



Review

## The Role of Business Communication on the Systematised Operations of Business Ventures: A Comprehensive Review

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### Abstract

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The exchange of ideas, information, or instructions is a fundamental feature of all organisations. This exchange of information may take place between different sections or departments or externally with other organisations. In the context of business communication, the identification of how this process operates most effectively and what essential elements are involved in the process for the sole purpose of enhancement of business activities and profit-making is vital. Still, most of the companies in the business sector have failed to pay due recognition for communication practices which have resulted in inefficiency in operations. The goal of this review study is to identify areas and highlight and explain the importance of good communication in the management process and business growth. The study is a review of literature that adopts qualitative research methodology and with secondary data. In this paper, the review of literature related to business communication has identified the necessity of maintaining an ideal communication protocol within and outside of the organization. The role of business communication is better understood through the identification of functions of key elements such as sender, business information, receiver, and feedback. Further, the role of communication in the business context is better understood through the identification and adaptation of the ideal type or mixture of types of communication: upward, downward, lateral/horizontal, and external. The study has also identified the enhancement of communication practices with the help of digital ICT technologies.

*Keywords:* business communication, business management, downward communication, enhancement of business, upward communication.

### 1. Introduction

Business organizations face many tasks and operations today without which the operation is challenged. To facilitate these operations, communication is considered the main drive and the lifeblood, particularly for profit making. Business ventures must embark on successful operations within and outside their framework for their success. One may assume that the stability of finance, manpower, and assets are the main concerns for the effective profit-making of an organization. However, despite the sound stability of such resources of a business, there is a tendency for failure in operations and profit-making if the organization's smooth operations collapse. The term operations can be considered an environment that facilitates proper

coordination of activities within the different departments and sections. Also, the system of operations has to run smoothly not only within the organization but also with outside agencies such as partner stakeholders, prospective or target clients, and the community outside the business. Further, the exchange of ideas, information, or instructions is a fundamental feature of all organizations for effective operations. Hence, communication is considered the main drive of power in the systematization of effective operations of the business. According to Bell & Martin (2019), communication is a method, a means to a profitable end, or a necessity as the resolution itself. According to Orel & Almeida (2019), business communication is a crucial factor in mobilizing and directing the workforce concerning the achievement of the corporation's objectives or goals. Making understanding promotes cooperation and enhances effective productivity. In the context of business organizations, business communication is a crucial factor in mobilizing the workforce and directing them in the right direction for the achievement of organizational objectives or goals. When miscommunication between staff and management exists, many industrial conflicts arise as collaboration declines (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Moreover, when disturbances leading to collaboration in the work environment exist, staff motivation is affected. Organization sought to have a mechanism that enhances productivity in interactions, attitudes, atmosphere, and behavioural and technical attributes generated by a proper communication environment.

### *1.2 Statement of the Problem*

The increased advances in functions of business activities have greatly influenced the drives of performance in business organizations. As Hiller & Shackelford (2018) point out, communication has become one of the key factors that have to play a key role in influencing business performance in the modern age. In a business organization, there are many stakeholders, such as workers, staff, vendors, clients, labour unions, and government regulators, in addition to management and executive staff involved in the myriad of functions (Naidoo & Gasparatos, 2018). Successful functions of the business are the effective networking connectivity of the said stakeholders, and the practices of communication that exist in the business would help to maintain the connectivity leading to the overall functions of the organization. However, the existence of communication gaps is rather disadvantageous as it can result in poor quality, poor customer service, unhappy clients, and unsatisfactory execution of managerial functions, all of which lead to affect the successful profit-making of the business. Also, the management of the business has to employ successful practices of communication for the company to be successful in increasing profitability. This study, therefore, seeks to ascertain the impact of business communication on success and business profitability by way of a review of the literature available in the discipline.

### *1.3 Objectives of the Study*

The study aims to explore the impact of business communication on managerial functions, human resource operations, and the overall profitability of the business organization. The study specifically aims to examine the effect of successful communication on the overall functions of business organizations, the enhancement of business productivity through communication, and salient features and concepts that are involved in effective business communication.

