein official announcements and statements from organization heads could be viewed. Memorandums could also be coursed through this medium. In this feature, communication processes are described to be more formal. Despite the unconventional nature of the MNT, there needs to be an appropriate level of formality that should be expressed. This approach establishes legitimacy within the organization (Lewis, 2001).

Status Live Feeds. In traditional organizations, subordinates frequently coordinated with their superiors to give status reports regarding their tasks and to give them updates regarding progress reports. Live feeds originally referred to web camera feeds of footages via the Internet wherein viewers could watch live from where they are via the Internet (Scammell, 2001). Depending on the nature of the organization, web camera feeds can or cannot be necessary in order to report on the status of the projects.

Social networking sites like Facebook and Multiply made use of live status feeds wherein users of these networks could share their thoughts, activities and announcements through real-time feeds. This could be similarly implemented for the organization's portal. This enables team members to bring the right information to the right people at the right time. Furthermore, it provides an infrastructure to develop a rich pool of ideas and motivation to view the current status updates from team members all over the world (Scammell, 2001). It establishes the benchmark for the internal performance of the team members that would allow for round the clock status reports to be submitted.

Instant Messaging. The portal of the organization can also include an instant messaging feature. The interactive model of communication involves encoding, decoding and feedback processes (Adler et al., 2004). This feature enables team members to coordinate with each other via instant messaging (IM) infrastructure with real-time interactions. This could be done between individuals or within the team. Despite the fact that team members were located geographically distant from each other, this feature could allow collaboration opportunities to enrich the explicit knowledge between people (Scammell, 2001). This feature is also cheaper than coordinating with each other through international phone calls.

It will be powerful if executives can participate once in a while in scheduled instant messaging meetings. This widely facilitates and accelerates learning on different levels in the company and creates opportunities for individuals to use their diversity into use (Scammel, 2001).

Private Messaging. There are also communication practices, even within traditional organizations, that require executives to send private communication materials to people in the organization for different purposes. There are cases wherein they need to send warnings for undesirable behavior or ineffective performance. These messages need to be transmitted in mediums that were private according to communication ethics within an organization. In

the same manner, MNT members also have the right to communicate with other members in private. Executives to coordinate serious and confidential messages can effectively utilize private messaging. This is also a medium wherein feedback could be sent back with the same level of privacy.

Video Conferencing. Other information technology facilities could include video conferencing. There are numerous sites that offer free video conferencing servicing via the Internet (Scammell, 2001). There was a time wherein video calls required telephone calls in order for people from different regions of the globe. Modern information technology allowed video conference meetings via video streaming sites. Skype is an example of software that enables conversations via the Internet. Video conference meetings can be done on a regular basis depending upon the nature of the organization and the availability of members. Time differences in the different team location should always be considered.

Nevertheless, the time wherein the executives and leaders can personally address team members in a "face-to-face" context should be maximized. This is a time wherein managers could create and communicate vision for the team, especially during the transition stages (Lewis, 2000). It allows the team members to have a clear perspective of the organization's vision in order to work towards it. There is nothing like communicating the organization's vision lives, with body languages and other non-verbal cues combined, that could make a significant impact among the team members.

Summary

This section provided the findings that were gathered from the conceptual qualitative analysis and analytical application of secondary data. The research questions were addressed, which ultimately satisfied the objectives of this research and the purposes of this study. The final section will include the final comments of the author of this research, as well as recommendations for future studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The 21st century was characterized as a time wherein organizations commonly take on different structures wherein multinational teams were commonly created in order to achieve the goals of the group. This did not change the fact that communication and management were concepts that were critical to organizational success. Thus, in order to address the complex needs of multicultural teams, innovative approaches to communication management were constructed.

The reviewed literature discussed about the process of communication. It identified the critical determinants for communication management. It also discussed the significance of communication in the processes of change and transformation. Organizations and the peoples and teams within them used different images and symbols to communicate with their publics. Images and symbols were used according to the organizational culture addressed and the meanings that this culture attributes to it.

The conceptualization of the secondary data enabled the research to identify areas that the organization needed to consider in establishing and improving communication processes in the context of multicultural organizations. The critical factors for communication management strategies were the organization's strategic goals, the existing communication skills, organizational characteristics and issues about the team. An analytical application of the secondary data provided the design for approaches to communication management that was specific to the needs of multinational teams. The approaches that were presented involved the use of an online portal website with features such as team member profile pages, online coffee shops, forums, databases, status live update feeds, instant messaging, private messaging, and video conferencing. These were unconventional manners of organizational communication, however, on one side it recreates the comforts of a geographically-intact

organization, on the other, it empowers the team members to communicate more freely and to have more decision-making capabilities from increased levels of autonomies and decreased bureaucracy processes.

Organizations experience journeys of growth in their attempts to adapt strategic changes. These changes could include entering the international market and creating international teams that communicate through unconventional means in order to maximize the potentials of a diversified group of workers. Technical innovations and a greater degree of understanding for communication processes allows for a more flexible and extensive model for communication management for multinational teams. The landscape of organizational communication is changing. They continued to create learning opportunities, provide avenues to progress towards achieving the team goals, link individual performance with the organization's and foster a richer dialogue between team members.

Recommendations for Future Research

The constantly changing nature of the organization forecasts the changing needs for communication strategies. There is a constant need to reflect on the relevance of existing communication management approaches. It will be significant for practitioners and researchers to assess their models for communication management. Future studies could test the approaches that were presented in this research. There is also a need to further analyze and test the approaches that were presented in this study based on primary data through experimentation or case study research methodologies for this study to evolve into a quantitative phase of the research study.

