



Corporate Communications: An International Journal

Emerald Article: Internal corporate communication and its impact on internal branding: Perception of Indian public sector employees

Neha Sharma, T.J. Kamalanabhan

Article information:

To cite this document: Neha Sharma, T.J. Kamalanabhan, (2012), "Internal corporate communication and its impact on internal branding: Perception of Indian public sector employees", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 17 Iss: 3 pp. 300 - 322

Permanent link to this document:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13563281211253548>

Downloaded on: 24-10-2012

References: This document contains references to 84 other documents

To copy this document: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

Users who downloaded this Article also downloaded: *

Louis Capozzi, Laura Berlin Zipfel, (2012), "The conversation age: the opportunity for public relations", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 17 Iss: 3 pp. 336 - 349

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13563281211253566>

Rajiv P Dant, Scott K. Weaven, Brent L Baker, (2012), "Influence of Personality Traits on Perceived Relationship Quality within a Franchisee-Franchisor Context", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 47 Iss: 1 (Date online 29/5/2012)

Augustine Pang, (2012), "Towards a crisis pre-emptive image management model", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 17 Iss: 3 pp. 358 - 378

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13563281211253584>

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

For Authors:

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service. Information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

With over forty years' experience, Emerald Group Publishing is a leading independent publisher of global research with impact in business, society, public policy and education. In total, Emerald publishes over 275 journals and more than 130 book series, as well as an extensive range of online products and services. Emerald is both COUNTER 3 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.



Internal corporate communication and its impact on internal branding

Perception of Indian public sector employees

Neha Sharma and T.J. Kamalanabhan

*Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology Madras,
Chennai, India*

Received 22 August 2011
Revised 23 December 2011
Accepted 15 May 2012

Abstract

Purpose – The primary objective of this paper is to model internal corporate communication (ICC) process, examining the nature of the process, the outcomes thereof and the variable that has the ability to mediate the process, in the context of an Indian petroleum public sector undertaking (PSU).

Design/methodology/approach – Following a review of the internal corporate communication and internal branding literature, an exploratory methodology was designed to capture the perceptions of employees on internal brand communication practices prevailing in the organization with an ambition of becoming a leading employer brand. Transcripts of interviews were analyzed, coded thematically and the essence of experiences was jointly combined into one description.

Findings – First, a relation between ICC dimensions and internal branding outcomes is established. Second, it is recognized that ICC practices and brand training have a positive impact on communication satisfaction that further promotes a sense of brand identification, loyalty and commitment among the employees.

Research limitations/implications – Given the qualitative nature of the case study method, only limited generalizations can be made as the purpose of case study research is to add to theory-building rather than to generalize to a population. There is a clear need for further empirical research. Such research could help quantify the nature of the relationships between the variables suggested and establish the extent to which the model might be generalized to other organizations.

Practical implications – This paper would be of value to researchers and practitioners seeking to understand and promote the specific role of ICC in achieving communication satisfaction and internal branding outcomes.

Originality/value – It is rare to find a company among Indian PSUs that has undertaken effective internal branding initiatives through its corporate communication department to strengthen the employer brand.

Keywords Internal corporate communication, Communication satisfaction, Brand training, Internal branding, Indian public sector undertaking, Public sector organizations, India, Communication, Employees

Paper type Research paper



1. Introduction

In an era when integrated communication and brand management are witnessing major attention worldwide, the track record of successful implementation of internal corporate communication (ICC) strategies remains poor. Among the various functions of CC in an organization, employee communication holds one of the most crucial positions. Argenti (1996) argues, "...no other corporate communication sub function

offers more of an opportunity for genuinely sought-after research than employee communication". Companies that attach higher importance to internal communication (such as setting up a separate ICC department) are known to have higher levels of employee engagement (Thomson and Hecker, 2000) and better reputation (Dortok, 2006). However, Welch and Jackson (2007) underline that even though the concept of ICC has received significance in practitioner venues particularly in brand management; the underlying theoretical foundation has not been fully developed in the academic field. At a time when the effectiveness of internal branding in context of turnover or employee engagement is highly discussed, it would be relevant to examine how ICC dimensions can influence internal branding outcomes from employee's perspective.

Moreover, hardly any experiential work seems to have been done on the subject of CC or ICC in the Indian context. Recently, Koul (2009) has done an evaluation of CC functioning and structure in Indian Public Sector companies. The study of Koul (2009) needs to be extended to understand the effectiveness of ICC in Indian Public Sector companies.

This study explores the extent to which practitioners in an Indian Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) use ICC dimensions to develop their company's brand image among employees. In India, PSU is a term used to refer companies in which the government owns a majority of 51 percent of the company equity. The issues such as privatization in the core businesses, improved professional avenues, increasing international work exposure and arrival of new players, have compelled the Indian PSUs to reinforce communication operations and look for improved levels of productivity from the employees (Koul, 2009). Nevertheless, at the same time, in India a disproportion exists between the perceived importance of ICC and the actual attention and resources given to it (Argenti, 2007). The Indian PSU selected for the study is an exceptional organization that has given genuine importance to ICC functioning and recently initiated an internal brand communication campaign to deal with the current challenges of the business environment.

From the practical perspective, the study draws practitioner's attention to ICC dimensions, which might facilitate internal branding among employees and convince management to focus on internal communication, rather than merely HR practices to deal with employee turnover and retention issues. For academicians, a model of ICC and its internal branding outcomes, in the context of Indian PSU, will be developed, utilizing a grounded theory approach as conceived by Glaser and Strauss (1967). However, our literature review will herein be presented in advance of the results of the primary study in order to identify the specific ICC dimensions that have been studied by previous researchers in context of organizational and branding outcomes. Furthermore, the gaps in literature, as indicated in the following section substantiate the relevance of developing an ICC and internal branding framework.

2. Definition, theory and implication

Internal corporate communication

Welch and Jackson's (2007) comprehensive review of internal communication reveals that internal corporate communication lacks theoretical clarity, particularly from strategic management perspective. Furthermore, they have positioned internal communication within the strategic public relations and introduced internal corporate communication (ICC) in their model of corporate communication (adapted from Van

Reil, 1995). Thereof, Welch and Jackson (2007, p. 186) define ICC as, "... a process between an organization's strategic managers and its internal stakeholders, designed to promote commitment to the organization, a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment and understanding of its evolving aims". Smidts *et al.* (2001) suggest that internal communication affects the degree of identification employees feel with their organization and their attitude to support the organization.

Giving a theoretical grounding to organization communication, Grunig *et al.* (1995) have given a two-way symmetrical model of public relations, which is characterized by a dialogue, rather than a monologue. This model involves the use of "bargaining, negotiating, and strategies of conflict resolution" to bring about pertinent changes in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of both organization and its stakeholders. On the similar note, Bennis (1997) asserts that it is inadequate for a company to write down its vision and values and hope that employees will perform accordingly. He explains that the company must engage its employees in a dialogue about what the vision and values mean to them if it hopes to have the values internalized by employees.