## **2. Methodology**

The study is a review of literature that adopts qualitative research methodology and with secondary data. In literature, secondary data refers to data that is collected by someone other than the primary user. In a study, common sources of secondary data for social science include censuses, information collected by government departments, organizational records, and data

that was initially collected for other research purposes. Secondary data can strengthen the research persuasion and can help foster strong conclusions (Sun & Lipsitz, 2018). The secondary method includes plethora of articles, literature, books, magazines, peer-reviewed journals, and online reports collected from authentic sources.

For the purpose of writing this paper, which is a review of literature, the concept of systematic synthesis methodology is used. The contemporary utilization of systematic synthesis methodology is driven by the rapidly increasing number of scientific publications in the last decades (Rapple, 2011). Most of the review articles that use synthesis methods (e.g., scoping review, systematic review, and meta-analysis) have the goal to provide state-of-the-art knowledge on a topic by summarizing data from primary published studies and attempting to aggregate and reconcile the scientific results from the individual studies. The synthesis procedures should be unbiased, clearly organized, and reproducible (Ketcham & Crawford, 2007).

The basic steps and important choices involved in conducting a literature review suggested by scholars are used and will include four phases; (1) designing the review, (2) conducting the review, (3) analyzing, and (4) writing up the review. This process was developed from practical experience and is a synthesis of and influenced by various standards and guidelines suggested for literature reviews (e.g., Liberati et al., 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003; Wong et al., 2013).

### **3. Literature Review**

The concept of business communication originates from the term communication which has been widely accepted by scholars and academics as the lifeblood of an organization for the reason that communication is essential for exchanging information and opinions, making plans and proposals, reaching agreements, executing decisions, sending and fulfilling orders and conducting sales (Blalock, 2005). As Conrad and Newberry (2011) perceive, communication is widely accepted, and business management and business educators regard communication skills as highly valuable to employees and organisations alike. The success and growth of an organization are highly dependent on the effectiveness of communication. Therefore, business communication can be considered as a process of generating, transmitting, receiving, and interpreting messages in interpersonal, group, public, and mass communication existing through written and verbal formats. This type of communication aims toward organizing activities that will lead the members of the company to make a profit (Safran, 2010). Effective business communication is the key to planning, leading, organizing, and controlling the resources of the organisations to achieve objectives, and may be formal or informal in nature (Hynes, 2005).

#### *3.1 Effects of Business Communication on Business Management*

Management is an essential activity that businesses ought to consider for efficient and effective operations. In simple terms, the art of getting things done by others is the prime function of management. A business with adequate funds, human resources, natural resources, and human resources alone can not be considered to be at the top of its performance. If the business does not have efficient and capable managers to utilize these resources, the success of the business cannot be guaranteed. As Srivastava (2021) observes, Business management is related to the seven M's, i.e., Money, Men, Material, Machine, Methods, Market, and Management. It involves various functions like forecasting, planning, decision-making, controlling, coordination, staffing, motivation, communication, etc. Every business deals with employees, suppliers, customers, and the government. All these factors are alive; they have emotions, i.e., their own opinion. The main aim of effective communication is to improve business practices and enhance the growth of a business.

Further, Srivastava (2021) points out that effective communication in the business context reduces errors created by any sort of communication gap. All the management activities and functions in a business rely on the effective communication strategies used by business managers. It has been proved that communication assists managers to execute their roles and responsibilities, and for these, managers need to spend a long time with subordinates, workers, suppliers, and customers to have them acquainted with information, ideas, and opinions. For all these functions, the manager must be capable of using written communication as well as oral communication to bring forth a way to communicate with others efficiently.

### *3.2 Effects of poor communication*

Poor communication is a breakdown that results from a discrepancy or disconnect between what is said and what is understood. This lack of mutual understanding can happen at the interpersonal level between colleagues or an organizational level (Grossman, 2022). Poor communication can happen due to many reasons. Although some of these reasons for poor communication are easier to spot than others, all of them can be harmful to employees and the business as a whole.

