Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

FACTORS AFFECTING PROJECT COMMUNICATION IN A SELECTED RETAIL HEAD OFFICE IN CAPE TOWN

by

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DECLARATION

I, Zuko Cornelius Ngoma, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my unaided work and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

10 September 2024

ABSTRACT

Effective interpersonal communication skills are essential in project management, particularly within industries where performance heavily depends on these abilities. This research investigates project communication challenges, with a specific focus on internal communication issues within a retail head office in the Western Cape, South Africa. It also suggests ways to improve communication to achieve better project outcomes. Here, communication is defined as the transfer of ideas, thoughts, and understanding, where feedback is a critical component. Poor internal communication, often resulting from siloed operations, can lead to confusion, flawed decision-making, and financial losses. This study underscores the need for an integrated communication system to mitigate these issues.

To examine these challenges, the research gathered both primary and secondary data. Employees involved in project management activities served as survey respondents, providing insights into communication barriers, tools, feedback mechanisms, and issues with unclear information. The study utilized a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative research—analysing literature on project communication challenges in South Africa's retail market—and quantitative research, in the form of a self-administered questionnaire based on the Likert scale.

The study's findings revealed that unprofessionalism, lack of feedback, absence of communication plans, and ambiguous instructions negatively impact project communication within this retail head office. Feedback, it was noted, is essential throughout a project's life-cycle, especially in a retail environment. To improve communication, project managers are encouraged to hold regular meetings with team leaders, send monthly emails highlighting exceptional performance, and promptly address any queries that might hinder project success. Additionally, the research highlights the risks associated with delayed information dissemination, which can lead to financial losses. A recommended solution is to conduct stakeholder analyses to identify relevant stakeholders and distribute project reports regularly. Project coordinators should meet monthly with project managers to align on what information needs to be communicated to different stakeholders.

Effective communication is recognized as a foundation for establishing a shared culture, enhancing workplace satisfaction, and achieving organizational goals. The study proposes several strategies for effective communication within project-based environments. Firstly, it emphasizes the importance of clarity by ensuring that project-related information is concise and implementing standard communication protocols to prevent misunderstandings. To avoid information overload, it suggests prioritizing essential content using tools and technologies that streamline communication.

To foster a productive communication environment, the study recommends minimizing external noise, setting up dedicated channels for project discussions, and promoting cultural

sensitivity to reduce miscommunication due to cultural differences. Additionally, language training and support are suggested to overcome language barriers.

The study also underscores the role of technology in enhancing communication, advocating for the use of project management software and collaboration tools for efficient information sharing. Lastly, training in communication skills, such as active listening, empathy, and clarity, is emphasized to improve overall communication effectiveness. Collectively, these strategies contribute to a comprehensive communication framework that supports successful project outcomes.

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- My friends and colleagues, both in academia and at work, thank you for always believing in me and calling me "Professor" prematurely. I appreciate and love you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late father, Mr Dennis Mxolisi Ngoma, whose memory continues to inspire me. Xhamela, Nokwindla, Ncanchashe, malamba abheke endle, yena uhamba nesali ihashi uzolifumana phambili, gaba lekhula wathatha iiGusha zabamhlophe athi zizdulu zethafa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
BoKs	Bodies of Knowledge
CBD	Central Business District
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
R&D	Research and Development
SAP	Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing

CHAPTER 1
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Adu-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang (2014:208) define "communication" as “the creation or exchange of thoughts, ideas, emotions, and understanding between sender(s) and receiver(s)". However, without feedback, communication is useless between the sender and the receiver.

According to Bruce (2014:49), the recent uproars in South Africa can be attributed to the mismanagement of state resources, leaving the population frustrated by the recession and the country's junk status. Retail has become a popular sector for employment, with opportunities varying based on location and the type of operations offered by retail companies. Sewell et al. (2014:23) note that, particularly in the last twenty-seven years of democracy, South Africa has developed systems aimed at promoting inclusiveness among stakeholders, especially within the retail environment.

Sarhadi (2016:227) states that communication is the driving force behind managing projects to achieve high-quality deliverables. The days when social skills were considered unnecessary are long gone. Gamil and Rahman (2017:239) note that companies have lost millions due to ineffective communication and individualistic approaches that overlook the importance of teamwork, both internally and externally, in the South African context. As French (2013) highlighted, poor communication results in South African organisations losing billions of rands annually. The author also cites SIS International Research, which found that up to 70% of small to mid-sized businesses identify ineffective communication as their primary challenge. Similarly, a study by Towers Watson emphasised the impact of strong corporate communication, revealing that companies with highly effective communication had 47% higher total returns to shareholders between 2004 and 2009, compared to those with less effective communication strategies.

The study explores the impact of project communication, its contributing factors on operations, and its role in achieving effectiveness and efficiency within the organisation. It will also examine how projects are influenced by departments and communication in a selected retail head office in the Western Cape.

As Tonchia and Tonchia (2018:143) state, “Communication is largely important to the ultimate success of any project”. South Africa demonstrated this through the successful hosting of the 2010 Soccer World Cup, where numerous countries with diverse cultures and native

languages participated in the global event. Similarly, Samáková et al. (2018:23) assert that “communication is a basis of everything and is thus the key to effective project management”.

In retail, client satisfaction is the best key performance indicator for any company, and how it is delivered is crucial. Quality communication plays a major role in this process, as organisations must establish effective communication systems that promote positive relationships between staff and management.

As Mesly (2016:20) suggests in his study, the success of any project depends on how effectively four key elements align with the contextual factors influencing the project, known as the four P's:

- **Plan**: Involves planning and forecasting activities.
- **Process**: Refers to the overall methodology for all activities and project governance.
- **People**: Encompasses the dynamics of collaboration and communication among team members.
- **Power**: Includes lines of authority, decision-making roles, organisational structures, and implementation policies. As highlighted by the researcher, people and communication are vital for the success of a project.

Similarly, Schwalbe (2015:2) notes that employers seeking to recruit graduates prioritise top skills such as verbal communication and project management.

1.2 Problem statement

Communication plays a critical role in project management literature, with many authors arguing that effective communication is closely tied to the success or failure of retail projects (de Carvalho, 2013). Project communication has received considerable attention from scholars and authors, with bodies of knowledge (BoKs) establishing guidelines for communication in projects. The utilisation of BoKs, such as those outlined in the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) (Project Management Institute [PMI], 2022) or PRINCE2, has become more common in projects. Within these widely adopted project management frameworks, there is a particular emphasis on communication as a crucial aspect in the project context. However, certain studies suggest that project communication is often managed informally (McChesneya & Gallagher, 2004).

Communication barriers hinder successful communication by obstructing the transmission and comprehension of information through communication channels, leading to project failures. These barriers exist at both macro and micro levels. Macro-level barriers include complexities in information, language barriers, information overload, and malfunctioning information networks (Santalova et al., 2019).

Effective information transfer during communication leads to successful endeavours. However, the lack of accurate communication can result in siloed operations in the retail head office, which may lead to store closures and employee redundancies due to the organisation's failure to achieve its intended goals. Ineffective communication adversely affects the business, causing confusion between clients and the organisation. Departments that do not integrate with other business units complicate processes, thereby hindering the timely achievement of strategic goals for the retail head office (Bento et al., 2024: 3).

Cilliers and Greyvenstein (2012:3) define a silo as a barrier and highlight its impact on team identity:

> Silo is an invisible barrier, it is not physically present in the organization – it exists in the mind of employees who have a shared impression of reality. In their minds, they provide safety and comfort by keeping out those who are 'not like us'. In doing so, silos create barriers that fragment the organization. These barriers create an 'us' and 'them' mentality which makes boundary crossing difficult, and often causes major anxiety in employees who have to attend meetings with or visit other departments, sites or teams.

Inadequate communication is a significant risk factor in project management, impacting both the effectiveness and financial success of projects. According to the Project Management Institute (PMI), poor communication can have severe financial repercussions. Their 2013 report highlights that for every billion dollars invested in projects, $75 million is at risk due to communication-related issues. This statistic underscores the critical role of clear, consistent, and structured communication within project teams, as well as between stakeholders. Miscommunication or a lack of communication can lead to delays, misunderstandings, budget overruns, and even project failure, stressing the need for organizations to prioritize effective communication strategies to mitigate these risks. Communication competencies go beyond encoding, transmitting, and decoding information (PMI, 2022). While these skills are essential, they are insufficient for ensuring effective project communication. It is crucial for both the sender and receiver to share a mutual understanding, which does not always materialise. Various epistemological fields and aspects impact communication in retail projects, yet there is a lack of integration between different research streams (de Carvalho, 2013). This research explores the hindrances in the retail environment and proposes remedies for the organisation to achieve its intended objectives.

1.3 Significance of study

This research contributes to understanding the barriers affecting project communication in retail projects and proposes remedies for organisations to achieve their intended objectives. It

also highlights best practices for organisations for operating and managing projects effectively, with communication playing a crucial role. Developing retail project teams with a strong focus on project communication is essential, as project managers spend most of their time communicating, coordinating, and managing resources. This requires strong communication skills, adaptability to the ever-changing environment, and the use of appropriate communication channels and devices.

The positive contributions of the research include:
· An informed workforce and high morale among staff, fostering a highly productive and conducive environment in the retail industry.
· A unified workplace culture that promotes trust among employees and customers in the retail environment.

Effective communication reduces the risk of significant income loss and facilitates smoother work execution (Johnson, 2020:137). Strategies such as active listening, documenting conflicts, and using open body language can help resolve disputes between customers and internal employees. Clear communication around processes and targets, as well as alignment of team members with organisational policies and procedures, allows project teams to understand their roles within the organisation. A well-crafted project communication plan provides this clarity for both processes and procedures.

In the era of the 4IR, efficiently managing time to outshine competitors is crucial, and speed in communication becomes a competitive advantage when transferring information (Huang et al., 2016:10-11). Ultimately, this research aims to improve communication practices in the retail sector, resulting in better outcomes for organisations, employees, and customers alike.

1.4 Aim and objectives of the study

The primary **aim** of this study was to explore communication management within retail projects and to identify the obstacles that hinder effective communication.

The **objectives** of the study were to:

1) Identify challenges in project communication in a retail outlet/setup, and
2) Recommend ways of improving project communication.

1.5 Research questions

The main research question was:

> "What are the factors that impact project management in a retail project?"

Sub-questions:

1) What are the communication challenges affecting retail projects?
2) How can communication be improved in retail projects to enhance their success?

1.6 Theoretical framework

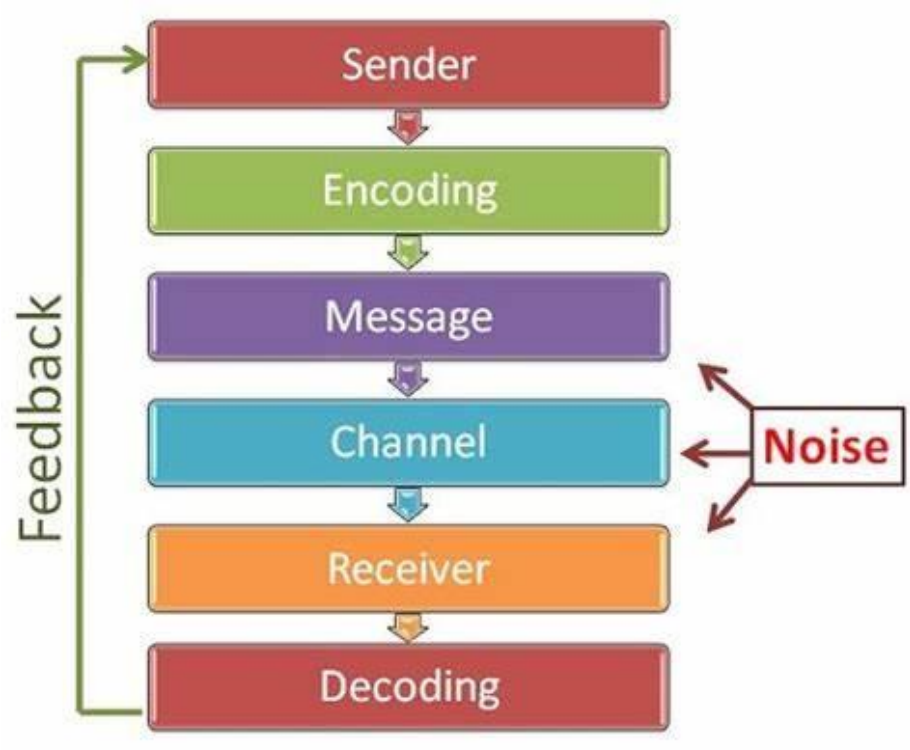

Figure 1.1: Theoretical framework (Tonchia & Tonchia, 2018:143)

The figure above breaks communication down into the following components:

- Encoding by the sender
- Transmitting through a medium
- Decoding by the receiver
- Acknowledge
- Feedback or response

The diagram above is a basic communication diagram. The communication components indicate that the sender conceives ideas or thoughts in their mind and encodes them by expressing those thoughts or ideas in words, either verbally or non-verbally. The message is

then transmitted to the receiver through a channel, such as email or a cell phone conversation. Ahmed (2018) states that once the message is received, the receiver has the responsibility to decode the message by understanding its content and providing feedback. He further explains barriers as obstacles to effective communication.

1.7 Conceptual framework of factors impacting project communication in a selected retail head office

The retail head office is the strategic hub of the organisation where strategic plans and decisions are made. Projects, communication, and the retail head office are interdependent. Projects include opening new stores, providing training, and developing information systems for staff members such as SAP BI systems or any method of capturing and reporting data and information.

Communication is crucial as it drives successful efforts. This soft skill is pivotal for transformation and development. These variables rely on each other; for top management to understand financial or sales reports, they require clear and accurate information. Once they interpret the information received from their stores, decisions can be made that directly impact projects aimed at achieving strategic goals. Therefore, factors that positively influence project communication become tools for effectiveness and efficiency.

The relationship between these variables is important for both internal and external stakeholders to understand the organisation. The head office has staff members responsible for recruitment and handling internal, confidential financial reports, as well as information technology employees who manage large-scale information. Leading will always require effective communication, as people do not follow what they do not understand.

Furthermore, departments that integrate and share information are directly affected by the procedures and systems in place. The reporting process includes upward, sideways, and downward channels. To lead a team or organisation, human resources need to know what is expected of them by top, middle, and lower management levels (Rodriguez, 2017).

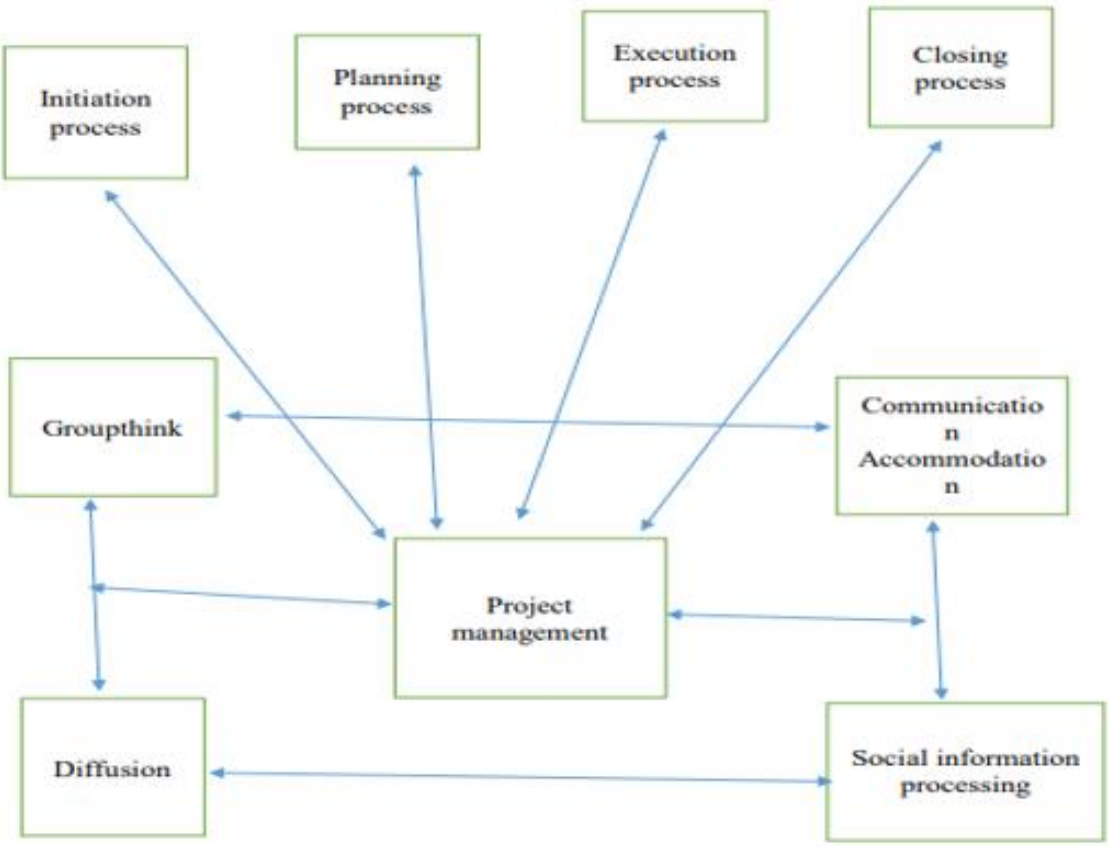

Figure 1.2: Conceptual framework

The conceptual model above highlights the importance of effective communication from the inception to the closure of a project (Rodriguez, 2017:49). A project begins with the creation of a project charter, which can only be signed once approved by the funder or executive management. The project manager communicates key details such as financial estimates, timelines, and resources needed to achieve the desired deliverables. During execution, regular progress updates are essential, along with corrective actions when the team deviates from instructions, and final sign-off when project goals are met. Effective communication is crucial at every stage to ensure project success.

1.8 Research design and analysis

Research Approach

This study adopted a quantitative approach, examining existing literature related to project communication in South Africa, the challenges faced by companies in the retail market, and the factors influencing project success, with communication as a key factor in achieving that success. The study reviewed a variety of sources, including academic journals, books, literature, and observations from similar academic work.

A self-administered questionnaire was used to investigate communication systems, interactions, and the factors that contribute to positive outcomes in project communication, utilising a Likert scale to gather data.

1.8.1 Research design

According to Nassaji (2015:129), “The goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics”. The descriptive research design was well-suited for this study as it made use of surveys and observations were pivotal. This approach describes a population or situation and also gives more space for further research on the topic. Additionally, it supports both qualitative and quantitative methods, enabling a thorough analysis of data and contributing to a deeper understanding of the research problem.

1.8.2 Demarcation

The study took place in Cape Town, where the head office is located. This office manages all stores in South Africa at both strategic and operational levels. Conducting the research in Cape Town was convenient due to reduced travel costs and the proximity between the head office and the researcher. Additionally, since the researcher’s university is in Cape Town and the researcher resides in the Western Cape, this provided flexibility for movement between the researcher and supervisor.

1.9 Ethical considerations

As Gajjar (2013:8) emphasises, “ethics focuses on the disciplines that study standards of conduct, such as philosophy, theology, law, psychology, or sociology”. Ethical considerations, therefore, played a pivotal role in ensuring that the research adhered to these standards of conduct, safeguarding the rights and privacy of all involved.

An approval letter was requested from the organisation, and participants were informed about the need to sign a consent form, establishing an agreement between the researcher and themselves. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to both the respondents and the organisation, with the organisation's name omitted from any publications. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology’s (CPUT’s) Ethics Committee via an Ethical Clearance Certificate. Additionally, participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

1.10 Limitations of the research

The survey was limited to head office support staff within various project departments. Employees who are not typically involved in project execution were not given questionnaires, potentially limiting the scope of perspectives included in the study.

1.11 Outline of chapters

Chapter 1Introduction - To introduce the research and background to the study, outlining objectives and research questions

Chapter 2 Literature Review - To review theories about project communication and its impact on the operations

Chapter 3 Research Methodology and Design

Chapter 4 Data Recording, Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 5 Summary of Findings, Conclusion, Recommendations

1.12 Conclusion

Chapter 1 served as an introductory chapter, outlining the research topic and covering the main elements of the research process. To build a comprehensive understanding of the challenges surrounding communication management within retail projects, Chapter 2 explores relevant literature, offering a review of existing research on communication practices and the obstacles that hinder effective communication in similar contexts.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a literature review on the classifications of communication, focusing on its various components. It examines the breakdown of these components and outlines the advantages and disadvantages of project communication, emphasising their impact on project success. Additionally, the chapter explores communication models and channels, as well as their roles in project management. It also provides definitions of a project and the retail industry, detailing what each entails.

2.2 Communication

Hernández et al. (2019) assert that communication "is a key factor to achieve good results in the developing of a project". A project progresses through various stages, from inception and initiation to the closure of the project lifecycle. Gido et al. (2018:10) argue that communication plays a consistent role throughout the project lifecycle. When a project is initiated, a charter must be drafted, and information must flow between stakeholders to reach an agreement. The next stage, planning, involves budgeting, resource allocation, and team building. To ensure success, the project manager must effectively communicate the objectives to the team.

Additionally, communication can only be considered successful if the receiver has understood the message and provided feedback to the sender. Kruger et al. (2013:320) define project communication as "the sequence of how information flows between all personnel involved in the project, such as stakeholders". Effective project communication begins with gathering all relevant information, breaking it down, and then sending the appropriate details to the intended receivers (stakeholders). Čulo and Skendrović (2010) emphasise that communication is the lifeblood of both projects and organisations. Just as the heart pumps oxygen throughout the body, a project manager circulates project information – moving it from external stakeholders to project documentation and then to internal stakeholders – ensuring alignment with the project plan. This cycle of communication and information flow is iterative, continuing throughout the project's life.

Gamil and Rahman (2017:240) highlight communication concerns raised by management and stress the importance of this soft skill in improving organisational performance. Companies are focused on directing their resources to enable employees to thrive during project execution, leading to successful outcomes. Bucăţa and Rizescu (2017:50) argue that a manager must possess strong communication skills to effectively influence staff interactions and foster an environment where employees are motivated to excel for both the company and themselves.

Moreover, Bourne (2011:19) points out that ensuring communication is clear and fully understood is the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver. Cervone (2014:76) notes that while various factors contribute to poor communication, simple remedies can include using accessible language (avoiding jargon) to ensure mutual understanding. Communication mediums – whether verbal, non-verbal, written, or visual – must be chosen appropriately to facilitate feedback from stakeholders. Tools like emails, public gatherings, and reports are essential for updating and instructing teams on task execution.

Furthermore, communication involves managing relationships with customers, internal employees, suppliers, and the general public. Project communication channels vary and should be tailored to the specific environment or business context. Employees should be encouraged to provide constructive criticism and make suggestions. This study will also explore different communication flows, including vertical, horizontal, diagonal, downward, and upward, as well as the formal and informal types of communication.

Involvement serves as a crucial tool for organisations to maintain effective communication with their employees, ensuring that clear, accessible information is provided to everyone. This sense of inclusion fosters a feeling among staff that they are truly integral to the organisation. Without involvement, communication becomes meaningless, as it requires the active participation of the entire workforce.

Grunig (2011:2) notes that organisations increasingly recognise employees as their most important competitive advantage, and effective communication helps harness their talents and energy. What was once seen as a soft skill – internal employee communication – now has a significant business impact, influencing customer service, product quality, innovation, and more.

Furthermore, as stated by Odin (2021:1), “Language is an integral part of human behaviour, it is the primary means of interaction between people”. *Communication* involves the exchange and transfer of information through speaking, writing, and various other mediums, such as telephones or emails. The nature of communication can vary across different settings, cultures, and work environments, where specific jargon is often used to convey messages effectively.

For instance, the term "communication" is derived from the Latin word *communicare*, which means "to make common" (Schemernt, 2017:173-187). However, communication is also referred to as "information", a term commonly used to convey meaning related to knowledge, technology, and skills. Communication, therefore, involves the exchange of well-thought-out

ideas or thoughts in a meaningful interaction between one or more people through the sharing of knowledge. Additionally, communication is understood as the process of transmitting information from one individual to another, with the ability to interpret and adapt to challenges (Zimmerman, 2013:10-45). Both authors emphasise the importance of information as a core component of communication, highlighting the research gap that shows communication is a crucial soft skill for project managers, vital for achieving efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, Tonchia and Tonchia (2018:143) assert that communication is the driving force behind a project's success, noting that project managers spend a significant amount of time communicating with internal and external stakeholders. The authors also mention that communication can take various forms, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual.

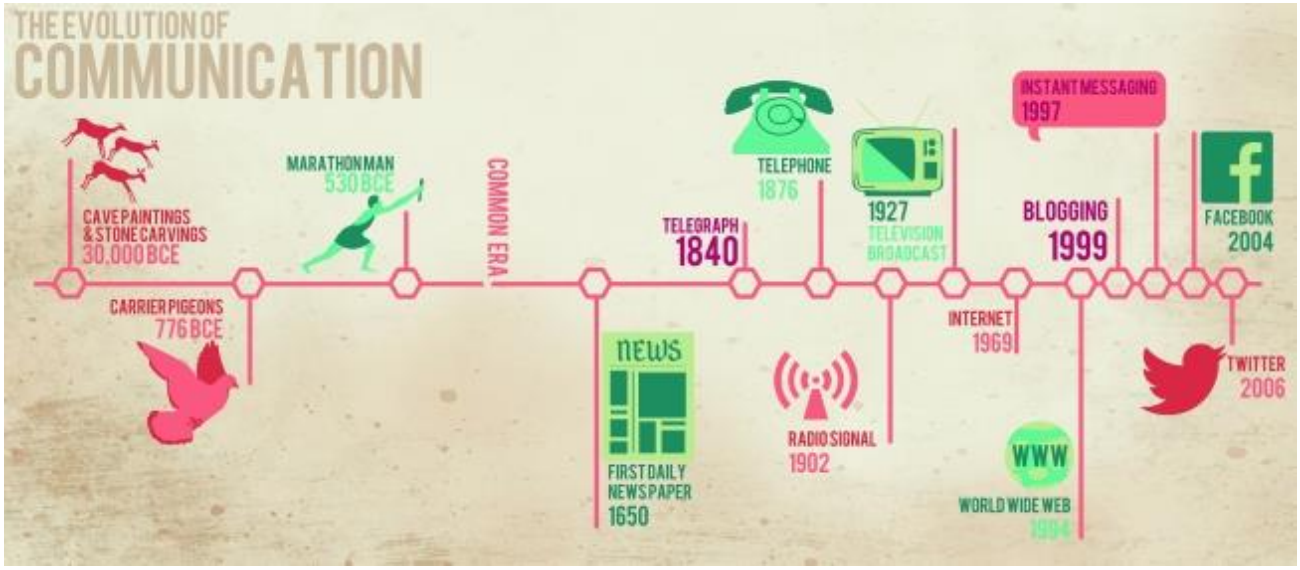

Figure 2.1: Timeline on the evolution of communication (Angeles et al., 2013)

Figure 2.1 provides a graphic illustration of the evolution of communication, from carving stones to the digital era. This progression aligns with the various industrial revolutions, highlighting how advancements in human development drive changes in communication. The illustration outlines the following stages of communication maturity:

- Oral era: Emergence of verbal communication.
- Written era: The influence of technology.
- The language of symbols.
- Digital era: Technology, the Internet, phones, etc.