Furthermore, Argenti (2007) and Tukiainen (2001) have described that the corporate messages like value statements in the form of mission and vision of the organization, employee benefits are delivered to the employees through internal communication channels with an intention of making an impact on the employee's attitudes. According to De Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2003), once the employees are part of the organization, internal communication may help in aligning employee behavior with the corporate values. Herstein *et al.* (2008), while explaining the relevance of formal and informal internal communication channels, remark that formal channels like weekly meetings, annual reports, house journals and informal channels like special events and face to face communication, help organizations to create a strong corporate brand image among the employees.

Weick (1987) feels that internal communication can be seen as a "sense-making" activity that employs language genres (e.g. news, feature-writing) to capture and construct corporate brand identity. He also believes that communication practitioners use corporate visual identity (CVI) symbols (van de Bosch and de Jong, 2005) like logo, building, clothing and vehicles as part of brand messages for creating a strong identity among internal stakeholders. Table I shows the list of studies that have linked specific ICC dimensions to organizational outcomes.

Despite the importance of ICC to practice, particularly in branding and corporate identity building, there are considerable gaps in internal communication theory and theorists have called for research on its structure, scope and focus (Argenti, 2007). Smidts *et al.* (2001) suggest that internal communication is a neglected management instrument and requires in depth understanding and evaluation.

Communication satisfaction

Communication satisfaction has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and other imperative work outcomes. Considerable research has been done to establish the relationships between communication satisfaction and other key organizational variables, including organizational identification (Smidts *et al.*, 2001); membership satisfaction (Taylor, 1997); job satisfaction (Pettit *et al.*, 1997; Trombetta and Rogers, 1988); employee productivity (Clampitt and Downs, 1993); service quality (Snipes, 1996); job performance (Pincus, 1986); organizational commitment (Trombetta and

Author and year	ICC dimension (s) studied	Organizational outcome(s) studied	Research methodology
Asif and Sargeant (2000)	Formal communication (style of communication), Informal communication (demographic profile of individuals, amount of communication received) Messages, clarity, trust, style of leadership communication	Employee loyalty, shared vision, commitment, empowerment, satisfaction	Case study
Bambacas and Patrickson (2008)	Supervisory relationships, feedback process, organization perspective, communication climate Messages (Corporate Philosophy), Channels, Communication standards	Organizational commitment	Qualitative
Brunetto and Wharton (2004)	Channels, Information sent, Information received, organizational communication relationships, timeliness of information	Job commitment and satisfaction	Survey
Camilleri (2008)	Messages, channels, training	Stakeholder awareness, commitment and sustainability of business	Case study
Carriere and Bourque (2009)	Use of language/Message	Communication satisfaction, job satisfaction	Survey
Chong (2007)	Organization Communication (no specific elaboration of communication dimensions)	Delivery of brand performance	Case Study
Clutterbuck, (2005)	Messages, Channels, Sender and Receiver	Psychological Contract	Conceptual
Elving (2005)	Messages, Channels (formal and informal), source of information	Organizational identification, readiness for change	Conceptual
Fawkes and Gregory (2000)	Visual identity symbols, messages (value statements), top management communication	Effect on internet based communication	Survey
Harge and Dickson (2007)	Messages, Channels, feedback	Awareness	Survey
Hawabhay <i>et al.</i> (2009)	Messages, Channels, training	Corporate Brand Image	Qualitative
Kapoor (2010)	Visual Communication	Employer branding	Qualitative
Mazzei (2010)	Message, Face-to-face communication, two way communication(feedback), communication training	Impact on communication behaviors	Qualitative
Melevar and Akel (2005)	Channels (orientation programmes, group meetings, briefings), training.	Corporate identity and image	Qualitative
Mestre <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Messages and Channels	Work life and employee performance	Conceptual
Power and Rienstra (1999)	Communication Channels, face to face communication, Supervisor communication	Impact on employee behaviors and attitudes	Case Study
Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2007)	Supervisory communication	Employee brand identification, commitment, loyalty and performance	Survey
Teeni (2001)	Sender, Messages, Channels, organization communication relationships	Mutual Understanding between internal stakeholders and influencing behavior and attitude	Conceptual
Tukiaimen (2001)		Communication satisfaction	Conceptual
Vuuren <i>et al.</i> (2007)		Affective organizational commitment	Survey
Welch and Jackson (2007)		Employee belonging, awareness, commitment, loyalty, job/personal satisfaction	Conceptual

Table I.
Studies showing the
relation between ICC
dimensions and
organizational outcomes

Rogers, 1988); and satisfaction with work relationships (Hunt *et al.*, 2000). Communication satisfaction in these studies usually correlates with positive organizational outcomes while communication dissatisfaction correlates with negative, dysfunctional outcomes such as reduced employee commitment, greater absenteeism, higher employee turnover, reduced productivity as well as increased occupational stress and burnout (Shanafelt, 2003). Crino and White (1981) have explained that communication satisfaction is the satisfaction with various aspects of communication in an organization and the relationship is one of the antecedent (communication practices) and the consequent (communication satisfaction). Carriere and Bourque (2009) study has empirically proved that the effect of organization communication practices on employee commitment and job satisfaction is fully mediated by communication satisfaction.

The current study also intends to see communication satisfaction as a fundamental yardstick on which all branding outcomes and internal corporate communication practices are measured.

Internal branding: an outcome of ICC

Brand management has become an indispensable part of an organizational functioning (Balmer, 2001). Firms commonly associate their branding efforts to the development of products and corporate brands, but branding can also be used in area of human resource management (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Organizations are increasingly concentrating on internal branding in order to assure that current employees engage in corporate culture and strategy (Backhaus and Tikko, 2004; Forman and Argenti, 2005). Furthermore, Punjaisri *et al.* (2009) feel that a potential employee is likely to accept a lower compensation if his job delivers quality and trust through company's brand values and internal communication. This study has empirically proved that internal communication and training may lead to employee brand identification, loyalty and commitment:

The key role of internal branding process is to ensure that employees transform brand messages into brand reality for external stakeholders. However, despite the lack of research in understanding antecedents of internal branding outcomes, few researchers have suggested that internal communication can be instrumental in successful implementation of internal branding strategy (Chong, 2007; Grof, 2001). Thomson *et al.* (1999) opine that internal communication and training help in internalization of brand values by employees, which build their commitment towards "brand-supporting" behaviors.

After summing up the definitions of internal branding given by researchers (Backhaus and Tikko, 2004; Punjaisri *et al.*, 2009), we can conclude that internal branding is a result of employer's internal communication effort to develop a workforce that is committed, loyal and identifies with the set of organizational values and goals. The study from the internal communication literature concurs that an effective internal communication could engender employee's commitment and loyalty (Asif and Sargeant, 2000; Steers, 1977). Recently, the study in the banking sector of Pappasolomou and Vrontis (2006) has supported that internal branding using internal communication and training enhances employee's loyalty.