When suggestions or feedback are requested by the leaders or management, it is necessary to recognize the responses of employees. When leaders fail to act on responses provided by employees, they need to explain why. Otherwise, employees can easily feel as though their concerns haven't been heard or recognized or that their feedback is not truly valued by the leaders or management. Another effect of poor communication is that when employees happen to work in remote environments, they tend to feel that they are left out of critical communication. This results in employees seeking increased transparency and more frequent communication regularly.

Grossman (2022) asserts that employees expect to be informed about changes in key personnel and processes that may impact their jobs and careers, and they look to leadership to ensure they get that information. If change is happening, and leaders aren't sharing why, the rumour mill can start to agitate and complicate or exacerbate an already complex situation. This is obviously not good for employee morale or helpful for keeping the organization focused and motivated. This can also lead to fear, confusion, and distrust, which can build over time and potentially hamstring the organization for years to come.

According to Khan (2021), there are five important causes of poor communication in the workplace. They can be identified as below:

#### *i. Poor leadership*

Good communication that originates from the top motivates staff members to be more productive and innovative. However, poor and incompetent leaders are more than often indecisive and are unable to inspire their subordinate staff.

#### *ii. Limited feedback*

Effective feedback, both positive and negative, is very useful for business. It provides valuable information for making important decisions. However, poor communication can seriously condense feedback given to employees that hinder their work. Limited feedback from management makes employees unclear about current actions and continues to underperform their duties.

### iii. Unclear objectives

When the goals and objectives of business organisations are clear and powerful, they lead to desirable outcomes and profitability. If management fails to provide directions with clear objectives, such conditions lead employees to confusion and frustration, and employees may also end up underperforming without meaning to.

### iv. Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

Work environments are getting more and more diverse. Diverse work environments have been proven to help companies grow as they bring in new ideas for greater creativity and innovation. However, one challenge of increasing diversity in the workplace comes with the potential for poor communication. Different people from different backgrounds relay messages in different ways, with varied nonverbal cues. Interpretations of messages will also be different. For example, forming a circle with your thumb and index finger means “OK” in the United States; however, it means “money” in Japan. To combat this form of poor communication, companies should invest in diversity classes to educate employees.