The oral era is particularly fascinating, as it showcases the development of numerous native languages around the world. This is evident in infants, who imitate what they observe and

eventually form sentences with meaningful words. The second stage, the language of symbols, is an artistic form of communication. The discovery of drawings in caves validates the existence of early humans and their ability to tell stories through images. Communication, as a whole, transcends time, continuously evolving and developing. The written era, for instance, allowed for the preservation of information through archiving, serving as a reference or for educational purposes. Finally, the digital era brought rapid technological advancements, with the 4IR accelerating the maturation of communication systems, enabling greater efficiency and effectiveness (Swingley, 2008:308).

Table 2.1: Communication Highlights (Davis, 2020)

Common	Information	Knowledge
Technology	Method	Soft Skill
Effectiveness		

Here is an explanation of each term and how it could be detailed within the context of communication highlights:

Common: Refers to universally accepted aspects of communication within the context being studied. This could include fundamental principles or standard practices that are widely acknowledged and applied across various settings.

Information: Focuses on the types of information that are typically communicated. This might include the nature, format, or content of the information, such as data, instructions, feedback, or general knowledge that needs to be shared.

Knowledge: Highlights the role of knowledge in communication, discussing how knowledge is conveyed, shared, or transferred between individuals or groups, and how this impacts the overall communication process.

Technology: Refers to the technological tools and platforms used to facilitate communication. This could cover digital communication methods like email, messaging apps, and video conferencing, and how these technologies influence the effectiveness and efficiency of communication.

Methods: Describes the channels of communication used, such as verbal, written, visual, or non-verbal methods. It may also include discussions of formal vs. informal communication, or synchronous vs. asynchronous communication.

Soft Skills: Emphasises the importance of soft skills in communication, such as active listening, empathy, clarity, and adaptability. It may explore how these skills enhance the communication process and contribute to more effective interactions.

Effectiveness: Assesses the overall effectiveness of communication strategies or practices. This could include criteria for evaluating effectiveness, such as clarity, timeliness, understanding, or the achievement of communication objectives.

2.2.1 Communication classification

Verbal communication should be central to both the scientific study of communication and language (Rocci & de Saussure, 2016:3). People convey messages in various forms, influenced by their backgrounds, education, and societal norms, which shape how they express their ideas through speaking or writing. In the retail sector, verbal communication is frequently used, and employees are expected to be responsive, adaptable in their use of language during meetings, and display confidence and assertiveness when speaking. Similarly, stakeholders, such as clients, require continuous constructive feedback to gain clarity on the products or services provided to them. Therefore, integrating communication into project initiatives is crucial for achieving successful outcomes, as stakeholders need assurance of the plan through various communication channels and methods (Kliem, 2007:1).

2.2.1.1 Intrapersonal communication

According to Oleś et al. (2020:321), self-talk is a ubiquitous human phenomenon. It refers to communication with oneself, occurring within the mind or inner self. In internal dialogue – whether it takes the form of inner speech or self-talk – the sender and recipient are the same person. This type of communication plays a crucial role in building confidence, as it involves the signals you send to your own thoughts.

2.2.1.2 Interpersonal communication

As stated by Lane et al. (2024), interpersonal communication involves at least two people who establish a communicative relationship. This type of way of communicating is measured by the feedback received between the sender and the receiver.

Additionally, interpersonal communication involves the exchange of information, feelings, and meanings between two or more individuals through both verbal and non-verbal messages. This type of communication occurs in person, making it a form of face-to-face interaction. It is also a two-way process, where information is passed from sender to receiver and feedback is commonly exchanged (Burleson, 2010:146).

2.2.1.3 Small group communication

According to Harris and Sherblom (2018:5), “Small group communication is the transactional process of using symbolic behaviour to achieve a shared meaning among group members”. A small group is typically defined as a collection of three or more individuals. Small group communication refers to the exchange of information and ideas within a group of usually three

to twelve people. This type of communication is distinguished by its intimate and interactive nature, in contrast to larger group settings. In small group communication, participants often share common goals, and their interactions are more personal, direct, and collaborative (Harris & Sherblom, 2018:5).

2.2.2 Non-verbal communication

As defined by Hall et al., (2019:272) “Non-verbal communication is defined as the behaviour of the face, body, or voice minus the linguistic content”. In other words, it encompasses everything beyond spoken words. This is a crucial soft skill, as first impressions can have a lasting impact on building relationships both inside and outside the organisation. Body language becomes the first point of engagement, allowing others to assess the type of worker or person they are interacting with at that moment.

2.2.3 Written communication

As described by Prabavathi and Nagasubrumani (2018:31), there are prerequisites to effective written communication:

- To ensure effective written communication, it is essential to maintain completeness, clarity, and correctness in your writing. Since immediate feedback is not possible, it is crucial that written communication is thorough and precise to convey the intended message accurately.

- Additionally, keep the communication simple and error-free. Written communication has its limitations, such as the lack of immediate feedback and the absence of vocal cues to enhance the message. These limitations can be effectively addressed by combining written and oral communication, leveraging the strengths of both while minimising their weaknesses.

- Written communication, second only to oral communication, is one of the oldest forms of communication. It involves any message that is documented from the sender to the receiver, such as letters, memos, research papers, and reports.

- Written communication serves as a solid form of evidence and can be used for future reference. Because it is documented, it can be easily distributed to a large audience, making it an efficient method for mass communication. The consistency of the written message ensures that the information remains accurate and unchanged for all recipients.

Table 2.2: Communication Classifications (own construct based on literature reviewed)

Communication Classification	Audience	Reference
Verbal communication	The receiver or recipient of the message.	Dixon, R.A. & Clark, M.L. 2018. The role of verbal communication in organizational settings, *Journal of Business Communication*, 55(2), 123-140.
Intrapersonal communication	The person that is having the thoughts or communicating internally in their mind.	Klein, R.D. 2017. Intrapersonal communication and self-concept, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 45(3), 257-272.
Interpersonal communication	The receiver of the message.	Knapp, M.L. & Vangelisti, A.L. 2018. *Interpersonal communication and human relationships*. 7th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
Small group communication	Two or more people listening to the message.	Smith, T.A. (2019) Dynamics of small group communication, *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 23(2), 85-97.
Non-verbal communication	Any person who relies on body language to interpret people's tone or message.	Burgoon, J.K., Guerrero, L.K., & Floyd, K. 2020. Nonverbal communication and social interaction, *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 44(2), 145-163.

Written communication	Any person who will be reading or using the information documented.	Kirkpatrick, D.L. 2019. The evolution of written communication in the digital age, *Journal of Communication Studies*, 32(4), 501-517.

In conclusion, the section above has taken us through the brief evolution of communication and its classifications. It highlights the importance of adapting to the changing times and modifying communication methods to best suit the current and future needs. When considering the research gap, which includes silo-type operations, lack of accurate information, and ineffective communication, it becomes important to identify the maturity of communication. This is crucial for executing change management that addresses workplace communication, while examining each component to choose the most suitable approach in a retail project context.

2.3 Communication models

2.3.1 Linear view of communication

The linear view of communication, as stated by Kuznar and Yager (2020:2), goes way back:

> Models of communication are as old as academia itself and have been elaborated through history to capture key features of what happens in the process of communication (Fiske, 1990:4).

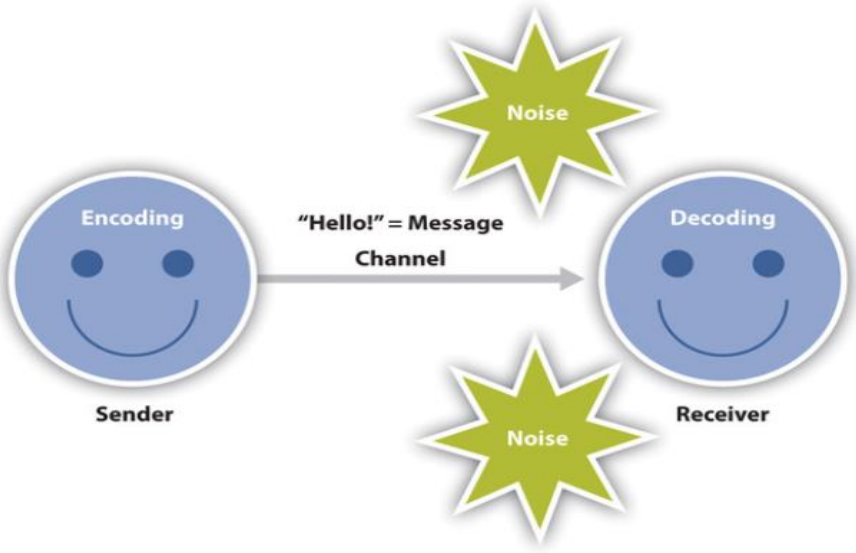

Figure 2.2: Linear view of communication (UMN staff, 2013)

Encoding a message involves producing the communication. The sender uses verbal and non-verbal symbols to express thoughts or messages to the receiver, with the expectation that the

receiver will understand and interpret the message correctly (Bragg et al., 2023). The process also highlights potential barriers to communication, such as semantic noise and misunderstandings that arise from differences in the meaning of words (Rapaport, 2003:3).

Table 2.3: Strengths and weaknesses of a linear view of communication (Smith, 2020)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Simplicity: Easy to understand and apply.	Lacks Feedback Loop: Does not account for responses from the receiver.
Clear Message Flow: Clearly defines the direction of the message from sender to receiver.	Ignores Complexity: Overlooks the complexities of real-world communication, such as noise and context.
Useful for Mass Communication: Effective in contexts where feedback is not immediate, such as broadcasting.	One-Way Process: Assumes communication is a one-way process, not interactive or dynamic.
Helps in Structuring Messages: Encourages clarity in message formation by focusing on the sender's intent.	No Role for Receiver's Interpretation: This does not consider the receiver's active role in interpreting or negotiating the meaning of the message.
Applicable in Simple Scenarios: Works well in straightforward communication situations, like instructions or announcements.	Not Suitable for Complex Interactions: Ineffective in conversations that require back-and-forth exchange, such as debates or discussions.

2.3.1.1. The Lasswell model of communication

According to McQuali and Windahl (2015:13), the Lasswell formula provides an effective framework for detailing an act of communication by addressing the following key questions:

- Who is the communicator?
- What is being communicated?
- Through which channel is the message delivered?
- Who is the intended recipient?
- What is the impact of the communication?

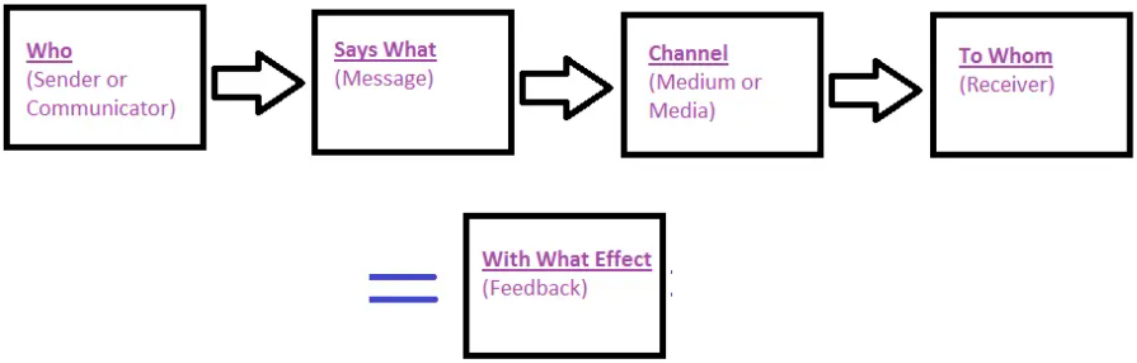

Figure 2.3: The Lasswell formula model of communication (Sapienza et al., 2015:608)

As indicated by the above illustration, the Lasswell model provides a detailed outline of the communication process by addressing key questions. However, the diagram does not account for potential barriers that could arise when answering these questions, such as obstacles between elements. Including these barriers would make the formula more robust. The feedback element in this model is effective, as it opens channels for communication and improvement. Primarily focused on mass communication, this model addresses the questions shown in Figure 2.4. Lasswell aligns each step with specific components: control analysis (who), content analysis (message), the choice of media (channel) such as television, newspapers, or radio, audience analysis (to whom), and the evaluation of effects and media effectiveness (to what effect) (Iosub &Platon, 2016:753).

2.3.1.2. Aristotle's model of communication

The primary focus of Aristotle's model is the speaker's intent to influence the audience. The same message may produce different effects depending on the audience and the occasion, highlighting the importance of tailoring communication to the specific context.

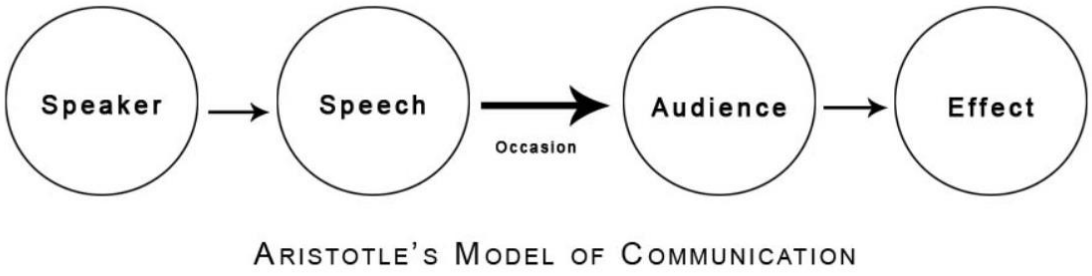

Figure 2.4: Aristotle's model of communication (Cooper, 2018:63-83)

This model works best for large audiences and is highly effective when the speech resonates with the audience. However, if the message is not well received, the feedback can be disheartening for the speaker.

Table 2.4: Strengths and weaknesses of Aristotle's model of communication (Panovski, 2023)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Focus on Persuasion: Emphasises the importance of the speaker's ability to persuade the audience.	Speaker-Centric: Overly focused on the speaker, neglecting the active role of the audience in the communication process.
Simplicity: Offers a straightforward framework for understanding communication in public speaking.	One-Way Process: Assumes communication is a one-way process, not accounting for feedback from the audience.
Influence on Rhetoric: Lays the foundation for the study of rhetoric, highlighting ethos, pathos, and logos as key elements of persuasion.	Limited Application: Primarily applicable to public speaking and does not adequately address other forms of communication.
Applicable to Public Speaking: Well-suited for analysing and improving speeches and presentations.	Ignores Context and Noise: Does not consider external factors, such as the context of the communication or potential noise that may disrupt the message.
Historical Significance: As one of the earliest communication models, it has influenced subsequent theories and models.	Lacks Interaction: Does not account for the interactive nature of modern communication, where feedback and dialogue are essential.

2.3.1.3. Shannon-Weaver model of communication

According to Ma (2015:1562), "Shannon introduces the concept of information entropy as a measure of uncertainty in the message".

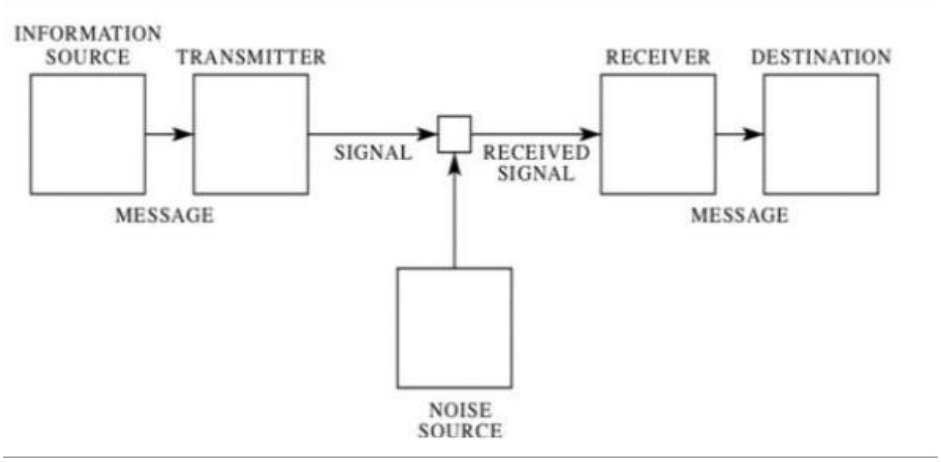

Figure 2.5: Shannon-Weaver model of communication (Weaver, 2017:13)

This model introduces the concept of transmission (channel) while also illustrating potential hindrances, such as noise. The breakdown of its elements is clear, making it particularly beneficial for projects when the project leader applies this model.

Table 2.5: Strengths and weaknesses of the Shannon-Weaver model of communication (Al-Fedaghi, 2012:2-3)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Identifies several similar steps in the communication process, allowing for a coherent understanding.	Not fully analogous to much of human communication.
Applicable to various types of communication, including digital and mass media.	Focuses only on formal communication, neglecting content.
Provides a clear and structured approach to the communication process.	Static and linear.
Introduced the concept of "noise", which is critical for understanding communication barriers.	Oversimplifies communication by emphasising technical aspects.
	Does not consider the influence of context, culture, or social factors.

2.3.1.4. Jakobson’s model of communication

According to Linask (2018:519), Jakobson’s communication model "consists of an addresser, an addressee, the message itself, and the context". In Jakobson's model, communication is centred around the message, emphasising the relationship between the addresser and the addressee.

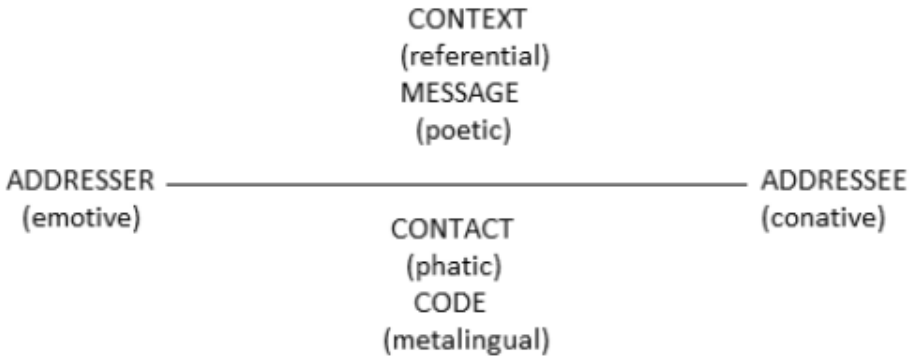

Figure 2.6: Jakobson's model of communication (Linask, 2018:520)

Table 2.6: Strengths and weaknesses of Jakobson's model of communication (Tribus, 2017:4-6)

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Expands the traditional communication model by including six functions (referential, emotive, conative, phatic, metalingual, and poetic), providing a more comprehensive analysis of communication.	Can be overly complex, making it difficult to apply in straightforward communication scenarios.
Recognises the importance of context and the multiple roles that language plays in communication.	Emphasises the linguistic aspects of communication, potentially neglecting non-verbal and cultural dimensions.
Applicable to a wide range of communicative situations, including literature, media, and everyday interactions.	The model's focus on the poetic function may not be relevant in all communication contexts.

2.3.1.5. Berlo's model of communication

Petersons and Khalimzoda (2016:426) state that Berlo's communication model emphasises the various aspects of a message, including its context, elements, treatment, and structure, while giving equal importance to both the sender and the receiver.

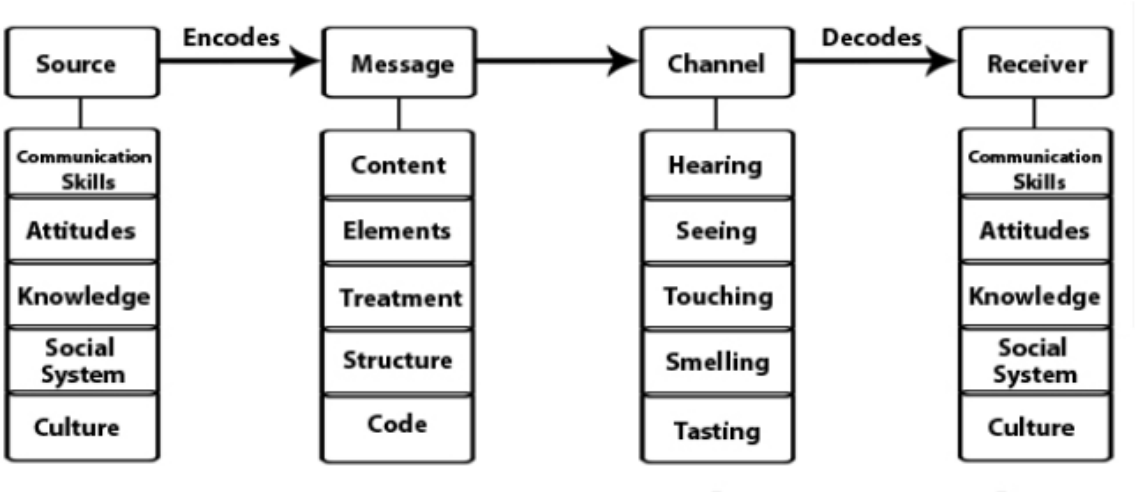

Figure 2.7: Berlo's model of communication (Businesstopia, 2018)

Below is a brief explanation of the components in Figure 2.7:

- **Communication skills –** Active listening, sharing feedback, volume and tone, confidence, using the right communication method.
- **Attitudes** – Congratulating others, being approachable, admiring others without envy.
- **Knowledge** – Familiarity gained through experience, exposure, and association.
- **Social systems** – Networking and relationship building.
- **Culture** – A way of doing things.
- **Content** – The main meaning.
- **Elements** – Sender, receiver, feedback, barrier, message.
- **Treatment** – Be an active listener and maintain eye contact when communicating.
- **Structure** – A message should be structured in an easy way to understand and make sense to the receiver.
- **Code** – This can be symbols that the receiver needs to decode (breakdown and understand) in order to give meaningful feedback.

The decoder of the message needs to possess cognitive skills, such as the ability to understand the message and provide meaningful feedback. This is an essential aspect of effective communication.

Table 2.7: Strengths and weaknesses of Berlo's model of communication (Berlo, 1960)

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Emphasises the role of the source and receiver's communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, and cultural systems.	Does not account for feedback, making it a linear model.

Highlights the importance of encoding and decoding in the communication process.	Lacks consideration of noise or barriers that can disrupt communication.
Flexible and adaptable to various types of communication, including interpersonal and mass communication.	The model is somewhat simplistic, not addressing complex communication dynamics like context or power relations.

Table 2.8: Components of the linear communication model

Component	Explanation	References
Message	The information being relayed to the receiver by the sender (Smith, 2019:1).	• Smith, J. 2019. *Understanding communication: The role of the message*. London: Communication Press.
Channel	This is the method which the message is being transmitted (Johnson, 2020:404).	• Johnson, L. 2020. *Channels of communication: An overview*. New York: Media Publications.
Receiver	This is the person getting or receiving the message (Brown, 2018:7).	• Brown, A. 2018. *The receiver's role in communication: An analytical approach*. Oxford: Academic Press.
Noise	This is a sound that obstructs the decoded in understanding the intended message clearly (Davis, 2021).	• Davis, K. 2021. *Noise in Communication: Understanding barriers to effective interaction*. Cambridge: Communication Studies.

2.3.2 Transactional models

Du Pré and Foster (2015:15) explain, “An alternative to the simple sender / receiver model is the transactional model of communication, which proposes that people are simultaneously senders and receivers”. They emphasise that communication involves reciprocal influence.

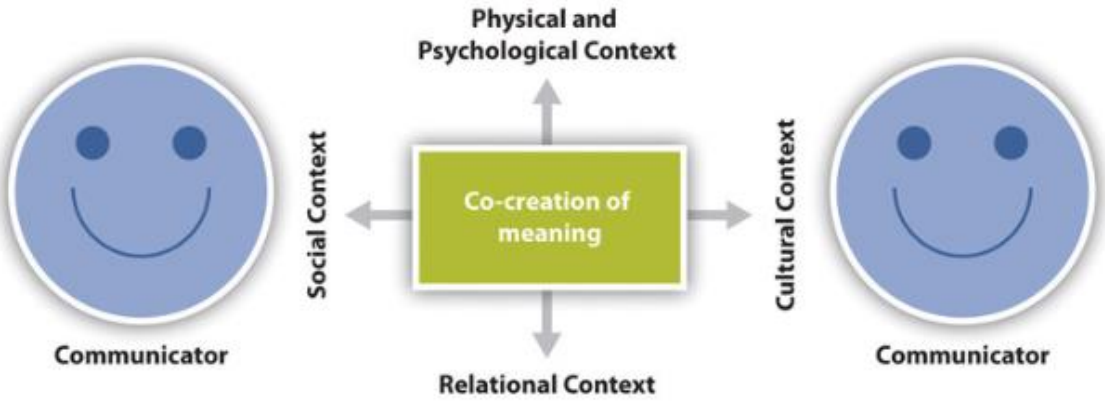

Figure 2.8: Transactional models of communication (UMN Staff, 2013)

This model is progressive, fostering innovation among project teams and project managers by encouraging collaborative exchanges of valuable feedback.

Table 2.9: Strengths and weaknesses of transactional models of communication (Rosenblatt, 2018:13)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Recognises communication as a simultaneous process where both parties are both senders and receivers.	The complexity of the model can make it difficult to apply in simple communication scenarios.
Incorporates feedback, making it a more accurate representation of real-world communication.	May not adequately address power dynamics or cultural differences in communication.
Accounts for the influence of context and social systems, providing a comprehensive view of communication.	Can be challenging to teach or use in practical applications due to its complexity.

2.3.2.1. Schramm’s model of communication

According to Ma (2015:1563), “Wilbur Schramm (1907-1987) focused his research on the experience of the sender and the recipient”. Schramm emphasised that a shared language allows both the sender and recipient to provide meaningful feedback.

Schramm's model highlights the cultural aspect of communication, promoting a universal approach that fosters inclusivity in achieving organisational objectives. Language plays a crucial role in encouraging engagement, so ensuring that a common language is used and understood by all becomes a priority. This shared language can become a competitive advantage for the organisation, as it enhances staff engagement and performance.

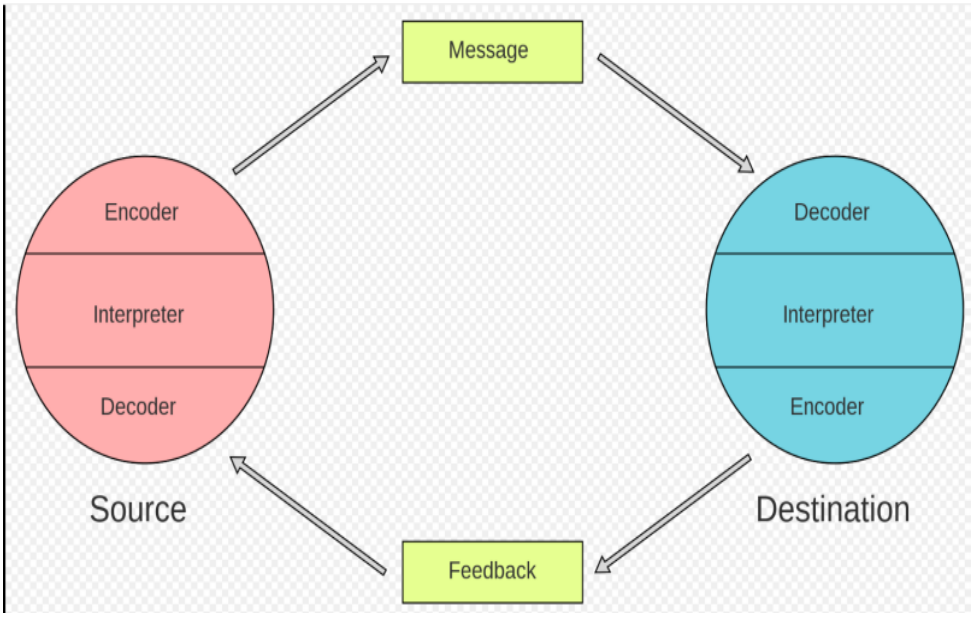

Figure 2.9: Schramm's model of communication (Schram, 1954:23)

Table 2.10: Strengths and weaknesses of Schramm's model of communication (Kapur, 2020)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Introduces the concept of the field of experience, emphasising the shared background between communicators, which enhances understanding.	The model can be overly dependent on the shared experience, which may not always exist between communicators.
Acknowledges feedback, making communication a circular process rather than linear.	Does not fully address the complexity of communication in multicultural or diverse environments.
Adaptable to different communication contexts, including interpersonal and mass communication.	The model's focus on mutual understanding may oversimplify the presence of noise or conflict in communication.

