STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT ON EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: AN ENHANCED MODEL

Muhamad Fazil Ahmad[*]

Abstract: To clarify how the communicational objectives such as message efficiency, creating learning networks and sharing knowledge represent guidelines for any strategy that looks at developing a current distribution of information. The theoretical approach tries to define concepts such as: external communication, strategic communication, external communication channels and the use of social media in a managerial setting. The study follows the Terengganu Village Security and Development Committees and communication officers as well as political parties supporters preferences regarding external communication channels by researching their needs and analyzing their beliefs about the on-going communication processes outside the Terengganu state government administrative center. The main findings support the choice of a rich communication medium validating the media richness theory and the hypothesis that people have a natural empathy for face-to-face communication. The research method involves an external survey and interviews that are used to identify and describe the communication channels employed outside the Terengganu State Government office (e.g. Internet service, emails, newsletters, Skype, Whatsapp and Portal). Therefore, the study looks at analysing the communication practices and concludes with suggestions for improving the communication strategy of Terengganu State Government administrative center.

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to describe and analyze the public services sphere in relationship with the communication channels used externally in order to transmit state governmental messages to various target groups by the Terengganu Village Security and Development Committees (Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung - JKKK) and also communication officers and political parties supporters (Samah et. al., 2011; Shaffril & Azril, 2011). The JKKK is a village organizations to administer and manage a village. JKKK headed by a village chief or *Ketua Kampung*. In a traditional Malay village, the village head automatically become chairman of JKKK. Starting with the analysis of the communication routines, understood as daily habits and rituals of communication within the organization, and finishing with the people' perception of external communication efficiency, the study tries to emphasize the media richness of the external channels in relationship with the elaboration of a communication strategy (Trevino 1987; El-Shinnawy & Markus 1992; Shaw 2005).

It is clear that, this research has been carried out while collaborating with Terengganu State Government, where we combined the scientific data gathering

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[*]   *Address for Communication:* Muhamad Fazil Ahmad, Senior Lecturer in Corporate Communication, Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, Malaysia. *E-mail: mfazilahmad@unisza.edu.my*

with the development of a local report on the communication routines that take place at a site level in the organization (Salleh et. al., 2011). In this way, our analysis is representative as a communication diagnosis of the organization. The related theory in fields such as strategic communication (Craig 1999; Hennig 2000; Argenti 2005), external communication, external communication channels and their richness prepares the background of our investigation by defining general concepts which will be presented later on in the discussion section of our study.

Furthermore, as a research challenge we introduced the concept of social media as a possibility in the expansion of external communication channels, trying to explore the state government's perception on introducing new innovative platforms as a resource for a future communication strategy (Zerfaß & Huck, 2007) (the concepts of platforms and channels are being used synonymously throughout the study). This unveiled to us the existing connection between external and internal communication, a link which could be brought to discussion in further research (Holtz, 2005).

While trying to follow the course of our data analysis we brought into light organizational theories such as work bound communication theory (McQuail, 2010) which was used in our discussion section in order to set the organizational frame for the roles and purposes of the communication acts. The theoretical approach helped us analyse and discuss our final results by capturing an insightful perspective on organizational communication (McQuail, 2010).

A modern observer would quickly point out that the importance of external communication in the development of positive working relationships between people is enabled through the use of an effective communication routine (Howell & Shea, 2006; Williams & Petermann, 2005). By promoting the people' understanding of the organizational environment, we prioritize the emergence of a professional identity with the aid of external communication channels. This study follows the employee preferences for the transmitting of information outside the state government and their contribution in describing the external communication issues (Fombrun & Van Riel 1997).

In a study related to the present research, the benefits of an efficient communication strategy can be specified to disseminate important organizational information in the adequacy of external communication channels with people based on these channels. However, if ignored, the richness of external communication channels may affect the organizational environment and create chaos, plagued by inefficiency and misunderstanding (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980).

This brief overview of literature related to the roles of strategic communication in through various communication channels that influence directly into an organization's communication practices (Hennig 2000; Argenti 2005). The strategy is consists of two different approaches to successfully combine: traditional

management paradigms with creative thinking by a new social media marketing and modern means of communication suitable replacement for the external e-mail or chat rooms routines (Johnson & Lederer, 2005). In addition, one of the main objectives of the work to use the messages and media to transmit information in a government service organization describe and provides an insight into the organizational academic, according to analysis and research communication practices.

Moreover, the research works towards a valid results section based on organizational insight from the people. Most of the suggestions from the discussion section are assigned to information taken from the organizational environment. In this case, the solutions of bringing improvement into the state government could be described as general assumptions which could be extrapolated to similar organizational studies. A novelty of our study is present in the nature of working with a very specific example, in our case Terengganu State Government, each analysed element being part of a higher scale problem outside various state government in Malaysia.

The study targets towards a descriptive perspective of the communication patterns outside an organizational environment. The specificity of the case can be found in the particularities of a singular circumstance: the external communication flow at Terengganu State Government. In addition, we examine how the external communication in a large organization for the exercise of the abundance of media workers. In particular, the research targets the case study of Terengganu State Government in and its external communication channels. For this purpose ,we define the groups and external communication channels specific objectives. In addition, we describe the flow of information within the organization and provide suggestions to improve and develop the external communications strategy.

One needs to be aware that in the external communication aims to strengthen the dialogue between organizational units in order to facilitate the flow of external information and a unified communication with business objectives (Mazzei, 2010). Another important point is to create a favorable climate for the active communication behaviors such as knowledge sharing, collaboration and creativity (Mazzei, 2010). Because of its impact on the organization, it is important to tailor messages to specific audiences.

Our research targets are externally defined groups at Terengganu State Government, for instance: the village chief or *Ketua Kampung* (JKKK), communication officers and political parties supporters. The study also focuses on describing the external communication patterns between different units outside Terengganu State Government. By analysing the case study of Terengganu State Government, we investigate what is the appropriate way to reach leaders and people of Terengganu and what they think about specific types of external communication respectively: oral communication through meetings and conversation, written

communication delivered via external newsletters and magazines, electronic communication through Internet service and emails, and notice/mood boards. To make the external communication strategy a natural part of everyday working life, we suggest the use of various social media platforms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research by White et. al., (2010) in the member preferences for a certain type of information and choice of external channel found a predisposition for external messages from face-to-face communication as the most valued in team projects to electronic communication via email. Friedl & Verˇciˇc (2011) argue that the new generation of personal has a preference for traditional external media at the organization in spite of having a strong liking for social media in their private lives. Kelleher (2001) discovered that different fondness for a certain communication channel is linked to different organizational roles, with leaders selecting email and face-to-face communication in order to dictate a sense of belonging to the organizational community (Dozier et. al., 2013). Woodall (2006) advocates the people' preference for the adaptability of the message to the appropriate communication channel. This brings into discussion the media richness theory (Lengel & Daft, 1988; El-Shinnawy & Markus 1992; Valacich et. al., 1994; Sheer & Chen 2004) stating that the most relevant media less clear and less rich media information for the very explicit content.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

There has to be proper for the social actors and organizations increasingly important to be intentional and deliberate in its communication (Argenti, 2005; Hallahan et. al., 2007). This applies, in particular that strategic communication of the organization has now increasingly virtual and internationally in the world today. Referring to Hallahan et. al., (2007:27) strategic communication should be a "communication focal interest fellowships" Study of strategic communication as a social science reflects on real changes in society and its organizational principles.