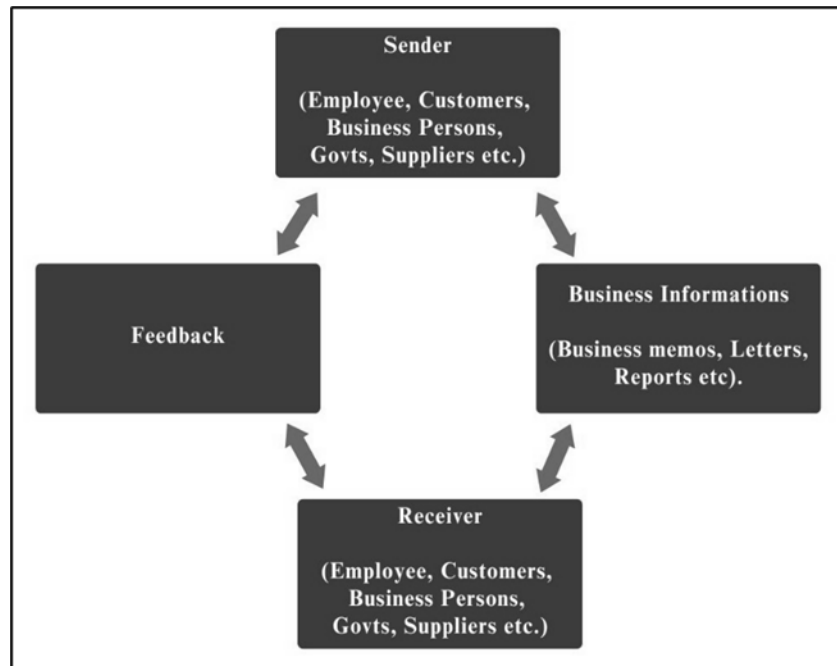
### v. Demoralized Employees

When employees lose interest in their work or the company, they are considered demoralized. Despite their capacities and talents. Employees who feel demoralized often also feel undervalued, unappreciated, and even disrespected. This will often lead to the employee becoming unproductive and irritable, disregarding the open lines of communication instead of helping move the company forward. Restoring employee morale may involve reevaluating workplace culture and thinking about what it takes to create a work environment where employees are personally invested enough to work with a good attitude.

Therefore, it is identified that lack of predictability and stability within the workplace, leading to an uneasy environment for employees to work in, are some negative effects of poor communication. Further, employees might find it difficult to clearly understand the objectives of the tasks ahead of the week or might misunderstand the process for a project, leading to unproductivity and ineffectiveness at their job. The management or employers have a responsibility to facilitate an active dialogue in order to create a stable work environment to get their best work done.

### 3.3 Key elements of business communication

Business communication has major key elements in its operation. Such key elements can be identified as the sender, information, receiver, and feedback, as shown in Figure 1 (Key elements of business communication, Verma et al., 2020). In the first stage, employees, customers, business persons, government agencies, suppliers, etc., can be identified as senders. The senders pass business information in the form of memos, letters, reports, etc., as shown in the second stage. Then, the business information is sent to the receiver. Receivers are again the people and agencies such as employees, customers, business persons, government agencies, suppliers, etc. The fourth stage can be identified as the stage of feedback in which the responses are sent to the sender by the receiver in the form of business information. If the communication process is to be successful, it is necessary that a continuous flow of information and feedback is in operation. Business communication has a vital part in many management responsibilities, such as planning, coordinating, organizing, directing, as well as managing, due to varying stages of hierarchy and the engagement of a large number of individuals.



**Figure 1.** Key elements of business communication (Verma et al., 2022)

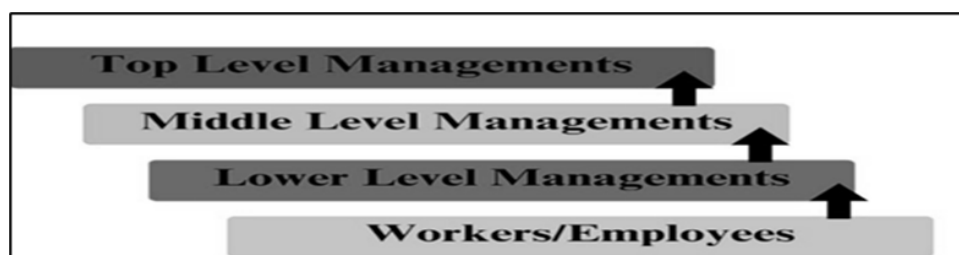
### 3.4 The four types of business communication

In business communication, there are four leading types of communication: upward, downward, lateral/horizontal, and external. Although there is no one ‘right’ way to communicate in an organization, the management can determine which types are the best for the team. Also, some organizations employ multiple types of communication for smooth functioning.

#### 3.4.1 Upward communication

In upward communication (see Figure 2), lower-level company employees can communicate directly with upper-level management to provide feedback, complaints, comments, and suggestions with reference to day to day operations of the company. Many companies have encouraged upward communication, and such communication has gained popularity among organisations to encourage a participative work culture. Companies that foster upward communication are better able to make decisions that positively impact their employees.

In upward communication, a sense of mutual trust is established between upper management, lower management, and employees as lower-level employees trust that company officials will consider their suggestions. Similarly, upper management believes that employees use upward communication methods to be proactive and positive.



**Figure 2.** Upward communication

### 3.4.2 Downward communication

Downward communication, also known as top-down communication, is the vertical process of relaying important information in a company or organization from higher levels to lower levels (see Figure 3). Downward communication becomes successful when the lowest position in the organization has received the message passed down to them by the top-level management.