2.3.2.2. Riley and Riley's model of communication

According to Budaya et al. (2022: 407), "Riley and Riley's communication model is the basic foundation of the formation of Word-of-mouth". The model clearly illustrates a two-way proposition.

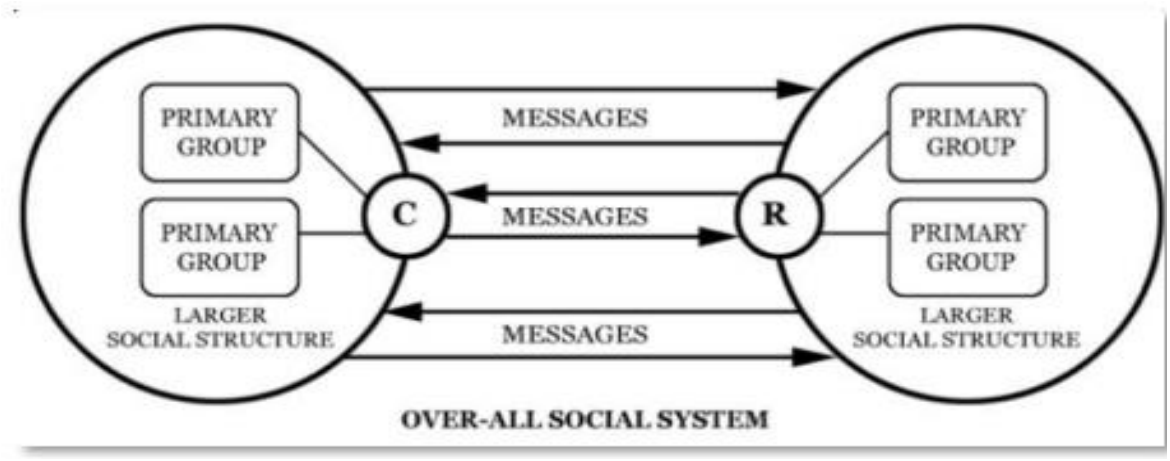

Figure 2.10: Riley and Riley's model of communication (Lawrence & Yager, 2020)

Word of mouth is particularly useful in teams that are adept at following instructions and asking questions when misunderstandings arise. The illustration depicts an overall system where component C encodes a message orally to component R, who then decodes the message and provides feedback, with the process occurring reciprocally between both components.

Table 2.11: Strengths and weaknesses of Riley and Riley's model (Smith & Riley, 2017)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Emphasises the role of social structures and relationships in communication, recognising that communication does not occur in isolation.	The model can be complex and difficult to apply to simple or individual communication scenarios.
Highlights the dynamic and interactive nature of communication within a social system.	May not fully account for the immediate, face-to-face communication between individuals.
Suitable for analysing complex communication processes in large social groups or organisations.	The focus on social systems might overlook individual psychological factors in communication.

2.3.2.3. Barnlund model of communication

According to Kuznar and Yager (2020:6), "Barnlund writes that communication is the evolution of meaning, as it is dynamic, circular, continuous, complex, unrepeatable, and irreversible".

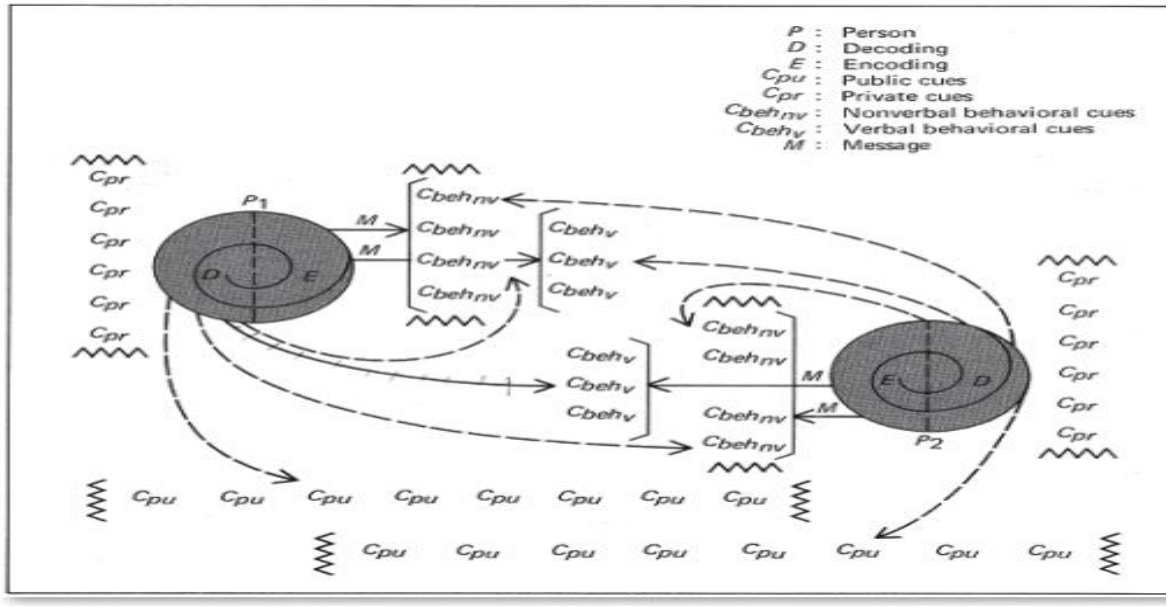

Figure 2.11: Barnlund's model of communication (Kuznar & Yager, 2020:6)

This model addresses an aspect often overlooked by other communication models: cues, which are elements attributed to meaning. The process of meaning-making is continuous, circular, unrepeatable, and irreversible. The illustration highlights various components, including public cues, private cues, nonverbal behaviour cues, the message, its decoding, and the individuals involved in the communication. This model provides a comprehensive view, depicting how all these components interact continuously in the communication process.

Table 2.12: Strengths and weaknesses of Barnlund's model of communication (Adler et al., 2016)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Interactive and Dynamic: Recognises communication as a continuous, dynamic, and complex process where all parties are simultaneously senders and receivers.	Complexity: The model's complexity can make it difficult to apply and understand, especially in simple communication scenarios.
Multi-layered Context: Emphasises the role of public, private, and cultural cues in understanding messages.	Overemphasis on Simultaneity: May not adequately address situations where communication is not simultaneous, such as written or asynchronous communication.
Contextual Sensitivity: Accounts for the influence of environmental and situational contexts on communication.	Potential for Misinterpretation: The inclusion of multiple cues and contexts can lead to increased chances of misinterpretation if not properly managed.

Non-Verbal Communication: Highlights the importance of non-verbal cues and behaviours in the communication process.	Limited Structure: Lacks a clear structure, which can make it challenging to identify and analyse specific components of the communication process.

Table 2.13: Characteristics of transactional models

Component	Explanation	References
Simultaneous communication	This refers to the act of speaking and using sign language simultaneously to convey a message to another person (Thompson, 2020.	Thompson, R. 2020. *Simultaneous communication in the digital age*. London: Communication Press.
Interpersonal communication	This type of communication involves a sender and a receiver. The sender communicates with the receiver, who then decodes the message, understands it, and provides feedback to complete the communication process (DeVito & DeVito, 2019: 26).	DeVito, J.A. & DeVito, J. 2019. The interpersonal communication book. *Instructor*, *1*(18), 521-32.
Non-verbal communication	This involves using body language to convey a message. For example, a happy person can be identified by their bright expression and smile directed towards the receiver (Fenández & Catalina, 2020:53)	Fenández, G.H. & Catalina, B. 2022. The non-verbal communication of Santiago Abascal, President of VOX.
Context of environment	This refers to the underlying substance and clear rationale behind a message (Główka et al., 2023:2)	Główka, K., Zubek, J. & Rączaszek-Leonardi, J. 2023. Context-dependent communication under environmental constraints. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2305.05821*.
Noise with disruptions	This refers to barriers that hinder the flow of communication and can lead to misunderstandings in the message being conveyed (Le Pell & Clavier, 2017:80).	Le Prell, C.G. & Clavier, O.H. 2017. Effects of noise on speech recognition: Challenges for communication by service members. *Hearing Research*, *349*, 76-89.

2.3.3 Constructive models of communication

As stated by Torre et al., (2021:4), constructive communication "is based on each person's perspective of the world, surrounding them through their own experiences and developing mental schemes". This model emphasises that communication is influenced by individual interpretations, where people construct meaning through their unique viewpoints and experiences.

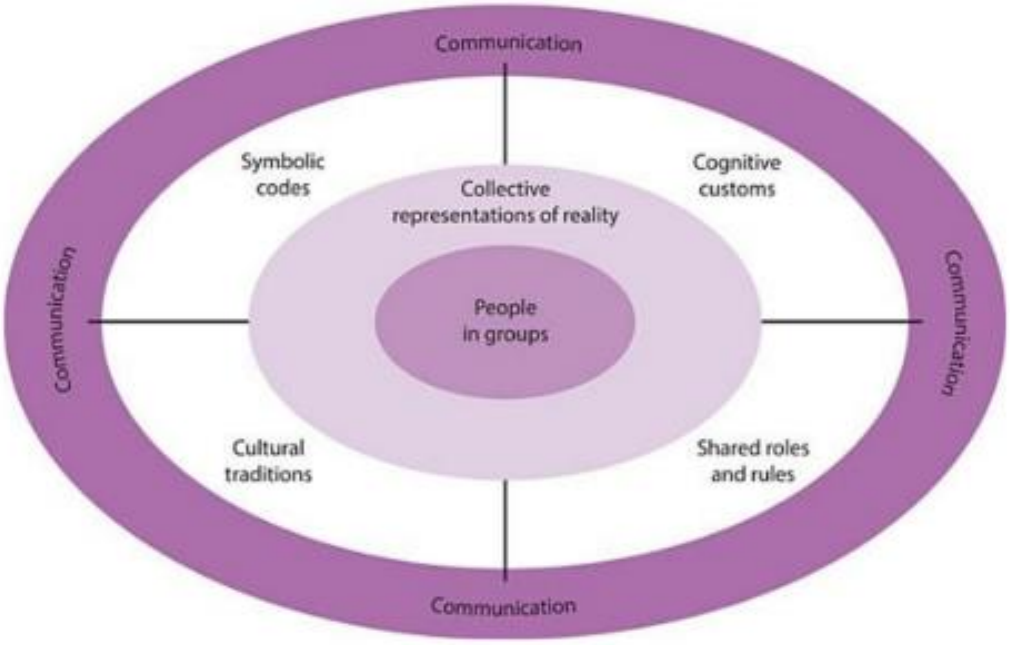

Figure 2.12: Social constructive model of communication (Trenholm, 2020)

The model examines four cultural tools, including language, symbolic codes, and the ways individuals are taught to process information, with a strong emphasis on the cognitive aspect of communication. This approach is centred on the negotiated meaning of communication, where both the sender and receiver take turns exchanging messages and providing feedback to one another.

Table 2.14: Strengths and weaknesses of the constructive model of communication (Littlejohn & Foss., 2019)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Focus on Individual Meaning-Making: Emphasises how individuals construct meaning based on their experiences and perspectives, leading to a deeper understanding of communication.	Complexity: The model's complexity can make it difficult to apply and understand, especially in simple communication scenarios.

Personalised Communication: Acknowledges that communication is tailored to the individuals involved, making it more adaptive and context sensitive.	Overemphasis on Simultaneity: The model may not adequately address situations where communication is not simultaneous, such as written or asynchronous communication.
Encourages Critical Thinking: Promotes reflection and critical thinking about how messages are interpreted and understood.	Potential for Misinterpretation: The inclusion of multiple cues and contexts can lead to increased chances of misinterpretation if not properly managed.

2.3.3.1. Symbolic interactionism:

As stated by Denzin (2017:11), “Symbolic interactionism regards identity, like society more widely, as a process of negotiation: it is relational, communicative and symbolically meaning”.

2.3.3.2. Framing

As defined by Davis and Russ (2015:223), “a frame is a set of simple elements that organize the perception of a given situation”. It is perspectives on how people organise and communicate realities.

Table 2.15: Construction model of communication characteristics

Construction model	Characteristic	References
Symbolic interactionism	• Type of education (what you have been taught) • Identity • Process of negotiating meaning in a message • People in groups • Culture	• Blumer, H. 1969. *Symbolic interactionism: Perspectives and methods*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Framing	• People's perspectives on reality • Interpretation of messages	• Entman, R.M. 1993. Framing: Towards a clarification of a fractured paradigm, *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), pp. 51-58. doi:

		[insert DOI if applicable].

Table 2.16: History of communication models (Kuznar & Yager, 2020:8)

Date	Model	Key Characteristics
Sender → Receiver Models		
400 BCE	Aristotle	A sender transmits a message to an audience
1927	Lasswell	Characteristics of the sender, audience, medium influence message impact
1949	Shannon/Weaver	Noise distorts message
1954	Schramm	Sender and receiver's "field of experience" impacts how a message is interpreted (encoded or decoded)
1958	Jakobsen	Communication is effective when senders and receivers have a shared understanding of the world
1960	SCMR (Berlo)	Sender, Message, Channel, Receiver; characteristics of each impact how a message is interpreted
1957	Westley Maclean	Gatekeepers control the messages the public receives
Transactional Models		
1954	Schramm/Osgood	Communication is a reciprocal process between communicators
1959	Riley & Riley	Communicators' social groups influence how messages are interpreted
1970	Barnlund	Meaning is created between communicators in a cumulative process
Constructivist Models		
1969	Symbolic Interactionism	Meaning is created through shared symbols
1974	Framing	How a message is presented influences its interpretation

The concept of communication models dates back to 400 BC, and it is evident that these models have evolved over time as researchers have refined and developed them. A common thread among all the models is their focus on the "message". In conclusion, examining the different types of communication models underscores the importance of understanding the purpose behind each one in order to apply them effectively, particularly in project-related work within the retail industry.

2.4 Communication channels

Ocasio et al. (2018:159) emphasise that communication is not solely about the content but also how that content is transmitted. This includes the effective use of communication tools and technologies, appropriate participation rights, and proper interactions that foster progressive engagement within and across channels. Additionally, Hawrysz and Hys (2014:73) argue that "a communication channel inside the organization influences the communication of the organization with its surrounding environment". A "channel" can be defined as the technical means through which meaning is conveyed. Various channels can be used, such as auditory

(face-to-face), visual (gestures and facial expressions), telephones, cables, books, radio waves, and television.

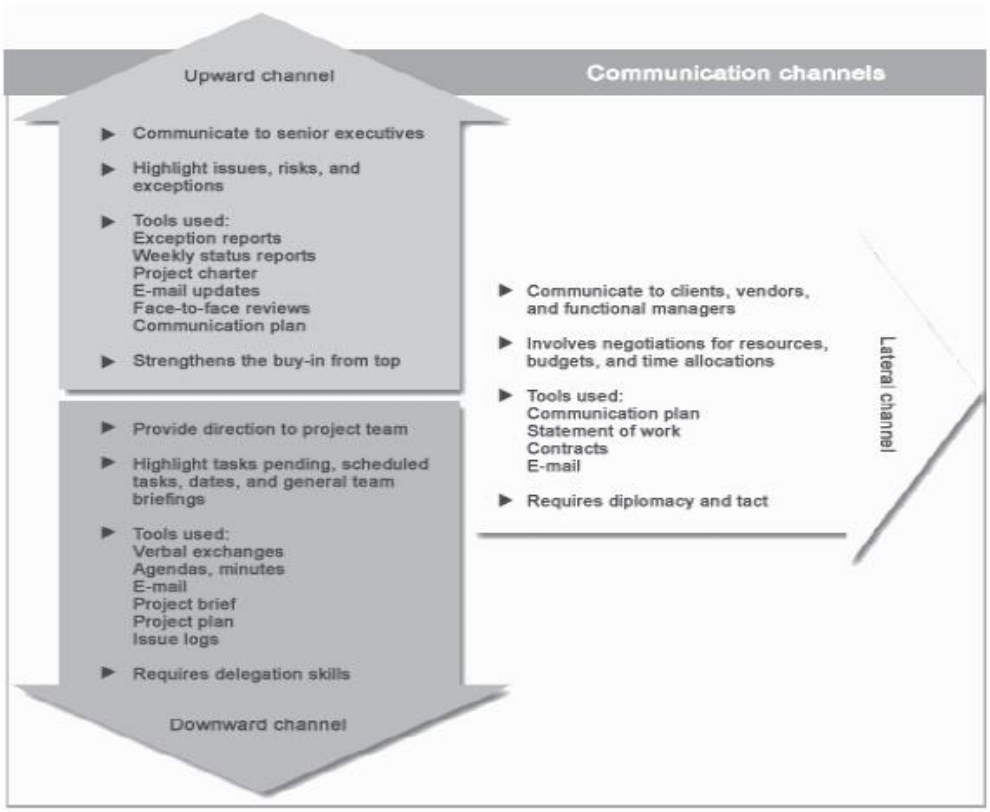

Figure 2.13: Communication channels in an organisation (Čulo & Skendrović, 2010:232)

The upward communication channel involves the flow of information from lower levels, such as project teams, to higher levels of the chain of command, including corporate management and clients. Tools like memorandums, newsletters, telephone calls, face-to-face interactions, and the internal website (intranet) are used in this process. This channel is typically employed by subordinates to persuade or inform senior executives. For example, project managers often use upward communication to secure buy-in for project-related costs, ensuring alignment with the organisation's long-term objectives.

In contrast, downward communication flows from senior management to subordinates, providing strategic direction and goals. Some managers prefer group meetings for this purpose (Erjavec et al., 2018:562). Tools such as meeting minutes are used to document recommendations and important information for future reference. Project plans, briefs, and verbal exchanges are also common tools for downward communication.

Lateral communication, meanwhile, involves the exchange of information among different stakeholders, such as vendors, clients, and functional managers. Tools like contracts, emails, and communication plans facilitate these interactions. Although non-verbal channels of

communication are less emphasised, emotions also play a crucial role in conveying messages (App et al., 2011:604).

Furthermore, misunderstandings can occur when the wrong communication channels are used. To avoid these barriers, communication plans must be clear and well-structured. The key characteristics of effective communication channels are:

2.4.1. Effectiveness

According to Sanina et al., (2017:4), "Effectiveness refers to choosing the right channel, or combination of channels to solve some particular problem to increase organizational development". Effectiveness is also linked to the cost of communication, which is a crucial factor in optimising the best channel for the team and organisation, ensuring that goals are achieved in a conducive environment.

2.4.2. Reliability

A communication channel used by an organisation should be reliable and trusted to fulfil its intended purpose. The systems employed to transfer information must ensure accuracy in transmission to maintain the integrity of the communication process.

Table 2.17: Characteristics of a communication channel

Characteristics:	Pros:	Cons:	References
Effectiveness	Enhances management capabilities	Poor expression, staff might misinterpret the given message, or information.	Johnson, S. 2021. Measuring the effectiveness of written communication in the workplace, *International Journal of Business Communication*, 58(1), 22-39.
Reliability	Resolves conflicts in understanding messages.	Prone to cyber threats, cyberattacks, and violations.	Peters, T.J. 2022. Ensuring reliability in written communication, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 43(3), 321-337.

Speed	Enhances productivity	Staff might become overwhelmed and not respond in time.	Adams, R. 2019. The impact of speed on written communication effectiveness, *Journal of Communication Management*, 23(2), 111-126.
Technology	Allows for virtual on boarding	Once software is down or Wi-Fi is unavailable, unforeseen delays occur.	Chen, W. 2021. The role of technology in enhancing written communication, *Journal of Information Technology*, 36(4), 445-459.
Flexibility	Flexibility allows systems or processes to adapt easily to changing requirements or environments. It encourages creativity and innovation by allowing for alternative approaches and solutions.	Increased flexibility can lead to more complex systems that may be harder to manage. A lack of flexibility can overwhelm users with too many options, leading to decision fatigue.	Davis, M. 2018. Flexibility in written communication: Adapting to audience needs, *Communication Research Reports*, 35(1), 45-53.
User-friendliness	User-friendly systems are intuitive and easy to navigate, reducing the learning curve for new users. They enhance productivity by allowing users to accomplish tasks quickly and without frustration.	Sometimes, making something too user-friendly can oversimplify complex processes, limiting functionality. A focus on user-friendliness may sometimes exclude advanced features that power users might need.	Hassenzahl, M. 2020. User friendliness in written communication tools, *Human-Computer Interaction*, 35(3), 287-305.
Accessibility	Accessibility ensures that products or services are usable by people with diverse abilities, fostering inclusivity. It expands the potential user base by making products available to a wider	Implementing accessibility features can increase development costs and time. Accessibility needs to be regularly maintained and updated, which can add to long-term maintenance costs.	Morgan, J. 2021. Enhancing accessibility in digital written communication, *Journal of Accessibility Studies*, 10(2), 98-112.

	audience, including those with disabilities.		

2.5 Barriers to communication

Anything that hinders the communication process is referred to as a “barrier”. These barriers can affect the effectiveness of communication among project stakeholders, potentially leading to project delays or failures. As noted by Zulch (2016:1-35), barriers in communication can be categorised into the following groups:

- Physical Barriers: Examples include noise, lack of privacy in the office, and telephone interruptions.
- Physiological Barriers: These include factors such as poor health and physical disabilities.
- Psychological Barriers: These involve emotional factors like distrust, anxiety, fear, nervousness, and anger.
- Perceptual Barriers: These relate to differences in education, training, intelligence, social background, values, competence, skills, and experience.
- Environmental Barriers: These encompass factors such as leadership styles, decision-making processes, and personality traits.
- Social Influence: This involves the relationships that are built.
- Semantic Barriers: These are related to the use of jargon and accents.

Table 2.18: Barriers to effective project communication (Taylor, 2020)

Lack of clarity	Selective perception	Information overload
Noise and distractions	Culture	Attitude
Status	Inattentive	Poor focus span
Language	Emotions	Silo type operations
Pressure	Jargon	Problematic channel of communication
Impatience	Emotions such as stress or depression	Competence

Understanding communication barriers is essential for ensuring that plans are in place to address and overcome such challenges. A project manager must develop a communication

plan that is crystal clear and proactively identify potential barriers before the execution phase, allowing for measures to be implemented that either mitigate or eliminate the issue.

2.6 Project management

As defined by Watt (2014:12), “A project is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result”. The concept of project management has existed throughout history, serving as a framework for planning both small and large projects. It ensures that tasks are completed within budget, on time, and with the designated resources to achieve the desired deliverables.

In addition, Verzuh (2015:4) adds that “project management is a discipline – set of methods, techniques that manage the complexities of work that is unique and temporary”. It involves planning, organising, monitoring, and controlling the project lifecycle to safely achieve project goals.

Furthermore, the triple constraints of a project are time, cost, and scope.

Project management utilises various methodologies, such as the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), PRINCE2, and Agile, all of which are tailored to suit specific fields or industries.

Table 2.19: Project methodologies

Project Methodology	Explanation	Reference
PMBOK	The Project Management Institute describes project management in the following five groups: initiating processes, planning processes, executing processes, monitoring and controlling processes, and closing processes. This approach takes a more phased approach to managing projects.	Steyn, H., Carruthers M., du Plessis Y., Kruger D., Kuschke B., van Eck S., and Visser K. 2013. *Project management: A multi-disciplinary approach.* 3rd ed. Funda Project Management (Pty) Ltd.: Pretoria.
Projects in Controlled Environments (Prince2)	As described by Wideman (2002:1), “Prince2 is a structured method for	Wideman, R.M. 2002. Comparing PRINCE2® with PMBoK®. *AEW Services,*

	effective project management for all types of projects, not just information systems based projects".	*Vancouver, BC, Canada*, 13-16.
Agile	As stated by Juricek (2014:173), "Agile principles are a different way of managing IT development teams and projects".	Juricek, J. 2014. Agile project management principles. *Lecture Notes on Software Engineering*, *2*(2), 172.

The triple constraint is universal across all projects, whether small, medium, or large. Every project must manage its budget, schedule, and scope to ensure success.

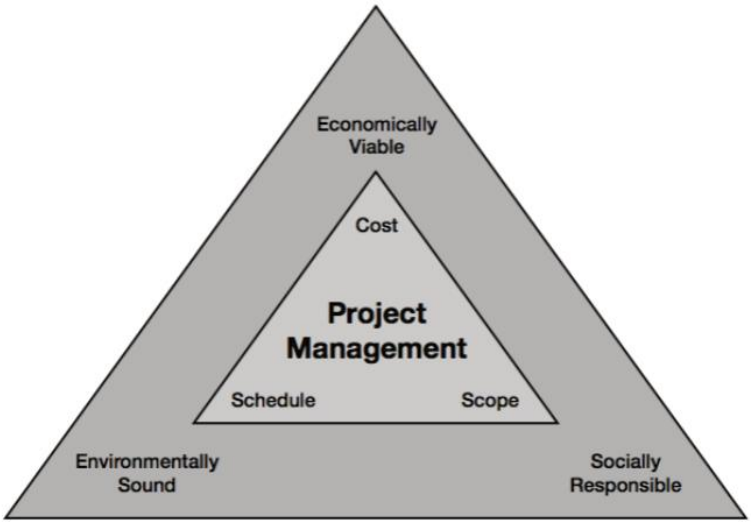

Figure 2.14: Triple constraints of a project (Watt, 2014:4)

The diagram above serves as a guideline for project managers, ensuring that projects are socially responsible for clients, economically viable for sponsors or the organisation, and environmentally sound for the general public.

2.6.1 Project

As Steyn et al. (2013) define, a project is "any planned temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique quality product or services with a definite outcome, limited timescale, and resources". Projects are characterised by their uniqueness, temporary nature, planned structure, and defined deliverables.

Table 2.20: Types of projects

Types of projects	Explanation	References
Construction Projects	• Projects that involve building infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, buildings, and other physical structures.	Choudhury, I. & Wysocki, R.K. 2018. *Construction Project Management*. New York: Wiley.
IT Projects	• These involve the development, implementation, and management of information technology solutions, including software development and network installations.	Schwalbe, K. 2015. *Information technology project management*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
Research and Development (R&D) Projects	• Projects focused on developing new products or technologies and improving existing ones through research and experimentation.	Cooper, R.G. 1999. 'Project portfolio management: The new challenge for managing knowledge workers', *Sloan Management Review*, 40(4), 33-44
Marketing Projects	• Initiatives aimed at promoting and selling products or services, which can include advertising campaigns, market research, and product launches.	Kotler, P. & Keller, K.L. 2016. *Marketing management*. 15th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
Event Management Projects	• Projects that involve planning and executing events such as conferences, weddings, and corporate events.	Allen, J. 2016. *Event planning: the ultimate guide to successful meetings, corporate events, fundraising galas, conferences, incentives and other special events*. 5th ed. New York: Wiley.
Social Projects	• Projects directed towards social causes, including	McCarthy, J. 2003. *Social marketing: strategies for*

	community development initiatives, advocacy campaigns, and non-profit programmes	*changing behaviors*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
Environmental Projects	• Initiatives aimed at conserving or enhancing the natural environment, including projects related to sustainability, recycling, and climate change mitigation.	Atkinson, R. 2000. Project management: A method for achieving the sustainable development goals, *Project Management Journal*, 31(2), 23-34.
Educational Projects	• Projects aimed at improving learning outcomes, which can include curriculum development, educational technology implementations, and training programmes.	McKimm, J. & Jollie, C. 2007. Technology and learning: planning for the future, *Medical Teacher*, 29(5), 491-495.
Healthcare Projects	• Projects focused on improving health services and patient outcomes, such as hospital expansions, new health programmes, and public health campaigns.	Project Management Institute (PMI). 2013. *Healthcare project management*. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
Agricultural Projects	• Initiatives aimed at improving agricultural practices, increasing food production, and developing sustainable farming methods.	Hodge, I. & McNally, S. 2013. The role of project management in the implementation of agricultural policy: Lessons from the European Union, *International Journal of Project Management*, 31(4), 631-641.