Research in strategic communication is to examine how organizations create and exchange the feeling of sharing with others: people, customers, investors and government officials and media representatives. Strategic Communications also examines how the organization in society. As social actors with regard to the creation of public culture and in the discussion of issues of public concern (Hallahan et. al., 2007).

Therefore, strategic communication offers members and organizational leaders with targeted communication activities to develop the organization's mission (Hallahan, 2007). Strategic term was first used in organizational theory in the 1950s and was developed to describe how companies in the market gain and increase market share (Hatch 1997; Argenti 2005; Bütschi 2006; Hallahan et. al., 2007). The modern concept of strategic communication defines the fundamental

objectives of the strategic planning as "environmental control and maintenance of the autonomy of the organization" (Hallahan et. al., 2007:12). The long-term strategic communication is also connected to the power and rational decisions in organizations (Hatch 1997 Hallahan et. al., 2007). Thus, the strategic planning includes the objectives, formulation and implementation of the strategy and its review (Porter 1985 Hallahan et. al., 2007).

The two key concepts that the term strategic communication are important. Reffering to Hallahan et. al., (2007) Strategic communication is a rich and multidimensional concept and should not be defined restrictively. First is the strategic word, communication and activities are designed. Used strategically in conjunction with communication says that "communication practice is a management function". (Halllahan et. al., 2007:12) Authors stated that such an approach is clearly visible when the communication is defined as the essential activity of management (Argenti, 2005).

When referring to strategic communication we elaborated a model based on Mazzei (2010) that supports the connection between the external and internal organizational communication practices. On an external communicational background, we have underlined the importance of sharing knowledge, creating ideas together via different channels by using different communication tools and crossing organizational boundaries by adopting new strategies in communicating externally with people. The sum of external communication patterns can be exemplified in the outcomes of external communication: in the creation of external business knowledge, bringing in external knowledge which helps with the development of the state government's business vision and branding the state government on a regional and global market.
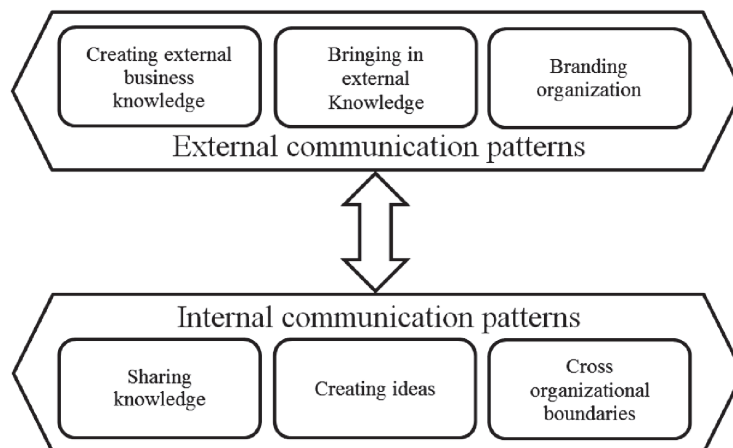

Figure 1: The model of strategic communication
(*Source:* **Mazzei, 2010**)

EXTERNAL MACRO/MICRO AND INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATION

External macro/micro and internal environment communication is one of the most dynamic specializations communication management matters. In organizations communication practitioners perceive the external macro/micro and internal environment communication as a difficult area (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980) relating to the ability of an organization, the people in the changes gets serious environmental and understanding for its changing objectives (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980). Hewitt (2006) stated that external macro/micro and internal environment communication is the basic method, that can create with the state government value. He explained that organizational skills "the knowledge and interrelationships of its people" and organizational processes are today required by this value to produce (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980). External macro/micro and internal environment communication takes place constantly and includes informal discussions and formal communication in organizations managed (Dolphin, 2005).

Definition of external macro/micro and internal environment communication as "communications between individuals and/or groups at various levels and in various areas of specialization, which are intended to create day and redesigning organizations implement designs and coordinate activities of the day" (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980), we recommend that the external macro/micro and internal environment communication depends on the organizational structure, is the main instrument for the coordination of activities between the work of the ministries (Welch, 2012; Bütschi 2006; Tushman & Katz, 1980).

On the other hand, Welch and Jackson (2007) simply relate to external macro/micro and internal environment communication as "employee relations, statements of mission and organizational development" (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980). The simplicity of this definition covers the idea of external and internal networking, through mentioning the organizational culture and its evolution through communicational contact with external and internal target groups (Welch, 2012; Bütschi 2006; Tushman & Katz, 1980).

Moreover, Welch and Jackson (2007) simple external and internal communications refer as "employee relations, statements of mission and organizational development" (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980) simplicity. This definition covers the idea of the external internal network, by specifying the corporate culture and its development through the communication contact with external and internal audiences (Welch, 2012; Tushman & Katz, 1980).
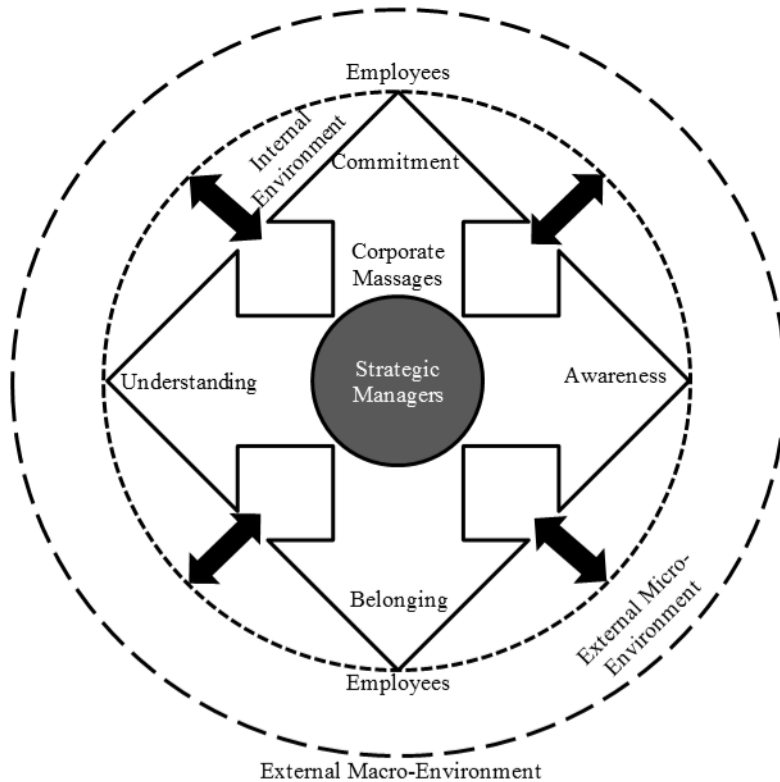
Figure 2: External macro/micro and internal environment corporate communication
(*Source:* **Welch & Jackson, 2007**)

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: ELECTRONIC MAIL AND THE INTERNET SERVICE

In order to support the understanding of what role of external communication effective model includes a positive communication climate, in the two-way communication is leading and the relationship between the top management and general staff based on mutual transparency and trust (Schmitz & Fulk, 1991; El-Shinnawy 1992; Hewitt, 2006). An additional factor for a successful communication strategy to motivate in the ability of the supervisor on any organizational changes and support staff. Through the exchange of knowledge and adequate information The literature suggests that people should provide information on their role in the organization and its performance, and the overall goals of the organization (Schmitz & Fulk, 1991; El-Shinnawy 1992; Hewitt, 2006).