Information that can flow through a downward communication system can include new policies, the latest or new company initiatives, specific job instructions, employee reviews and feedback, and announcements that are not directly related to work.

Top management or company executives can use a number of different channels to disseminate information through downward communication. Employee handbooks, email circulars, face-to-face conversations, and company-wide directives are some examples of forms of downward communication. The employee handbook is typically drafted by members of upper-class management and then shared with all members of the organization. In the case of email circulars, they can serve as a company-wide memo that goes out to all team members. In most companies, face-to-face communication through downward communication can take a direct interpersonal approach. An example can be the charges towards employees spoken by the supervisors. Also, on the positive side, supervisors can share performance appraisals or give new job instructions. The last one mentioned above is the company-wide directives. Sometimes, upper management makes a decision affecting the whole company, but as a matter of interpersonal strategy, they choose to disseminate that message through departments and managers.

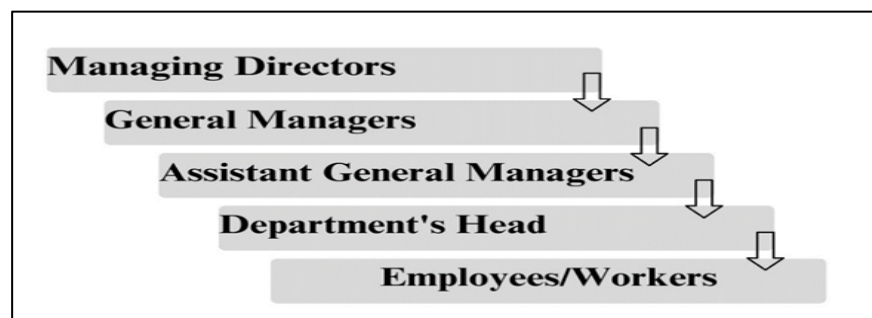


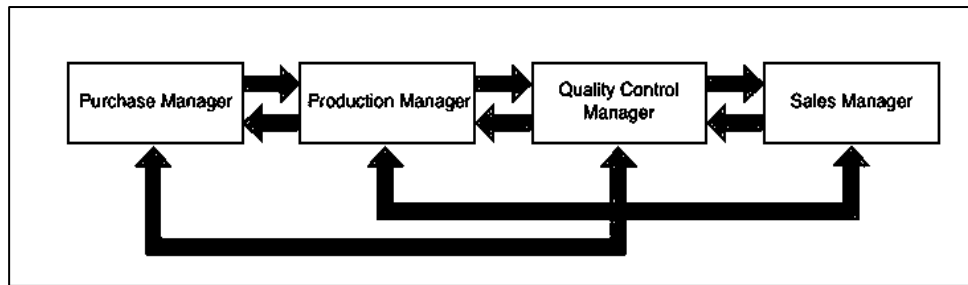
Figure 3. Downward communication

### 3.4.3 Lateral/horizontal communication

As indicated in Table 4, lateral communication is "the exchange, imparting or sharing of information, ideas or feelings between people within a community, peer groups, departments or units of an organization who are at or about the same hierarchical level as each other for the purpose of coordinating activities, efforts or fulfilling a common purpose or goal.

As with any type of workplace communication, there are upsides and downsides. When done correctly, horizontal communication fosters teamwork, visibility, and accountability among employees at the same hierarchical level. Proper horizontal communication should create a feeling of unity, ensuring everyone is working toward the same goals together and not competing against one another or higher-ups.

However, ineffective horizontal communication can create pitfalls and bottlenecks in the business. When employees have too many platforms to check or are left dealing with inefficient communication processes, it can do more harm than good.



**Figure 4.** Lateral /horizontal communication

According to Guthrie (2021), traditionally, big companies have hierarchical structures that focus on vertical communication. However, communication methods and channels have changed massively over the past 50 years, with email, chat apps, mobile, and video conferencing transforming the way we all talk to one another.

