

The Role of Strategic Communication in Hospitality Industry “The Case of Antalya”

Faruk Seyitoglu

Akdeniz University Faculty of Tourism, Turkey

E-mail: seyitoglu.f@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Nedim Yuzbasioglu

Akdeniz University Faculty of Tourism, Turkey

E-mail: nedimy@akdeniz.edu.tr

Received: October 13, 2014 Accepted: November 21, 2014 Published: January 28, 2015

doi:10.5296/jsss.v2i2.6526 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/jsss.v2i2.6526>

Abstract

The success of organizations depends on various factors such as effective organizational structure, well-defined roles and responsibilities and the structure and process of communication within the organization. As one of the determinants of success in tourism establishments as well as all types of other organizations, communication is the fundamental condition which enables coordination of organizational functioning. In tourism management literature, however, this topic is observed not to be adequately dealt with. Therefore, this article aims to contribute to tourism management literature. Another purpose of the article, on the other hand, is to analyze the communication process between managers and employees of tourism establishments on a strategic dimension. Data was gathered through questionnaires implemented at the 5-star hotels located in Antalya, since Antalya is one of the most important destinations in Turkey, attracting the highest numbers of tourists. Data was subjected to explanatory factor analysis in order to identify the dimensional structure of communication. Then, regression analysis was conducted in order to identify relationships between the variables. Results of the study suggested that there was a positive link between strategic communication dimension and operational effectiveness, as well as increased overall effectiveness of the organization and better internal operational qualities of separate departments.

Keywords: Communication, Strategic communication, Tourism, Organizational communication

1. Introduction

Communication may be defined as the activity aiming to constitute an arrangement to convey information as one of the fundamental pillars of social life and organizational structure as well as the activity of forming relationships between organizations and groups. A healthy communication is needed for people to know and understand each other better, to create better functioning organizations and to resolve problems easier (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2001; Ruck & Welch, 2012). If an adequate importance is not placed on communication problems in an organization, it may not be possible, for example, for people to have better relationships within that organization. Communication has various definitions and descriptions in the literature. Writers have suggested that communication is the activity of exchanging messages or thoughts through speaking, pointing or writing; on reciprocal terms, however, they define it as a message exchange process and they suggest that communication event happens when messages have been completely conveyed. Communication has also been defined as the process of conveying a message containing information from a source to a recipient and has been indicated to be a term expressing the exchange of feelings and thoughts between people (Cüceloğlu, 2000; Adler & Elmhorst, 2002; Kaya, 2003; Koçel, 2001; Okay & Okay, 2005; O’Hair & Fredrich, 2005).

Human factor comes forth as the most important factor for the organizations in tourism sector due to its labor-intensive quality. Communication is considered as an important factor in tourism establishments and especially in accommodation establishments where human factor is significantly important for the constancy and regularity of the activity of workers as well as sustainability and efficiency of organizations. An accommodation establishment which does not use communication channels properly may not be able to conduct operations regularly and correctly as well, since this specific sector provides services for human beings by human beings as a labor-intensive sector. Human beings who are positively or negatively affected by any behavior, spoken word and attitude make their decisions as a result of these interactions. And communication is one of the fundamental characteristics differentiating human beings from all other living creatures (Şener, 2001; Öztürk & Seyhan, 2005).

Brownell (1990) has pointed out the importance of employees and the obligation of the management to communicate effectively with their employees in accommodation establishments and has indicated that the need for effective communication skills could increase even more due to the newly emerging international quality of labor in tourism sector and continuous changes in customer demand. He has also emphasized the quality of “racing against the clock” which is specific to accommodation establishments as well as the increased importance of timely and clear communication between employees in this specific sector.

Frontline employees play an important role in connecting with and providing service to customers, and forming long-term relationships with them (Kuslivan, 2003). Employees’ understanding and perception of the information related to the work to be done in accommodation establishments, and the clarity of employees’ roles within the organization, in other words clear expression of the expectation of the organization from the employees play very significant roles in the relationship between employees and customers. The

employee who has all the information needed for the work to be done, would be able to increase the quality of service by managing relationships with customers more effectively due to increased self-confidence and would contribute to the positive perception of customers with regard to the service quality (Argenti, 2003; McCabe, 2009; Slåtten et al., 2010; Demir, 2011; Zulhamri & Claina, 2012).