A strategic external communication is also based on relational communication and personal influence at the organization. Grunig & Repper (1992) and Grunig

(2013) suggests that interpersonal communication influences the essence of public relations (Zerfass, 2008), the power of each employee consisting of status, trustworthiness, and credibility of the individual. People can be seen as public relations advocates, by having a positive image of the state government and enhancing it outside the work environment. They are considered carriers of external corporate stories and they can positively influence the state government's image by sharing messages with outsiders (White et. al., 2010).

When stating the efficiency of email use in corporations, its quality to reach out to a large number of participants made it a revolutionary tool outside corporations. On the other hand, researchers argue that the over reliance on technological tools can result into information overload or information leakages (Schmitz & Fulk, 1991; El-Shinnawy 1992; Hewitt, 2006).
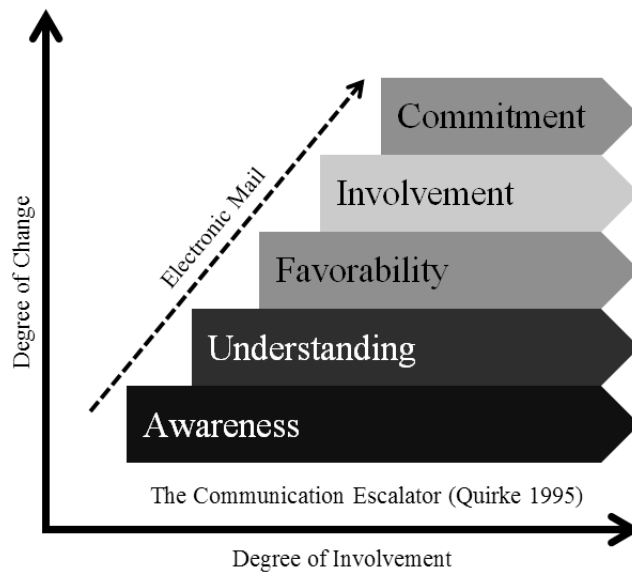

Figure 3: The use of Email in corporation
(***Source:*** **Hewitt, 2006)**

As described earlier, one important aspect of using the Internet service is the possibility of knowledge creation among people, giving them the chance to express and suggest creative solutions (Flaherty, 1998). As predefined structural information is known to hinder the levels of creativity outside an organization, the Internet service provides people with unlimited possibilities of sharing rich communities preferred outside messages. It also enables peer-to-peer information sharing, eliminating geographical distances in global companies and facilitating accessibility between various work teams (Daft, 1996; Stenmark, 2003). Nevertheless, although the Internet service technology promises to support and enhance creativity at the

organization, the members of the organization have to take an active role in designing the platform as an interactional tool of sharing knowledge and corporate information (Stenmark, 2003; Zerfass, 2008).

THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media in general has become such a widespread form of communication, not only because they present new possibilities for interacting and connecting with one another, but also due to the existence of the smartphones, which provide for being connected almost whenever and wherever one wants. Social media is a recent and complex phenomenon and since its development has become a mass of individuals interacting on the web (Agichtein et. al., 2008; Bertot et. al., 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Meredith 2012; Vuori 2012; Mussel, 2012). For example, a study by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describes that most of the respondent participants are using their mobile device to access social media. Such result is not surprising as Berg, Mörtberg and Jansson (2005) suggest that for some the mobile technology has become "a social prosthetic", meaning that the participants have become dependent on the technology for supporting their social life. Having in mind this definition and the finding by Barkhuus and Tashiro (2010) about the use of Facebook as an extra form of communication presents the necessity for studying the use of social media in social situations and how it impacts its users. One of the motivations for this can be found in a study performed by Weilenmann and Larsson (2001) in which they present several design challenges of the mobile phone with respect to integrating its use in a situation where more participants are included. The researchers wanted to understand "the local interaction of mobile phones, the ways in which phones are used and shared in the local situation of use" (Weilenmann and Larsson, 2001, p. 2). Their findings show that contrary to the general assumption that the mobile phone is used and perceived as a personal device for remote communication purposes, its use by teenagers is also "as a collaborative interaction tool in the local environment" (Weilenmann and Larsson, 2001, p. 4), whereby local environment they refer to a situation in which a group of friends physically together trying to communicate with a person remotely situated via SMS or phone call. In relation to this they develop categories of forms of collaboration which are "minimal forms of sharing and 'hands-on' sharing" (Weilenmann and Larsson, 2001, p. 13). The first connected with sharing the screen of the phone in which way the rest of the teenagers in the group are involved in the communication process, where the second is when the phone is given to another member of the group again to enable participation in the communication.

This is true especially since the emergence of the social media communication platforms, as they support many-to-many communication. What is more, with the development of the mobile phones to enable accessing such sites, it is considered

as a prerequisite that they provide for such form of communication as well in order to meet more adequately the user needs. The reason for this can be found in a study of Ito and Okabe (2005, p. 6) on the relationship between technosocial situations and co-presence which suggests that mobile phones have two sides – one, which has a negative effect on the current social norms, as it is interfering with them, but also a positive side, which creates "new technosocial situations and new boundaries of identity and space" for young mobile phone media users. The authors point out to the social practice of sending emails and text messages between the Japanese teens as a way of affecting the social situation of being in a restaurant together, as instead of communicating with one another they are using their phones. However, such a situational use of phones, the authors argue, augments the experience of physically co-located participants rather than isolating them from one another, as those the teenagers communicate with are brought into the situation as well, in which way the "experience and properties of physically co-located encounters" (Ito and Okabe, 2005, p. 17) are being augmented "rather than simply detracting from them" (Ito and Okabe, 2005, p. 17). A parallel of this conclusion can be made with the findings of Weilenmann and Larsson (2001) in the way that the Swedish students were also using their phones to extend the local situation by connecting the participants physically located with those who were at a distance, in the form of sharing the content of a text message or a phone call. Therefore, it is interesting to transpose this finding of augmentation of the social situation into the Malaysian youth context within the present study with respect to Facebook. This would be useful to understand the future design of smartphones and social media sites can use the results as an inspiration for improving the user experience in a way that better supports such augmentation and communication.