Now, anyone can talk to and share information with anyone in seconds. This has naturally made organizational communication a little more horizontal in practice by default, even within a vertical communication structure.

#### 3.4.4 External communication

External Communication is the transfer or exchange of information between a company and external entities such as customers, businesses, suppliers, partners, investors, government agencies, and law enforcement. A customer's feedback is also considered as external communication.

A company may use external communication to exchange information that will educate, inform, or entertain the people outside your organization. Such communication may include:

- Company achievements
- Product developments
- Discounts, promotions, and giveaways
- New releases and service announcements
- Brand identity

When organisations communicate externally, it is vital that the communication should reflect organizational values and company culture. If organizations use the incorrect tone or communicate the wrong thing, it could harm the reputation of the company. Businesses must develop strategies for both external and internal communications. Almost every organization will need to communicate externally and internally at some point, so it is important to choose the right methods, technologies, and communication channels for better information exchange.

#### 3.5 Place of technology in business communication

In this age of communication, access to information through technology is considered as wealth (Jansen, 2016). The emergence of new communication technology serves as a key source for the application of information retrieval techniques in the business context. The use of new communication technology can tackle some of the basic problems, namely accuracy, cost, speed, quality, and quantity, considering wide corporate business operations. The business world must adopt new technologies for the cause of communication to serve the community as social responsibility, or it will be difficult to survive in the competitive scenario. So, the search for alternative methods over the traditional media like radio, television, computer, audio and video cassettes, video disk, telephones, and many mechanical devices has become imperative



in the modern complex business organization, where communication must go to vast geographical territory, both inside and outside the country.

There are infinite reasons why technology is important in business. It must be noted that whether we like it or not, the role of technology in business is expanding and will only keep growing in the future. Businesses owe it to their operations, employees, and bottom line to utilize the new technological innovations. Businesses must embrace the benefits of technology and can no longer devalue the importance of technology in business.

To narrow the reasons down, we can identify ten reasons with regard to the importance of technology in business communication:

I. Technology increases efficiency.

It's no secret that there have been some awesome technological advancements in recent years. Advancements such as Lifesize's video conferencing technology and Zulty's VOIP phone cloud solution are strategically designed to improve efficiency and reduce laytime in the office.

II. Technology improves business communication.

Businesses rely on several aspects of technology for communication, such as email, Skype, instant messaging, business phones, video conferencing technology, etc. Communication breakdowns can lead to disasters for businesses and employees. With the help of technology, businesses can be prepared to ensure that they are prepared for even the most difficult communication obstacles.

III. New innovations protect important assets.

Cyber-attacks are growing at an alarming rate. So too are the amazing cyber-security defences such as Sophos' Deep Learning technology. In an age where almost all-important business assets are stored in the cloud or on endpoints, it is imperative that businesses employ security technology to protect those valuable assets.

IV. Employees demand technology for smooth operations.

The role of technology in business is not new, but it is expanding. Employees expect their employers to provide them with the latest and greatest technology, which will, in turn, help them be successful in fulfilling their job responsibilities. It is hard to compete against businesses that fully employ technology advancements when your own business is lagging in its technology.

V. There are no limitations to the technology.

We know this principle is true from first-hand experience. Imagine a company that has 20 employees stationed in 10 different locations across the country. If it was not for technology, the company would not be successful in coordinating all of the employees. Businesses across the nation are diverse in needs, culture, and education. Advances in technology can help businesses address these differences unlike ever before. There is no limit to what can be accomplished by a business that employs a successful technology plan.

VI. Technology keeps employees engaged.

Technology keeps employees engaged in many different ways. It allows employees to telecommute to work. It encourages collaboration between coworkers in businesses through tools

such as file sharing. It improves communication. It reduces stress by allowing you to schedule important deadlines and meetings on your electronic calendar. Also, technology gives employees the flexibility to perform work functions with the help of their mobile devices.