Boone (2000) has observed the recognition of internal branding among companies such as Southwest, Sears, IBM and McDonald. These examples reflect the influence of an informed workforce committed to delivering the brand promise. Recently, some of

the studies have provided empirical evidence for the link between internal branding and employee's brand commitment (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005), and some have focused on the relationship between internal branding and employees' brand loyalty (Papasolomou and Vrontis, 2006).

Drawing upon the social identity theory, Ashforth and Mael (1989) argue that social identification stems from the distinctiveness and prestige of a group. Internal branding could engender employee's brand identification, reflecting their sense of "oneness" because it is about communicating to employees the brand values, which are exclusive to a specific brand or company making it differentiated from the others (De Chernatony, 2001). Mitchell (2002) believes that organizations trying to achieve employee brand commitment need to create an emotional connection with employees to make the brand come alive for them in order to persuade them to align their values and behaviors with that of the company's brand. ICC creates the conditions for commitment, and hence should be seen as one of its important antecedents (Foy, 1994; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Meyer *et al.*, 1989; Postmes *et al.*, 2001). A meta-analysis (Postmes *et al.*, 2001) reveals that employees are strongly committed if they obtain brand information to perform their task. Furthermore, Davis (2000) has empirically found that corporate brand communication could be improved by imparting communication training to employees on inter personal communication techniques, public speaking and soft skills development. He explained in his study that communication training would improve the relationship between employees to engender a better working relationship and greater cooperation to achieve their common goals. Brand communication training can also be recognized as an important channel of communication to further enhance the flow of corporate information to the internal stakeholders.

Some authors (Drake *et al.*, 2005) express that creation of internal branding is through the practice of internal marketing (IM). The review of different author's proposition of an IM mix (Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; Gummesson, 1991; Tansuhaj *et al.*, 1991), provide support to recent studies (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2002) within the internal branding context that argue for the coordination between HR and CC disciplines to successfully achieve internal branding's objectives. This is explained by Mahnert and Toures (2007) in their definition of internal marketing (IM):

[...] as the accumulation and application of functions and tools aimed at the formation and maintenance of a consistent, efficient, effective and customer-oriented workforce. These objectives are achieved through the communication with and attraction, retention, motivation, education and management of suitable employees. Suitable employees in this context are defined as those employees who are conscious of and committed to the needs of the organization and other employees at all levels in the internal value chain".

Woodruffe (1995) argues that internal marketing is a means for creating internal commitment among employees by adopting the marketing concept internally. According to the balance theory of Heider (1958), an individual desires to maintain consistency among a triad of linked attributes. An unbalanced relationship system will cause anxiety that it desires to shift towards a balance state. The balance theory can explain why ICC is argued to influence employee's brand attitudes. When employees find themselves holding different attitudes toward their employer brand, they will try to regain the balance system. Therefore, internal brand communication creates a

shared understanding of brand values that help the employees to align their brand attitudes with their employer brand (De Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2003).

However, due to the dearth of research on inter-linkages of ICC and internal branding, there is hardly any study that empirically depicts the influences of the ICC dimensions on internal branding outcomes.

3. Methodology

Organization: context and relevance

Our study aimed to gain comprehensive insight into the challenges and significance of internal branding, as defined above, as well as process of its management from ICC perspective in an Indian PSU. The chosen organization for the study had recently taken extensive internal branding initiatives to mark its Golden Jubilee celebrations. This PSU is the highest ranked Indian Petroleum company in the prestigious Fortune “Global 500” listing and India’s largest commercial enterprise, with a sales turnover of Rs. 2, 85,337 crore – the highest-ever for an Indian company. It is one of the few Indian companies that established Public Relations (PR) department from the time of its inception. In late 1990s, PR department of the PSU was renamed as Corporate Communications (CC), thus got strategic powers for devising communication plans for internal and external image building of the corporate.

Data-collection and analysis methods

To be able to unearth the aspects of ICC and internal branding, we selected a grounded approach (see Glaser and Strauss, 1967). For our case study, we combined the available research literature on the topic with 27 semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Interviews were done in corporate and marketing offices of the PSU at New Delhi between June to September 2010. The duration of interviews was approximately 60 to 120 minutes respectively. Due to confidentiality concerns, the company and individual identities have been made anonymous. It should be noted that the size of the host institution and limitations – in terms of time and resources – made it impossible to attempt to target the entire organization. As a consequence, it was decided to center the research on manageable sample, which was functionally and responsibility-wise diverse. The interview sample drew on senior and middle management, as well as some junior members of staff working in marketing, human resources, CC, production and IT departments of the organization. The mix was designed to ensure that the perceptions of ICC and branding activities were investigated at all levels throughout the PSU. The interviews were kept semi-structured, since the researchers had very little a priori perspective of either the communication techniques or the perceptions that would be encountered. As a result, each interview covered a wide range of internal corporate communication issues. It should also be noted that in keeping with the implementation of a grounded approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1994), the specific content of each interview developed as the research process unfolded. It should further be noted that the latter interviewees were specifically selected to capture data in respect of a particular interaction or set of interactions. Each interview was subsequently transcribed and analyzed. As in any qualitative analysis, the first step in the procedure was to classify and code discrete categories of meaning in the data. The next stage in the analysis was to move from a descriptive to a conceptual level of analysis. This process is greatly aided in the

grounded theory approach by an ongoing process of theorizing about the relationships between variables, which take place as the analyst is coding the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

4. Analysis

Themes emerged from interviews

A content analysis of the transcribed interview responses was performed to unveil the main themes of the study. Table II gives an indication of the research questions that were used for interviews.

The key themes that consistently emerged in the interviews were:

- consistent and innovative use of brand messages in internal communication;
- use of contemporary channels of communication;
- need for structured feedback mechanism;
- training facilitates internal branding initiatives of ICC; and
- high communication satisfaction is leading to pride in brand values and achievements of the company.

Inevitably, there was a degree of overlap between the above-mentioned categories. The words and examples used by few people were different from the others. However, the categories identified here highlighted distinct dimensions that aided analysis and action. Results from interviews have been condensed in this study for two reasons.

Research questions	Topics/codes for analysis
Warm up questions	Starting point
How important is corporate communication?	Current stage
What are the key functions of corporate communication in your organization?	
What are the key corporate messages that are communicated to the employees?	ICC brand messages Training
How brand messages in terms of company vision and mission are incorporated in daily communication?	
How does organization communicate its corporate brand values to the employees?	ICC Channels
Does organization collect the views of employees about the corporate brand values?	Feedback
Does organization collect the views of employees on communication satisfaction?	Communication satisfaction
Does management feel that communication satisfaction is important aspect for overall job satisfaction?	
How would you describe the changes that happened in the minds of employees regarding corporate brand?	Impact
Does management believe in taking internal branding initiatives?	Internal branding
Do you relate to the corporate brand values communicated to you?	Employee Brand identification
Do you feel a strong sense of loyalty towards corporate brand?	Employee Brand commitment
Are you willing to remain with the corporate brand for the rest of your professional career?	Employee Brand loyalty

Table II.
Topics emerged from the
interview questions

First, it removed unnecessary repetition, and second, it helped to preserve respondent confidentiality. Moreover, a process of “sorting” was adopted until a strong pattern of relations began to appear from the themes of interviews. In this case the model postulated in Figure 1 was developed through a process of sorting that spanned the entire four months of research.