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APPENDIX

Communication Process Models
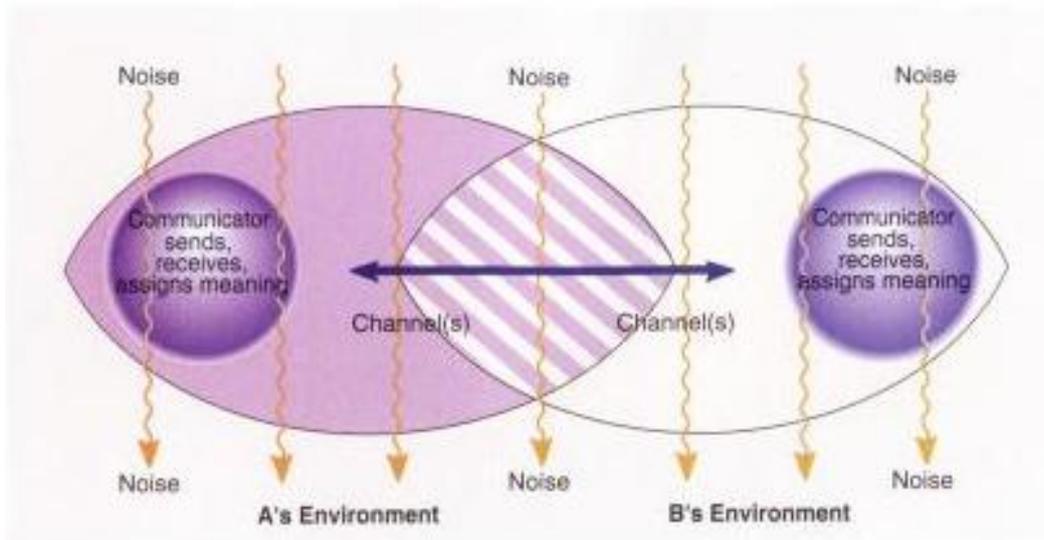
Figure 1 Communication Process and Noise
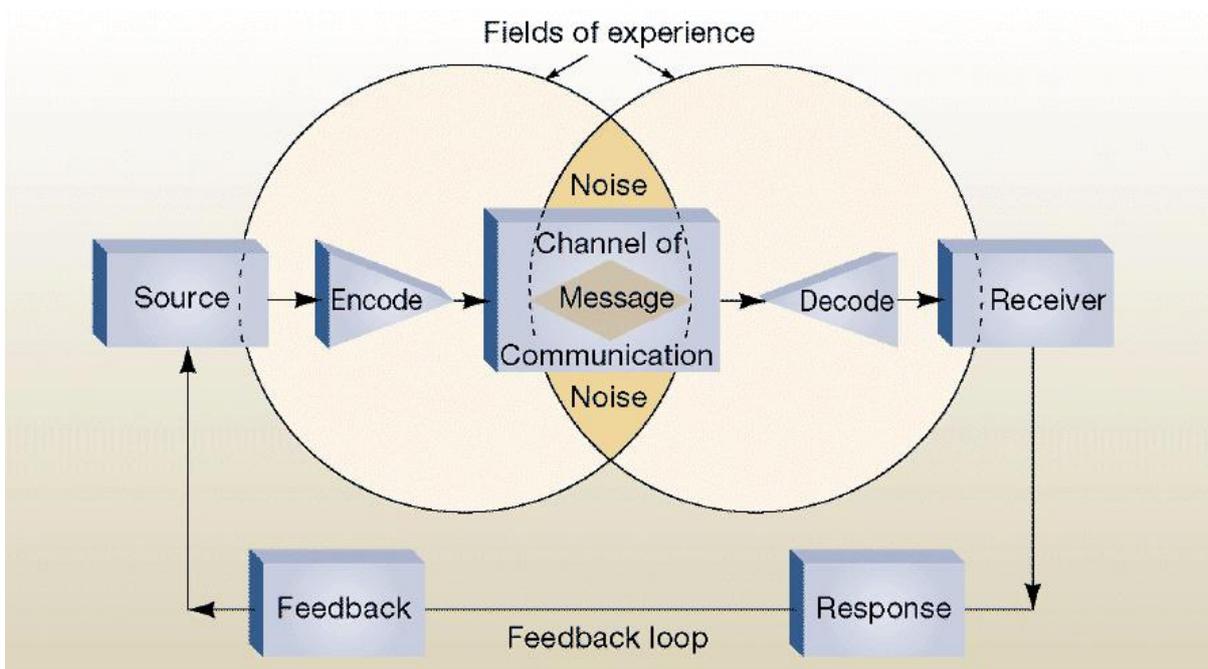
Figure 2 Communication Process with Fields of Experience Factor

	Time Required for Feedback	Amount of Information Conveyed	Sender's Control over How Message Is Composed	Control over Receiver's Attention	Effectiveness for Detailed Messages
Face-to-Face	Immediate (after contact estab-lished)	Highest	Moderate	Highest	Low
Telephone	Immediate (after contact estab-lished)	High (vocal, but not visual)	Moderate	Moderate (less than in face-to-face setting)	Lowest
Voice Mail	Delayed	High (vocal, but not visual)	Higher (since receiver can't interrupt)	Low	Low
E-Mail	Delayed	Lowest (text only, no formatting)	High	Low	High
Instant Messaging	Quick	Lowest (text only, no formatting)	High	Moderately low	Low
Hard Copy (e.g., handwritten or typed message)	Delayed	Low (words, numbers and images, but limited nonverbal cues)	Highest	Low	High

Figure 3 Comparison of Channels