Retail is closely aligned with IT projects, Research and Development, and social projects. In the retail context, systems like SAP Business Intelligence are used to capture sales data across various stores. This data is then sent to suppliers to track the performance of their products, with the IT team responsible for ensuring the system is user-friendly and regularly updated. The Research and Development team focuses on improving products by researching market demands and creating projects to meet customer needs. Social projects in retail involve initiatives like donating goods to vulnerable communities through campaigns such as Helping Hand Trust NPO, which provides high-quality health and wellness interventions.

The table below illustrates the key aspects of these types of projects:

Table 2.21: Project characteristics (Mentis, 2015:3)

Unique	Temporary, start and end date
Objective	Budget
Lifecycle	Purposeful
Communication	Possible conflicts
Methodologies	Team spirit
Risk and uncertainty	Single entity
Time	Outcome or quality-based

2.6.2 Role of communication in project success

As recognised by Zulch (2014:2), “The survival of any organized human activity depends largely on man’s ability to communicate with others”. Zulch (2014) further identifies the essential skills needed for effective communication, based on his study of construction-related projects. These communication skills – speaking, listening, reading, and writing – are universal across all disciplines and sectors, and are prerequisites for ensuring the success of any project.

Seymour and Hussein (2014: 238) argue that “the challenge for future project managers will be understanding the big picture and effectively communicating with others”. The big picture is the essence of the ever-changing technology used when transferring information, efficient devices used to bring across messages, and the evolving nature of communication in project-related work.

Additionally, Pachori (2023:31) emphasises that effective team communication is crucial for achieving organizational goals. Team communication faces challenges such as the perception of the message, the actual message being conveyed, and how the message is received. Project Managers, who often have limited authority over resources, rely on negotiation, persuasion, and influencing functional managers and the human resources assigned to them.

Moreover, the role of communication in projects is closely aligned with an organization's culture and the way it conducts its operations.

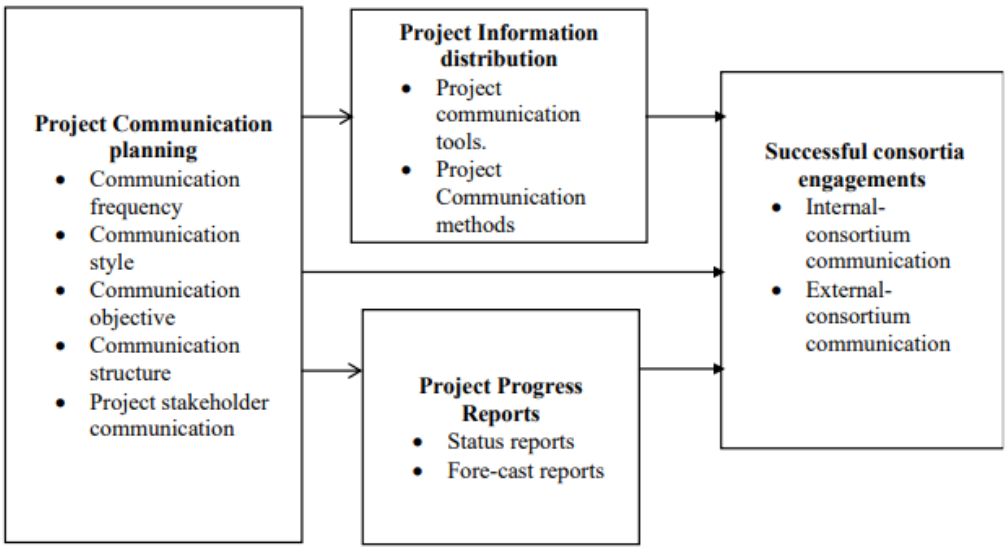

Figure 2.15: Conceptual framework (Magezi et al., 2021:1475)

According to the above conceptual model, linking project communication planning, project information distribution, and project progress reports creates effective project communication.

2.6.3 Project communication management

Heagney (2016:21) asserts that a combination of logically related communication methods, tools, and techniques for the successful initiation, planning, implementation, control, and administrative closure of a project can be viewed as an enhancement of the project communication framework.

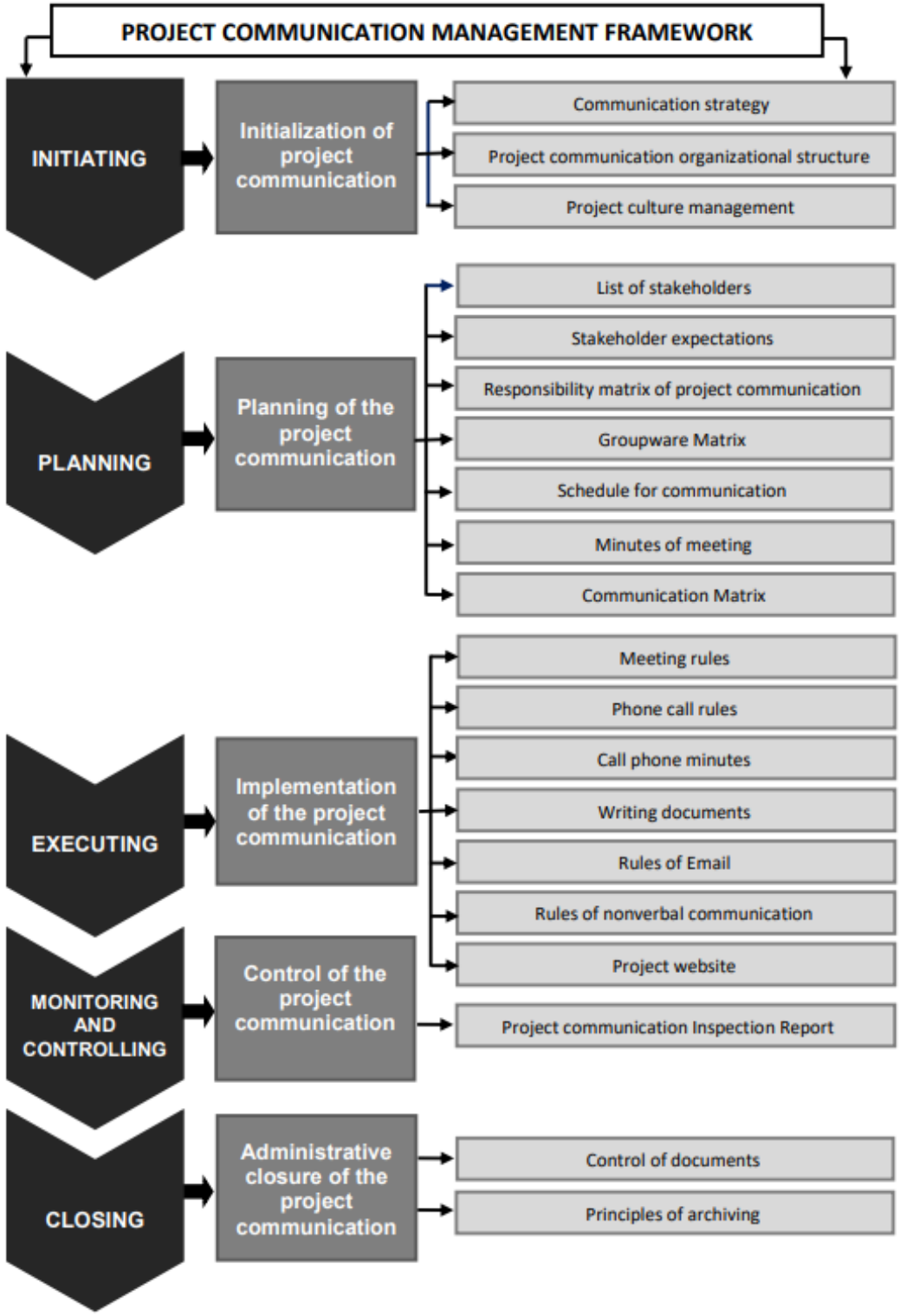

Figure 2.16: Project communication framework (Samáková, 2013:155-163)

The project communication framework outlines the project lifecycle from initiation to closure, aligning each phase with the communication framework to emphasise the importance of effective communication in projects.

The **Initiation stage** marks the development of a communication strategy, detailing how communication will occur and establishing the organisational structure for communication – whether a top-down approach (communication from senior management to subordinates) or a bottom-up approach (information from lower-level employees to higher-level employees). Project culture management focuses on how the organisation operates and handles diversity within the project team.

In the **Planning stage**, as illustrated by Figure 2.16, stakeholders are identified, allowing for tailored communication based on their power and interest in the project.

The **Executing stage** involves the implementation of the project communication plan:

- Writing Documents: Drafting and distributing project-related documents.
- Rules of Email: Defining the standards for email communication, including format, tone, and frequency.
- Rules of Nonverbal Communication: Guidelines for nonverbal communication, ensuring consistency in body language, gestures, etc.
- Project Website: Managing and updating the project's online presence, ensuring it serves as a communication tool.

The **Monitoring and Controlling stage** involves regularly reviewing and reporting on the effectiveness and adherence to the communication plan, ensuring that project communication is on track.

The **Closing stage** focuses on the administrative closure of project communication, including the management and archiving of all communication documents to ensure proper documentation control.

2.6.4 Project Management Plan

According to Zulch (2014:1002), the project management plan should be in place and outline the following:

- Who (lines of communication – sender and receiver – responsibility and authority)
- What (scope of communication and format)
- When (schedule)
- Feedback (confirms message received and understood – document control)
- Filing (retrieval, storing, disaster recovery)
- How (email, document, telephone, meeting, presentation)

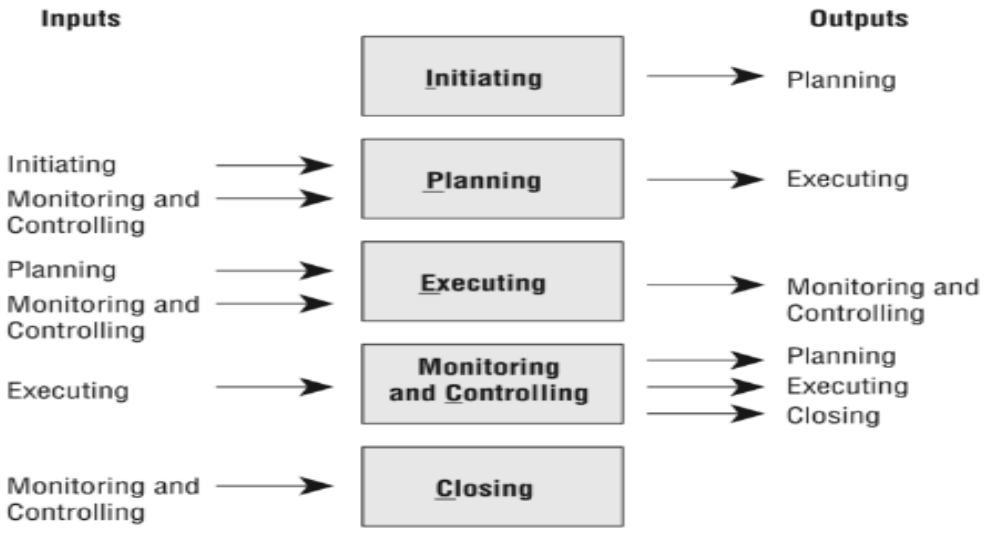

Figure 2.17: Project Management Process Groups (Heldman, 2018:37)

Brown (2020) asserts that the project management plan should always be aligned with the project lifecycle, with communication at its core. Each phase requires effective information flow, whether it's problem-solving during the initiation stage, creating a project charter, or ensuring proper allocation of budget and resources during planning. Project teams communicate regularly while executing tasks, and project managers continually update senior management, ensuring the team meets the intended project objectives. The project manager monitors actual progress against the plan, taking corrective action as needed, and, once deliverables are achieved, documents lessons learned and completes project handover (closure). Throughout these stages, continuous communication between all stakeholders with interest and influence in the project is crucial.

2.6.5 Efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to accomplishing tasks adequately, while *efficiency* focuses on cost-benefit, aiming to get things done in the most economical way possible. *Efficacy*, on the other hand, is the capacity to achieve desired outcomes. The diagram below provides a detailed breakdown:

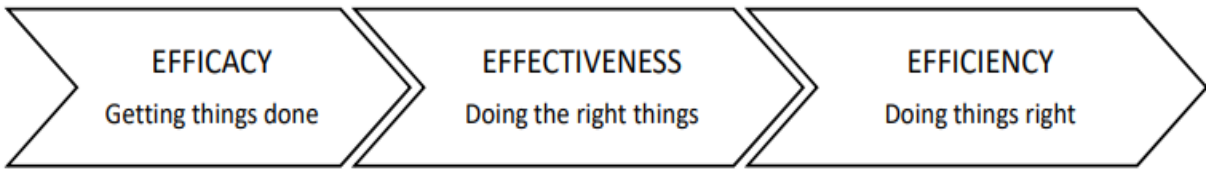

Figure 2.18: Efficiency, Efficacy and Effectiveness (Patel, 2021:34)

In the context of retail-related projects, effective communication involves using the appropriate methods and mediums to engage with different stakeholders. The project manager is responsible for ensuring that projects are completed within budget, on schedule, and meet the required quality standards.

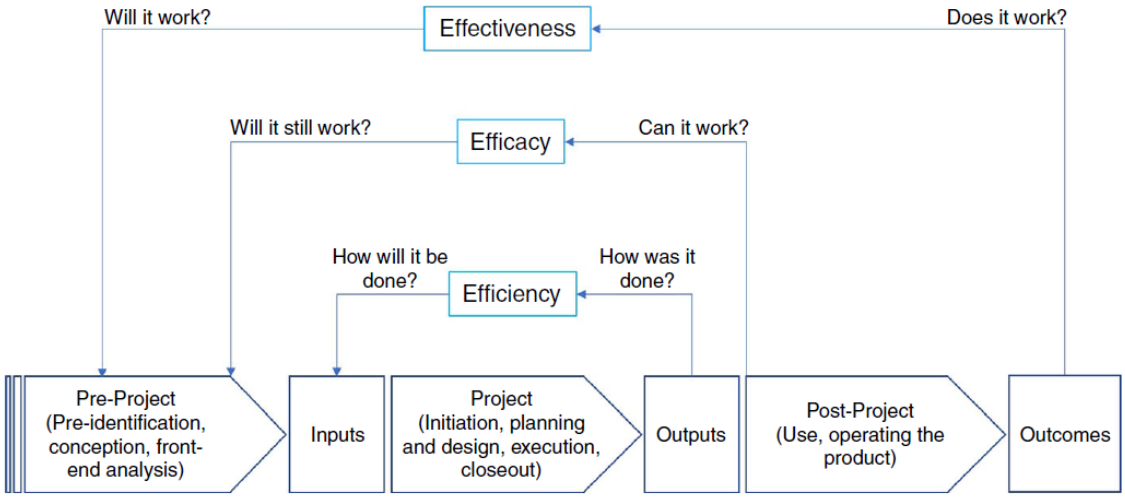

Figure 2.19: Model reflecting efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness (Zidane & Olsson, 2017:632)

The model above is aligned with the project lifecycle, guiding you through each step in a manner that emphasises efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness.

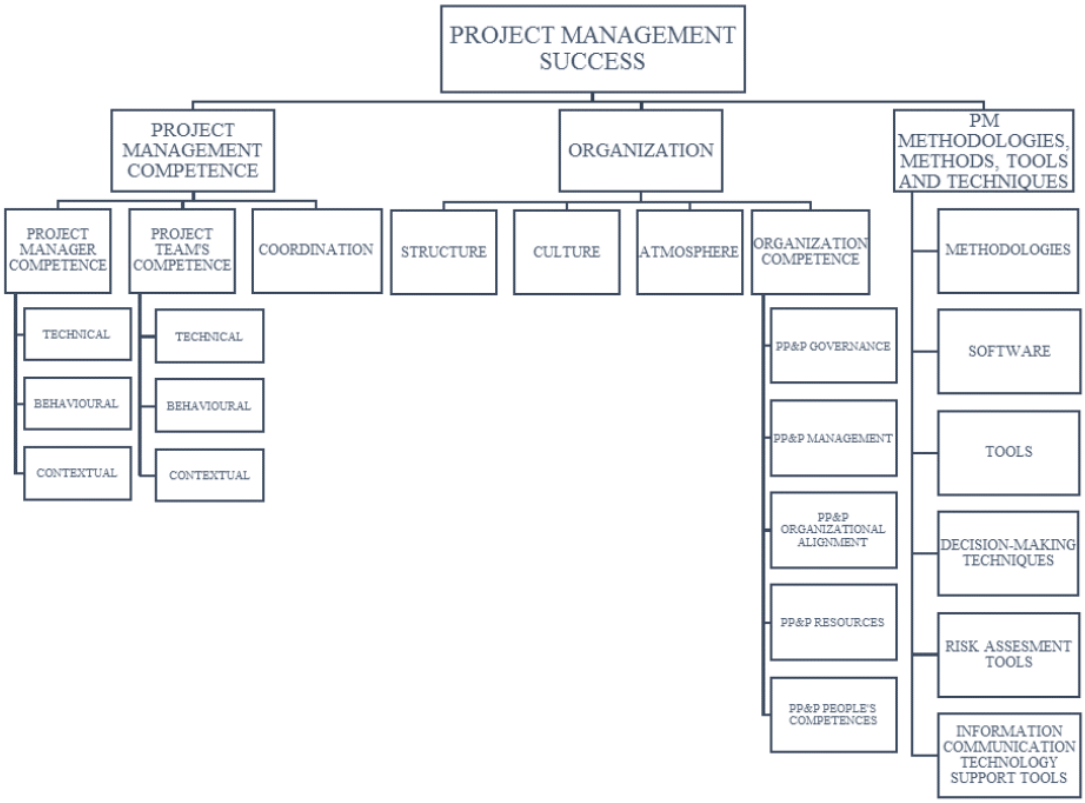

Figure 2.20: Project Management success factors breakdown structure (Radujković & Sjekavica, 2017:610)

2.7 Conclusion

The discipline of project management is both highly technical and reliant on soft skills, making it essential for achieving an organisation's long-term objectives. Figure 2.20 outlines the key elements that need to be addressed to ensure project success, whether as a project manager or programme manager. Communication plays a central role in shaping organisational behaviour, culture, coordination, and the competencies of the project team. The distribution of information through software tools and systems is a vital factor influencing project communication, especially in retail projects.

In conclusion, the retail industry provides a compelling context for examining project communication and the factors that influence it. This chapter explored the classification of communication, analysing the various channels available to organisations and project managers. The literature also examined different communication models and the barriers that can directly impact project success. The PMBOK lifecycle was illustrated and connected to the project communication framework. Additionally, the chapter addressed project management characteristics, as well as the concepts of efficiency, efficacy, and effectiveness.

CHAPTER 3:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design and methodology used in this study, outlining the population, sampling methods, data collection instruments, procedures, and strategies implemented to ensure reliability, validity, and adherence to research ethics. This chapter details the diverse techniques employed, including a mixed method approach. The objective is to examine and understand the factors influencing project communication in a project-based retail setting.

3.2 Research design and methodology

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was employed due to the complexity of the problem. As this was a primary study, the aim was to establish potential factors that hinder effective communication. Despite the debates surrounding positivistic and phenomenological research paradigms, both contributed valuable insights to this study. The following table outlines their respective contributions:

Table 3.1: Contributions of positivist and phenomenological research paradigms to acquire knowledge

Aspect	**Positivistic Paradigm**	**Phenomenological Paradigm**
Epistemology	The data (100 responses) received through the surveys and observations allowed for descriptive analysis to take place, and the questions were quantified.	Open-ended questions were included in the online questionnaire to understand the project teams' individual perspectives on retail projects focusing on communication.
Methodology	A self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted to investigate communication systems, interactions, and factors that contribute to positive outcomes in project communication, using a Likert scale.	The study reviewed a variety of documents, including academic journals, books, literature, and observations related to similar academic work.

Data Collection	Used structured tools, such as online questionnaires, to collect data that can be quantified.	Used unstructured or semi-structured tools, such as open-ended questions, to gather rich, descriptive data through the questionnaire.
Data Analysis	Data were analysed using statistical methods, including mean and standard deviation, to test hypotheses and theories. Excel was used for data cleaning, storage, and transforming the data into charts and meaningful insights.	Data were analysed using thematic or narrative analysis to identify patterns and meanings from the literature reviewed. Google Docs was utilised for analysing the qualitative data.

The research consisted of two stages: a literature review and an empirical study, employing a deductive approach to data analysis. The research design was structured to facilitate the collection, measurement, and analysis of data to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2014:5). The plan included the personal distribution and collection of questionnaires as the primary research tool. The questionnaire was divided into sections: Section A covered biographical information, Section B used a Likert scale, and Section C featured open-ended questions. Therefore, a mixed research method was used for this study to take advantage of the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

3.3 Research design

In any form of research, the researcher develops a strategy or approach for conducting the study, either theoretically or practically, and this is referred to as the research design (Bryman, 2016:8). As Silewey (2019:28) states, a “research design is intended to provide an appropriate framework for a study”.

This research employed both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to address the research problem. This aligned with Caruth’s (2013: 113) view that "mixing methods can complement each other, provide richer insights, and generate additional questions for future studies". Furthermore, the advantages and disadvantages of mixed method research designs are summarised in the Table below.

Table 3.2: Advantages and disadvantages of mixed method research designs (Myers et al., 2013:169)

Advantages	Disadvantages
Data collection is simple.	Requires more subjects for testing.
Fewer assumptions underlying the data. Triangulation validates findings by corroborating results from multiple methods.	Less control of nuisance variables. Unwanted factors such as participants' characteristics such e.g. age.
Fewer calculations	

3.4 Target population

The company targeted for this study had a staff complement of 1,000 individuals in Cape Town. The sample population chosen to participate in the study was 10% of the total staff, amounting to 100 respondents. According to Singh and Masuku (2014:11), a 10% sample is considered accurate and representative when sampling a population, as shown in the figure below.

Size of Population	Sample Size (n) for precision (e)	
	±5%	±10%
500	222	83
1,000	286	91
2,000	333	95
3,000	353	97
4,000	364	98
5,000	370	98
7,000	378	99
9,000	383	99
10,000	385	99
15,000	390	99
20,000	392	100
25,000	394	100
50,000	397	100
100,000	398	100
>100,000	400	100

Figure 3.1: Sample size 10% precision levels (Singh & Masuku, 2014:11)

The project team is distributed across various retail outlets, with the majority centralised at the Head Office in Cape Town.

3.5 Sample size and sampling methods

Etikan et al. (2016:2) explain that convenience sampling, also known as judgement sampling, is chosen by researchers for its qualities, such as easy accessibility, geographic proximity, and availability at a given time.

For this study, a convenience sampling technique was chosen to gather data from respondents. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers select participants who are readily available or easy to reach. This method

is often chosen due to its practicality, especially in situations where time or resources are limited, making it a feasible option for many studies. Here are some key rationalizations for using convenience sampling in research:

Cost-Effectiveness: Convenience sampling is typically less costly than other methods, as it involves recruiting participants from readily accessible populations, such as students in a university setting or patients in a specific clinic.

Time Efficiency: It allows researchers to gather data quickly, which is especially useful in exploratory research or preliminary studies. This can help researchers generate initial findings that can later guide more in-depth studies.

Ease of Implementation: Since it uses participants who are easy to contact or reach, convenience sampling simplifies the data collection process, avoiding the logistical challenges of more complex sampling techniques.

Preliminary Insights: For exploratory research, convenience sampling can provide useful insights and help in identifying trends or generating hypotheses that can be tested in subsequent, more rigorous studies.

Feasibility in Specific Settings: In certain cases, access to a broader, more random sample is difficult, and a convenience sample may be the only feasible option. For instance, researching a niche group within a limited geographic area might necessitate using whoever is available within that area.

While convenience sampling is beneficial for its practical advantages, it's important to acknowledge its limitations, particularly in terms of representativeness and potential biases, which may affect the generalizability of the findings.

The study population consisted of staff members working at a selected retail head office who are involved in projects as part of their daily activities. The target audience included employees working on projects, such as those in the IT Project Office, Business Process Team, and approximately five Human Resource employees, including five line managers. Although the entire population at the head office consisted of 1,000 employees, the sample size was 100, representing 10% of the total workforce. According to Singh and Masuku (2014:11), a 10% sample size is considered accurate and representative when sampling a population.

3.6 Data collection method and the research instrument

A quantitative survey-based approach was employed in this study using either a self-administered online SurveyMonkey questionnaire or a physical questionnaire. The

questionnaire was reviewed by a statistician to ensure credibility. This method was chosen over other data collection tools because it is time-efficient and cost-effective, eliminating the need for travel and minimising the time participants spent away from their responsibilities (Brace, 2018:28).
As Weigold et al. (2013:53) note, the internet has revolutionised processes, making them more cost-effective by reducing paper usage, as everything can now be done online.

The survey featured a structured online or physical questionnaire presented in English, containing both open and close-ended questions. Data collection took place over six weeks, from the 20th of May 2024 to the 30th of June 2024. Questionnaires were distributed via internal communication, with an online link shared or physical questionnaires delivered to the head office for distribution by management. The organisation also utilised an intranet to transfer information to employees' emails, further facilitating internal communication.

The design of the questionnaire aimed to gather information from the population as accurately as possible, maximise cooperation from respondents, and streamline the collection and analysis of data. The collected data were carefully analysed to provide accurate insights to the researcher. The data were captured, cleaned, and verified using statistical methods, including mean and standard deviation analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

Google Forms and excel were easy to use and served as key tools for quantitative data collection. Excel was used to quantify the data, transforming it into meaningful visual information and graphs. The Likert scale questions were coded for the quantitative data, and descriptive analysis was performed to calculate the mean and standard deviation of the dataset using Excel spreadsheets.

Google Forms and Excel were valuable tools for quantitative data collection due to their ease of use and functionality. The significance lies in their ability to streamline data collection and analysis: Google Forms efficiently gathered responses, while Excel facilitated the coding and quantification of Likert scale data, allowing for the transformation of raw data into visually interpretable graphs. Moreover, Excel supported descriptive analysis by calculating key metrics like mean and standard deviation, thus simplifying data interpretation and providing insights into participant responses. These tools enabled a structured, efficient approach to analysing quantitative data, making them significant for achieving accurate, reliable results.

3.8 Empirical data

The questionnaire was meticulously crafted to ensure the accurate collection of information from the target population, maximise respondent cooperation, and simplify data analysis. A sample of 100 respondents was chosen to achieve a comprehensive and balanced understanding of the results. The questionnaire comprised three sections with a total of 31 questions:

Section A – Biographical Information

This section featured questions about respondents' profiles, qualifications, positions, and years of experience. It aimed to provide background information, offering insights into their expertise and knowledge in communication and project management.