METHOD AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In sampling the relevant respondents for our interviews we took into account the same target groups as in the survey: the Terengganu Village Security and Development Committees (JKKK) and also communication officers and political parties supporters. We mapped a choice of respondents by randomly interviewing representatives from each category in the course of our ten interviews. The survey targeted all the general of people forms Terengganu State Government with a response rate of 350 answers from the general target.

We mapped out an initial interview guide which was based on a semi-structured set of open questions with the possibility of having other emergent question during the interview. Each interview took around 30 minutes, being conducted by two interviewers. The individual in-depth interview gave us the opportunity to apprehend in detail the organizational issues of the respondent with all the follow up questions being designed to get a deeper perspective of the interviewee's experiences outside

the state government organization. We completed 10 interview sessions with representatives from each target group: the JKKK and also communication officers and political parties supporters. Every interview was recorded with the participants' accord with the aid of a computer recording program.

In our case, we decided to develop a survey to collect and analyse information from the general communication officers and political parties supporters concerning the external communicational processes that take place at Terengganu State Government. Our main scope is to research what communication tools are used outside Terengganu State Government office and to provide solutions for a more efficient way of communicating with the communication officers and political parties supporters. Also, we are looking at social media as an external channel of spreading work related information.

In this research, a qualitative content analysis is used as a scientific way to interpret the content of official documents, official data from the external website and external work presentation for them. More specifically, we used content analysis outside the organization as a complementary method while browsing the state government's Internet service pages with the scope of finding out new information about the communication and the organizational culture. At the beginning of our research content analysis was used intensively to browse external information (external documents, surveys, polls, organizational figures, strategies). This pre-research stage helped us to gather relevant information about the state government and also guided us in identifying the communication issues outside the organization.

The literature review represents the first step in developing a valid scientific paper, contributing to the general investigation and helping to map out the research question. By incorporating theory in the research structure, the paper provides a reliable system for gathering information and drawing conclusions. The use of literature in developing a communication strategy is vital for the validity of the results (Shaw, 2005). In our case, the theory was based on relevant previous research papers that dealt with organizational communication issues (Downs & Adrian 2012). The main sources were represented by online journals and articles.

To carry out this study, McQuail's work-bound communication model (McQuail, 2010) will be presented as part of our theoretical background when trying to analyse the results of our study. The reason for taking this perspective is that work-bound communication is considered to be instrumental to the nature of the work. McQuail outlines work-bound communication as "who works with whom, for what reason/purpose, in what manner, with what result" (McQuail, 2010).

The study will also try out the theory that to be considered in theory resources and constructive communication society (Mazzei, 2010). Stating the basis for resource companies theory that "competitive advantage stems from firm-specific resources that a state government owns and that assure its uniqueness in its sector"

(Mazzei, 2010). This theory emphasizes that the effective communication between colleagues who share trust and shared values enable knowledge creation (Snell et. al., 2001; Mazzei, 2010).

Constructive communication theory says that "communication is a social process of interaction and/or interpretation that gives sense and meaning to social reality, organizational actions, events and organizational roles and processes" (Mazzei, 2010). The theory emphasizes that every member of a state government can "enact processes to negotiate meanings and make the organization operate" (Mazzei, 2010). Then, it recommends that the responsibility for effective communication not only monopolize leader but by all members of the organization (Dozier et. al., 2013).

The average theory is concerned with the interaction between the communications format and content. Qvortrup (2006: 351) states that: "Successful communication is not a 'natural', but a highly improbable phenomenon. Thus, the effect of communication media is to limit the improbability of communication success, and the qualities of media can be measured by their impact on communication success."

1. How do external communication channels affect strategic communication?
2. How do organizations feel about external communication channels?

Literature suggests the following research challenges: effective communication strategies improve the communication flow outside companies and support innovative thinking (Hallahan et. al., 2007), external and external communication strategies are strongly linked to each other (Vuori, 2012), choosing the appropriate communication channels is the key to communication efficiency, (Johnson & Lederer, 2005), using new social media to communicate with different external and external target groups is thought to be efficient (Vuori, 2012).

Results

When referring to our respondents 76% are represented by JKKK, 21% by leaders and 3% of them are communication officers and political parties supporters.

Finding: The Face-to-Face Preference

Regarding the communication tools used by JKKK when communicating with people, the highest scores were reached by face-to-face communication (47%) and the use of emails (21%). The least used ways of communicating outside the organization were mentioned as being: newsletters, SMS and Terengganu State Government's external communication platforms: the Internet service and Whatsapp. Communication with other people outside groups is reached mainly through face-to-face communication (63%) and emails (38%). The same as in communicating with JKKK, the Newsletters, SMS, Internet service and Whatsapp are situated on the list of the least used channels. In mentioning the effectiveness of the communication channels 87% of the people mentioned face-to-face communication as being the

most efficient channel of transmitting messages outside the organization. To see how regularly face-to-face communication takes place between JKKK and people we asked about the number of meetings with JKKK and most of them (49%) meet with their JKKK less than once a week, while 46% have 1 or 3 meetings a week.

The desire for face-to-face communication is consistent with the communication routines outside the organization. The survey found that among the communication-rich channels preferred by people we can add the direct, face-to-face exchange of information. This fosters a deeper sense of community and avoids misunderstandings while communicating job-related tasks. Furthermore, detailed, in-depth information is better received through first-hand sources than through other communication platforms at the organization.

Finding: The Email Paradox

Regarding communication through emails, 93% of the people find emails critical for getting their problems solved and 68% do not find a number of emails they receive daily as being overwhelming. An interesting finding of the study regards the use of emails outside the organization. When asked how they get the majority of the information, peoples' main answer was from the emails. However, most of the messages received through emails are overlooked or considered an information surplus. Moreover, emails are considered critical to get the problems solved by the people, which means that the organization's external communication is dependent on one certain type of communication tool.

Finding: The Social Media Moderation

Talking about social media usage outside the organization, 46% of the people are using Facebook, Whatsapp 23%, 7% and 5% use Twitter social media. When asked about interaction with colleagues on social media platforms to 41% of the people do not communicate with other people outside the organization and also 47% do not follow Terengganu State Government on different social media.

The study also revealed the need for a better relationship with social media tools. Most of the respondents do not have a great connection with their social networks' profiles and are not interesting in following the organizational representation on different platforms. Furthermore, very few respondents actually have their colleagues as friends on social media. This shows a preference for keeping a clear distinction between the private and professional identity, most of the Facebook profiles being considered too personal to be convenient at the organization. On the other hand, Whatsapp appears more as a professional platform where people keep in contact, gather knowledge and services through their online personal profiles. The idea of social media at the organization as an external communication tool is still perceived as being unsuitable, creating complications in the communication routines developed already by the people.

Finding: The Internet Service's Inefficiency

One of the concerns of the study was to establish the competence of the external platforms at Terengganu State Government, the Internet service being questioned one of the communication tools, 31% of the people finding it less helpful than expected. Furthermore, one of the main scopes of using the Internet service is mostly for getting news and updates, 64% saying that they do not use it at all forsocialising with other people. Also, the most used external platforms are Skype (an external chat tool) and WhatsApp (an external communication platform).