The model illustrated in Figure 1 depicts the ICC process as well as tools and techniques employed, mediating variable and the outcomes perceived by the participants in the study. It should be noted that these outcomes could be positive or negative depending on the quality of ICC in specific organization. In the review of the model, which follows, each of these critical dimensions will be explored, together with employee perceptions of the same. Moreover, Table III summarizes the definitions and meanings of each of the variables considered in the model of ICC and internal branding as shown in Figure 1.

5. Results

Brand messages effectiveness

Brand message is the tangible and intangible formulation of an idea sent by the sender (employer) to the receiver (employee). Brand message effectiveness implies to the state when the intended brand messages of the employer and the interpreted meanings of employees are identical (Herstein *et al.*, 2008).

The internal communication department of PSU resided within the CC department and reported to Executive Director (ED) CC. ED, CC reported to Director, HR on internal communication activities and also to Director, Corporate Brand Management on the progress of overall branding initiatives undertaken by the CC department. The objective of ICC in the PSU was to build and maintain strong relationships among management and employees by communicating the corporate messages effectively. CC officials took special care in designing brand messages for their internal audience. Primarily these messages comprised of company’s value statements (e.g. vision and mission, core values) and employee benefit plans (e.g. insurance policies, new compensation and appraisal schemes, career and development plans and children’s

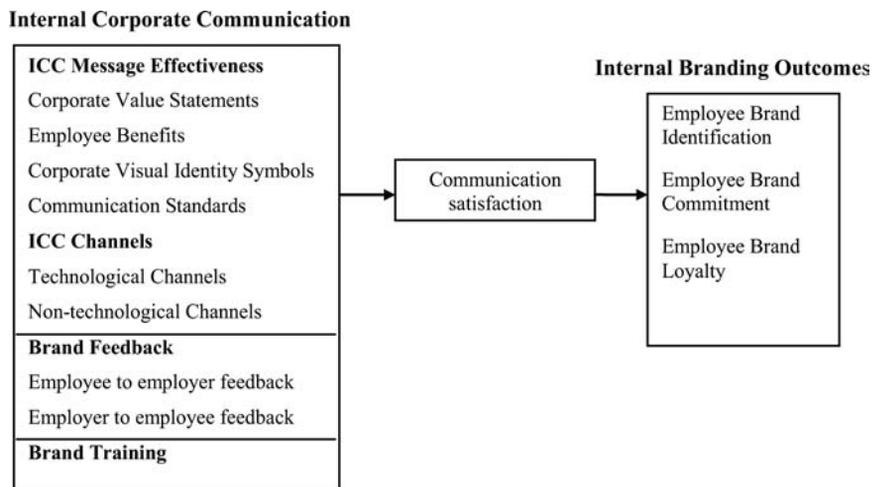


Figure 1.
Model of ICC and internal branding outcomes

Constructs/variables	Definitions and meanings	Source (adapted from the study(s) of)
<i>ICC message effectiveness</i>	Message is the tangible formulation of an idea sent by the sender (employer) to the receiver (employee). The message consists of the verbal (oral or written) and non-verbal symbols that have been developed to convey meaning to the receiver. ICC message effectiveness implies to the state when the intended messages of the employer and the interpreted meanings of employees are identical	Herstein <i>et al.</i> (2008)
Value statements (message effectiveness)	The centre values (relational and ideological psychological contract), which function as the basis for undertaking any kind of communication envisaged by an organization. It is also referred as corporate philosophy comprising of mission, vision and core values	Genest (2005); Van Reil (1995)
Corporate visual identity symbols (message effectiveness)	A tangible asset of organization comprising of all the symbols and graphical elements that express the essence of an organization (logos, uniform, infrastructure, tag lines)	Van de Bosch <i>et al.</i> (2005)
Employee benefit messages (message effectiveness)	Tangible as intangible values that an organization has to offer to its employees in order to differentiate itself from its competitors and build a mutually beneficial relationship (rewards, career growth and development programs, employee family communication and business objectives)	Backhaus and Tikko (2004); Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Communication standards (message effectiveness)	Attributes of effective communication messages like clarity, authenticity, truthful, consistent, relevant, distinctive and timely	Grunig <i>et al.</i> (1995); Bishop (2006)
Brand training (message effectiveness)	A process to equip employees to understand corporate brand values and develop an employee behavior and attitude to improve performance in the market environment	Aurand <i>et al.</i> (2005); Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009)
<i>ICC channel efficiency</i>	Carrier of the messages that minimize the resources expanded to deliver messages effectively	Mestre <i>et al.</i> , 2000

*(continued)***Table III.**
Definitions and meanings
of variables and
constructs

Constructs/variables	Definitions and meanings	Source (adapted from the study(s) of)
Technological channels (channel efficiency)	ICC Channels reliant on technology like internet, intranet, audio-visual media, new media like blogs, chat, mobile, SNS	Ghami <i>et al.</i> (2007)
Non-technological channels (channel efficiency)	ICC channels that are not supported by technology like face to face conversations, meetings, tours	Grunig <i>et al.</i> (1995)
<i>Brand feedback collection and response</i>	Two way communication between organization and its stakeholders to prepare and improve mutually beneficial plans for internal and external branding	Grunig <i>et al.</i> (1995); Bishop (2006)
Employee to employer feedback	Relevant and consistent exchange of ideas and beliefs on corporate brand from employees to employer	Bishop (2006); Welch and Jackson (2007)
Employer to employee	Relevant and consistent response of management on the corporate brand feedback received from employees	Hendrix (2001)
<i>Communication satisfaction</i>	The satisfaction with the various aspects of communication practices prevailing in an organization	Downs and Hazen (1977)
Internal branding	Internal branding represents a firm's internal communication efforts to promote both within the firm, a clear view of what makes it different and desirable as an employer	Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Employee brand identification (internal branding outcome)	An employee's sense of belonging to the organization and a perception of being aligned to the organization's brand values and promises	Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009); Welch and Jackson (2007)
Employee brand commitment (internal branding outcome)	The extent of psychological attachment of employees to the brand, which influences their willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching the brand goals	Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Employee brand loyalty (internal branding outcome)	An employee's willingness to remain with the current organization	Punjaisri <i>et al.</i> (2009)

Table III.

scholarships). A strong theme to emerge from the interviews was the growing need for setting up communication standards for the company and a demand for a more consistent communication program. A Chief Manager, CC said:

What we've tried to do is design all our communication material in a new style and a look, so that it is offered up in a simple but attractive manner. We have put in a lot of efforts to understand the communication needs of our staff. We realized that we have to be honest,

clear, timely and relevant in our messages. Our employees often feel that we don't communicate consistently. We therefore are adopting certain communication standards and improvising these for effective information dissemination.