As one of the determinants of success in tourism establishments as in all kinds of other organizations, communication is the fundamental condition enabling the coordination of organizational functioning. In tourism management literature, however, this topic is observed not to be adequately dealt with. Therefore, the purpose of the article is to analyze the communication process between managers and employees of tourism establishments on a strategic dimension.

2. Literature Review

Strategy is defined as the art of reaching certain pre-defined targets in the most effective and rapid way through the usage of optimal methods and means (Eren, 2002; Shimizu et al., 2006) while communication is defined as the process of conveying a message containing information from a source to a recipient through a channel (Okay & Okay, 2005). Strategic communication, on the other hand, as the combination of both terms, may be defined as sharing pre-defined messages with the purpose of facilitating the process of reaching long-term strategic targets, with the related (or targeted) public at the optimal place and time to create the strongest possible impact through the most proper channel and includes the process of impacting the public. The ultimate goal of a strategic communication planner, thus, has to be to enable the best possible public understanding related to the organization's strategic targets by gathering the maximum power of information at the most proper time and to impact public opinion by doing so (Coffman, 2004).

As mass media have developed and diversified in the modern era and some significant changes have occurred both in form and content of the messages to be conveyed to public (Vural & Bat, 2010), strategic management became all the more important when communication started to be considered as a strategic notion. Notably Internet has led to a revolution in media in terms of reaching and sharing information in every area of life. We may even say that a simple video camera and an Internet access could cause the national and even international balances to change, depending on the importance of shared information.

To summarize, strategic communication may be defined as the usage of communication as a strategic tool with the purpose of effective management of corporate reputation (Taylor, 2009). Strategic communication provides guidance in determining a "road map" for the implementation of corporate policies. This enables determining what to say in messages to be shared with the public and provides a vision with a more powerful corporate reputation through the knowledge of what, why and how, instead of gropingly and randomly conducted communication campaigns. Actually, strategic communication may play the role of a "decoder," deciphering a complex communication process. Its purpose is to eliminate problems before they come up or while they are on the process of appearing by using a proactive approach rather than a reactive one and determining and strengthening weak points

that would cause problems beforehand. Additionally, strategic communication requires long-term work rather than short-term, daily solutions (Goldman, 2008).

Strategic communication is not a passive, source-oriented communication process aiming to convey the most proper message to the public or to inform public, but an active communication process which involves sharing pre-defined messages with the public in the most proper way in line with the corporation's vision and targets and as it is grounded on the impact, shaping public opinion in a positive way. Strategic communication, basically, is to develop corporate image by impacting public opinion. Therefore, it may be suggested to have an important role in the branding process of the corporation. In addition, strategic communication is a term including an active impacting process with the purpose of convincing the public opinion, considering current attitudes and behaviors of the public and measuring the changes in these attitudes and behaviors rather than being a simple and one-way conveying of information (Jones, 2009).

Strategic communication measures the effectiveness of the messages to be shared with the public, identifies perception levels, assesses the amount of damage when there are discourses which create misunderstandings or do not provide the desired impact; after the assessment it modifies these kinds of discourses immediately and doesn't let public opinion to have a wrong impression since wrong or missing information about the organization may cause the problem of wrong perception and these wrong perceptions tend to transform into wrong opinions through repetition in time. And correcting wrong opinions is a long-term and expensive process. Strategic communication, in other words, plays the role of an important control mechanism, preventing the organization ending up in such a condition (Tatham, 2008). Strategic communication is also an important factor in the success of creation of perception.

There are some requirements for an organization to be successful and some of the most important ones are listed below (Taylor, 2009):

- Fast decision-making and implementation process
- A “vision” based on competition
- A “corporate culture” differentiating itself from its precedents
- A “management approach” susceptible to change
- Initiative
- A network-centric communication structure within the corporation

These six important factors constitute the most significant features needed for creation of values and a strong corporate reputation. The “set of values” offered by the corporation, different when compared to its precedents, is perceived correctly by the public thanks to these features and as a result, it opens the way for the corporation to gain a competitive advantage.

In order to find an answer to the question of “why did the need for a strategic communication model emerged?” it would be pertinent to investigate the reason of the inadequacy of the

conventional communication model in explaining today's communication environment. The situation may be analyzed by the help of Table 1, in which the features of conventional and strategic models are given comparatively.