The external communication platform which gathers all the information needed from JKKK to all people is considered inefficient due to the lack of targeted messages and the large amount of knowledge which usually gets lost on the external web pages (Kent & Taylor, 1998). This conglomeration of global and local messages, unclearly distributed on different pages creates a feeling of aversion towards using the Internet service on a daily base. On the other hand, the external communication platform can be seen as an electronic library, full of valuable information for all people regardless of their professional and social status identity. Another finding of the study is that it is important for most people to receive information about the organization, even if the information is not necessarily targeted for their daily tasks or job performance. Gathering knowledge fosters a sense of professionalism and increases the feeling of belonging to a community.

Interview Results

The result section is based on the data collected from interviews with 5 different level leaders in the Terengganu State Government such as JKKK, assistants JKKK, external communicators (*bahagian penerangan*) in JKKK office which working with a diverse background: operational, media and communication, or people consultancy. Communication patterns and routines: Local versus global When discussing the communication routines at the organization most of the interviewes mention the presence of local and global patterns of communication routines. Their communication experiences are entirely based on their professional and social status identity and are always related task: "It always depends on the type of information we have to send out". From a site perspective, the communication outside the organization becomes a very cleared and meticulous act being divided into a variety of specific routines for each different section: "Some information is even made for a specific level".

This does not ignore the continuous connectivity to a global system being updated with most messages from very high up in the organization to very far down. (Eg. "We are always trying to use emails and newsletters to communicate on an inclusive scale with other sections.").

As ways of communicating on a comprehensive scale the interviewees point out the use of TV screens, the organizing of WiFi technology and the creation of information wide newsletters which involves the recording of important messages and their conveyance on an worldwide scale. The multimodality of communicating with other teams around the world shows the technological possibilities to expand you work with no limitation to time and space:

"*I think everyone should be able to work almost anywhere in Terengganu.*" This involves the broadening of the work time and space with most comprehensive meetings taking place in different place in an online frame supported by internet and WiFi:

(i) "*I don't have any leaders here at all- with my leaders in Terengganu we have a different place to communicate. Our organization team meetings are always in the meeting room and balairaya. That's the only time when we can actually communicate with an online application. Otherwise, we are using emails or phone messages.*"

Leaders (JKKK) as Communication Agents

One of the codes that describe the ways of communicating is represented by the communication through leaders understood as a very specific type of transmitting information outside the organization:

(i) "*Our communication routine is based on mainly meetings where we present information to leaders.*"

(ii) "*If we have a big change we try to have more meetings with the leaders.*" This reveals that leaders represent a front line sender for information packages and play a critical role in the communication routines outside the organization. They are the communication agents who spread external information and reject or accept the elaboration of certain types of messages: "*Every information package we develop is sent to leaders through emails and then connected to other people.*"

From the leaders' perspective their role is defined be the ways they choose to communicate with their group, being responsible for the information supply in the organization and for the communication efficiency between people:

"*When you are a leader communicating is a very important part of your work because you need to filter a lot of information that you need to supply for your people. Communication is crucial.*"

In collaborating with other people, leaders take part in the development of task communication routine, where they elaborate and divide task related messages for their group.

This is done mostly through face-to-face meetings:

(i) "*One to one is almost always face-to-face.*"

(ii) "*Guys working with me having great responsibility so my role is more coach them rather than say what do to.*"

Frequently used External Communication Channels

In establishing work routines in communication practices, the people constantly use the same type of external communication channel in order to communicate with their other colleagues. As mentioned in the interviews the most popular choices of communicating on a daily basis are: email utilization, external phone calls between villages or Dun, newsletters and the Internet service with the acknowledgment pages of Whatsapp and Skype chat room.

On the other hand, at a different level in the organization stands the service of face-to-face communication with most of the respondents sharing information through this particular medium:

(i) "*I start every morning with the white board, checking tasks and speaking with each other.*" "*We are using real-time channels – either face-to-face or phone or audiovisual.*"

The value of face–to-face communication is constantly stated by people as being the richest channel of receiving and spreading messages every day:

(i) "*I think it's good to go to a real whiteboard and see things and discuss in person with face-to-face. We tried a computer board and it was not as good as face-to-face communication.*"

Furthermore, the respondents assert the informality of face-to-face interaction as a networking quality which encourages the appearance of casual conversation and social bonding between people:

(i) "*I have my group close by so there is a dominance of face-to-face communication (...) informal introductions like giving Salam, and asking how are you ?*"

(ii) "*We have informal ways of talking to each other e.g. in the mosque.*"

Video Communication

The next channel that succeeds in conveying rich information by having the most similarities with face-to-face communication and offering the possibility to communicate from different places in Terengganu state is represented by video messaging:

"*We have made one change within our responsibility, usually 4-5 times a year my leader was sending an email to all people within kampung. Now we have made a video message instead, and we're sending the link to the movie.*"

By replacing the over used emailing technique with video messaging people get a sense of change in their communication routines, ending up with a better understanding of the message and paying more attention to its details:

(i) "*I think it's much more effective to watch this movie (…). We're trying to involve a lot of people to take a part in this message.*"

(ii) "*I think we should put more support into video messages. It feels like it sticks better to your brain.*"

On the other hand, communication failure is one of the main problems of video messages and this channel has not ceased to create technical issues or miscommunication when used by people:

(i) "*The external communication video messages systems that we have used, have failed. This is why we have adopted a different ways and using the external tools for communication*".

(ii) "*Almost every time I am trying to use a standard video messaging system it didn't work. It's more like a common problem and it takes like 5 minutes to solve it*".

The presence of face-to-face communication and the absolute richness of this channel makes it difficult for the people to find a better substitute in their communication practices:

"*Video is good but is not good enough. Face-to-face is always assuring me that they understand what I am saying*".

The main conclusion when referring to video messages was resumed by one of the respondents who said that the communication potential of video messaging is really high if the system would be technically improved (e.g. "*We should work on quality aspects. Personal video messaging system should be much more accessible; phone meetings' quality is very low now. We need this tool for our communication.*").

Email Overload

We found that communication through email is critical for getting work done and is one of the most popular choices on a daily base. Most of interviewees said that it would be harder to do their work without using emails: "*When it comes to my own unit I am usually sending emails, otherwise I am trying to collect things over the week and present it during weekly meetings*".

We learned that higher volume email was associated with increased feelings of email overload. Terengganu State Government's people perceive that their own use of email has gotten out of control because they receive and send more emails than they can handle or process effectively:

> "*You can't trust emails. We get it too much, and you kind of feel responsible for respond to it.*" They are having difficulties in dealing with the amount of emails they receive, sometimes missing information and important messages: "*When you send an email with information it often gets stuck in the mailbox because people have their own things to do, their own projects.*"

A rapidly increasing amount of new information is produced and results in the information overload at the organization. All leaders admitted to struggling with the amount of information existing on the external platforms and experienced difficulties in reaching their team with relevant information:

(i) "*One of the biggest problems is the fact that there is so much information and one person cannot filter it. I often have people coming and asking why I haven't informed them about something as a leader. They feel I don't give them the information they want. There is a lot of interesting information out there but I cannot really do that, I cannot keep up with all the information flow and this is one of the major problems I would say. We have too much information*".