Section B – Likert Scale

This section included questions on general project management communication and specific communication practices within the company. Responses were measured using a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = "strongly disagree", 2 = "disagree", 3 = "neutral", 4 = "agree", and 5 = "strongly agree".

Section C – Open-Ended Questions

This section consisted of open-ended questions, allowing respondents to freely express their views on communication. The first question asked them to list the communication channels they use at work. The second question sought their opinions on what constitutes effective communication. The final question invited them to describe factors contributing to successful communication in projects.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter effectively outlined the research methodology employed in the study, providing clear and valid answers to the research questions.

Data were collected using questionnaires that included both open-ended questions, allowing respondents to express individual opinions, and close-ended questions for structured responses. The chapter also detailed the sample selection process, explained the procedure for designing the research instrument and collecting data, and provided an overview of the statistical methods used to analyse the data.

The following chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation thereof.

CHAPTER 4
DATA RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of data analysis. Microsoft Excel was used to clean, edit, code, and generate charts. After the data cleaning and editing process, questionnaires were accurately completed from a total population of 1,000. The illustrations highlight the relationships between variables as outlined in the research instrument – the questionnaire.

The research aimed to understand the significance of communication in projects and the factors affecting project communication in achieving success. The findings are intended to provide guidelines for project teams, leaders, and coordinators on effective information transfer throughout the project lifecycle. The study endeavoured to identify, assess, and emphasise the importance of effective communication during project execution, with a specific focus on retail projects.

4.2

4.2.1 Section A: Biography

What is needed here is a brief description of what made up the respondents' biography. An example is given below:

The biography of the respondents constitute their ethnicity, gender, educational qualifications, etc, and the results of the survey are presented in the following charts/figures.

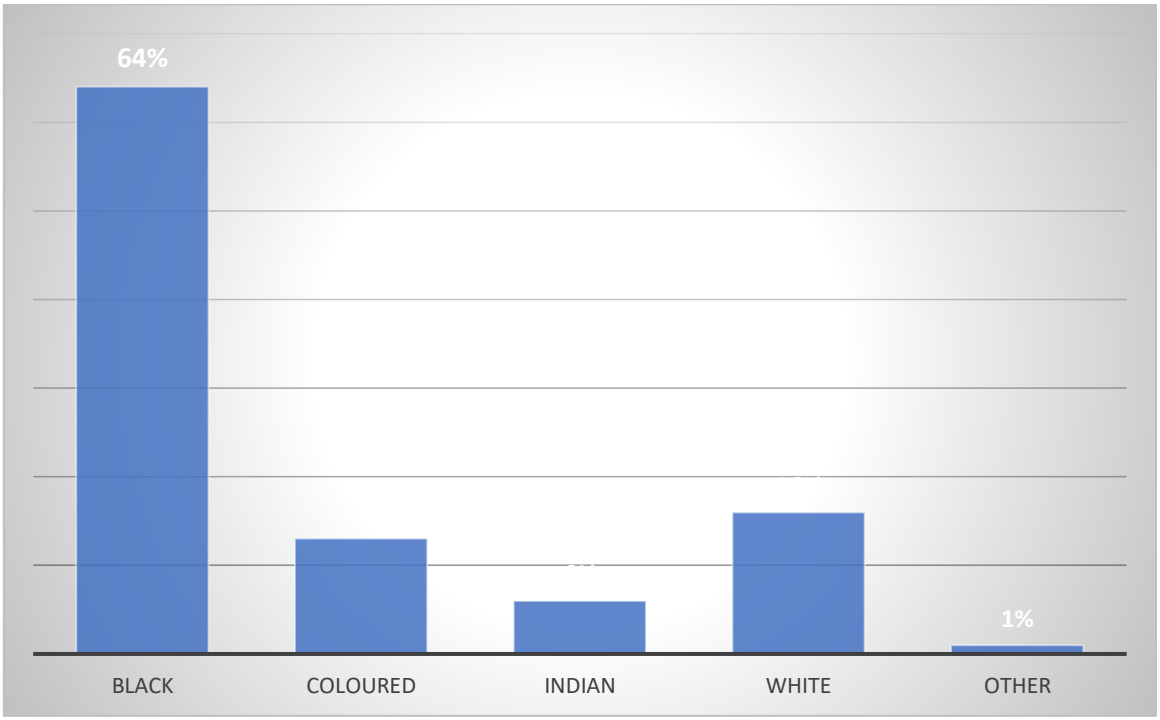

Figure 4.1: Ethnicity of the respondents

The majority of the respondents, 64%, are Black, 13% are Coloured, 6% are Indian, 16% are White, and 1% selected 'Other'. No additional groups were represented in the survey. These findings highlight that most employees at the head office under study are Black. The office is located in Cape Town's central business district (CBD), an area surrounded by predominantly Black and Coloured communities, with Black residents forming the largest demographic in and around the city.

Question 2: Respondents Gender

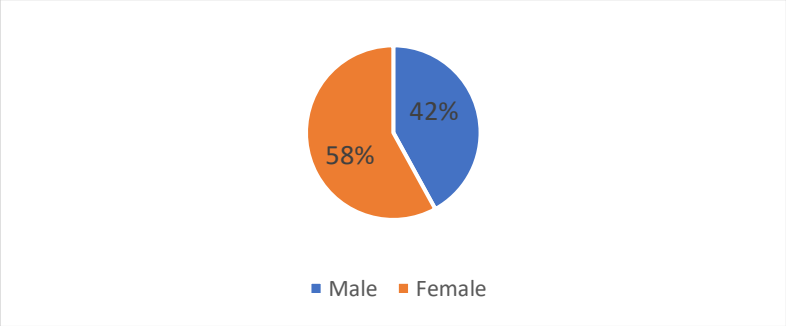

Figure 4.2: Gender

Of the overall target population, 58% were female respondents and 42% were male. The majority of retail outlets are managed by women. This imbalance may reflect the demographic trend in the targeted area, which is predominantly female, with more women willing to participate in the study.

Question 3: How old are you? Please indicate your age range below by ticking the appropriate box below.

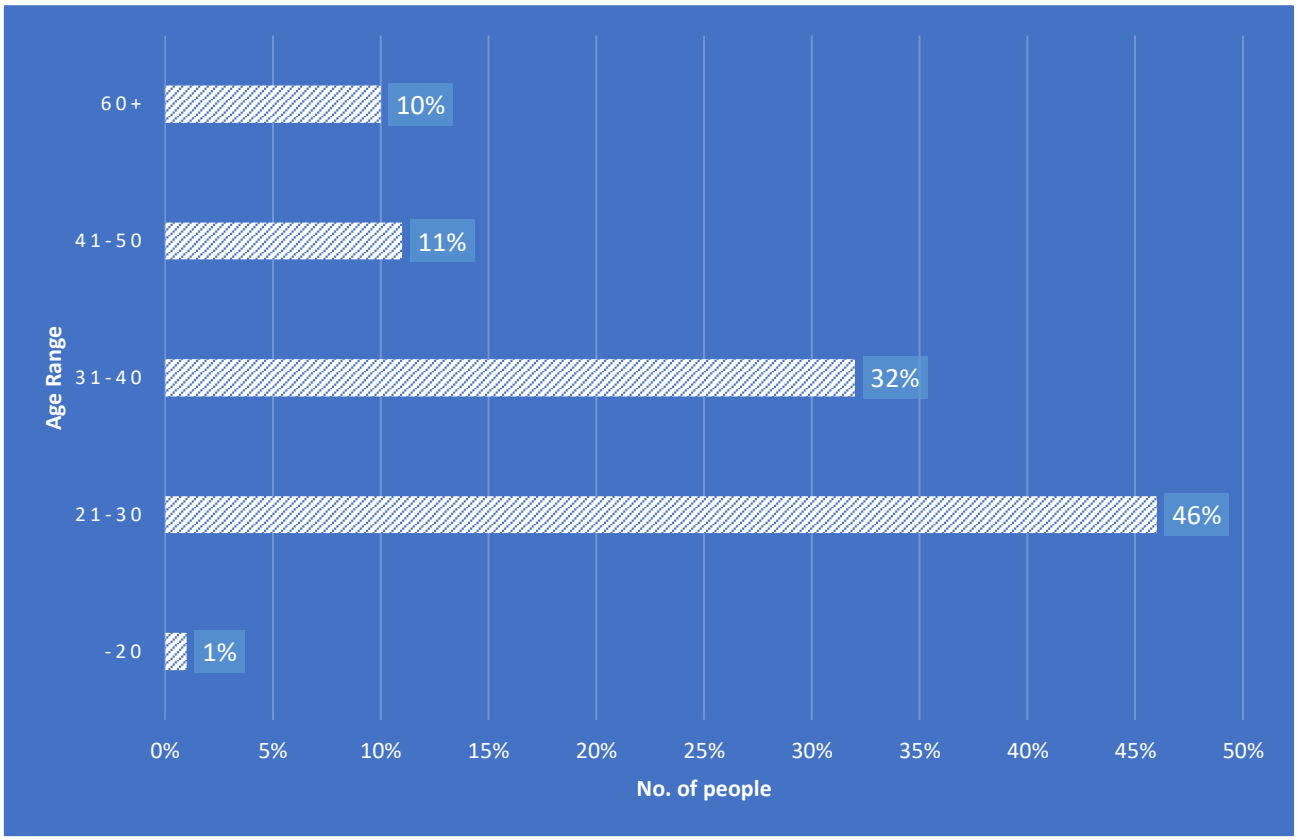

Figure 4.3: Age

As shown in the chart above, 1% of respondents were under 20 years old, 46% were aged 21 to 30, 32% were aged 31 to 40, 11% were between 41 and 50, and 10% were 60 years or older. The chart indicates that most participants in this study are between 21 and 30 years old, with relatively few aged 51 and above. This aligns well with the organisation's profile, suggesting potential growth for the younger employees in the 21–30 age range. This group is more adaptable to technology, particularly new developments like Artificial Intelligence, which assists in the ways of communicating and presenting information.

Question 4: Position in the Head Office

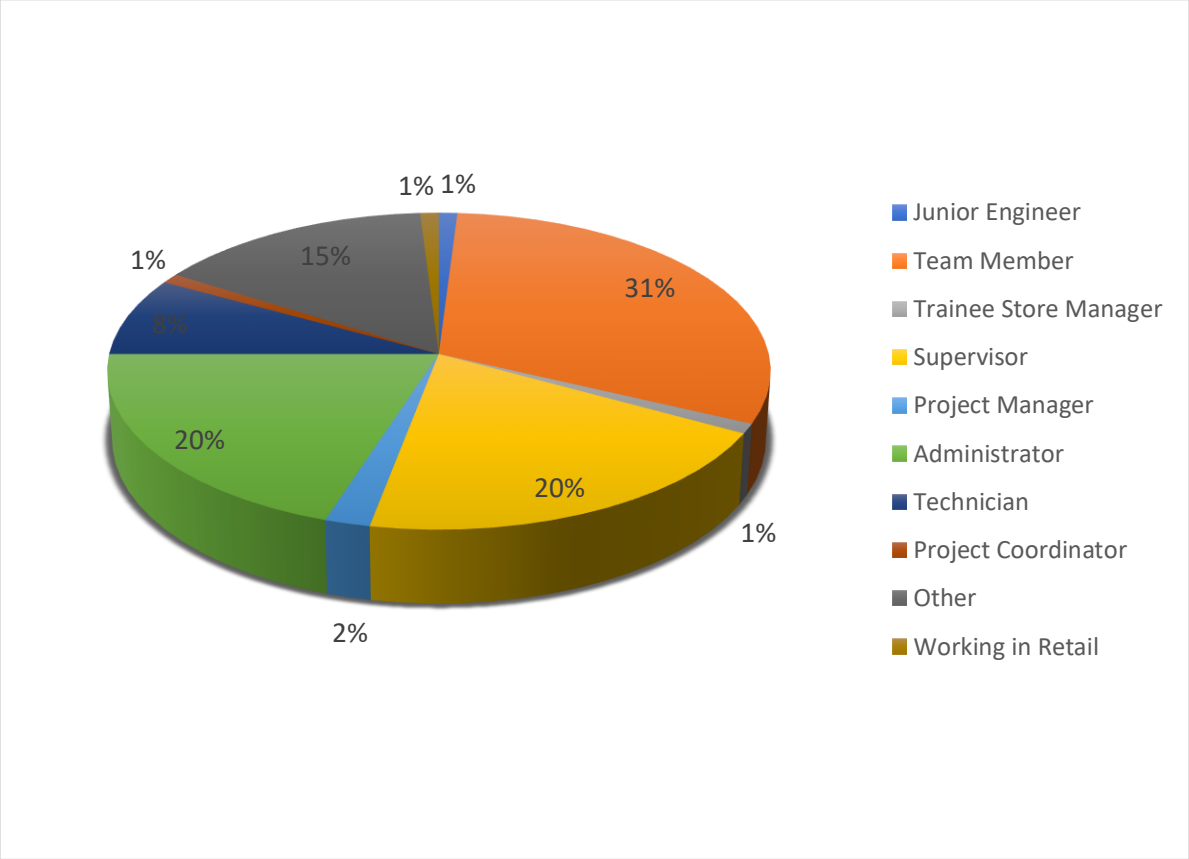

Figure 4.4: Position

The roles of respondents were distributed as follows: 31% were team members, 20% were administrators, 20% were supervisors, 15% selected 'Other', 8% were technicians, 2% were project managers, and 1% each were trainee store managers, junior engineers, and project coordinators. The chart illustrates that for a project to succeed, it should include a well-rounded team comprising project managers, coordinators, engineers, and administrators, who are responsible for digitalising information for record-keeping. Supervisors typically serve as resource allocators, ensuring that staff continue their day-to-day tasks, while team members are responsible for implementation.

Question 5: Job experience?

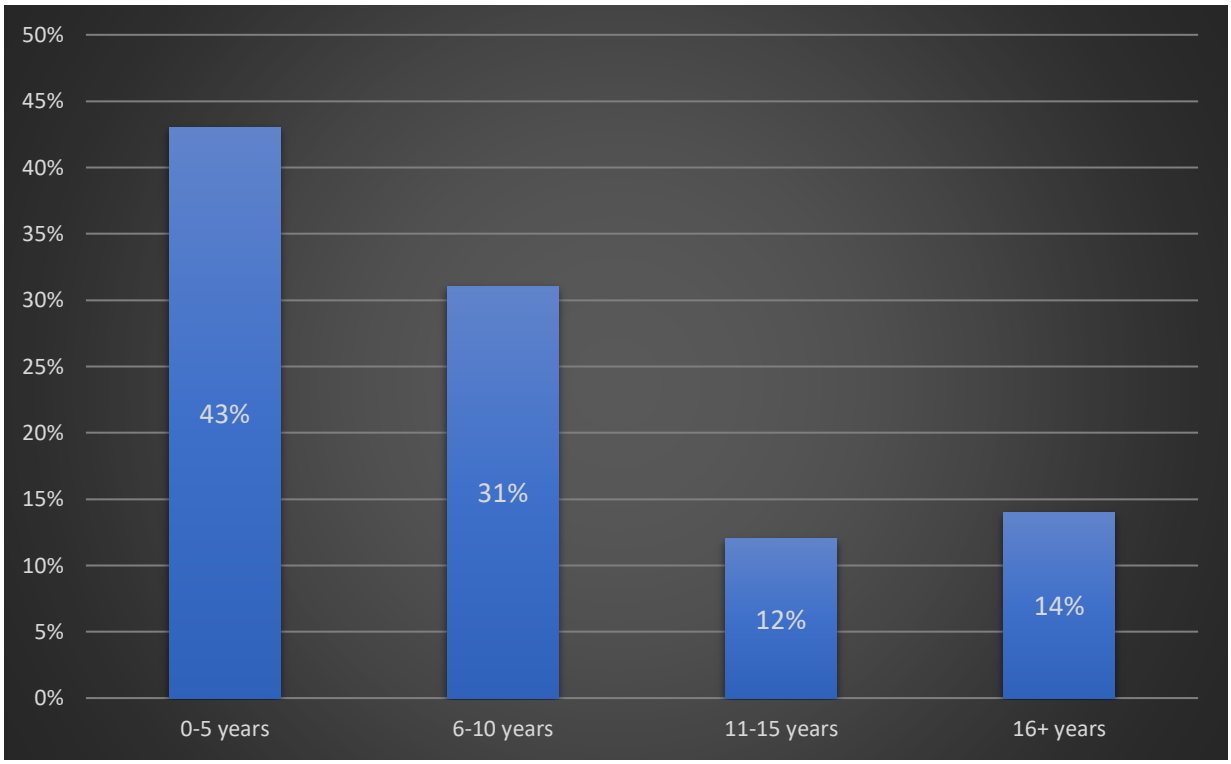

Figure 4.5: Length of work experience

The chart highlights the varying levels of experience among participants. It shows that 43% of respondents have 0–5 years of experience, 31% have 6–10 years, 12% have 11–15 years, and 14% have 16 or more years. This data aligns with the respondents' age distribution, where the majority are aged 21–30. The 0–5 years of experience confirms that many in this group are young professionals.

Question 6: Does your line manager have direct authority over you, or do you report to someone else?

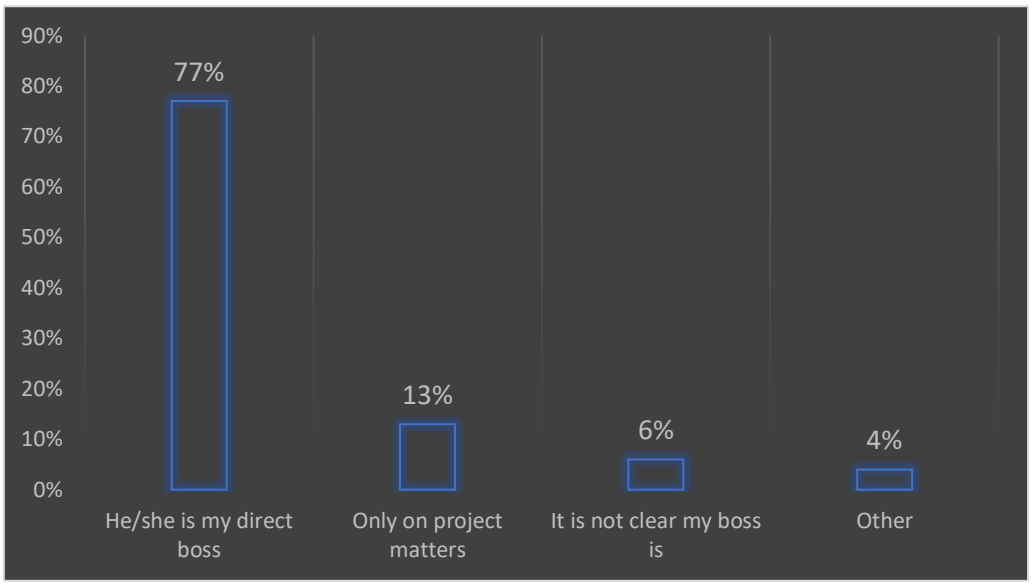

Figure 4.6: Chain of command

The objective was to assess whether respondents had been exposed to leadership characteristics in their workplace. This question helps determine the extent of the respondents' exposure to different leadership or management styles. The participants' responses are displayed in the bar graph below.

The results show that 77% of the respondents reported or are currently reporting directly to their supervisors; 13% reported or report only on project-related matters; 6% were uncertain about who their supervisors were; and 4% fell into other categories, such as reporting to senior management or similar.

Question 7: What kind of business/industry do you work in?

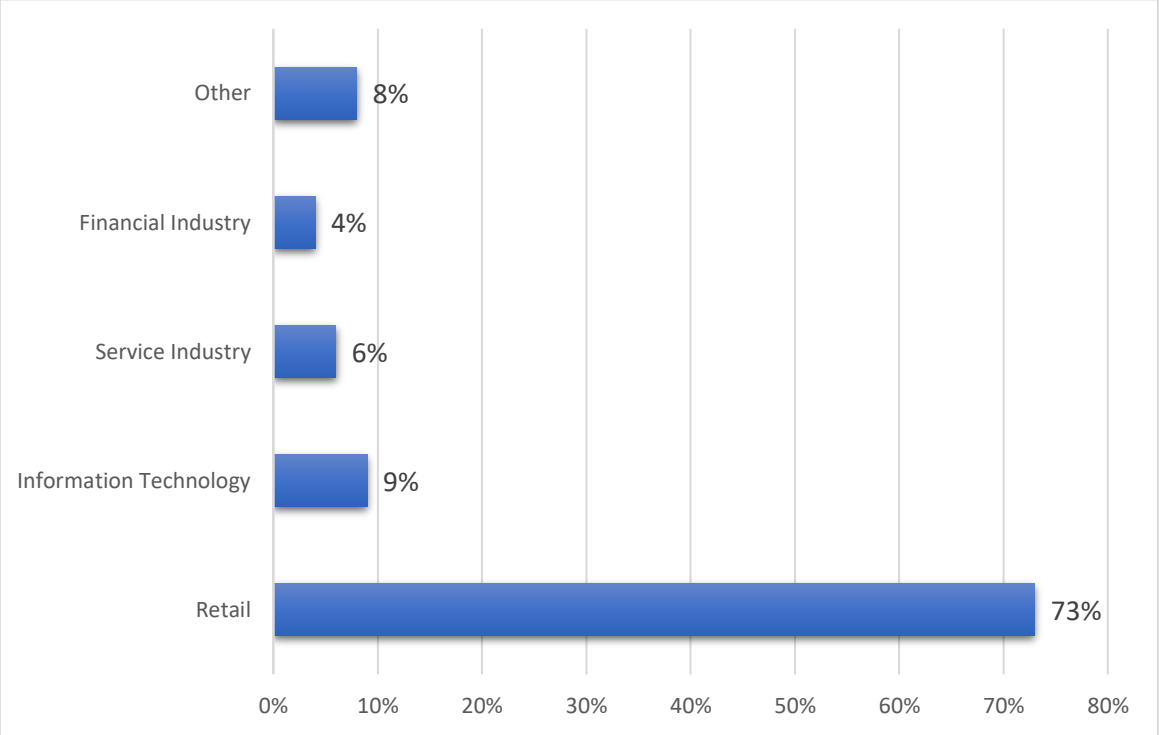

Figure 4.7: Industry

The majority of respondents, 73%, work in retail, which reflects the primary focus of this research. The respondents hold a variety of positions, offering a diversity of perspectives. This question was included because the researcher recognised that respondents come from different backgrounds and hold various roles within the retail industry, which may influence their viewpoints and perceptions. Additionally, the question aimed to define the demographic of the respondents. The study also found that 9% of respondents work in information technology, 6% in the service sector, 4% in the financial sector, and 8% in other fields. This variety of roles among those involved in retail projects provided a broad range of responses, helping to address the research objectives.

4.2.2 Section B: Open-ended questions

A Likert scale was utilised in this section to gauge the respondents' perceptions and opinions on specific statements derived from the research question, problem statement, and research objectives. The Likert scale ratings ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 = "strongly disagree", 2 = "disagree", 3 = "neutral", 4 = "agree", and 5 = "strongly agree". Respondents were asked to rate these statements based on their level of agreement or understanding. The same approach used in the Personal Information section is applied here, where each statement is presented as in the questionnaire, accompanied by a visual representation of the responses. The statements are repeated below.

IDENTIFYING COMMUNICATION

This was to rank how well the respondents understood the importance of communication, and the questions were constructed and arranged in a manner that the respondents could understand.

Statement 1: Good communication leads to a successful project.

This question was focused on figuring out whether the project manager and team know the success of projects is directly affected by communication – from a respondent's perspective/observation. The line graph below demonstrates the responses.

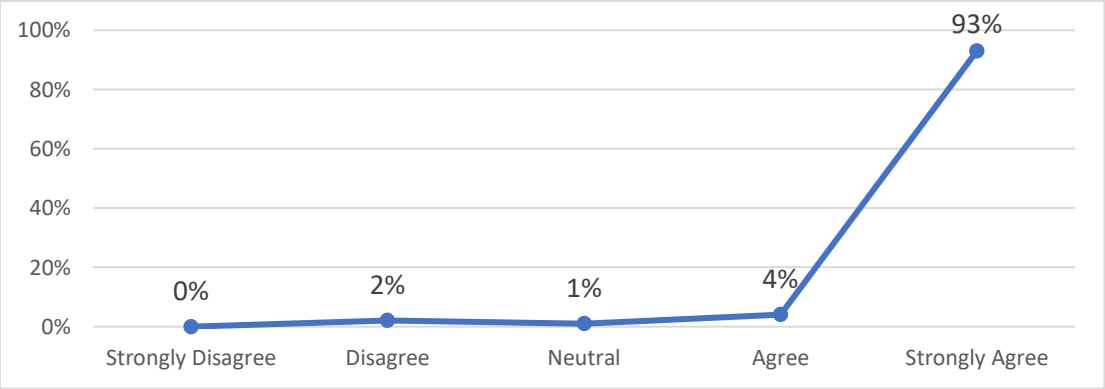

Figure 4.8: Responses to Statement 1

The majority of respondents, 93%, strongly agreed with this statement, while 4% agreed. A small portion, 1%, were neutral, and 2% disagreed, with none (0%) strongly disagreeing. This indicates that the project manager and the team understand the importance of communication for a project's success.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.88
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.50

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 4.88 (scoring is high). Satisfaction is evident that good communication leads to a successful project, while the standard deviation is 0.50, indicating a closer grouping to the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 2: Clear information helps the project team.

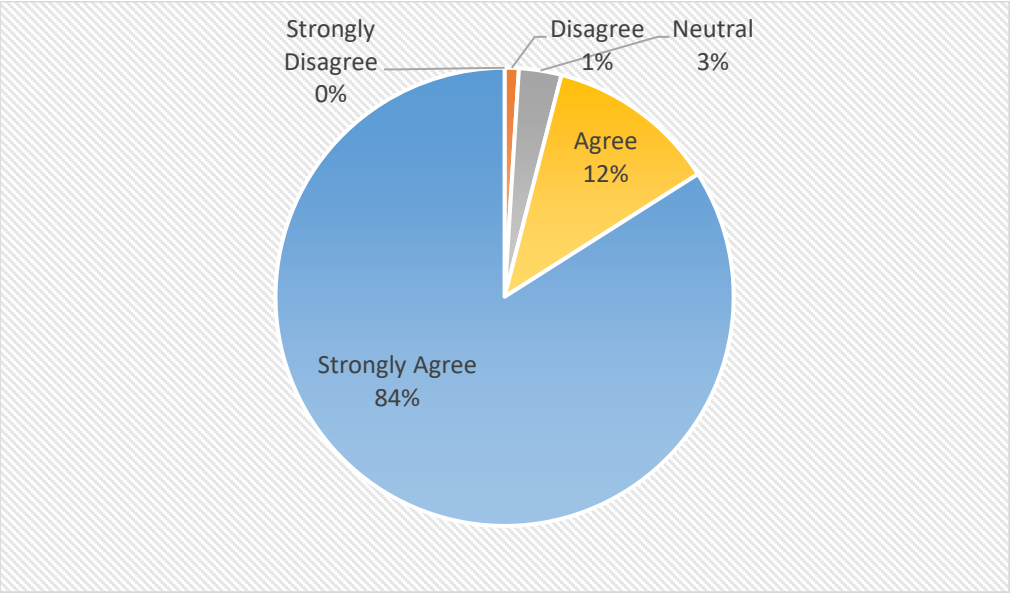

Figure 4.9: Responses to Statement 2

The highest proportion of respondents strongly agreed with this statement at 84%, followed by the second-highest proportion, which supported the agreement at 12%. There were 3% of respondents who were neutral, and 1% who disagreed with the statement. From this, we can conclude that both the project team and the project manager understand the importance of clear information in supporting the project team as a whole.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.79
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.54

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 4.79 (a very high score). It is evident from the participants that clear information helps project teams. The standard deviation is 0.54, indicating a closer grouping to the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 3: Project managers do not need to communicate with their team members.