When employees other than CC and HR departments were asked about their overall impression of corporate messages within the company, majority of them responded positively. For example, the organization had formulated a new "Vision" statement, which had been extensively communicated to the employees from junior staff to the senior management. Elaborating the content of brand messages, a senior manager explained:

The Vision, mission and value statements of the company are communicated to the employee right from the day of her induction. ICC brand messages like "People in the service of the nation", "Our people – India's pride, Celebrating 50 golden years in energizing the nation", "It is YOU that has made us the BEST", are regularly communicated to the employees in all the units.

It was interesting to find that many respondents felt that corporate visual identity (CVI) symbols such as logo and photographs of various buildings of the organization at different geographic locations and use of corporate color schemes on publications and web site help to identify with the values of the organization. One of the employees narrated:

Work pressure sometimes does not permit us to go through the written messages, but CVI symbols act as reminders of corporate values and our responsibility towards them.

As we kept asking more questions on the quality of ICC messages, two distinct categories of opinion emerged from the interview data. While the majority of respondents indicated that the quality of ICC messages was generally effective, there was a small group of individuals (among middle management) who felt that significant scope for improvement remained. These respondents felt that ICC messages should concentrate more on providing strategic information about the company like that on new corporate initiatives taken to deal with competitors and on-going research and innovation in the development of new products.

Indeed, the quality of ICC was generally perceived to be satisfactory, yet it was felt that some more introspection and effort would position brand messages more strongly among the PSU employees.

ICC channels

The number of technological communication tools at PSU is impressive for its comprehensiveness and specificity. Monthly print publication of the organization is supplemented with electronic bulletin boards and email updates. Moreover, communication channels are tailored to the specific communication needs of the employees who belong to different educational and economic backgrounds. A bi-weekly publication is produced in English as well as Hindi (Indian national language). It carries corporate news, employee's children's achievements, rules and regulations, safety updates and some entertainment news about Indian festivals and movies.

Nonetheless, what makes PSU stand out is the number of non-technological communication channels. Meetings and road shows enable staff employees to interact

with the managers directly and express their opinion on corporate brand values. A senior Manager, HR asserted:

We, in collaboration with CC and branding teams, conduct workshops to help assimilation of the corporate brand values. Posters, screensavers, danglers, wallpapers of same are visible across the company. A "Value Book" celebrating the 50 glorious years of the company has also been published to cascade the same. From time-to-time, we *also run quizzes and articles on similar lines in our in-house journal.

However, some of the junior staff employees felt that a lot more could be done in exploring external media. One of the respondents felt:

Employees will take more pride in the company that share a premium reputation among external audience. External corporate communication tools like print and TV advertisements, news coverage, one to one interviews, special feature stories in business newspapers and electronic media are better ways to get recognition externally as well as internally.

Overall, the channel of ICC, was felt to be adequately addressed by the PSU, yet there is a need to look at external technological channels for better corporate brand visibility.

Brand feedback

Comments from interviewees indicated that feedback from the managers about the changes happening in the company was beneficial for the organization. However, positive remarks were minimal when asked whether organization had a structured feedback mechanism. Much of the feeling gyrated around the need for more two-way communication between the management and employees. One of the respondents believed:

Company can prevent wastage of time and money by sharing employee feedback on a regular basis. It is highly effective means by which employees can be told about areas where they need to improve. It is also useful for the management to know what employees think about the corporate brand values and improvise the changes in the ICC messages accordingly.

Respondents felt that they informed the management about their views on work culture and business objectives but rarely any action had been taken on their inputs. A middle management employee said:

Feedback is generally taken at the time of appraisal or training program. Employees are not motivated to comment on corporate brand at regular basis.

Indeed employee feedback felt to be a significant issue, as yet not satisfactorily addressed by the PSU.

Brand training

Generally respondents felt that the PSU had successfully communicated to them a sense of overall direction in which the organization was moving. Most were able to cite their respective organization's mission and vision statements and knew what their organization was striving to achieve in the medium to long term. A few reservations were, however, expressed about the inefficiency of ICC tools in explaining the implementation of corporate values in performing daily activities.

Indeed, it is difficult, for example, in the case of print publications, to provide specific details about how a given goal is to be achieved by a particular department

when each publication has a much wider generic readership. Any attempt to provide additional information without a prior improvement in the quality of targeting would thus serve merely to increase the volume of communication generated. Thus, CC department (in consultation with specific department heads) at the PSU thought of giving tailored communication training to the employees of different departments at all levels. A staff employee explained:

CC and HR teams train the employees not only on functional skills but also on “soft skills such as intercultural communication, personal development and interpersonal communication which included topic of body language, interpretation of gestures and postures, usage of corporate communication tools for self expression”.

These training programs were regularly conducted for the entire term of employment and continually reinforced the alignment of personal with corporate values through the communication and sharing of core value affirming experiences. Most of the senior managers of the organization felt that identification with the brand values was not a one-time process; it was an ongoing process that required adequate management attention. Thus, brand communication training at PSU included a session that was based on the sharing of experiences and circumstances, actually encountered by other senior employees in the past. This sharing intensified the learning and bonding between employees belonging to different employee segments as they came to a common understanding of PSU values and their enactment in a wide variety of circumstances.

Communication satisfaction as a mediating variable

Carriere and Bourque (2009) have defined communication satisfaction as “an employee’s affective appraisal of the organization’s communication practices”. In their empirical study they have established that communication satisfaction fully mediates when job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment were regressed against both internal communication practices and communication satisfaction. Our study also revealed similar observations. HR managers of Indian PSU also reiterated that employee’s satisfaction with the brand communication played crucial role in their identification with the core values.

Internal communication was perceived as influencing levels of employee’s communication satisfaction in a variety of different ways. The perceived closeness of the relationship and trust between the seniors and co-workers and the clarity with which employees understood both their requirements and those of the PSU as a whole were a key theme to emerge from this section of the interviews. Importantly, however, levels of personal satisfaction with their role within the organization appeared to be related to the extent to which the PSU recognized employee’s performance and rewarded them accordingly. Expressing views on the role of ICC in the PSU, a junior officer said:

I am satisfied with internal communication practices in my organization. It helps me to identify with the organizational values and make me feel proud of it. We are highly aware about our duties and responsibilities towards our organization and nation on the whole, which is as it should be.

However, while the majority of employees indicated that the quality of ICC was generally good there was a small group of employees who felt that significant scope of improvement remained. An employee opined:

I know what my company expects me to do but I hardly get any information on the needs and expectations of our customers.

While those interviewed did not appear to regard this attitude as resulting from the quality of internal communication or the lack thereof, an additional role is clearly suggested. The ICC department should make considerable improvements in conveying customer perspectives to the employees for better alignment of external and internal brand. It was highlighted in the interviews that the reports of customer satisfaction surveys should be analyzed well and communicated to the employees consistently through ICC channels.

Internal branding outcomes

It was apparent from the analysis that four key dimensions of ICC (see Figure 1) namely:

- (1) brand message effectiveness in terms of value statements, identity symbols, employee benefits and communication standards;
- (2) technological and non-technological channel's efficiency;
- (3) brand feedback from employees to employer and employer to employees; and
- (4) brand communication training resulted into communication satisfaction and internal branding outcomes (employee brand identification, brand loyalty and brand commitment).