Along with the description of this problem, people proposed accurate solutions e.g.:

> "*Start looking for communication needs by looking at the needs of the team and individuals. Communication should be really specific concerning each department and each audience.*"

This reveals that Terengganu State Government people not only do not know how to deal with too much information but also notice the importance of launching a new communication strategy in the state government.

Internet Service

Terengganu State Government's Internet service portal has a variety of functions such as: providing global and local news and updates, support center for people (IT support, e-learning, trainings), a space for collaboration and information sharing (Whatsapp, Skype, portal) and other administrative activities (calendar and schedule; documents templates). Despite the great capabilities of the Internet service, a majority of respondents admitted that they are using only a few of them eg "Few things I look for: time reporting, travel expenses". Most of the interviewees explained that their reluctance is caused by experiences with the very inefficient

searching tool. Terengganu State Government's Internet service is a portal which provides a large variety of sources for gathering information. The specific complaint from people was that the general web search engine has to be improved:

(i) "*I am using Internet service a lot, but I think Terengganu State Government could have a better Internet service. I think the search engine is not good enough.*"

(ii) "*The problem is that the search capabilities of the Internet service cannot handle even the local sites I would say...I know there was a lot of effort into designing a better search engine (...)instead they should just develop another platform that could work better.*"

(iii) "*The worst thing about the Internet service is that I'm not using it. If I'm looking for an answer, I decide to go to other ways of finding it.*"

Some of the respondents suggested that the ideal search engine should be very much the same Google:

"*I would like to have the Internet service build on similar features like Google. There is so much good information out there, but it's difficult to find it*"; "*The Internet service is like finding the fish in the pond. I would like it to be more like a Google search engine.*"

Additionally some people have demonstrated some kind of "*pessimistic acceptance*" when referring to the use of Internet service (e.g. "*Quite often when I am going to the Internet service page I want to find something and I know I am not able to find it*"; "*Our Internet service is always two steps behind but you get used to it*") while others tried to avoid it and instead use other external tools. (e.g. "*I am using Internet service on a weekly basis – time reporting, not my primary source of information, there is a lot of noises, if I want to find something I am using an external source.*")

Whatsapp

The Whatsapp platform is the collaborative part of Terengganu State Government's Internet service. Similar to the Internet service's case, the people were asked to what extent they use Whatsapp, their experiences and critical opinions regarding the usefulness of this platform and what they would add or change. "*We learned that Whatsapp could be used for gathering information and knowledge sharing:*" Whatsapp page I use frequently for information gathering and learning processes."

The vast majority of the respondents admitted, however, that in the last few years Whatsapp has become so popular that the number of usages increased significantly. Now it is impossible to keep track of them e.g.: "*Whatsapp has exploded, I was bookmarking it previously but there are so many apps now and I don't have time to*

search through it. I need something like a subscription in order to have notification if there is something interesting(…)", "*The collaborative part of the Internet service is Whatsapp where people can create their own groups, but then they forget about them and don't keep them active.*"

Furthermore, some of the people complained that Whatsapp is too slow to work with, and the system is crashing while they are trying to publish on it. Frequent system failures and slow response rate also led to a general reluctance towards Whatsapp's application e.g. "*I am not a fan of it, I think it is slow but as a file storage it's fine*"; "*WiFi supported by state government it doesn't exist. It supported by Whatsapp just crash every time you want to use it.*"

Some of the people admitted that due to continuous problems with the software they replaced external portal pages by Media Portal (external free portal application): "*Whatsapp is too slow to publish on, portal is too slow to publish on, this is the reasons why we are using media portal*"; "*I am not a fan of Whatsapp application, but I am very much a fan of media portal. I am very much into co-creating content.*"

Among the respondents, however, we found some who were satisfied with the system. These people appreciated that the information and work-related documents are available in one place and they support the task performance and teamwork (e.g. "*It's good to know that information is available.*") Furthermore, some of them were responsible for creating and managing portal or Whatsapp pages and provided us with their strategies to make it more efficient: "*We are trying to make pages more attractive and constantly updated, select important information and avoid the information overload.*"

Skype

Skype portal has been introduced to the people of Terengganu over a year ago and since then it is accessible for everyone who logs on to the Internet service platform. This social media platform is built on features similar to Facebook and Yammer and was created to support and encourage collaboration between people. However the results revealed that Skype is almost practically unused: "*I have been introduced to Skype, but I do not use it*"; "*I do not see the point of using Skype, it simply does not reach the people I want to be connected to.*"

Some of the respondents pointed out that Skype does not attract many active users. In addition, people admitted that their inactivity on Skype is related to the fact that they have been provided with too many channels for external communication: "*Skype is similar to other social media tools and I think Terengganu State Government tries to copy that. So should we add more tools even if I don't have time to use the ones that we already have?*"

We also found that the resemblance to Facebook may discourage potential users since Facebook is seen as a channel for private communication: "*Skype is*

not as good as Facebook, it doesn't fulfil my needs, and I don't have a need to use it. I make a distinction between my private and community side." In other words, people are not attracted by external platforms which remind them of popular media because they associate it with private rather than corporate communication.

The Ideal Communication Experience

Another topic covered in the interview was that of informational change and improvement of the external communication experience. When asked about how they receive information and how they would amend the communication routines outside the state government most of the people demanded transparency, collaborative work, outside networking with people and an increased specificity in targeting external messages.

(i) "*Change the typical ways of communication into a more face-to-face pattern of communication in order to get to know people better, socialise.*"

(ii) "*One of the major problems is that we need to target information better, instead of just sending email to mass people. If you could target them appropriate, communication would definitely improve.*"

(iii) "*We have tried to be more specific with sending the emails: put ACTION or INFO in the title because when people see the action they know they need to do something, take action.*"

Their ideal communication experience includes not only an information transfer but also a reaction in the sender's behavior. Also, the highlight is on having a practical experience after following a theoretical presentation and being supported with all the logistic details needed for implementation.

(i) "*Information gets to everyone, but it's more difficult to make people do something.*"

(ii) "*Not only have a presentation saying this is a strategy, but also mention what they can specifically do to support it.*"

Some other important aspect of increasing the communication efficiency in the organization is the social aspect of it, respondents mentioning that involving more people in a project means an actual growth in external collaboration between sections and better chances for the project to be accepted as an organizational success.

The negative aspects of being part of a state government personnel were stated by interviewees as being the time consuming organizational routines which can sometimes interfere with their work quality, reducing the productivity and consuming the allocated time: "*Terengganu State Government is so big and it has all these routines which are good, but sometimes it's also a little too hard to manage to be really efficient.*"

The Social Media Paradigm

One of the areas of interest in the research is how people perceive the use of social media at the organization. Initially respondents were asked to define social media and its purpose. Next, there were questions regarding the impact of social media platforms on the daily work, and the use of external social media platforms as Facebook, WhatsApp or Twitter.