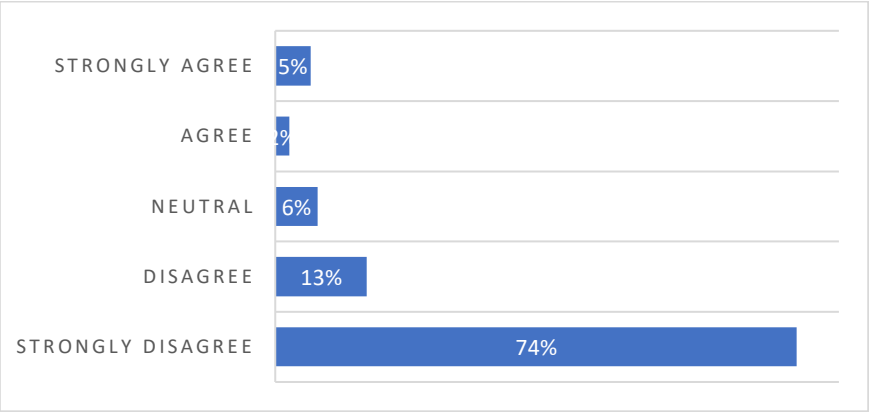

Figure 4.10: Responses to Statement 3

A total of 74% strongly disagreed with the statement that project managers do not need to communicate with the team. As shown in Figure 4.10, 13% also disagreed with this assertion. Meanwhile, 6% of respondents were neutral, 2% agreed, and 5% strongly agreed, further reinforcing the idea that effective communication from project managers is essential.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.51
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.05

The above is a descriptive analysis, with an average score of 1.51, indicating that satisfaction is rarely evident among participants. The standard deviation of 1.05 suggests a wider spread of responses around the mean or average of the data set. These findings demonstrate that participants place a high value on being communicated with and kept informed about project-related issues.

Statement 4: Leaders need to be effective in communication.

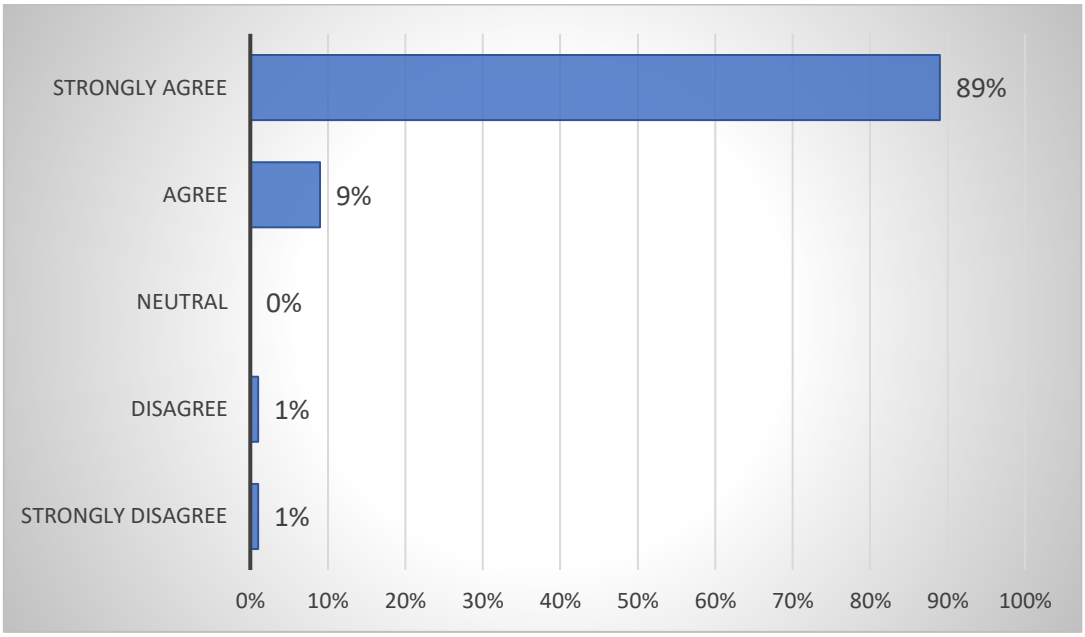

Figure 4.11: Responses to Statement 4

Furthermore, 98% of respondents affirm that leaders need to be effectively involved in project communication, while 2% (1% disagreeing and 1% strongly disagreeing) do not share this view. These results indicate that project team members expect leaders to communicate effectively.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.84
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.56

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 4.84, which indicates a very high level of satisfaction among the participants. It is evident that clear information greatly assists project teams. Additionally, the standard deviation of 0.56 suggests that the data points are closely grouped around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 5: Staff do not need to use a universal language to communicate.

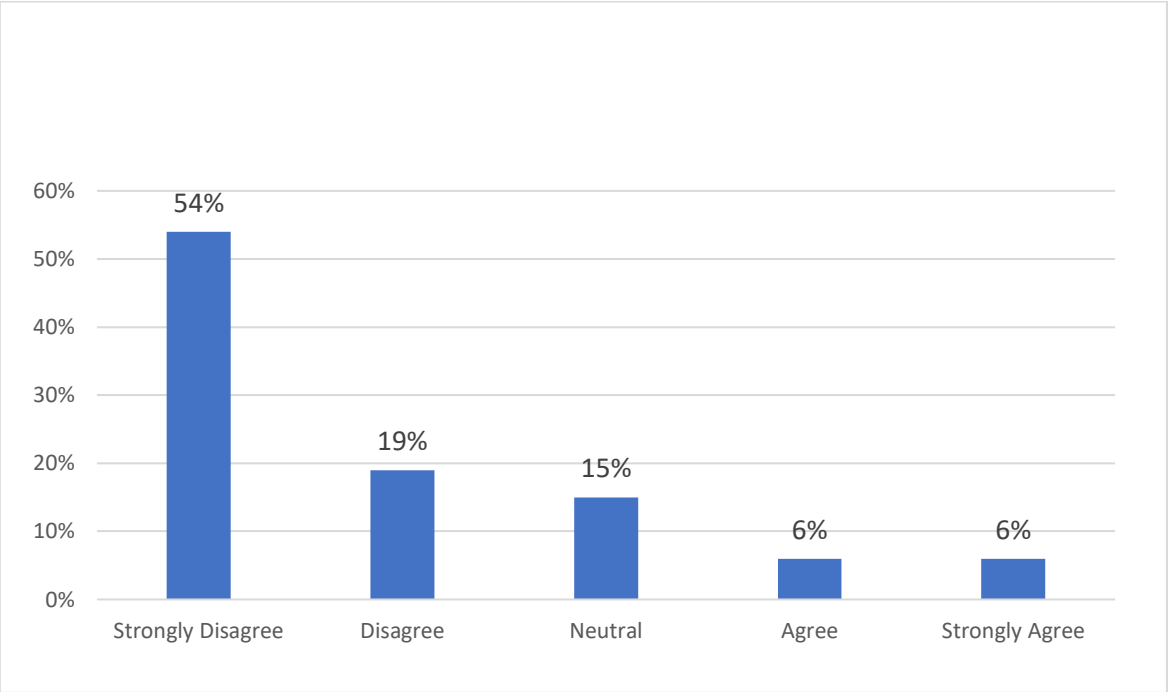

Figure 4.12: Responses to Statement 5

Moreover, 54% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, and 19% disagreed that staff do not need to speak in a universal language to communicate. A total of 12% agreed with the statement, while 15% were neutral.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.88
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.21

The average of the data sets is 1.88 (with little evidence of satisfaction), suggesting a significantly low score from the participants. Additionally, the standard deviation is 1.21, indicating a wider dispersion from the mean or average of the data set. These findings demonstrate that the participants place importance on the adoption of a universal language for effective communication in project settings. They disagree with the statement that there is no need to communicate using a shared universal language among themselves and the project manager.

Statement 6: Deliverables can be achieved without any soft skills such as communication.

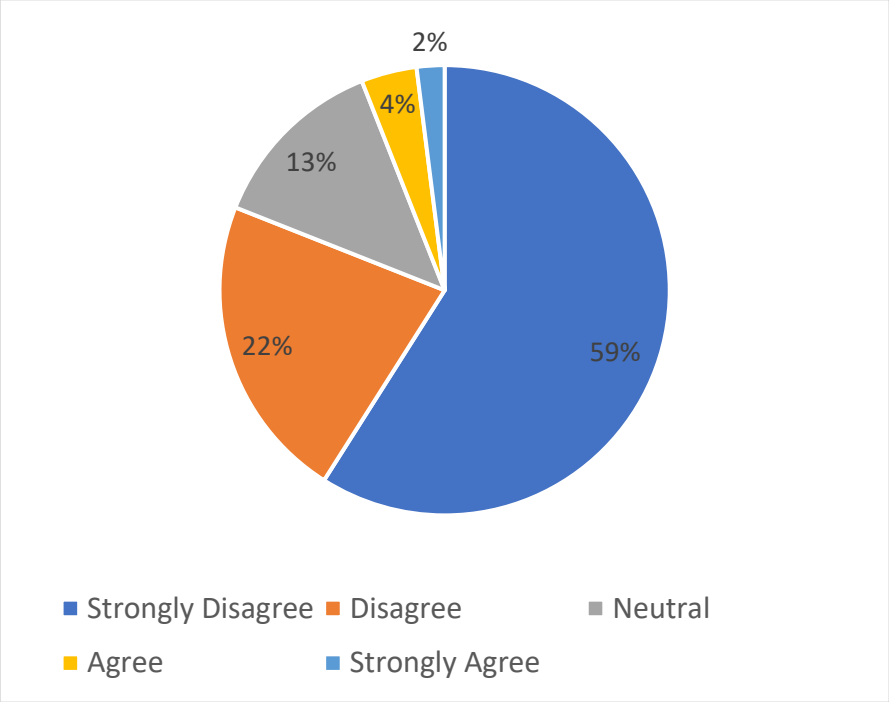

Figure 4.13: Responses to Statement 6

A total of 59% strongly disagreed with the assertion that project deliverables can be achieved without communicating with the team or stakeholders. Figure 4.13 demonstrates that 22% disagreed with the statement. Neutral responses accounted for 13% of respondents, while 2% strongly agreed and 4% agreed, suggesting that project managers do need to communicate with the team to realise the project objectives. Project deliverables can be categorised as tangible and intangible. Tangible project deliverables refer to project documents, such as the Project Plan, Reports, and minutes of meetings. Intangible project deliverables may include software being developed, among other things.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.91
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.22

The mean of the data sets is 1.91 (satisfaction seldom evident), which suggests a significant low scoring from participants. Additionally, the standard deviation of 1.22 indicates a wider spread in the grouping of data points around the mean or average of the data set. These findings highlight the participants' perception that effective communication plays a crucial role in ensuring the successful completion of deliverables. Without this important soft skill, the likelihood of project failure increases significantly.

Statement 7: Departments that tend to delay transferring information lead to financial losses in the business.

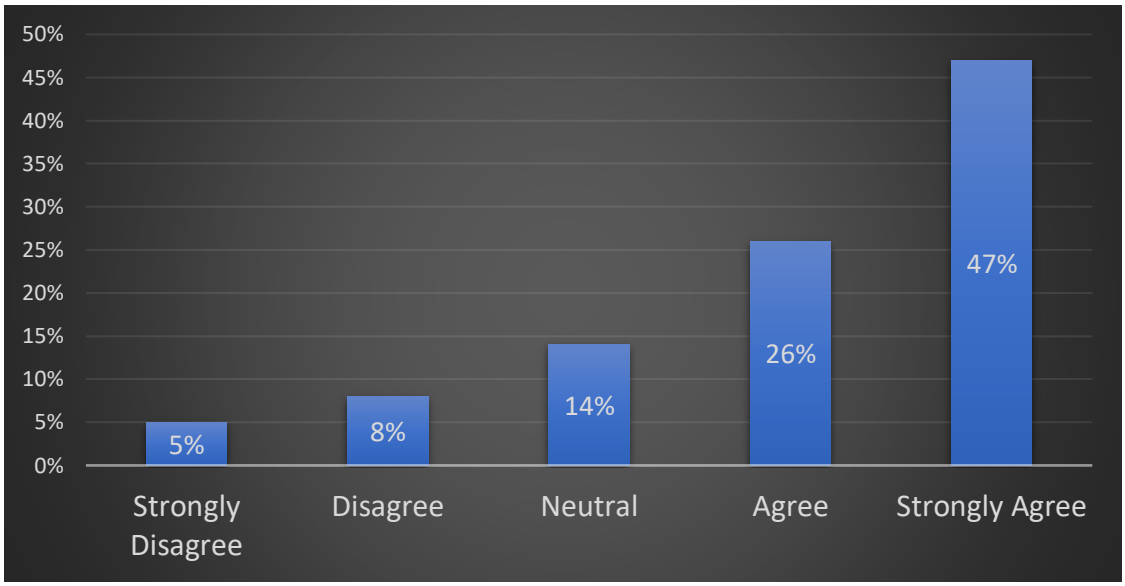

Figure 4.14: Responses to Statement 7

Neutral participants made up 14% of the total, while 13% disagreed with the notion that they would feel demotivated in the absence of timely information, with 5% strongly disagreeing and 8% disagreeing. In contrast, 47% strongly agreed, and 26% agreed with the statement. Therefore, no definitive conclusions can be drawn from this finding alone. The research aimed to highlight the importance of communication.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.02
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.18

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals that the average of the data sets is 4.02, indicating a high level of satisfaction. It is evident that delaying the transfer of information results in financial losses. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 1.18 suggests that the data points are spread out from the mean, reflecting the variability in the data set.

Statement 8: Conflicts can arise between clients and the organisation due to misunderstandings of instructions.

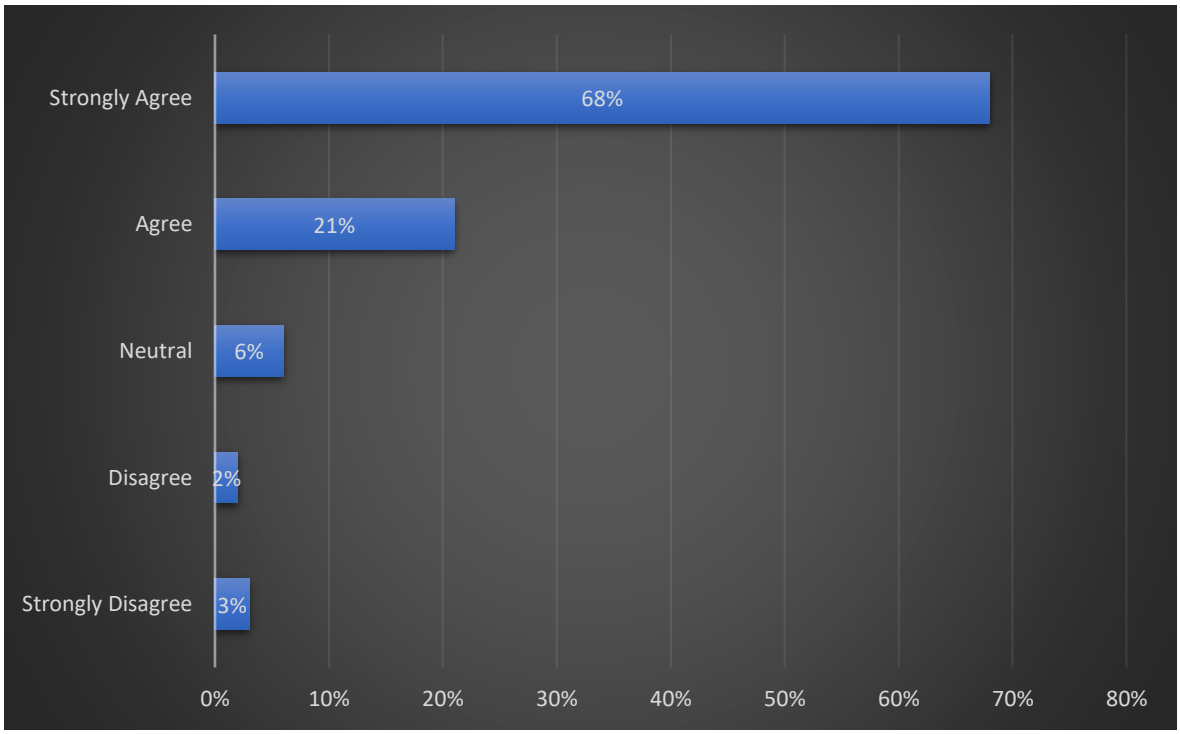

Figure 4.15: Responses to Statement 8

The largest group of respondents, 68%, strongly agreed with this statement, while 21% agreed. Meanwhile, 6% were neutral, 2% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed. This suggests that conflicts among stakeholders can be exacerbated by unclear instructions both within and outside the organisation.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.49
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.93

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 4.49, indicating a very high level of satisfaction. It is evident that conflicts arise during projects between clients when the project team misunderstands instructions from clients. Additionally, the standard deviation is 0.93, which suggests that the data points are closely grouped around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 9: Feedback is not vital during project execution.

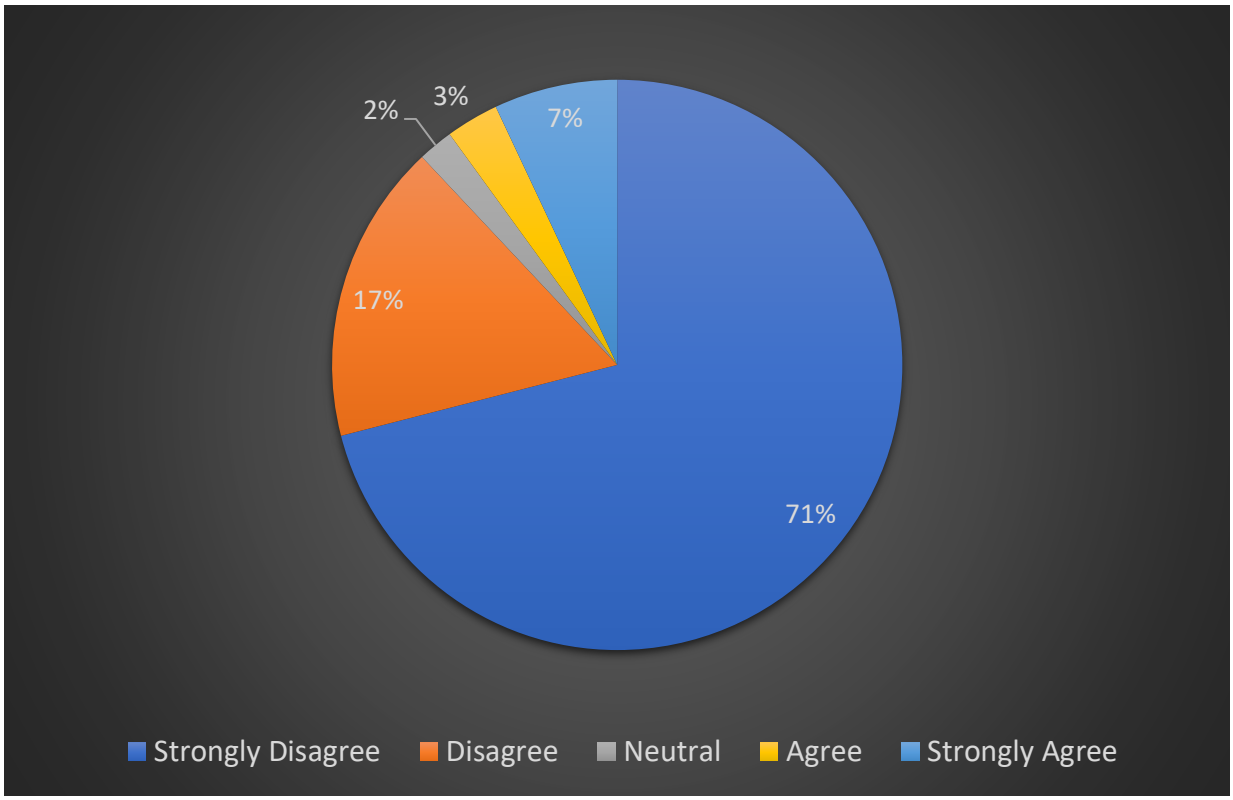

Figure 4.16: Responses to Statement 9

The graph above illustrates how participants view the importance of feedback. In that, 71% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 17% disagreed, 2% were neutral, and 10% agreed. The responses highlight that feedback is essential for satisfying both internal and external stakeholders. Feedback serves as a driving factor for project teams, whether it is related to performance or issues raised during the project's lifecycle.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.58
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.15

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals an average of 1.58 (indicating a low score) for the data sets. The presence of limited satisfaction suggests that feedback is crucial during project execution. Additionally, the standard deviation of 1.15 indicates a wider spread of data points from the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 10: Internal communication that is confusing does not affect the outcomes of projects.

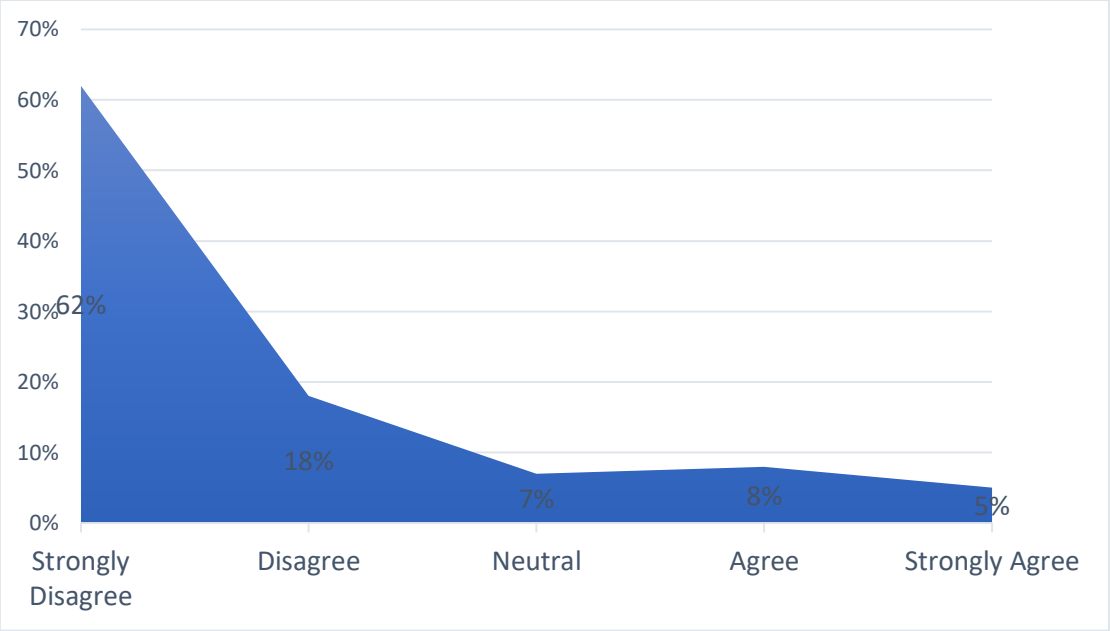

Figure 4.17: **Responses to Statement 10**

A total of 80% of respondents disagreed with the statement (18% disagreed and 62% strongly disagreed). Meanwhile, 7% were neutral, and 13% agreed (8% agreed and 5% strongly agreed). These results suggest that project team members view clear internal communication as essential for successful project outcomes.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.76
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.19

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals that the average of the data sets is 1.76, indicating a low score. It also suggests that satisfaction is rarely apparent when internal communication is confusing, which in turn affects the outcomes of the project. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 1.19 indicates that the data points are more widely dispersed around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 11: New developments during implementation need to be communicated.

Projects begin with drafted plans, but when deviations occur – known as scope creep – certain stakeholders must be informed. The team then develops a contingency plan to address the issue or mitigate the risk.

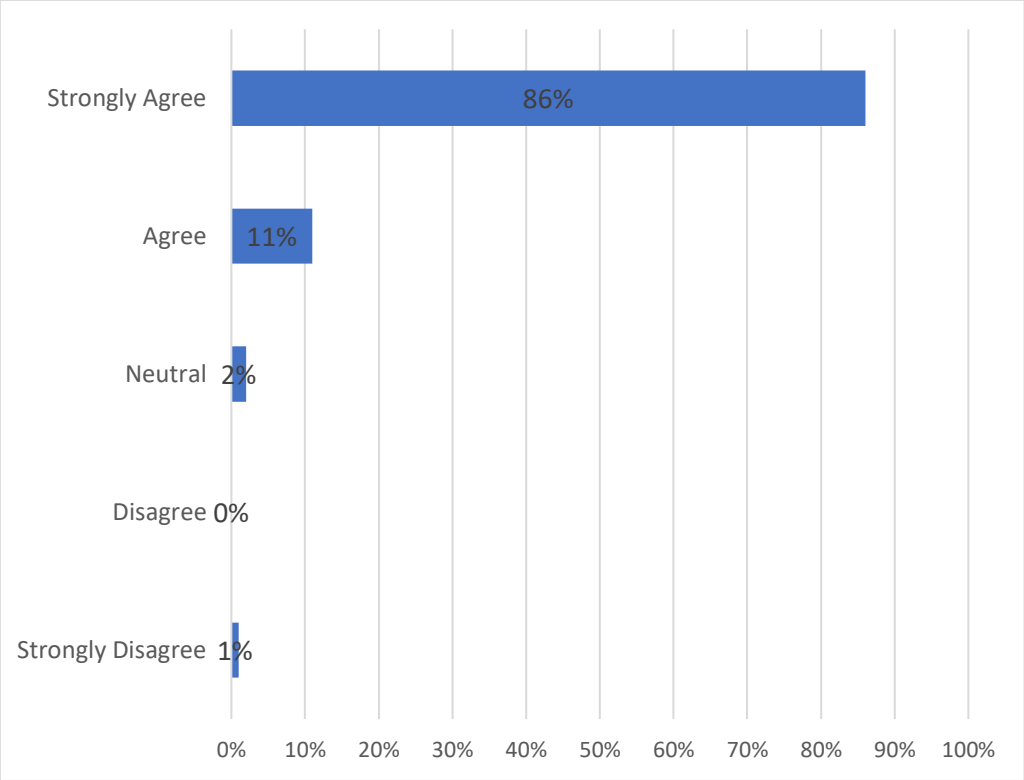

Figure 4.18: Responses to Statement 11

Based on the chart, it is clear that the majority of respondents support the statement, with 86% strongly agreeing and 11% agreeing. Only 2% were neutral, and 1% strongly disagreed. This suggests that continuous information transfer about new developments is essential during project execution.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.81
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.56

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals that the average of the data sets is 4.81, indicating a very high level of satisfaction. Additionally, it is evident that effective communication is required for new developments during implementation. The standard deviation of 0.56 suggests that the data points in the set are closely grouped around the mean.

Statement 12: Important information about the progress of projects should only be limited to senior management.