Table 1. Differences between conventional and strategic communication models

| Conventional Communication Model | Strategic Communication Model |
|--|--|
| There is only one recipient in the model | There are several recipients in the model with different interests and opinions. So, the communication environment has a multipartite structure. |
| Communication environment consists of an active source, a passive recipient and a message channel closed to external impacts. | “External Environment” is considered as a third actor after the source and the recipient. External environment impacts both the recipients in the environment and the channel. And the source impacts external environment through corporate reputation. |
| Process is message-oriented. | Process is recipient-oriented. |
| The source is independent from the recipient. | There is a mutual dependency between the source and the recipient. |
| It is based on the hypothesis of “The recipient accepts every message coming from the source unconditionally.” The recipient doesn't have an impact on the source. | The recipient may accept or reject the message coming from the source in differing degrees. The recipient impacts the source through feedback process. |
| The process of communication is only initiated when a message is to be conveyed, in other words there is an interrupted communication process. | The process of communication is uninterrupted. |
| Past conditioned characteristics and prejudices of the recipient are ignored. | Past conditioned characteristics and prejudices of the recipient are taken into account. Therefore, correct analysis of perceptions and opinions of the recipient is quite important. |

Source: Tatham (2008).

Conventional communication model is based on the principle of conveying information by a coded message, from a source to a single recipient, through a channel closed to external impacts (Okay and Okay, 2005). So, it is possible to say that conventional communication model is quite inadequate in describing today's communication environment, as seen in Table 1. Strategic communication model, on the other hand, is utilized by the organizations as a method aimed at changing perception and attitude of the targeted public to "justify" their strategic visions as well as the policies they implement (Tatham, 2008).

3. Methodology

For the present study, a literature review has been conducted before the questionnaire was implemented. The purpose of the questionnaire prepared in scope of the study was to analyze the communication process between the employees of accommodation establishments located in Antalya from a strategic perspective. Questionnaires were implemented on hotel employees. As a result of literature review, the studies of Kurt (2004), Yılmaz (2011) and Yıldız (2006) were used to prepare the questionnaire.

A pilot test was conducted within the scope of the study before the final implementation. A two-phased process was used to conduct the pilot test. First, the statements were checked by 6 academicians who are knowledgeable in the subject in order to test the understandability of the questions. Second, the questionnaire was implemented on 60 employees of 5-star hotels in Antalya region. Once the understandability of the questions and the reliability of the scales were confirmed, the final implementation was carried out with the same questionnaire form.

Later, data was gathered through questionnaire. Data was subjected to various analyses and the findings of the analyses were interpreted. Questionnaire consisted of 37 statements using five-point likert scale and these were oriented towards strategic communication. In addition, there were 4 questions related to other dimensions to measure the communication strategically. 5-point Likert scale was used in the questions intended for the participation level of the participants.

Questionnaire was implemented on personnel of 5-star accommodation establishments located in the center of Antalya. Convenience sampling was chosen as the sampling method. Questionnaire was implemented on 356 persons in total working for 7 different 5-star accommodation establishments located within the provincial borders of Antalya. Cronbach Alpha values for all statements were calculated in order to define reliability of the scale and it was found to be 80.9 %. The scale is reliable since the obtained value exceeded 70%.

3.1 Hypotheses of the Study

H1: Good communication in tourism establishments increases the effectiveness of operations.

H2: Good communication in tourism establishments enables the organization to function more effectively overall.

H3: Good communication in tourism establishments increases the internal functional quality of separate departments.

3.2 Strategic Communication “Factor Analysis”

Explanatory factor analysis was used in order to determine the dimensional structure of communication according to the hotel personnel and the results were shown in Table 2. First, KMO (Kaiser_Meyer_Olkin) analysis was conducted in order to determine whether the sample number is sufficient and the ratio was found to be 0.864. This ratio shows the sufficiency of the sample number (Sipahi et al., 2010). The presence of relationship between the variables which is one of the pre-requisites of factor analysis was shown as a result of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ($p= 0,000$), and varimax rotation and principal component analysis were used to conduct factor analysis.