#### VII. Technology is necessary to succeed.

Whether you like it or not, technology is essential to business success. Employees rely on it for day-to-day operations. Outside companies, clients, and prospective clients evaluate you on your use of technology. HR relies on technology to train and develop employees. Accounting employees rely on technology to complete payroll and execute necessary monetary management functions. Management relies on technology to communicate with those they supervise. Without technology, companies would almost certainly fail to accomplish all that there is to do.

#### VIII. Technology increases the capacity of businesses.

Technology allows businesses to reach more people in less time. For example, here at a certain point, we use a variety of technology mediums to communicate with our clients, potential clients, and experts in the industry. We use technology to host monthly webinars, send out e-newsletters, and publish news and blogs.

#### IX. Tons of new resources exist that can improve your business.

Technology is growing fast, prices are dropping, and new innovations are being rolled out constantly. If you have not been consistently looking out for new technology to assist your business, chances are that you have missed something. For example, the Comfort Company implemented video conferencing technology that saved them time and costs while improving relationships and communication. Savage Public Schools discovered the need to totally revamp their technology and have since enjoyed an improved school system. There certainly are technology solutions out there that can improve your business.

#### X. Technology saves time and money

Technology, by now, performs many of the mundane tasks that employees used to be expected to perform. Provisions of technology allow employees to focus their time elsewhere on more important duties. This can save money by cutting back on employee expenses and improving productivity.

In a nutshell, the role of technology in the business context is to drive growth and improve the effectiveness of company operations. The advancement of technology and the subsequent effects of globalization have compelled companies to perform better in the global competitive business environment. The contribution of the internet can be regarded as a facilitator for global advanced technological communication. The Internet really is a way or path for various computers to communicate. The success of a product in the market depends upon its quality and capacity to compete and sell in the world market. In a global marketing set-up, there is a need to inform the potential global customer about the availability of a particular product with certain specifications, price, utility, and other features. Hence, the vibrant contribution to business communication.

## 4. Results and Discussion

Business communication is a major part of the success of the business. Given the diversity, globalization, and competitiveness in the business environment, methodical application of business communication is vital in case of maintaining day-to-day activities within and outside

the business organization. There is the paramount importance of application of well-structured practices of business communication inside the business organization to effectively run the functions of different departments, units, sections, or layers of administration. Further, the contribution of business communication to the overall management of the organisation is very essential. Outside the business organization, it is necessary to place high esteem on external communication, which is the transfer of information between a company and external entities. Customer feedback and provisions for such communication can be taken under external communication. Effective communication is considered a milestone to maintain a successful business. Communication plans require being proactive to get better success. For the trainees, education in business communication is impactful as it can help in maintaining the success of the business in the future. Internal as well as external communication is the backbone of any organizational success in the market. Thus, learning professional communication strategies is essential for any employee. This can help in a joyful work environment and the trainees to be applied as employees can give their best in the work and emit professional performance in a job that can ultimately lead to job satisfaction.

Business ventures need to identify the four key elements, such as sender, information, receiver, and feedback, involved in the business communication environment. For effective administration and operations, the concepts of four communication types, upward communication, downward communication, lateral/horizontal communication, and external communication, serve as ideal options for selection in the major communication practices to be adopted. Finally, the emergence of ICT serves as a key source for the application of information retrieval techniques in the business context, and the use of new communication technology can tackle some of the basic problems, namely accuracy, cost, speed, quality, and quantity considering wide corporate business operations.

## 5. Conclusion

Business communication involves a constant flow of information. Feedback is an integral part of business communication. Organizations these days are very large and involve large numbers of people. There are various levels of hierarchy in an organization. The greater the number of levels, the more difficult the job of managing the organization. Communication in this context plays a very important role in the process of directing and controlling the people in the organization. The role of business communication is better understood through the identification of functions of key elements such as sender, business information, receiver, and feedback. Further, the role of communication in the business context is better understood through the identification and adaptation of the ideal type or mixture of types of communication: upward, downward, lateral/horizontal, and external. Further, ICT serves as a key source that facilitates the systematized operations pertaining to functions of communication in business ventures.

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