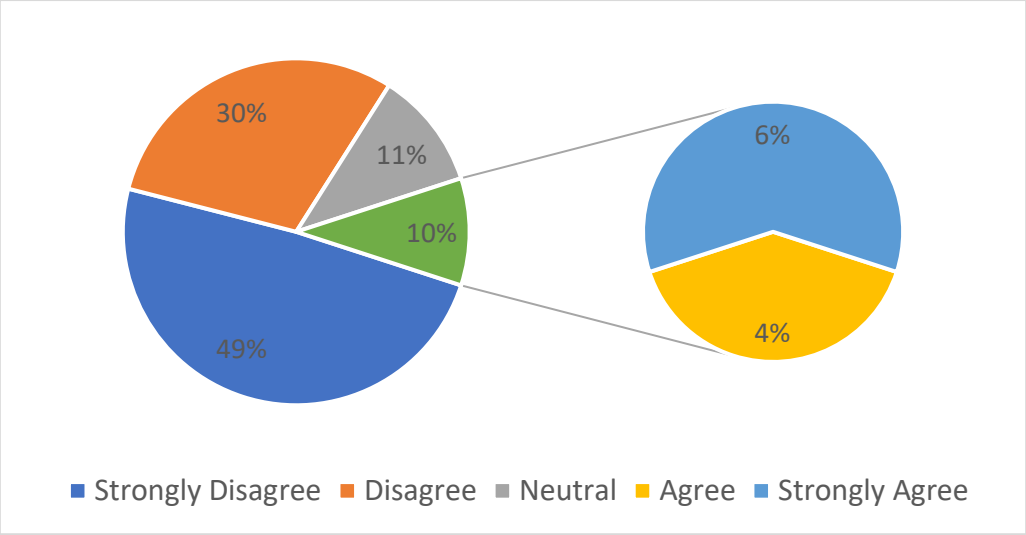

Figure 4.19: Responses to Statement 12

A total of 79% of respondents disagreed with the statement (49% strongly disagreed, 30% disagreed), while 11% were neutral. Only 10% agreed (6% strongly agreed, 4% agreed). The results indicate that the majority of respondents value being updated on critical project progress, which serves as a motivator for the project team.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.88
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.14

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 1.88 (which indicates a low score). Satisfaction is rarely evident, suggesting that participants disagree with the given statement. Additionally, the standard deviation is 1.14, indicating a wide range of values away from the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 13: Project team performance is not affected by poor communication.

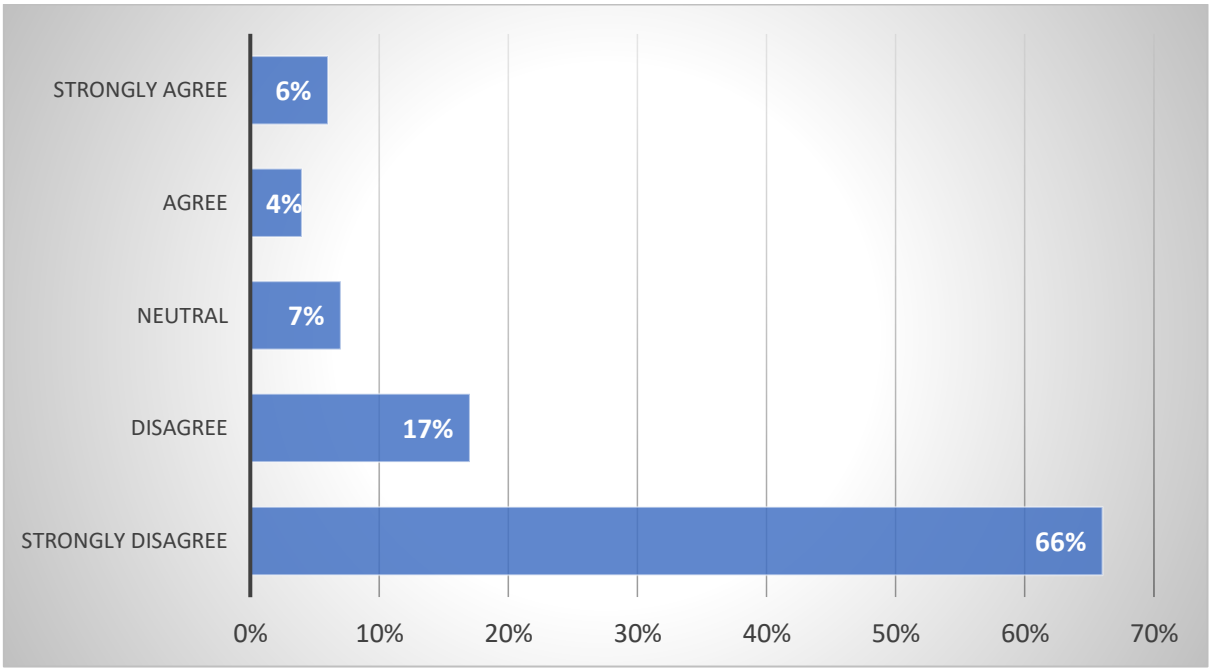

Figure 4.20: Responses to Statement 13

According to the chart, 66% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, and 17% also disagreed that performance is unaffected by poor communication. Meanwhile, 7% remained neutral, and 10% agreed (6% strongly agreed, 4% agreed). With 83% disagreeing, the survey confirms that poor communication is a key factor impacting project success.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	1.67
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.16

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 1.67 (indicating low scores). Satisfaction is rarely evident, as participants disagree that project team performance is affected by poor communication. The standard deviation is 1.16, indicating a wide spread in the grouping around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 14: Further training is needed when doing presentations during the initiation phase in projects at the head office

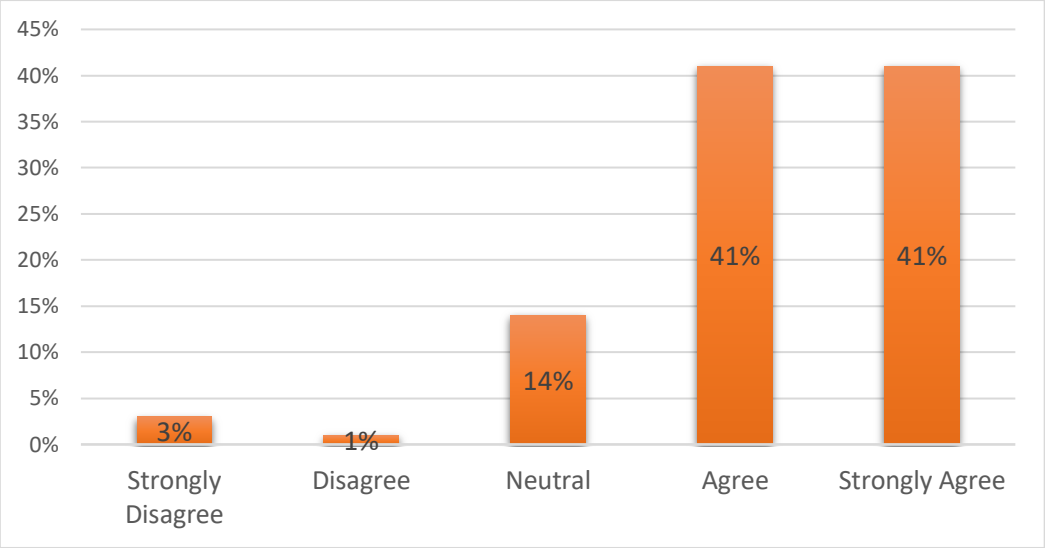

Figure 4.21: Responses to Statement 14

The chart highlights a strong need for training in presenting information or projects during the inception phase. A total of 82% of respondents agreed that further training is necessary for presenting planned work, with 41% strongly agreeing and 41% agreeing. Meanwhile, 14% were neutral, and 4% disagreed with the statement.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$Mean = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.16
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.92

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 4.16, indicating high levels of satisfaction. It is evident that participants agree on the need for further training when conducting presentations during the initiation phase in projects at the head office. The standard deviation of 0.92 suggests a close grouping around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 15: The head office staff is always easily understood when communicating with one another.

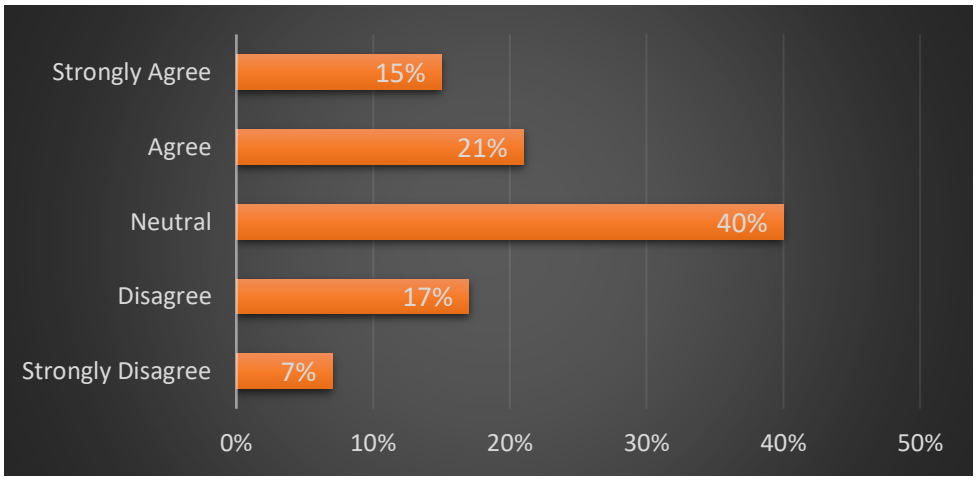

Figure 4.22: Responses to Statement 15

The findings were surprising, with 40% of respondents being indecisive. Of those who felt they are not easily understood when communicating, 24% disagreed (7% strongly disagreed, 17% disagreed). Meanwhile, 36% agreed with the statement. The conclusion suggests that respondents feel they are not easily understood when communicating, possibly due to unclear instructions or accents.

Formula	**Descriptive Analysis**	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	3.20
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.11

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 3.2, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction. This is evident from the statement provided. Additionally, the standard deviation is 1.11, suggesting that the data points are spread out from the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 16: The project team can only be confident if they know what is expected from them during the forming stage from the plan they receive and the communication thereof.

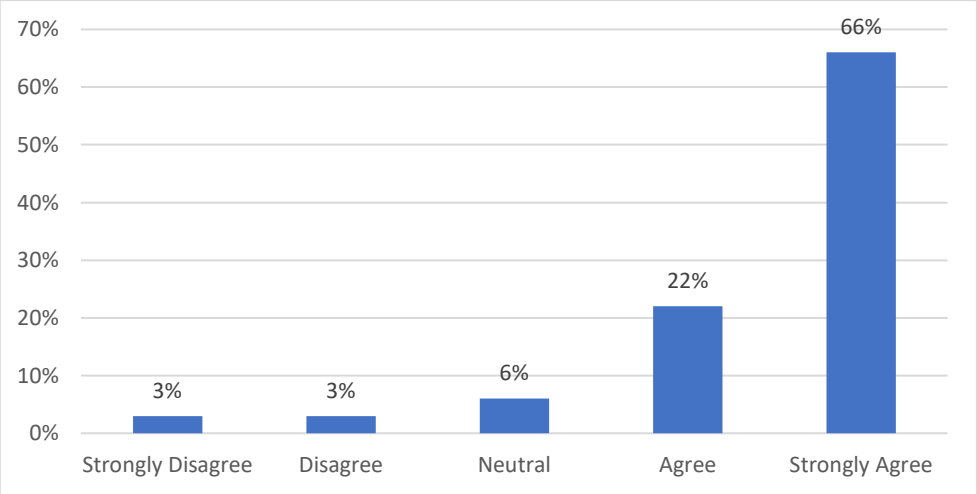

Figure 4.23: Responses to Statement 16

The findings are clear: 88% agree that confidence comes from an informed workforce, particularly during team formation. Of the respondents, 66% strongly agreed, 22% agreed, 6% were neutral, while 3% disagreed, and another 3% strongly disagreed.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.45
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.96

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 4.45 (which indicates high scoring). Satisfaction is alternatively evident, suggesting that confidence is linked to being sure of the expectations in the given role during project execution. The standard deviation is 0.96, indicating closer grouping to the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 17: Designing a project communication plan requires intelligence

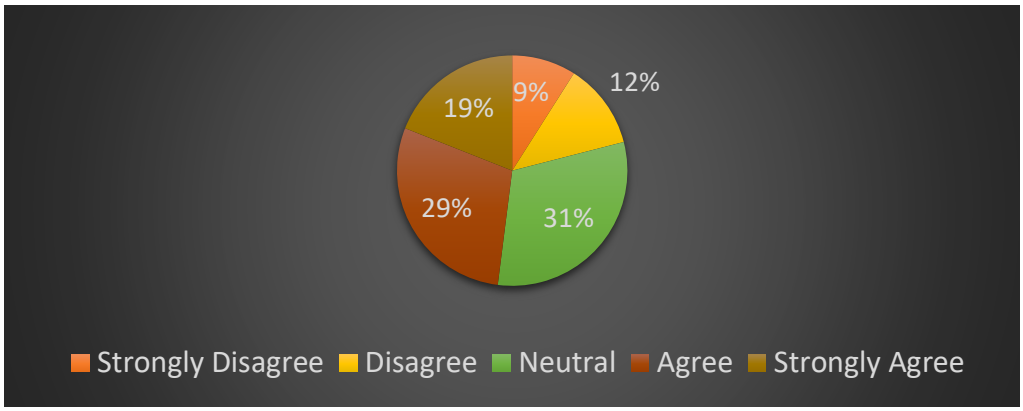

Figure 4.24: Responses to Statement 17

The survey results show that 31% of participants were neutral, while 48% agreed with the statement (29% strongly agreed, 19% agreed). On the other hand, 12% disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed. In conclusion, although the majority remained neutral, a significant 48% acknowledged that designing project communication plans requires a certain level of intelligence.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	3.37
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.19

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 3.37 (indicating high scoring) and satisfaction is clearly evident in relation to the statement above. Additionally, the standard deviation is 1.19, which suggests that the data points are spread out from the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 18: Tools and techniques for information distribution vary from project to project.

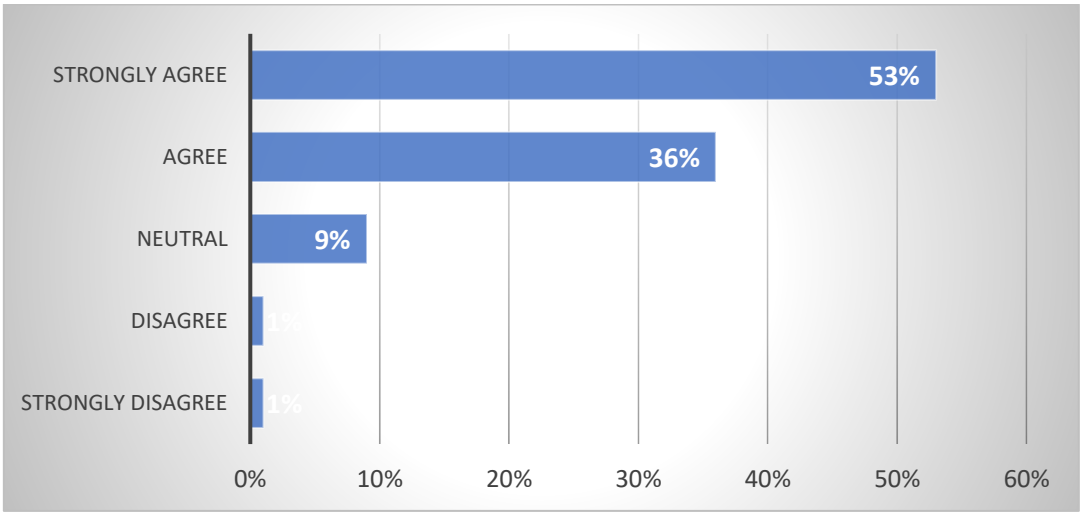

Figure 4.25: Responses to Statement 18

The figure above shows that 89% of respondents agreed with the statement (53% strongly agreed, 36% agreed). Meanwhile, 9% were indecisive, and 1% each strongly disagreed and disagreed. The survey results indicate that respondents are well-informed about the various tools and techniques, which differ from one another.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.39
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.78

The above is a descriptive analysis, indicating that the average of the data sets is 4.39, which suggests high scoring satisfaction. This is further supported by the statement above. Additionally, the standard deviation is 0.78, indicating that the data points are closely grouped around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 19: Project reports are a means of communicating in projects

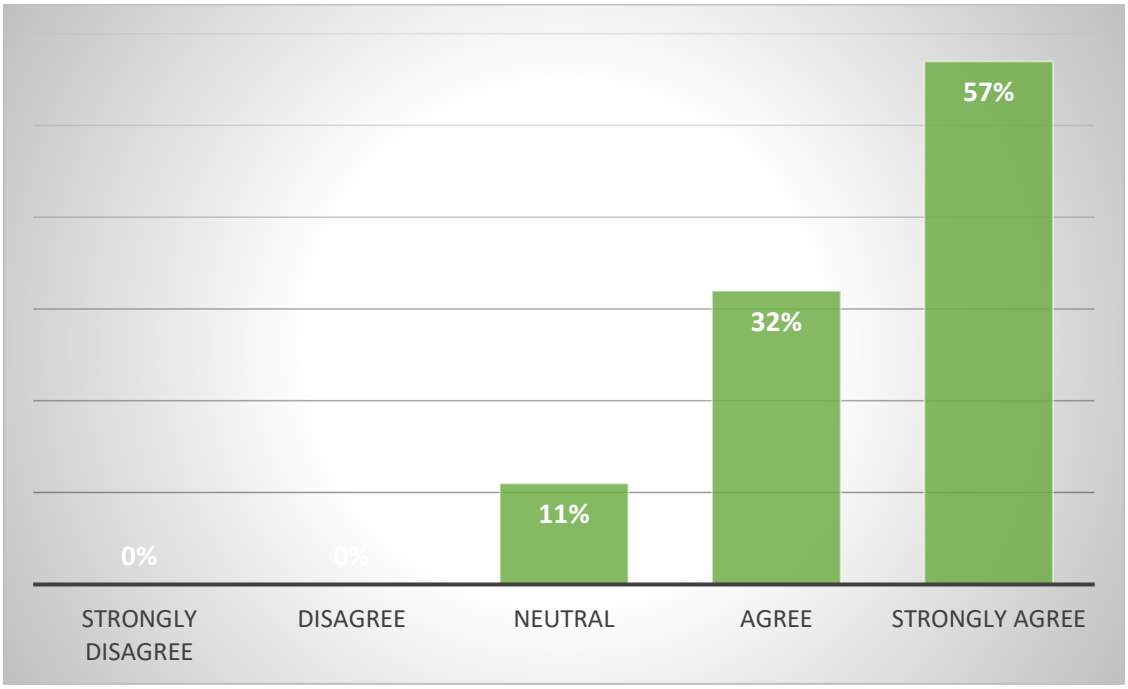

Figure 4.26: Responses to Statement 19

The statement above focused on the technical aspect of the project, specifically project reports. A significant number of participants agreed, with 57% strongly agreeing and 32% agreeing. Additionally, 11% were neutral, and no participants disagreed with the statement.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.46
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.69

The above is a descriptive analysis, whereas the average of the data sets is 4.46 (indicating high scoring). Satisfaction is alternatively evident in the statement above, while the standard deviation is 0.69, indicating a closer grouping to the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 20: Project documentation serves as a reference for future projects.

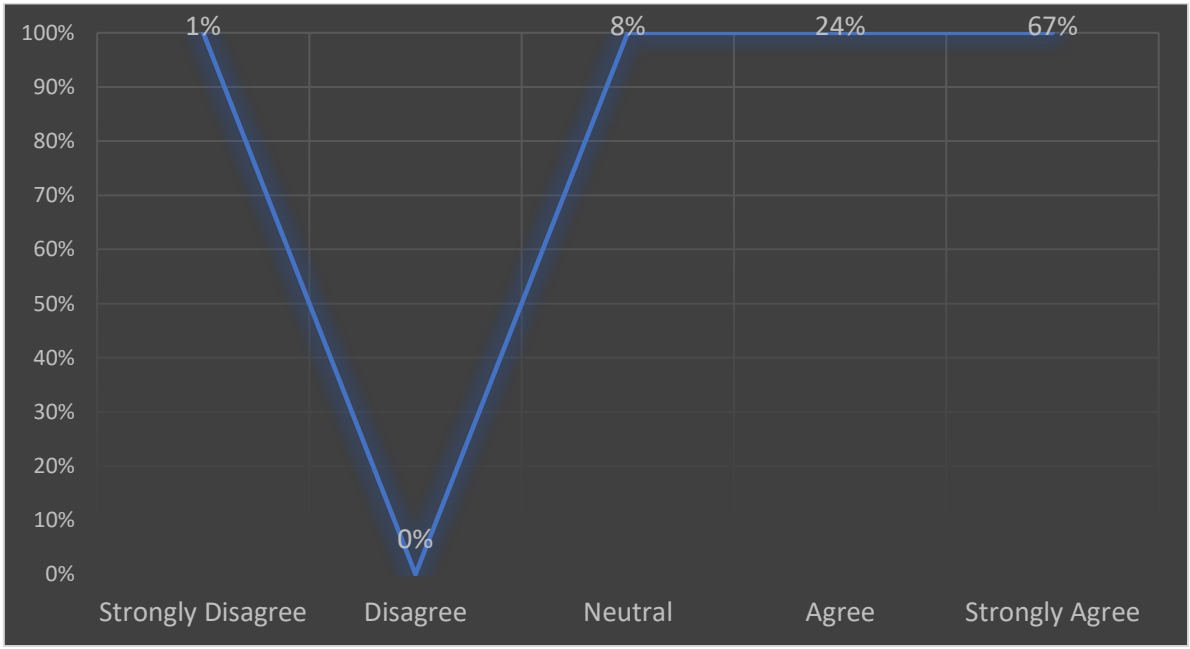

Figure 4.27: Responses to Statement 20

A best practice in project management is documenting lessons learned from each project to inform future, similar projects. This helps identify challenges, key stakeholders, and refine cost estimations. In the survey, 91% of respondents supported the importance of documenting project work, 8% were neutral, and 1% strongly disagreed.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.56
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.73

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. The average of the data sets is 4.56, indicating a high level of satisfaction. This is further supported by the agreement amongst participants regarding the statement above. Additionally, the standard deviation of 0.73 suggests that the data points are closely grouped around the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 21: Line managers always acknowledge a job well done and give staff feedback on their performance.

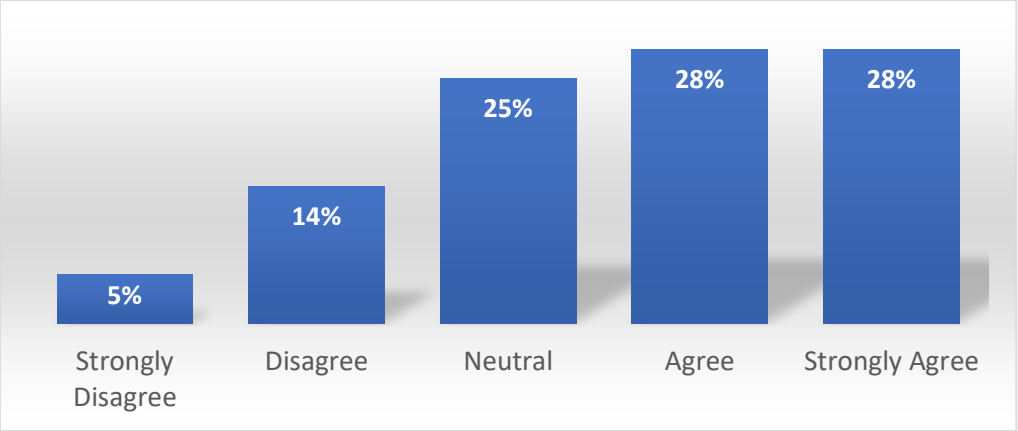

Figure 4.28: Responses to Statement 21

The results indicate positive leadership, though there is room for improvement in management. A total of 56% of participants felt acknowledged for a job well done, with 28% strongly agreeing and 28% agreeing. Meanwhile, 25% remained neutral, 14% disagreed, and 5% strongly disagreed that they receive recognition for good performance.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	3.6
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$	Standard Deviation	1.18

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals that the average of the data sets is 3.6, indicating a high level of satisfaction. This finding supports the statement mentioned earlier. Moreover, the standard deviation of 1.18 suggests that the data points are spread out from the mean or average of the data set.

Statement 22: The systems used such as SAP enhance work productivity

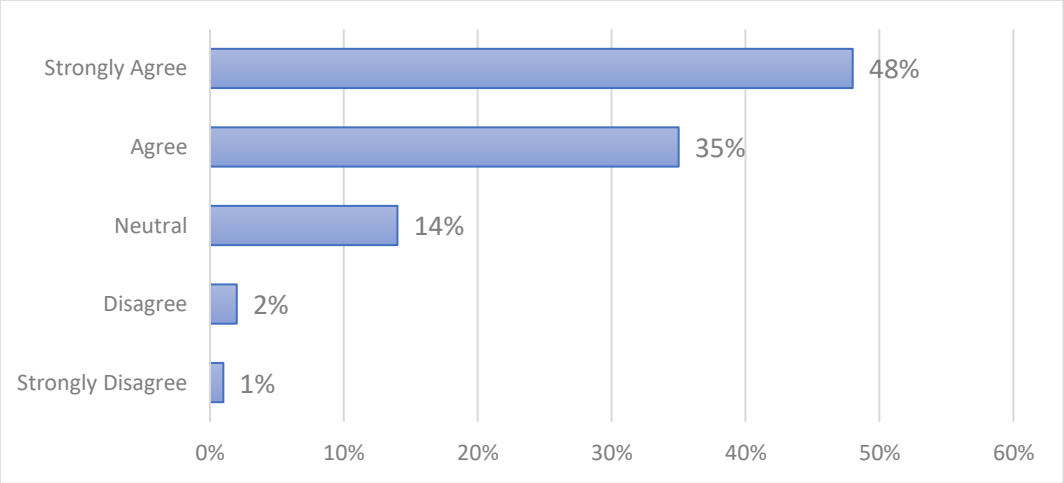

Figure 4.29: Responses to Statement 22

A total of 83% of respondents agreed with the statement, likely due to the high reliance on SAP's reporting features, particularly its strengths in cost and scheduling. Of these, 48% strongly agreed, and 35% agreed. Meanwhile, 14% remained neutral, 2% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed.

Formula	Descriptive Analysis	
$\text{Mean} = \sum x_i / n$	Mean	4.27
$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$	Standard Deviation	0.85

The above analysis is descriptive in nature. It reveals that the average of the data sets is 4.27, indicating high levels of satisfaction. This is further supported by the relatively low standard deviation of 0.85, suggesting that the data points are closely clustered around the mean or average.

4.2.3 Section C: Open-ended question

Only a small number of respondents (96 for question 1 and 94 for question 2) provided the requested number of items. However, the responses were grouped by similarity, and the details are summarised below:

QUESTION 1: What communication channels are used to transfer information?

Table 4.2: Responses regarding communication channels used to transfer information

Channels	No. of Respondents
Email	10
WeTransfer	1
Virtual Calls	2
Magnetic App	1
Google Doc	1
WhatsApp	15
Meetings	1
Teams	3
Cell phone	1
Taskmasters Doc	1
Face to face	1
Cloud Storage	2
Google Drive	3
Social Media	4
Workplace	2
Verbal interactions	5
Presentations	1
MS Project	1
Telephone	1
Text Message	5
SAP Business Intelligence	1
Documentation	5
Physical Printing Reports	5
Notice Board Information	1
Stakeholder Meetings	5
Excel Spreadsheets	11
Webinar Meetings	1

Collaborative CRMA Tool	2
SAP Portfolio Project Management	3
Visio	1

Total number of respondents was 96. Majority of the participants responded by indicating WhatsApp as a channel used to transfer information, while some responses were leaning towards Microsoft excel as a channel utilised and emails also having a large number indicating that is used to communicate. The rest of the responses were scatted around technical channels of transferring information such as Viso, SAP Portfolio Project Management etc. It can be concluded that Project managers need to establish WhatsApp groups as an additional means to transfer project reports and adding emails for record purposes and technical reports for technical teams.