Out of 37 statements used in the questionnaire to measure strategic communication, 11 statements which had lower communalities than 0.5 were excluded from the analysis (*Any unit, informs all the other units related to the operation it performs / My task involves one single and specific job / The division of the works conducted into many departments causes communication breakdowns between units and people related to the same task / The tasks carried out are divided into many jobs / The power and responsibility separation between the departments is drawn in a clear and precise way / I cannot reach my manager when I want to meet with him/her / My superiors encourage me to convey them information, opinions and problems / Information and instructions I get from my superiors related to my task are insufficient / I can easily reach my superiors to convey them information, opinions and problems / I need to be in communication with units which are different from the ones I usually communicate with while performing my job / Information within the communication system of our organization are kept confidential among those related people*), and the remaining 26 statements were included in the factor analysis. Of the statements which have higher communalities than 0.5, six factors were obtained explaining 59.791 % of total variance, with Eigen values more than 1. Cronbach Alpha values calculated for the internal consistencies of factors ranged from 0.548 to 0.867 and this showed the reliability of the scale (Hair et al., 1998).

Table 2. Strategic communication dimensions according to hotel employees

| Statements | Factors | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------|---|--------------|--|
| | Adopting and conveying cultural elements | Centralization | Intra-organizational communication | Formalization | Vertical and Horizontal differentiation | Segmentation | |
| Management informs us about the organization's vision, mission and targets. | .848 | | | | | | |
| Management informs us about the ways to follow in order to reach the targets. | .791 | | | | | | |
| Vision and mission of the organization are adopted by everybody. | .768 | | | | | | |
| Boards, warnings, mottos etc. on the walls indicate our working principles. | .750 | | | | | | |
| I try to participate in all kinds of events organized for the personnel (meetings, seminars, etc.). | .708 | | | | | | |
| Reaching corporate objectives is more important than reaching personal ones. | .478 | | | | | | |
| My opinions are considered when decisions related to my task or to me are taken. | .821 | | | | | | |
| Decisions are taken with the participation of all units including sublevels. | .773 | | | | | | |
| I am informed about the decisions taken related to the department I work for. | .763 | | | | | | |
| I am not informed of the decisions taken. | .614 | | | | | | |

| | |
|--|------|
| Instructions and information related to my tasks are conveyed to me by my superiors in a timely manner. | .606 |
| Interpersonal communications within the organization are good. | .795 |
| Interdepartmental communications within the organization are good. | .735 |
| I can easily convey my wishes, suggestions and complaints about the job or other matters to the management. | .650 |
| I can easily reach information necessary for my job. | .525 |
| Repetition of the same tasks or intermingling of these within the department or between departments occasionally occurs. | .779 |
| I frequently feel the need to consult top units about the tasks I am to perform since the job definitions are not clear. | .732 |
| Communication problems due to indefinite tasks, powers and responsibilities occur in the organization in general. | .651 |
| Some important units or persons are left outside of the communication process in conveying information and instructions. | .711 |
| There are persons or units preventing messages containing information about the tasks or other messages to reach where they need to reach. | .623 |
| Some malfunctions occur in performing the jobs related to other departments in a timely and complete manner. | .616 |

| | |
|--|------|
| The lack of communication between units causes malfunctions in the jobs conducted in a coordinated manner. | .568 |
|--|------|

| | |
|---|------|
| There are many ranks to pass through to convey an issue or problem to the top superior authority. | .508 |
|---|------|

| | |
|---|------|
| The presence of too many divisions for the work to be done makes communication between units difficult. | .728 |
|---|------|

| | |
|---|------|
| The indefinite responsibilities between departments cause conflicts in tasks. | .704 |
|---|------|

| | |
|---|------|
| High number of departments in the unit I work for makes communication and coordination difficult. | .520 |
|---|------|

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Reliability Coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) | 0.867 | 0.817 | 0.813 | 0.751 | 0.647 | 0.548 |
| Variance Explanation Ratio (%) | 25.785 | 11.689 | 7.280 | 5.944 | 4.898 | 4.195 |

Total Variance Explanation Ratio (%): 59.791; KMO: 0.864.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: 3581.931; p: 0.000.

Factors have been named in the order of the table, taking into account the statements they include as follows: "Adopting and Conveying Cultural Elements," "Centralization," "Intra-organizational Communication," "Formalization," "Vertical and Horizontal Differentiation," and "Segmentation" (Table 2). First factor which explains 25.785% of the total variance was named as "Adopting and Conveying Cultural Elements." The statements constituting the first factor are: "Management informs us about the organization's vision, mission and targets," "Management informs us about the ways to follow in order to reach the targets," "Vision and mission of the organization are adopted by everybody," "Boards, warnings, mottos etc. on the walls indicate our working principles," "I try to participate in all kinds of events organized for the personnel (meetings, seminars, etc.)," and "Reaching corporate objectives is more important than reaching personal ones." Second factor which explains 11.689% of the total variance was named as "Centralization." The statements constituting the second factor are: "My opinions are considered when decisions related to my task or to me are taken," "Decisions are taken with the participation of all units including sublevels," "I am informed about the decisions taken related to the department I work for.,"

“I am not informed of the decisions taken,” and “Instructions and information related to my tasks are conveyed to me by my superiors in a timely manner.”