When we asked about what social media is, most of the respondents referred to popular platforms as Facebook, Twitter, or WhatsApp. Some of them also associated with external social media social media platforms at the organization such as Skype, WhatsApp or Skype:

(i) "*Social media is Facebook for me. I don't use any at work and I don't have many colleagues on it.*"

(ii) "*Social media is like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Skype. I mainly use Facebook for myself.*"

(iii) "*Social media is Facebook, but also Skype and our Whatsapp parts- if they gather more people they become social media.*"

The stated definitions indicate that the majority of the people are aware of the possibilities, benefits and consequences of using social media in their everyday life. Respondents pointed out that thanks to social media channels they can create personal and professional networks, share information and knowledge and get the support they need:

(i) "*Social media is connecting people regardless of the distance. An extension of what I do but not restricted by time or distance.*"

(ii) "*It is a fulfilling basic human need: everybody wants to share and gather information.*"

Interestingly, a few of them also mentioned the potential risk associated with active use of popular platforms, as time wastage and the loss of privacy: "*Social media is like Facebook, YouTube (…) where you share things about yourself and your life. So your life is not anymore something that only you have access to; so everyone knows what you are doing.*"; "*Sharing in this way is a bit exhibitionist and people are getting recognition; everybody wants to get positive feedback like well done, I like it, good job.*"

Despite the great awareness of what social media represents and how it could be used, most of the respondents admitted that they are not using social media at work: "*We don't use it in our daily work; you don't do your daily work via social media.*" More than half of the respondents perceived the use of external social media platforms at the organization as rather unusual and are trying to avoid it while working: "*I don't spend time doing my Facebook updates; I am doing this*

at home. When I am in work I am doing my work. Maybe during the coffee break I would check my Facebook on my phone."; "*I have colleagues that check their updates at work and I wonder is that ok?*"

Some of the people explained that their working environment is rather unfavorable and resistant to change. Therefore, external social media provided by Terengganu State Government is almost unused in the daily working life: "*Social media has been actively discouraged instead of encouraged. It's a shame. Many people have been working here for long period of time and haven't seen the need of change.*"

We found out that people are not socializing on the external social media platforms. Some of the respondents admitted, however, that they establish connections with their people on external social media platforms such as Whatsapp e.g. "*Social media is something that allows you to connect or keep connected. I use Whatsapp to keep in contact with people I have been working with, establish contact with them and sometimes establish new contacts with others professionals.*" The majority of the connections related to work were established via Whatsapp (e.g. "*Whatsapp I consider only for professional networks.*") and Facebook was perceived rather as a private tool for communication and restricted to friends and family.

We asked our respondents if social media has an impact on the working habits and to what extent they are influenced by this phenomenon. Most of the interviewees agreed with these statements: respondents noticed that communication became more direct; feedback is immediate, papers forms are replaced by electronic data and information is processed much faster:

(i) "*I stopped using paper and pen like 4 years ago.*"
(ii) "*Social media has changed the way we work today from the perspective of collaborating with people. It's easier to create information and share it.*"
(iii) "*It started to change from email to chat and that changed the way we communicate, everything is more direct.*"

People pointed out the advantages of social media use for their professional knowledge and expertise e.g.: "*Twitter and Whatsapp gave me a lot of interesting influences, empowering what I do. Yes, I think it does influence the way I work today.*"; "*I think that there is no impact, regarding my daily routine, but you can see that people are bringing information and knowledge from outside to the organization.*"

Another advantage is the possibility to brand their professional identity on various social media platforms: "*You need to have a very clear idea of what you want to accomplish by using social media at work. I think people are using social media for self-promotion, to brand themselves. What I have on my Whatsapp profile reflects me as a person.*"

Terengganu State Government in External Social Media

In trying to observe the connection that people have with the Terengganu State Government as one of state government in Malaysia on external social media platforms we found out that there is a balance between national and state level of identity on media platforms. Most of the respondents confirmed that even if they do not follow the Terengganu State Government on Facebook or Twitter they still feel connected to the concept of the network society. (e.g., "*Even if I am not using a social media I feel like I am a part of it*"). The idea of a Network Society involves the development of communication platforms to a point that you feel connected to everything and everyone around you, with no borders or limits to your communication experience:

(i)   "*Network society is what I'm living in.*"
(ii) "*The network society makes me feel proud of working at Terengganu State Government.*"
(iii) "*Networked society promotes more the ways we will communicate not the way we are doing it now.*"

Professional vs. Private Identity

With the emergence of social media and the new ways of sharing information some of the respondents feel like their professional and personal identity have merged into a distinct item characterized by openness on social media platforms, social networking with colleagues outside the organization, continuous knowledge sharing and learning experience, even after work hours, and a very open schedule due to working in global teams.

(i) "*If I do something privately it would reflect on my professional life.*"
(ii) "*I have an open schedule for work so from that perspective the limit between the professional identity and personal identity is a bit blurred.*"

On the other hand, most people still consider that there is a very specific difference between the two identities and it all consists of personal choices in separating your private affairs from the organizational world: "*There is a strict line between professional and personal identity. I'm leaving my professional identity at work.*"

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In searching for communication patterns and daily routines we looked at the relationship, people have with external communication platforms and other sources of information outside the organization. As a way of bringing people together around the same organizational goal and building a sense of belonging to a common

group identity, the external communication practices encourage the process of identification with the organization. In our case, communication routines stand for face-to-face communication outside collaborative teams, specific instances communication with people from the same section and small talk with colleagues as a social networking process. The findings support the idea that communication processes are limited to a certain degree by the task orientation of each group and external communication is often an example of collaborative work between individuals with similar interests and in solving a work- related problem.

The model of strategic communication incorporates the interactivity between external and external communication patterns, with a focus on the role of external communication in creating and exchanging organziational messages.The model also highlights the channels used in transmitting information outside the state government.