Question 2: What contributes to effective communication during projects?

Table 4.3: Responses regarding factors that contribute to effective communication during project information

Contributing factors to effective communication	No. of respondents
Clear and correct with attention to detail.	1
Awareness, agility, consistent communication and collaboration.	1
Emails and meetings.	1
Clear message, active listening, and feedback from the team.	1
Proper feedback to streamline the process.	1
Communication.	1
Clear instructions	1
Respect.	1
Regular feedback and status meetings.	1
Clear communication channels and using project management tools.	1
Regular meetings for project progress.	1
Establishing appropriate methods of communicating considering stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.	1
Giving feedback and the right information	1

Transparency, clear instruction and language, clear goals, regular updates and feedback, acknowledgement, active listening, and progress reporting.	1
Policies and systems that are in place.	1
Having regular touch-base sessions, reassuring team members that managers are always open to hearing about progress. Monthly meetings are also a necessity to ensure the team is aware of progress, snags, and areas of improvement.	1
Clear objectives and ensure that everyone understands the goals and timeline given for the project.	1
Productivity.	1
Feedback	1
A clear understanding of the project plans and an effective team that works together to achieve the success of the project.	1
Clear language.	1
Regular communication between the project team and manager.	1
Clear lines of communication.	1
Jobs.	1
Continuous engagements and reporting sessions, including meeting updates.	1
Transparency.	1
Openness.	1
Listening to feedback.	1
Clear scope.	1
Regular meetings for performance updates.	
Constant updates on progress.	1
1. Project Management Team Meetings. 2. Internal and External Stakeholder updates meetings	1
Weekly check-ins and regular meetings allow everyone to speak and voice concerns or ask questions and listen to what they have to say.	1
1. Meetings 2. Planning sessions	1
Clear instructions.	1
1. Use of understood language 2. Project Team Meetings	1

Report Writing, Site visits, PowerPoint Presentations.	1
Team meetings.	1
Team training. Use of universal language. Team building activities.	1
Team building programmes Listening to everyone's views.	1
Feedback.	1
Attentive listening and transparency.	1
Regular meetings to align on project status.	1
Good teamwork, dedication, and having small meetings now and then just to get people together to get used to each other so that it can be easy to communicate with each other	1
Transparency and trust.	1
Ensuring that everyone understands what is expected of them and implementing better ways to help meet their expectations.	1
Objectives of the project being properly laid to all participants in the planning phase	
Planning.	1
Teamwork, participation, and collaboration.	1
Clear, concise communication. Empathy and patience, as well as check-ins to see if the team is managing and, if there are any follow-up questions.	1
Knowledge.	1
To listen, email, share project goals, keep everyone updated, be clear, feedback.	1
Good performance.	1
Target tracker sheets.	1
Check-in.	1
Teamwork.	1
M & E tools.	1
Having regular meetings with stakeholders; being clear about the objectives and clearing misunderstandings.	1
Transparency.	1
Debrief.	1
Clear information about the project.	1
Constant meetings and discussions using media such as texting.	1

Teamwork and feedback.	1
Clear picture demonstrations.	1
Clear combination of instructions and expectations.	1
Regular updates.	1
Clear expectations, goal setting.	1
Understand what's expected.	1
A high level of continuous engagement and feedback.	1
Members' point of view.	1
Feedback on performance.	1
Clear instructions and message.	1
Good channel of communication.	1
Regular meetings to go over performance.	1
Clear instructions and roles.	1
Regularly scheduled progress meetings.	1
Routine check-in.	1
Regular check-ups with the project team.	1
Regular feedback on performance.	1
Regular communication.	1
Teamwork.	1
Consistency in providing feedback.	1
Timeously communicating.	1
Morning meetings.	1
Constant meetings and engagements with stakeholders.	1
Constant communication.	1
Feedback.	1
Regular PMO meetings.	1
Regular communication between the project team and manager.	1
Clear instructions.	1
Teamwork.	1
Clear instructions.	1
Transparency.	1
Teamwork and collaboration.	1
Clear instructions.	1

The total number of respondents was 94. The above is a clear indication of what needs to be in place in order to establish a conducive environment that will enable a team that is informed

and know what is expected of them to effectively communicate. Regular meetings and clear instructions, collaboration and team work help in this regards.

4.2.4 Discussion of Findings

The primary objective of this study was to explore communication management within retail projects and to identify the obstacles that hinder effective communication. A structured questionnaire was used, and participants were asked to identify the factors that negatively affected their communication. The findings are summarised below:

4.2.4.1 When participants were asked about the industry they work in, 73% identified as being in retail, 9% in information technology, 6% in the service industry, 4% in finance, and 8% were undecided. These results suggest that the majority of staff in retail projects are from the retail industry and the other units are support services.

4.2.4.2 Regarding whether leaders need to communicate effectively, 89% strongly agreed, 9% agreed, 1% strongly disagreed, and 1% disagreed. The results suggest that participants expect leaders to be effective communicators.

4.2.4.3 When asked about the consequences of delaying information transfer, 47% strongly agreed that delays lead to financial losses, 26% agreed, 14% were neutral, 8% disagreed, and 5% strongly disagreed. The majority of participants understand that delays have negative consequences.

4.2.4.4 When asked whether misunderstanding instructions leads to conflicts, 47% strongly agreed, 26% agreed, 14% were neutral, 8% disagreed, and 5% strongly disagreed. The results indicate that misunderstanding instructions is a significant factor hindering effective communication among project teams.

4.2.4.5 Regarding the importance of feedback during project execution, 71% strongly disagreed that feedback was unnecessary, 17% disagreed, 2% were neutral, 7% strongly agreed, and 3% agreed. The results show that 88% of respondents consider feedback vital during project execution.

4.2.4.6 When asked if unclear internal communication affects project outcomes, 62% strongly disagreed, 18% disagreed, 7% were neutral, 8% agreed, and 5% strongly agreed. The results suggest that participants see clear internal communication as critical to successful project outcomes. It points out that unclear internal communication is bad it negatively impacts project outcomes.

4.2.4.7 When asked if changes during the execution phase need to be communicated, 86% strongly agreed, 11% agreed, 2% were neutral, and 1% strongly disagreed. These results suggest that 97% of participants believe updates on project changes and new developments are essential.

4.2.4.8 When asked if important project information should be limited to senior management, 49% strongly disagreed, 30% disagreed, 6% agreed, and 11% were undecided. The results suggest that important project information should be accessible to the entire project team, not just senior management.

4.2.4.9 When asked whether further training is needed for presenting project information, 41% strongly agreed, 41% agreed, 14% were undecided, 3% strongly disagreed, and 1% disagreed. The results indicate that the majority of participants in retail projects feel further training is necessary for presenting project information.

4.3 Conclusion

Chapter 4 presented the findings of factors that affect project communication in a retail head office. The results aimed to gather findings from project teams, engineers, trainee store managers, supervisors, project managers, administrators, technicians, and project coordinators, though some responded as ‘other’. The findings clearly indicate that several factors hinder effective communication in retail projects. The key factors identified include:

Unprofessionalism
Unclear instruction, and information
No feedback
No updates on new developments in projects
Using language that is not accommodating to all projects the team
The channel used to transfer information
No access to project information
No tools and techniques to communicate
No archiving of project documentation (lessons learned)

While the findings were insightful, some participants remained undecided or neutral on certain statements and questions. The study also revealed that the majority of retail project teams are young, with 46% of respondents aged 21–30 and 43% having 0–5 years of experience. Most respondents also indicated that WhatsApp is their primary tool for transferring information.

Furthermore, the research highlighted that feedback is highly valued by project teams, who expect regular updates on their performance. The responsiveness of a project manager was identified as a key competitive advantage, as the results in this statement below:

Participants' views on feedback

In this regard, 71% strongly disagreed with the sentiment that feedback is not important during the execution of projects in retail.

The following chapter summarises the main points of each chapter and provides recommendations based on the insights of this research.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 provides conclusions and recommendations based on the data collected, analysed, and interpreted in the previous chapter. To recap, the aims and objectives of this research were as follows:

a. The main aim of this paper was to explore communication management within retail projects and to identify the obstacles that hinder effective communication.

The objectives were to:
1. Identify challenges in project communication in a retail outlet.
2. Recommend ways of improving project communication.

This chapter also answers the research questions:

Main question:

What are the factors that affect communication in retail projects?

Sub-questions:

What are the communication challenges affecting retail projects?

How can communication be improved in retail projects to enhance project success?

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study focused on communication management within retail projects, highlighting barriers that hinder effective communication. The findings, drawn from structured questionnaires, offer insight into industry distribution, communication expectations, and challenges within the retail sector.

The survey revealed that 73% of participants work in retail, with smaller percentages in IT, services, finance, or undecided roles, indicating that retail project teams are primarily composed of retail employees, with other sectors offering support services. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed (89%) that leaders must communicate effectively, and a majority recognized that delaying information transfer can lead to financial losses (73%). Additionally, 73% agreed that misunderstanding instructions leads to conflicts, stressing that clarity in directives is critical to avoid team discord.

Feedback was deemed essential by 88% of participants, with most indicating that it plays a vital role in project execution. There was also a strong consensus (97%) on the importance of communicating project changes promptly. The majority of participants disagreed (79%) with restricting important information to senior management, supporting the idea that essential project information should be accessible to all team members.

A significant portion (82%) expressed the need for additional training in presenting project information, suggesting that enhancing communication skills is a priority for retail project teams. Key challenges identified include unprofessional behavior, unclear instructions, insufficient feedback, lack of updates on project changes, inappropriate language or jargon, restricted information access, ineffective communication channels, absence of communication tools, and lack of documentation for lessons learned.

Demographically, the study showed that retail project teams tend to be young (46% aged 21-30) and relatively inexperienced (43% with 0-5 years of experience). WhatsApp emerged as the primary communication tool, underscoring a reliance on digital platforms for information transfer. Regular feedback is highly valued, with most participants indicating that updates on project performance enhance project success. The study concludes that improving communication processes and providing further training on communication skills could address many of these obstacles, ultimately leading to more successful project outcomes in retail environments.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusion addresses the following aim of the study:

- To explore communication management within retail projects and to identify the obstacles that hinder effective communication.

Previous researchers, such as Bopape (2018), have identified a range of diverse factors influencing project communication. The findings of this study also identified several factors affecting project communication in the specific retail head office under study. These are presented below:

Factors that affect project communication in a selected retail head office and recommendations

In this study, several communication barriers in retail project teams were identified, alongside practical recommendations to improve communication effectiveness. **Unprofessionalism** emerged as a significant issue, with 82% of participants advocating for further training in presenting project information. It is recommended to establish a clear code of conduct and provide regular professional communication training to ensure respectful and accountable interactions.

The **channels used to transfer information** were also found to be crucial, with the majority of respondents associating delays in communication with financial losses. Choosing the best channels based on the nature of information and making them accessible to all team members can greatly improve responsiveness.

Participants highlighted a **lack of tools and techniques for communication**, with 97% indicating the need for regular updates on project changes. Investing in standardized project management tools and training team members to use them can streamline information sharing and foster collaboration.

Unclear instructions were another identified barrier, with a notable percentage of participants associating miscommunication with team conflicts. To address this, guidelines for clear communication, alongside visual aids and templates, can help ensure everyone understands project instructions.

The absence of a **project documentation archiving system** also poses a risk, limiting future project learning. A centralised digital archive can be used to document lessons learned, while making information searchable and accessible. This was supported by 91% of respondents who agreed on the value of such documentation.

Access to project information was another area of concern. The findings indicate that most participants believe essential project details should not be limited to senior management but accessible to all team members. Setting protocols for information access and using secure cloud solutions can make data easily accessible to those who need it.

In terms of **language barriers**, participants linked confusing communication with negative project outcomes. Adopting a common language, avoiding jargon, and providing support for non-native speakers are recommended to ensure clarity across diverse teams.

Lastly, **lack of updates on new developments** was identified as a hindrance. With 88% of participants considering feedback critical, regular updates on project progress and new developments are recommended. Establishing structured feedback and communication protocols, including periodic meetings, can keep everyone aligned and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

These findings underscore the need for clear, accessible, and structured communication processes to support successful project execution in retail. Implementing these strategies can help overcome existing communication barriers, leading to enhanced project outcomes and team satisfaction.

By implementing these recommendations, projects can overcome common communication barriers, leading to smoother project execution and increased chances of success.

The objectives of the study were:

a) To identify challenges in project communication in a retail setup; and
b) To recommend ways to improve project communication.

This study emphasised that many researchers have noted barriers that hinder effective communication among project stakeholders, potentially leading to project delays or failures. Additionally, it found that departments that delay information transfer contribute to financial losses for the business, as shown in the statement below:

Departments that tend to delay transferring information lead to financial losses in the business

Neutral participants made up 14%, leaving 86% either agreeing or disagreeing. Of that 86%, 13% disagreed (5% strongly disagreed and 8% disagreed) that they would become demotivated without timely information. The difference between those agreeing and those disagreeing is 73% (47% strongly agreeing and 26% agreeing); no generalisation can be made on this finding. The expectation from the research was to identify challenges in project communication in a retail set up and recommend ways of improving project communication.

The research findings indicate that effective communication in retail projects is crucial for project success. Key conclusions drawn from the data include:

- Identification of challenges: Several challenges affect project communication, including lack of clarity, information overload, noise and distractions, cultural differences, and language barriers.
- Impact of communication: Effective communication significantly enhances project success by ensuring the alignment of goals, improving collaboration, and addressing

issues promptly. Ineffective communication can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and conflicts.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- **Emphasize feedback**: Since feedback is crucial throughout a project's lifecycle in a retail setup, Project Managers should hold regular meetings with team leaders to provide performance updates and recognise exceptional work. Monthly emails should be sent to highlight high performers and celebrate excellence. Project Managers must remain responsive to queries that could impact project success.
- **Address information delays**: As delays in sharing information can lead to financial losses or risks, it is recommended to conduct stakeholder analysis and distribute project reports weekly or monthly, based on stakeholders' interests. Project coordinators should be responsible for this and meet monthly with the Project Manager to ensure timely dissemination of information.
- **Clarify instructions**: To avoid misunderstandings that could lead to conflict, project managers should provide clear instructions and ask team leaders to rephrase the instructions to ensure alignment and clarity across the team.
- **Communicate scope changes**: When scope creep occurs, relevant units, such as engineers or IT teams, should be informed to maintain interdependencies. A risk register should be maintained and communicated by the Project Manager, with a top-down communication approach to ensure the entire team is aware of changes that may impact the project.
- **Evaluate communication performance**: Since the project team is aware of the importance of effective communication, it is recommended to establish individual performance management documents and conduct quarterly evaluations with senior management. This should include feedback from project managers, coordinators, and team leaders on their role in fostering effective communication. Attach supporting evidence to project documentation.
- **Enhance clarity**: Ensure that all project-related information is communicated clearly and concisely. Standardise communication protocols to reduce ambiguity and prevent misunderstandings.
- **Manage information overload**: Implement strategies to manage and filter information to avoid overload. Use communication tools and technologies that streamline and prioritise essential information.

- **Minimise distractions**: Create a conducive environment for communication by reducing external noise and distractions. Utilise dedicated channels for project-related discussions to keep communication focused.
- **Promote cultural awareness**: Foster cultural sensitivity and understanding within the team to address communication challenges arising from cultural differences.
- **Improve language skills**: Provide language training or support to team members to overcome language barriers, ensuring more effective communication across the project team.
- **Make use of technology**: Use communication technologies and collaboration tools to enhance information sharing and streamline communication across teams.
- **Encourage regular feedback**: Implement feedback mechanisms that allow team members to identify and resolve communication issues quickly. Encourage open, constructive feedback to ensure ongoing improvement.
- **Train on communication skills**: Offer training on communication skills, including active listening, empathy, and clarity, to improve overall communication effectiveness within the project team.

By implementing these recommendations, retail projects can improve communication, address challenges, and increase the likelihood of project success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Faculty of Business and Management Sciences
Ethics Informed Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Category of Participants (tick as appropriate):

Staff/Workers	x	*Teachers*		*Parents*		*Lecturers*		*Students*	
Other (specify)									

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study being conducted by **Zuko Cornelius Ngoma** from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The findings of this study will contribute towards (tick as appropriate):

An undergraduate project		*A conference paper*	
An Honours project		*A published journal article*	
A Masters/doctoral thesis	x	*A published report*	

Selection criteria
You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are:

(a) ***Employee at the head office***

(b) _____

The information below gives details about the study to help you decide whether you would want to participate.

Title of the research:

Factors impacting project communication in a selected retail head office in Cape Town.

A brief explanation of what the research involves:

The aim of this study is to learn more about factors impacting project communication in a selected retail head office in Cape Town so as to:

To identify the impact of communication on project execution efficiency and effectiveness at a retail head office.

To identify opportunities to enhance communication

Procedures
If you volunteer to participate in this study the following will be done:

1. Describe the main research procedures to you in advance, so that you are informed about what to expect;
2. In a case where there is no clarity, the respondents will be allowed to ask for confirmation or clarity of words/sentences/phrases to ensure accuracy of the data collected;
3. Data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs.
4. Participants have the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer or feel uncomfortable with;

5. The questions do not pose any realistic risk of distress or discomfort, either physically or psychologically, to them;
6. Participants will be debriefed at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study).
7. The target population is anyone that work on projects at Head Office.
8. Your identity is protected, please do not make any markings that may be used to identify you.

You are invited to contact the researchers should you have any questions about the research before or during the study. You will be free to withdraw your participation at any time without having to give a reason.

Kindly complete the table below before participating in the research.

Tick the appropriate column		
Statement	Yes	No
1. I understand the purpose of the research.	x	
2. I understand what the research requires of me.	x	
3. I volunteer to take part in the research.	x	
4. I know that I can withdraw at any time.	x	
5. I understand that there will not be any form of discrimination against me as a result of my participation or non-participation.	x	
6. Comment:		x

Please sign the consent form. You will be given a copy of this form on request.

Signature of participant	Date

Researchers

	Name:	Surname:	Contact details:
1.	Zuko Cornelius	Ngoma	0797547828
2.	Stanley	Fore	073 628 6902

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

PLEASE MARK THE APPLICABLE BOX WITH AN X

1. Please indicate your ethnicity

Black	Colored	White	Indian	Other

2. Please indicate your gender

Male	Female

3. How old are you? Please indicate your age range in the boxes below by ticking the appropriate box below.

Less than 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51+

4. What is your position in the Head Office? Please state in the space below.

Team member	Administrator	Supervisor	Technician	Other

If other, please specify.....

5. How long have you been working, including your previous occupation, please indicate below?

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16+ years

6. Does your line manager have direct authority over you / do you report to someone else?

He/she is my direct boss	Only on project matters	Its not clear who my boss is	Other

If other please explain .....

7. What kind of business / industry do you work in?

Retail	Information Technology	Service industry	Financial industry	Other

8. If other, please specify.....

SECTION B

PLEASE MARK THE MOST APPROPRIATE WITH AN X

Factors affecting project communication in a selected retail head office

Please rank the following by crossing the most applicable. By using the scales 1 to 5.
NOTE: 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree

	Impact communication has on project execution at the head office	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Not sure**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
1	Good communication leads to a successful project.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Clear information helps project team.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Project managers do not need to communicate with their team members.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Leaders need to be effective in communication.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Staff do not need to use a universal language to communicate.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Deliverables can be achieved without any soft skills such as communication.	1	2	3	4	5
	Negative effects due to unclear information					
7	Departments that tend to delay transferring information lead to financial losses in the business.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Conflicts can arise between clients and the organisation due to misunderstandings of instructions.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Feedback is not vital during project execution.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Internal communication that is confusing has no effect on outcomes of projects.	1	2	3	4	5
11	New developments during implementation need to be communicated.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Important information about progress of projects should only be limited to senior management.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Project team performance is not affected by poor communication.	1	2	3	4	5

	Perception on communication as a tool for effectiveness					
14	Further training is needed when doing presentations during the initiation phase in projects at the head office.	1	2	3	4	5
15	The head office staff is always easily understood when communicating with one another.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The project team can only be confident if they know what is expected from them during the forming stage from the plan they receive and communication thereof.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Designing project communication plan requires intelligence.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Tools and techniques for information distribution vary from project to project.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Project reports are a common method of communication within projects.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Project documentation serves as a reference for future projects.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Line managers always acknowledge a job well done and gives staff feedback on their performance.	1	2	3	4	5
22	The systems used such as SAP enhances work productivity.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C

Open-ended questions

1. **What communication channels are used to transfer information?**

- .....
- .....
- .....

2. **What contributes towards effective communication during projects?**

- .....
- .....
- .....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

CLICKS

Dear Mr ZC Ngoma

LETTER OF AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT FACTORS AFFECTING PROJECT COMMUMICATION IN A SELECTED RETAIL HEAD OFFICE, STUDENT ZUKO CORNELIUS NGOMA STUDENT NUMBER: 216288339 MASTERS: BUSINESS INFORMATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research in Cape Town Clicks Group. This right of access commences 1st April 2023 – 31st December 2024.

We wish you all the best with your endeavours.

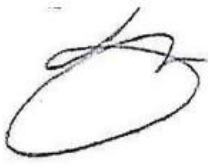
Warm Regards,

Zinzi Zilwa

Store Manager

Click Centre Point

021 525 6320



APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

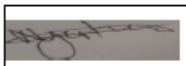
P.O. Box 1906 | Bellville 7535
Symphony Road Bellville 7535
South Africa

Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	FACULTY: BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

The Faculty's Research Ethics Committee (FREC) on **06 May 2024**, ethics **Approval** was granted to **Ngoma Zuko Cornelius (216288339)** for a research activity for a **Master in Business and Information Administration** at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Title of dissertation/thesis / project:	Factors affecting project communication in a selected retail head office in Cape Town Lead Supervisor (s): Mr Stanley Fore

Decision: APPROVED

	14.05.2024
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	Date

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the CPUT Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study requires that the researcher stops the study and immediately informs the chairperson of the relevant Faculty Ethics Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, notably compliance with the Bill of Rights as provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution) and where applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003 and/or other legislations that is relevant.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after two (2) years for Masters and Doctorate research project from the date of issue of the Ethics Certificate. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report (REC 6) will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Clearance Certificate No | 2024_FBMSREC_ST02

APPENDIX D: EDITOR'S LETTER

PROOF-READING

DR LEE-ANNE ROUX

EDITOR | PROOFREADER

+27 82 825 7325
leeanne@proof-reading.co.za
www.proof-reading.co.za

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14 September 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: LANGUAGE EDITING

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the thesis titled:

FACTORS AFFECTING PROJECT COMMUNICATION IN A SELECTED RETAIL HEAD OFFICE IN CAPE TOWN

By

ZUKO CORNELIUS NGOMA

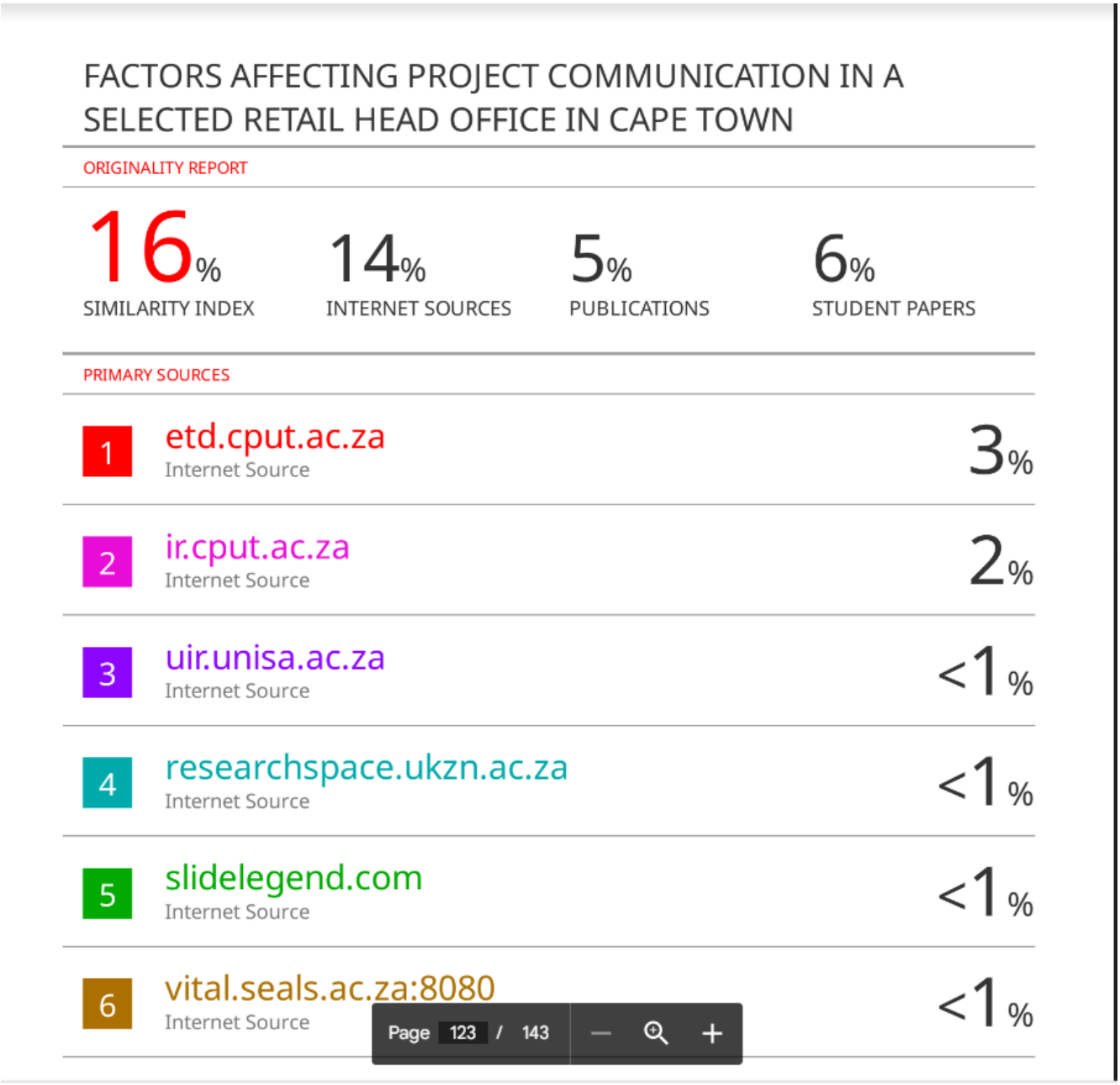
This certificate does not cover any alterations made subsequent to the editing process.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lee-Anne Roux

APPENDIX E: SIMILARITY INDEX



FACTORS AFFECTING PROJECT COMMUNICATION IN A SELECTED RETAIL HEAD OFFICE IN CAPE TOWN

ORIGINALITY REPORT

16%	14%	5%	6%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	etd.cput.ac.za Internet Source	3%
2	ir.cput.ac.za Internet Source	2%
3	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
4	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
5	slidelegend.com Internet Source	<1%
6	vital.seals.ac.za:8080 Internet Source	<1%

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