Third factor which explains 7.280% of the total variance was named as “Intra-organizational Communication.” The statements constituting the third factor are: “Interpersonal communications within the organization are good,” “Interdepartmental communications within the organization are good,” “I can easily convey my wishes, suggestions and complaints about the job or other matters to the management,” and “I can easily reach information necessary for my job.” Forth factor which explains 5.944% of the total variance was named as “Formalization.” The statements constituting the forth factor are: “Repetition of the same tasks or intermingling of these within the department or between departments occasionally occur,” “I frequently feel the need to consult top units about the tasks I am to perform since the job definitions are not clear,” and “Communication problems due to indefinite tasks, powers and responsibilities occur in the organization in general.”

Fifth factor which explains 4.898% of the total variance was named as “Vertical and Horizontal Differentiation.” The statements constituting the fifth factor are: “Some important units or persons are left outside of the communication process in conveying information and instructions,” “There are persons or units preventing messages containing information about the tasks or other messages to reach where they need to reach,” “Some malfunctions occur in performing the jobs related to other departments in a timely and complete manner,” “The lack of communication between units causes malfunctions in the jobs conducted in a coordinated manner,” and “There are many ranks to pass through to convey an issue or problem to the top superior authority.” Sixth factor which explains 4.195 % of the total variance was named as “Segmentation.” The statements constituting the sixth factor are: “The presence of too many divisions for the work to be done makes communication between units difficult,” “The indefinite responsibilities between departments cause conflicts in tasks,” and “High number of departments in the unit I work for makes communication and coordination difficult.”

3.3 Impact of Strategic Communication Dimensions on Operational Effectiveness

Multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted in order to test the impact of strategic communication dimensions on “operational effectiveness” by using averages. Scores of the questions constituting each factor were summed up and divided by the number of questions constituting the factor, average factor scores were calculated in this way and these average factor scores were included in regression analysis. Results of regression analysis are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Impact of strategic communication dimensions on operational effectiveness

| Independent Variables | β | t | p |
|--|---------|--------|---------|
| Invariable | 3.129 | 10.053 | 0.000* |
| Adopting and conveying cultural elements | .173 | 2.567 | 0.011** |
| Centralization | .132 | 2.177 | 0.030** |
| Intra-organizational Communication | .073 | 1.077 | 0.282 |
| Formalization | -.003 | -.053 | 0.958 |
| Vertical and Horizontal Differentiation | .090 | 1.579 | 0.115 |
| Segmentation | -.021 | -.381 | 0.703 |

$R^2=0.097$; $F=6.278$; $p=0.000$

* $p<0.01$; ** $p<0.05$

***Dependent Variable: A better communication within the organization increases “Operational Effectiveness” (conducting the same operation better than the competition).

The results suggest that the model as a whole is significant ($F=6.278$ and $p=0.000$). Model explains 9.7% of satisfaction. When Table 3 is analyzed, the variable with the highest impact on operational effectiveness perception of the personnel is observed to be “Adopting and conveying cultural elements” (.173). Another factor with a high coefficient is the perception of “Centralization” (.132). Perceptions of “Intra-organizational communication” (.073), “Formalization” (-.003), “Vertical and horizontal differentiation” (.090) and “Segmentation” (-.021), on the other hand, are observed as non-significant factors in terms of their impact on satisfaction within the model.

As the model indicates, “operational effectiveness” is impacted by “adopting and conveying cultural elements” and “centralization” dimensions of strategic communications. This means that as the adoption and dissipation of cultural elements of the organization in tourism establishments increase, so does the level of operational effectiveness. Centralization in the structures of organizations has an impact on the performance of management functions hierarchically in terms of operational effectiveness. In other words, the centralization dimension within the organizational structure impacts operational effectiveness in a positive

way. More effective and better functioning managements would emerge and service quality of tourism establishments would increase as their operational effectiveness increases. In this way, it would be possible for the tourism establishments to become better, first in their own regions and then across countries.