Each of these categories of outcomes will be discussed next.

Employee brand identification

Internal branding literature shows that internal communication can help to engender employees' brand identification, reflecting their sense of "oneness" because it is about communicating to employees (Bergstrom *et al.*, 2002; Cheney, 1983) the brand values, which are unique to a specific brand or company making it differentiated from the others (De Chernatony, 2001).

When we tried to examine this aspect we found that the PSU employees were generally enthusiastic about the internal communication practices and the impact these initiatives had made on the awareness of employees about corporate brand values and promises. A junior staff employee professed:

There's no doubt that ICC has helped me to identify with my organizational values, goals and objectives. Indeed, the quality of my work has improved after I understood how I am expected to behave in the organization.

ICC was perceived as influencing level of employee identification with the organization in a variety of different ways. The clarity with which the employees understood the corporate values and the pride they took in their employment were some of the main ideas that appeared from the interview discussions. A middle management employee described:

I am proud to tell others that I am part of the PSU and view the success of the corporate brand as my own success.

Employee brand commitment

The study from the internal communications literature concurs that an effective internal communications cause employee commitment and loyalty (Asif and Sargeant, 2000; Steers, 1977). Supporting this observation, the majority of those interviewed expressed a high degree of commitment to their employer. Many respondents from middle management group felt that they would like to retire from the same company as they could relate to the vision and business objectives of the company. Respondents felt that company's new vision clearly communicated the noble attitude of the organization and helped employees to work not just for personal growth but also towards national development.

ICC efforts of PSU seemed to keep employees updated, engaged and motivated, to put in their best. It also influenced the way a family of an employee perceived the organization. A junior officer stated:

My wife and kids also have strong ties with the organization. Family get-togethers, picnics, festival celebrations make them feel glad to be part of the PSU family.

It was believed that information on various achievements of the organization promoted employees pride in the organization. The ability to create and maintain employee commitment in view of the changing environment was perceived as an important aspect of ICC and the commonly expressed view was that it should form the core of the PSU's future branding endeavours.

Employee brand loyalty

The perception of loyalty as an outcome of ICC appeared from the interviews as a separate, although related, issue to commitment. Loyalty is generally perceived in terms of length of service of an employee in the organization (Punjaisri *et al.*, 2009). Loyal employees exhibit tendencies to engage in a long-term relationship with their employer and show willingness to remain with the current company. In spite of the general perception of senior managers that the encouragement of loyalty was no longer an issue for ICC, there was some recognition that this was not true of the employees working within all the departments of the PSU. At the junior staff level, the number of job reductions taking place had meant that the loyalty of employees at this level was not considered to be important. A middle manager expressed:

I think we've lost too many good people recently. These people were strategically important and could have helped us in many ways.

General perception of the employees who were considered for the study was that the focus of the PSU's internal branding was primarily on building commitment and not loyalty. This was particularly difficult issue for communicators to address, since it is clearly desirable for any organization to create brand loyalty, to ensure that employees imperative to the success of organization were retained.

In considering the core outcomes of ICC, it is apparent that the development of aspects of communication satisfaction resulting in internal brand identification, commitment and loyalty are believed as primary outcomes of ICC within the PSU. The extent to which these outcomes might be achieved was analyzed as a function of the way in which the organization built and executed its communication and branding strategy.

6. Discussion

In this article we have developed, through grounded theory, a model depicting the role of ICC in achieving internal branding outcomes as it is currently evident in Indian PSU. A comparison of the operation of the model with the earlier literature suggests that there may be a number of prospects for PSU to improve the quality of its ICC practices for better branding outcomes. It seems clear that the organization studied is particularly focused on the achievement of three internal branding outcomes through ICC. In spite of the similarities to those suggested by the literature, it is interesting to note that the capacity of internal communication to relate employee's identification, commitment and loyalty with better delivery of brand promise to customers (De Chernatony and Segal-Horn, 2003), was not a factor that emerged from the interviews. Indeed there was some evidence that this might be a pertinent goal for such a communication to address in the future. Although many employees felt that senior management was supportive, there was a general feeling that top management contribution towards building-brand needed improvement. Indeed, the literature suggests feedback is most important aspect of informal communication, which may be best suited to achieve strategic goals, but it remains poorly developed in the studied organization. Given the observations from the literature, some mechanism should be found to establish norms, which would ensure two-way symmetrical process of communication (Grunig *et al.*, 1995). On a related theme, there was also evidence from the data that suggested ICC was still largely viewed as an opportunity to share information:

ICC and internal branding linkages have important implications for practice. The innovation in brand messages, technology and escalating use of interactive social media have become so much an integral part of modern day organizations that one wonders whether much consideration has been given to measure the effectiveness of these channels in achieving communication satisfaction and shaping employer brand attitudes (Teeni, 2001). Simply put, does communication satisfaction and internal branding matter to practice? However, this study has found that when employees are satisfied with the communication practices of the organization, they're motivated to work harder and show high level of brand commitment and loyalty.

Another implication of the study is that human resources (HR) and ICC functions should be integrated in order to disseminate corporate brand information effectively. For instance, brand communication training is perceived as a dimension of ICC in the current study. This helps the organizations to understand the degree to which brand communication training, which is typically associated with HR, can be utilized to influence employee's attitude towards the corporate brand.

The model presented in this paper identifies ICC dimensions that can help in creating a strong sense of employee brand identification, brand loyalty and brand commitment among the employees of PSU. It is evident that the biggest hurdle in building "internal brand" is the communication process (Argenti, 2007; Carriere and Bourque, 2009; Davis, 2000; Herstein *et al.*, 2008; Vallaster and Chernatony, 2006). Our analysis of Indian PSU shows that if ICC dimensions are well managed, it can ensure assimilation of company's brand values by internal stakeholders. The success of this undertaking on the part of Indian PSU can serve as a model for other companies in their efforts to build a strong corporate brand among their employees.

Theoretically, this model holds relevance as it has introduced internal branding as a function of CC/ICC, which has been ignored by researchers in their proposed models of PR and CC (Van Reil, 1995; Welch and Jackson, 2007). However, the latest empirical study of Punjaisri *et al.* (2009) has linked few dimensions of ICC (mainly training, orientation, briefing and meetings) with internal branding outcomes, it does not give a holistic overview of the role of ICC messages, channels, feedback and training (specific to brand communication) in achieving internal branding objectives. Similarly, communication satisfaction has not been studied with respect to internal branding outcomes, to the best of our knowledge. Moreover, the significant amount of studies that are available (Hargie and Dickson, 2007; Mazzei, 2010; Power and Rienstra, 1999; Vuuren *et al.*, 2007; Welch and Jackson, 2007) have examined internal communication conceptually or primarily in the context of private organizations. Hardly any attempt has been made to study ICC and internal branding in the context of PSU or government organizations. At the highest level, the model proposed in this study would enable a cross-organizational comparison of relative degree and nature of ICC practices across organizations to understand whether it has influenced employee's attitudes towards meeting corporate brand promises. Hence, one could potentially compare ICC practices of a private organization with public organization, to examine if nature of ICC practices and higher levels of communication satisfaction have given them an added competitive advantage.