In our literature review, we have elaborated and presented the model which connects external and extrenal patterns of communication in an organizational context (see figure 4). Based on the results of our study we identified how the state government establishes communicational routines, by incorporating Web 2.0 technologies in their communicational process and enhancing creative thinking and networking:
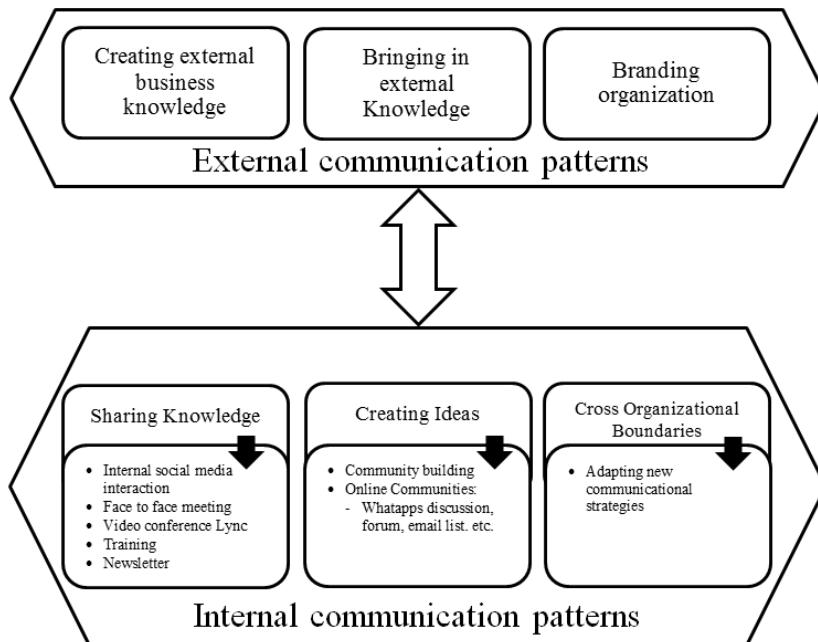

Figure 4: External and internal communication pattrens in Terengganu state government

Strategic communication outside Terengganu State Government is keen on increasing the innovative potential of the state government by engaging its creative people in networking and knowledge sharing. For this purpose the state government provides people with a variety of communicational platforms and channels, for instance: training and online learning, newsletters, weekly / monthly meetings with team supervisors, and Internet service's social media applications - Whatsapp, portal, Skype (Zerfaß & Huck , 2007). According to Vuori (2012), knowledge sharing can be seen as a "critical and strategic resource that when used in unique ways, enables the state government to develop sustainable competitive advantages." Literature highlights the importance of active user participation and technology's role in providing a platform for knowledge creation and sharing. External social media applications (e.g., WhatsApp, portals) are used for sharing and exchanging various kinds of content and the use of social media contributes to the state government's knowledge creation capability (Vuori, 2012).

Vuori suggest that high stocks of creative knowledge outside the state government, should be considered "as something that is embedded in practice, constantly emerging and developing as a result of people interacting with each other, interpreting and making sense of their environment in a social context" (Vuori, 2012). Therefore, the state government should create a dynamic and innovative oriented organizational culture where everyone can be an innovator. According to Swan et. al., (1999 in Vuori, 2012) knowldge and new ideas are created "through negotiations, where different people bring together and share their thought worlds, which are exposed for new meanings and interpretations in the networking process". When comparing our results with this finding, we discovered that the communication platforms and its online communities (eg Whatsapp discussion forums, email lists) are fostering communication and interaction among people. Popular and well-structured online communities with a high number of active users are attracting more and more new members who seek solutions and work-related information and also want to share their expertise and creative thinking.

Consequently, the establishment of external communication patterns which encourage knowledge sharing, creative thinking and adapting the innovative communication strategies has a positive impact on the state government's external operations such as: creation of external business knowledge, branding and promoting the organization and bringing external knowledge outside the organization. All in one, it helps to increase the state government's originality and speeds up the collaborative process between people (Vuori, 2012).

In order to improve the communication practices outside the organization, we can propose a list of suggestions, generalized to fit the state government's needs and based on recommendations found in the literature review. We can mention as external communication purposes of the following strategic goals:

- to improve information flows by alternating external communication channels and matching the messages to the appropriate medium
- to enhance a two-way form of communication by reducing the communication differences between leaders and general people and allowing individuals to be part of the decision-making process
- to define the values and attitudes outside the organization by incorporating them in the daily communication practices and in general communication strategies
- to create personal profiles of all people by allowing space for interpersonal communication and social interaction between people
- to define communication styles of individuals and organisations by analysing and describing the existing communication practices and choosing to be consistent with the organization's communication styles
- to encourage an appropriate management style by improving motivation, responsibility, initiative, affiliation and innovative capability
- to promote an efficient solution finding system by providing people with efficient communication channels and other search related engines.

To sum up, the study researches the field of organizational communication with a specific interest in external communication channels such as used outside the state government and other routines which contribute to the communication practices. By following the people' personal preferences and analyzing their contributions to the organization's communication strategy, we managed to relate our results to findings which bring into light the patterns of communication outside a global state government.

Looking at how external communication channels affect strategic communication, the study highlights through its findings that the relationship between the external communication channels and the strategy that follows is one of dependency with every message on the state government's Internet service should be strategically matched with the channel of transmission.

Validating the medium theory (Qvortrup, 2006), the research agrees that information has to correspond specifically with the choice of channel. In this case, the over utilization of emails for a large variety of information concludes in an overload, a communication blockage which could be avoided by considering alternative channels in passing on messages. When asking people about the general functions of external communication channels, we managed to discover and analyze: their perception about the efficiency of external channels, the communication patterns between different hierarchical levels, their fondness for certain channels, the existence of a sense of community built through communication and their relationship with social media. As guidelines for reviewing the organizational behavior we took

into consideration a few communication theories such as McQuail's work-bound communication model (McQuail, 2010), the constructive theory of communication (Mazzei, 2010) and the medium theory (Qvortrup, 2006). Also, we theorized and discussed strategic concepts like communication, external communication and external communication channels (email and the Internet service).

This was the base for developing further our debate and helping us describe and investigate the communication practices outside the organization. Regarding our main findings, we focused on highlighting the communication patterns and routines outside the state government where we discovered a difference between the local ways and the global methods of transmitting information. This shaped the communication approach of the organization, dividing the communication choices and strategies into a local, more face-to-face oriented mode and a global perspective where video messaging and other technological means of communication are often used. Furthermore, another key finding was the role of the leaders (JKKK and their group of officers) as agents communication outside the state government with most of the important information being disseminated through external leaders to general people. In this way, their professional identity switches between communicating within their section and managing other work related tasks. As frequently used external communication channels based on communication technologies outside the organization we focused on the following: Internet service (Skype, Whatsapp), email, and video communication, as being the most frequently used and debated ones outside the state government. As a main point in the discussion, we underlined that most of the technological means of communicating outside the state government are flawed and thus they become a second choice in the people' preference list. This again validates the media richness theory which supports the idea that it is impossible to replace face-to-face communication with other virtual channels (Trevino, 1987; Johnson & Lederer 2005; Goodbody, 2005).

Another important facet of the research lays in the social media paradigm and the users' approach towards communicating through a new medium outside a professional environment. Being characterized as one of the channels that can replace the social interaction often lost on various other platforms such as video messaging or emails, social media promises the reach of a large audience, the creation of numerous communities and offering everyone the possibility to express themselves through sharing information. Even with all these attributes in hand, social media seems too new to be efficient in a traditional organizational environment, needing to be introduced and programmed to fit the needs and values of the state government. On the other hand, all people expressed a greater need for real social interaction with colleagues from the local site or from all over the world, admitting that social media has the right features to make this need a real opportunity to share and communicate with people. All this concludes with the expression of an "ideal" communication experience, or at least a communication experience which can be

characterized by little misunderstanding, finding an effective solution strategy and the capacity of bringing people together.

FUNDING

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