3.4 Impact of Strategic Communication Dimensions on Overall Effectiveness of the Organization

Multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted in order to test the impact of strategic communication dimensions on the overall effectiveness of the organization by using averages. Scores of the questions constituting each factor were summed up and divided by the number of questions within the factor, average factor scores were calculated in this way and these average factor scores were included in regression analysis. Results of regression analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Impact of strategic communication dimensions on overall effectiveness of the organization

| Independent Variables | β | t | p |
|--|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| Invariable | 3.362 | 13.142 | 0.000* |
| Adopting and conveying cultural elements | .263 | 3.986 | 0.000* |
| Centralization | .094 | 1.574 | 0.116 |
| Intra-organizational Communication | .081 | 1.207 | 0.228 |
| Formalization | .093 | 1.611 | 0.108 |
| Vertical and Horizontal Differentiation | -.004 | -.068 | 0.946 |
| Segmentation | -.034 | -.626 | 0.532 |

$R^2=0.131$; $F=8.803$; $p=0.000$

* $p<0.01$; ** $p<0.05$

***Dependent Variable: Good communication enables the organization to work more effectively overall.

The results suggest that the model as a whole is significant ($F=8.803$ and $p=0.000$). Model explains 13.1% of satisfaction. When Table 4 is analyzed, the only variable that has an impact on the overall effectiveness of the organization is observed to be “Adopting and conveying cultural elements” (.263). As it is evident from the model, “The overall effectiveness of the organization” is impacted by the dimension of “adopting and conveying cultural elements” of strategic communications. So, in tourism establishments, as adoption and dissipation of cultural elements within the organization increase, so does their level of overall effectiveness. And this may contribute significantly in tourism establishments’ growth as better establishments with higher quality levels.

3.5 Impact of Strategic Communication Dimensions on Internal Functional Qualities of Separate Departments

Multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted in order to test the impact of strategic communication dimensions on the internal functional qualities of separate departments by using averages. Scores of the questions constituting each factor were summed up and divided by the number of questions within the factor, average factor scores were calculated in this way and these average factor scores were included in regression analysis. Results of regression analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Impact of strategic communication dimensions on internal functional qualities of separate departments

| Independent Variables | β | t | p |
|--|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| Invariable | 3.452 | 12.248 | 0.000* |
| Adopting and conveying cultural elements | .131 | 1.960 | 0.051 |
| Centralization | .108 | 1.794 | 0.074 |
| Intra-organizational Communication | .166 | 2.453 | 0.015** |
| Formalization | .051 | .872 | 0.384 |
| Vertical and Horizontal Differentiation | -.030 | -.532 | 0.595 |
| Segmentation | -.031 | -.554 | 0.580 |

$R^2=0.112$; $F=7.313$; $p=0.000$.

* $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$

***Dependent Variable: Good communication enables separate departments to work better internally.

The results suggest that the model as a whole is significant ($F=7.313$ and $p=0.000$). Model explains 11.2% of the satisfaction. When Table 5 is analyzed, the only variable that has an impact on internal functional qualities of separate departments is observed to be “Intra-organizational communication” (.166).

It is evident from the model that the dimension of “intra-organizational communication” of strategic communications impact “internal functional qualities of separate departments.” This means that, as intra-organizational communication level increases in tourism establishments, internal functional qualities of separate departments improve as well. Better internal functional qualities of separate departments also mean a higher overall efficiency level for the organization. Therefore, we may suggest that increasing quality and efficiency of the tourism establishments in Antalya depends on the presence of a good intra-organizational communication level.

4. Conclusion

In the present study, we first dealt with the notion of communication and tried to define the importance of communication for tourism establishments. Then, we explained the notion of strategic communication and its importance for and role in the management of organizations. We also compared conventional and strategic communication models using a table. The present study which focuses on strategic communication, involved the implementation of a questionnaire on employees of 5-star hotels located in the center of Antalya which is the busiest region of Turkey in terms of the numbers of tourists it receives; data gathered through the questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted.