7. Research limitations and scope for future research

In the endeavour to understand two phenomena – “internal corporate communication” and “internal branding” – the scope of interviews may have been too broad and unable to investigate in great depth. Given the qualitative nature of the case study method, only limited generalizations can be made, as the purpose of case study research is to add to theory-building, rather than to generalize to a population. Judgemental sampling was used to select the studied organization. Quota sampling was used to determine which respondents in each organization are to be interviewed (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). These limitations may impact on the validity and reliability of the study.

There is a clear need for further empirical research. Such research could help quantify the nature of the relationships between the variables suggested and establish the extent to which the model might be generalized to other organizations. Moreover, future studies can also attempt to take views of customers to understand the effectiveness of ICC on employee brand performance (Punjaisri *et al.*, 2009). This can also help in recognizing whether customer perceptions are aligned with employees with respect to corporate brand performance.

It is obvious that there is a significant amount of work yet to be done to understand ICC better. It is anticipated that the framework and the ideas presented here will serve as a useful starting point for several related discussions and future research.

References

- Ahmed, P.K., Rafiq, M. and Saad, N.M. (2002), “Internal marketing, organizational competencies and business performance”, *Proceedings of the American Marketing Association Conference*, Vol. 13, pp. 500-1.
- Argenti, P.A. (1996), “Corporate communication as a discipline”, *Management Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 73-97.

- Argenti, P.A. (2007), *Strategic Corporate Communication*, Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi.
- Ashforth, B.E. and Mael, F. (1989), "Social identity theory and the organization", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 20-39.
- Asif, S. and Sargeant, A. (2000), "Modelling internal communications in the financial services sector", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 34 Nos 3/4, pp. 299-317.
- Aurand, T.W., Gorchels, L. and Bishop, T.R. (2005), "Human resource management's role in internal branding: an opportunity for cross functional brand message synergy", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 163-9.
- Backhaus, K. and Tikoo, S. (2004), "Conceptualizing and researching employer branding", *Career Development International*, Vol. 9 No. 5, pp. 501-17.
- Balmer, J.M.T. (2001), "Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate marketing - seeing through the fog", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 1-38.
- Bambacas, M. and Patrickson, M. (2008), "Interpersonal communication skills that enhance organizational commitment", *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 51-72.
- Bennis, W. (1997), "Becoming a leader of leaders", in Gibson, R. (Ed.), *Rethinking the Future*, Nicholas Brealy Publishing, London.
- Bergstrom, A., Blumenthal, D. and Crothers, S. (2002), "Why internal branding matters: the case of Saab", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 133-42.
- Brunetto, Y. and Wharton, R.F. (2004), "Does talk effect your decision to walk", *Management Decision*, Vol. 42 No. 3, pp. 579-600.
- Boone, M. (2000), "The importance of internal branding", *Sales and Marketing Management*, No. 9, pp. 36-8.
- Burmam, C. and Zeplin, S. (2005), "Building brand commitment: a behavioral approach to internal brand building", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 279-300.
- Camilleri, C.S. (2008), "Sharing Yalumba: communicating Yalumba's commitment to sustainable winemaking", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 18-41.
- Carriere, J. and Bourque, C. (2009), "The effects of organizational communication on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a land ambulance service and the mediating role of communication satisfaction", *Career Development International*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 29-49.
- Cheney, G. (1983), "The rhetoric of identification and the study of organizational communication", *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol. 69, pp. 143-58.
- Chong, M. (2007), "The role of internal communication and training in infusing corporate values and delivering brand promise: Singapore Airlines' experience", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 201-12.
- Clampitt, P.G. and Downs, C.W. (1993), "Employee perceptions of the relationship between communication and productivity: a field study", *Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 5-28.
- Crino, M.D. and White, M.C. (1981), "Satisfaction in communication: an examination of the Downs-Hazen measure", *Psychological Reports*, Vol. 49, pp. 831-8.
- Davis, S.M. (2000), *Brand Asset Management: Driving Profitable Growth through Your Brands*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

-
- De Chernatony, L. (2001), *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- De Chernatony, L. (2002), "Would a brand smell any sweeter by a corporate name?", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 114-32.
- De Chernatony, L. and Segal-Horn, S. (2003), "The criteria for successful services brands", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 37 No. 7, pp. 1095-2118.
- Dortok, A. (2006), "A managerial look at the interaction between internal communication and corporate reputation", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 8 No. 4, pp. 322-38.
- Drake, S.M., Gulman, M.J. and Roberts, S.M. (2005), *Light Their Fire*, Dearborn, Chicago, IL.
- Fawkes, J. and Gregory, A. (2000), "Applying communication theories to internet", *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 109-24.
- Forman, J. and Argenti, P.A. (2005), "How corporate communication influences strategy implementation, reputation and the corporate brand: an exploratory qualitative study", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 245-64.
- Foy, N. (1994), *Empowering People at Work*, Gower, Aldershot.
- Genest, C.M. (2005), "Cultures, organizations and philanthropy", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 10, pp. 315-27.
- Ghami, M.A.S., Roy, H.M. and Ahmed, U.Z. (2007), "How employees learn about corporate strategy?", *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 14, pp. 273-85.
- Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Aldine, Chicago, IL.
- Grof, A. (2001), "Communication in the creation of corporate values", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 193-8.
- Grunig, J.E., Grunig, L.A., Sriramesh, K., Huang, Y. and Lyra, A. (1995), "Models of public relations in an international setting", *Journal of Public Relations Research*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 163-86.
- Gummesson, E. (1991), "Marketing orientation revisited: the crucial role of the part-time marketer", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 60-75.
- Hargie, O. and Dickson, D. (2007), "Are important corporate policies understood by employees? A tracking study of organizational information flow", *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 11, pp. 9-28.
- Hawabhay, B., Abratt, R. and Peters, M. (2009), "The role of corporate communications in developing a corporate brand image and reputation in Mauritius", *Corporate Reputation Review*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 3-20.
- Heider, F. (1958), *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*, Wiley, New York, NY.
- Hendrix, J. (2001), *Public Relations Cases*, 5th ed., Wadsworth, Belmont, CA.
- Herstein, R.Y., Mitki, Y. and Jaffe, E.D. (2008), "Communicating a new corporate image during privatization: the case of El Al airlines", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 380-93.
- Hunt, O., Tourish, D. and Hargie, W. (2000), "The communication experiences of education managers: identifying strengths, weaknesses and critical incidents", *The International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 120-9.
- Kapoor, V. (2010), "Employer branding - a study of its relevance in India", *The IUP Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 7 No. 1, pp. 51-74.
- Katz, D. and Kahn, R.L. (1978), *The Social Psychology of Organisations*, Wiley, New York, NY.