According to the results of analysis, it is observed that “operational effectiveness” is impacted by “adopting and conveying cultural elements” and “centralization” dimensions of strategic communications. So, in tourism establishments, the level of operational effectiveness increases as the adoption and dissipation of cultural elements of the organization increase. Centralization in the structures of organizations has an impact on the performance of management functions hierarchically in terms of operational effectiveness, although it is observed to have little impact on strategic communications in general. In other words, the centralization dimension within the organizational structure impacts “operational effectiveness” in a positive way. More effective and better functioning managements would emerge and service quality of tourism establishments would increase as their operational effectiveness increases. In this way, it would be possible for the tourism establishments to reach to levels of high competitive advantage, first in their own region, and then in the international arena. Additionally, “the overall effectiveness of the organization” is impacted by the dimension of “adopting and conveying cultural elements” of strategic communications. So it may be suggested that overall effectiveness of tourism establishments would increase as

adoption and dissipation of cultural elements within the organization increase. And this would contribute significantly in tourism establishments' improvement as high quality establishments.

Another result of the study suggests that "internal functional qualities of separate departments" is impacted by "intra-organizational communication" dimension of strategic communications. Better internal functional qualities of separate departments would be attained as intra-organizational communication level increases in tourism establishments. Better internal functional qualities of separate departments also mean a higher overall efficiency level for the organization. Therefore, we may suggest that increasing quality and efficiency of the tourism establishments in Antalya depends on the presence of a good intra-organizational communication level.

The present study is based on 5-star accommodation establishments located at the center of Antalya destination but other studies may be conducted to cover all the other regions in Antalya. Moreover, other studies may be conducted to compare Antalya as a destination with other domestic or international destinations.

References

- Adler, R. B., & Elmhorst, J. M. (2002). *Communication At Work: Principles and Practices For Business and The Professions*, McGraw-Hill: NewYork.
- Argenti, P. A. (2003). *Corporate Communication*, McGraw-Hill: NewYork.
- Brownell, J. (1990). The Symbolic/Culture Approach: Managing Transition in the Service Industry, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 9(3), 191-205. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0278-4319\(90\)90015-P](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0278-4319(90)90015-P)
- Coffman, J. (2004). *Strategic Communication Audits, Communications Consortium Media Center*, Washington DC.
- Cüceloğlu, D. (2000). *Yeniden İnsan İnsana*, Remzi Kitabevi: İstanbul.
- Demir, Ş. Ş. (2011). Halkla ilişkiler faaliyetlerinde iletişim tekniklerinin etkisi: Konaklama işletmeleri örneği, *Uluslar arası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi*, 8(2), 127-150.
- Eren, E. (2002). *İşletmelerde Stratejik Yönetim ve İşletme Politikası*. Beta Basım Yayım Dağıtım: İstanbul.
- Goldman, E. (2008). Strategic Communication Theory and Application. *Presentation Presented in the Office of Coordinator for Counter terrorism of U.S. Department of State*.
- Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Prentice Hall: New Jersey.
- Jones, J. (2009). Strategic Communication: A Mandate for the United States, *National Defense University, Joint Force Quarterly*, 4, 104-114.
- Kaya, B. (2003). *Yönetim ve İş İletişimi*, Siyasal Kitabevi: Ankara.

- Koçel, T. (2001). *İşletme Yöneticiliği*, Beta Yayınları: İstanbul.
- Kurt, T. (2004). *Örgüt Yapısının Örgütsel İletişime Etkisi* (Unpublished Master thesis). Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Eğitim Yönetimi ve Denetimi Bilim Dalı, Ankara.
- Kusluvan, S. (2003). Employee attitudes and behaviors and their roles for tourism and hospitality businesses, In S. Kusluvan (Ed.), *Managing employee attitudes and behaviors in the tourism and hospitality* (pp. 25-50), New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Mccabe, S. (2009). *Marketing Communications in Tourism and Hospitality* (First ed.) Oxford: Elsevier, UK. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-7506-8277-0.00007-0>
- O.'Hair, D., & Fredrich, G. W. (2005). *Strategic Communication in Business and Professions*. Houghtan Mifflin Company: Boston.
- Okay, Ayla., & Okay, Aydemir. (2005). *Halkla İlişkiler: Kavram, Strateji ve Uygulamaları*, Der Yayınları: İstanbul.
- Öztürk, Y., & Seyhan, K. (2005). *Konaklama İşletmelerinde Sunulan Hizmet Kalitesinin Artırılmasında İşgören Eğitiminin Yeri ve Önemi, Ticaret ve Turizm Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 1, 121-140.*
- Ruck, K., & Welch, M. (2012). Valuing Internal Communication; Management and Employee Perspectives. *Public Relations Review, 38, 294-302.* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.12.016>
- Sabuncuoğlu, Z., & Tüz, M. (2001). *Örgütsel Psikoloji*, Ezgi Kitabevi: Bursa.
- Shimizu, T., Carvalho, M. M., & Laurindo, F. J. B. (2006). *Strategic Alignment Process: Theory and Case Studies*, Hershey: PA, USA.
- Sipahi, B., Yurtkoru, S. E., & Çinko, M. (2010). *Sosyal Bilimlerde SPSS'le Veri Analizi*, Beta Yayınevi: İstanbul.
- Slatten, T., Göran, S., & Sander, S. (2011). Service Quality and Turnover Intentions as Percieved by Employees. *Personnel Review, 40(2), 205-221.* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00483481111106084>
- Şener, B. (2001). *Modern Otel İşletmelerinde Yönetim*. Gazi Kitapevi: Ankara.
- Tatham, S. (2008). *“Strategic Communication: A Primer”*, Defence Academy of United Kingdom.
- Taylor, P. M. (2009). *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*. Rutledge Press: London.
- Vural, A. B., & Bat. M. (2010). Yeni Bir İletişim Ortamı Olarak Sosyal Medya. *Journal of Yaşar University, 20(5), 3348-3382.*
- Yıldız, Y. (2006). *Örgüt Kültürü Oluşumunda Örgütsel İletişimin Rolü: Gaziantep Büyükşehir Belediyesinde Bir Uygulama* (Unpublished Master thesis). Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İşletme Ana Bilim Dalı, Gaziantep.

Yılmaz, E. (2011). Örgütsel Bağlılığa İletişimin Etkisi: Bir Örnek Olay (Unpublished Master thesis). Sakarya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Çalışma Ekonomisi ve Endüstri İlişkileri Ana Bilim Dalı, Sakarya.

Zulhamri, A., & Claina, A.. A. (2012). Perception of Employees on Internal Communication of a Leading Five Star Hotel in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, 8(2), 17-26.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Survey question for strategic communication

| STRATEJİK COMMUNICATION | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Management informs us about the organization's vision, mission and targets. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Management informs us about the ways to follow in order to reach the targets. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Vision and mission of the organization are adopted by everybody. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Boards, warnings, mottos etc. on the walls show our working principles. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I try to participate in all kinds of organizations arranged for the personnel (meetings, seminars, etc.). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Reaching corporate objectives is more important than reaching personal ones. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My opinions are considered when decisions related to my task or to me are taken. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Decisions are taken with the participation of all units including sublevels. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am informed about the decisions taken related to the department I work for. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am not informed of the decisions taken. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Instructions and information related to my tasks are conveyed to me by my superiors in a timely manner. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Interpersonal communications within the organization are good. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Interdepartmental communications within the organization are good. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I can easily convey my wishes, suggestions and complaints about the job or other matters to the management. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I can easily reach information necessary for my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Repetition of the same tasks or intermingling of these within the department or between departments occasionally occurs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I frequently feel the need to consult top units about the tasks I am to perform since the job definitions are not clear. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Communication problems due to indefinite tasks, powers and responsibilities occur in the organization in general. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Some important units or persons are left outside of the communication process in conveying information and instructions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| There are persons or units preventing messages containing information about the tasks or other messages to reach where they need to reach. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Some malfunctions occur in performing the jobs related to other departments in a timely and complete manner. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The lack of communication between units causes malfunctions in the jobs conducted in a coordinated manner. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| There are many ranks to pass through to convey an issue or problem to the top superior authority. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The presence of too many divisions for the work to be done makes communication between units difficult. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The indefinite responsibilities between departments cause conflicts in tasks. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| High number of departments in the unit I work for makes communication and coordination difficult. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I need to be in communication with units which are different from the ones I communicate with while performing my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My task involves one single and specific job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The division of the works conducted into many departments causes communication breakdowns between units and people related to the same task | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The tasks carried out are divided into many jobs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Information within the communication system of our organization are kept confidential among those related people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The power and responsibility separation between the departments have been done in a clear and precise way | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My superiors encourage me to convey them information, opinions and problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Any unit, informs all the other units related to the operation it performs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I cannot reach my manager when I want to meet with him/her | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Information and instructions I get from my superiors related to my task are insufficient | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I can easily reach my superiors to convey them information, opinions and problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | |
| A better communication within the organization increases “Operational Effectiveness” (conducting the same operation better than the competition). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Good communication enables the organization to work more effectively overall. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Good communication enables separate departments to work better internally. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Good communication increases the quality of service. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; are Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5.

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright reserved by the author(s).

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).