- Koul, S. (2009), "Communication structure of the public sector in India: an empirical analysis", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 320-32.
- Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. (2001), *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 7th ed., Merrill Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Mahnert, K.F. and Torres, A.M. (2007), "The brand inside: the factors of failure and success in internal branding", *Irish Marketing Review*, Vol. 19 Nos 1-2, pp. 54-63.
- Mazzei, A. (2010), "Promoting active communication behaviours through internal communication", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 221-34.
- Mestre, M., Stainern, A. and Strom, L.B. (2000), "Visual communication – the Japanese experience", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 10, pp. 41-57.
- Meyer, J., Paunonen, S., Gellatly, I., Goffin, R. and Jackson, D. (1989), "Organisational commitment and job performance: it's the nature of the commitment that counts", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74, pp. 152-6.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, M.A. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA.
- Mitchell, C. (2002), "Selling the brand inside", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 80 No. 1, pp. 99-105.
- Papasolomou, I. and Vrontis, D. (2006), "Using internal marketing to ignite the corporate brand: the case of the UK retail bank industry", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 14 Nos 1/2, pp. 177-95.
- Pettit, J.D., Goris, R. and Vaught, B. (1997), "An examination of organizational communication as a moderator of the relationship between job performance and job satisfaction", *Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 34 No. 1, pp. 81-98.
- Pincus, J.D. (1986), "Communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, and job performance", *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 395-419.
- Postmes, T., Tanis, M. and de Wit, B. (2001), "Communication and commitment in organisations: a social identity approach", *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 207-26.
- Power, M. and Rienstra, B. (1999), "Internal communication in new corporate conglomerates", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 12, pp. 501-15.
- Punjaisri, K. and Wilson, A. (2007), "The role of internal branding in the delivery of employee brand promise", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 57-70.
- Punjaisri, K., Heiner, E. and Wilson, A. (2009), "Internal branding: an enabler of employees' brand-supporting behaviors", *Journal of Service Management*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 209-22.
- Shanafelt, T. (2003), "The well-being of physicians", *The American Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 114 No. 6, pp. 513-9.
- Smidts, A., Pruyn, A. and Van Riel, C. (2001), "The impact of employee communication and perceived external prestige on organizational identification", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 49 No. 5, pp. 1051-62.
- Snipes, R.L. (1996), "A test of the effects of job satisfaction and self-efficacy on service quality and customer satisfaction: a causal model", dissertation, Auburn University, Auburn, AL.
- Steers, R. (1977), "Antecedents and outcomes of organisational commitment", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 46-56.

-
- Tansuhaj, T., Randall, D. and McCulloch, J. (1991), "Applying the internal marketing concept within large organizations: as applied to a credit union", *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, Vol. 6 No. 2, pp. 193-203.
- Taylor, C.B. (1997), "Communication satisfaction: its role in church membership satisfaction and involvement among southern Baptist churches", *Southern Communication Journal*, Vol. 62 No. 4, pp. 293-305.
- Teeni, D. (2001), "A cognitive-affective model of organizational communication for designing IT", *MIS Quarterly*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 251-312.
- Thomson, K. and Hecker, L.A. (2000), "The business value of buy-in", in Varey, R.J. and Lewis, B.R. (Eds), *Internal Marketing: Directions for Management*, Routledge, London.
- Thomson, K., de Chernatony, L., Arganbright, L. and Khan, S. (1999), "The buy-in benchmark: how staff understanding and commitment impact brand and business performance", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 8 No. 15, pp. 819-35.
- Trombetta, J.J. and Rogers, D.P. (1988), "Communication climate, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment", *Management Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 1 No. 4, pp. 494-514.
- Tukiainen, T. (2001), "An agenda model of organizational communication", *Corporate Communication: An International Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 47-52.
- Vallaster, C. and Chernatony, L.D. (2006), "Internal brand building and structuration: the role of leadership", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 40 No. 7, pp. 41-57.
- Van de Bosch, A.L.M., Jong, M.D.T. and Elving, J.L.W. (2005), "How corporate visual identity supports reputation", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 108-16.
- Van Reil, C.B.M. (1995), *Principles of Corporate Communication*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Vuuren, M., de Jong, M., Meno, D.T. and Erwin, S.R. (2007), "Direct and indirect effects of supervisor communication on organizational commitment", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 12, pp. 116-28.
- Weick, K.E. (1987), "Theorizing about organizational communication", in Jablin, F.M., Putnam, L.L., Roberts, K.H. and Porter, L.W. (Eds), *Handbook of Organizational Communication*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.
- Welch, M. and Jackson, P.R. (2007), "Rethinking internal communication: a stakeholder approach", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 177-98.
- Woodruffe, H. (1995), *Services Marketing: Integrating Customer Focus across the Firm*, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill, Singapore.

Further reading

- Cheney, G. and Christensen, L. (2001), "Organizational identity: linkages between internal and external communication", in Jablin, F.M. and Putnam, L.L. (Eds), *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Clutterbuck, D. (2005), "Communication and psychological contract", *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 9, pp. 359-64.
- Cronin, J. and Taylor, S. (1992), "Measuring service quality: a re-examination and extension", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56, pp. 55-68.

- Dolphin, R.A. (2005), "Internal communication: today's strategic imperative", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 11, pp. 171-90.
- Elving, W. and Wim, J.L. (2005), "The role of communication in organizational change", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 10, pp. 129-38.
- Hargie, O. and Tourish, D. (2000), *Handbook of Communication Audits for Organizations*, Routledge, London.
- Melewar, T.C. and Sibell, A. (2005), "The role of corporate identity in the higher education sector: a case study", *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 12, pp. 298-310.
- Oliver, S. (1997), *Corporate Communication: Principles, Techniques and Strategies*, Kogan Page, London.

About the authors

Neha Sharma is currently pursuing a PhD in corporate communications from IIT Madras, India. She started her career as a journalist with an Indian national newspaper. Thereafter, she worked for an international PR and CC agency. From managing media coverage, handling crisis situations, to launching a communication strategy, she has been instrumental in building strong brand images of many global brands in India. Previously, she worked with Amity Business School, Noida, India, as Assistant Director and trained Post Graduate students for a successful communication profession. Neha Sharma is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: nhsharma2008@gmail.com

T.J. Kamalanabhan is a PhD in Organizational Psychology. He received his MPhil in Organizational Psychology and Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management. He has around 20 years of experience in academics and consultancy projects. He obtained a Fulbright Fellowship for Research and Teaching at the Department of International Business, Washington State University, Pullman, USA in 2002 and was awarded a DAAD Fellowship to visit Germany under the German Academic Exchange Program to research in Entrepreneurship at the Department of Management, University of West Saxony, Zwickau, Germany in 1998. He is a regular Visiting Faculty at the Department of Management and Law, Multimedia University, Melaka, Malaysia, University College of Technology and Management Malaysia, (KUTPM) Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia Faculty of Management, Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Malaysia, University College of Technology and Management Malaysia, (KUTPM) Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia and a Visiting Research Fellow at KNU University, Daegu, South Korea.