

Corporate Communication in the Age of Digital Platform

Field Study at Oum El Bouaghi University

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Abstract:

This study, entitled "Corporate Communication in the Age of Digital Platforms, aimed to comprehensively evaluate the role and effectiveness of digital platforms within the university environment, in light of the shift from traditional to digital environments. This study addresses the research question: What is the role of the university website and Facebook page in activating corporate communication between the University of Oum El Bouaghi and its users? A descriptive approach was employed, and a representative sample from the original community was selected. The data collection tool was a questionnaire consisting of 140 forms. The findings highlight the significant role of digital platforms (website and Facebook page) in stimulating communication and increasing its effectiveness at the University of Oum El Bouaghi.

Keywords: Communication, Corporate Communication, Digital Platforms.

JEL Classification Codes: D83 ,M14,L86

Introduction:

Human societies have witnessed a gradual and continuous influx of technology and new practices, involving interaction between humans and these advancements. Researchers have dedicated decades to developing the language of communication, and communication and media technologies have undergone waves of development and improvement.

Today, communication is no longer limited to individuals and groups; rather, its significance has become increasingly evident in institutions. Corporate communication is a continuous form of communication that highlights an institution's status, the values that shape its behaviors, and the culture that distinguishes it from similar institutions. Administrative work and the communication process are two inseparable factors.

Modern communication technologies have contributed to the emergence of digital platforms as a key player in various aspects of human life and activities. Large segments of the public have shifted towards using digital communication tools, leading to the rise of a digital society that relies primarily on information and advanced communication technologies. Computers have played a significant role in disseminating, producing, and efficiently utilizing knowledge across all fields.

The success of any institution is fundamentally tied to the effectiveness of its communication process. Corporate communication has become a crucial equation that attracts the attention of researchers and scholars.

To understand the role of digital platforms in connecting different levels of communication within institutions, we pose the following research question:

What is the role of the website and Facebook page in activating Corporate communication between the University of Oum El Bouaghi and its users?

Sub-questions:

- What are the mechanisms through which corporate communication manifests via the website and Facebook page of the University of Oum El Bouaghi?
- What are the forms of interaction with the content on the website and Facebook page of the University of Oum El Bouaghi?

- What are the implications of employing the website and Facebook page in improving corporate communication at the University of Oum El Bouaghi?

Study Hypotheses:

Main Hypothesis:

- Main Hypothesis: There is a positive impact of the website and Facebook page in activating corporate communication between the University of Oum El Bouaghi and its users.

Sub-Hypotheses:

1. First Sub-Hypothesis: Corporate communication is effectively achieved through specific mechanisms presented on the website and Facebook page of the University of Oum El Bouaghi.
2. Second Sub-Hypothesis: There is a relationship between the forms of interaction with the content on the website and Facebook page and the improvement of corporate communication at the University of Oum El Bouaghi.
3. Third Sub-Hypothesis: The use of the website and Facebook page leads to the enhancement of corporate communication performance at the University of Oum El Bouaghi.

Significance of the Study:

The topic of corporate communication in the era of digital platforms holds great importance due to its seriousness and novelty, as well as the added value it provides in ensuring institutional continuity and maintaining performance. Communication is one of the fundamental pillars of an institution's success in achieving its objectives, managing its activities, and handling its interactions. It serves as the tool institutions use to establish relationships, foster proximity, ensure continuity, and advance their activities.

Objectives of the Study:

- Identify the digital mechanisms through which corporate communication takes place and how they connect the institution's functions, departments, and levels, both internally and externally, assessing their effectiveness through the website and Facebook page of the University of Oum El Bouaghi.
- Examine the forms and manifestations of interaction with the content and corporate communication materials shared on the

Facebook page and website of the University of Oum El Bouaghi.

- Determine the effects of utilizing the Facebook page and website of the University of Oum El Bouaghi.

Firstly. Study Methodology:

In this study, we used the descriptive methodology due to its advantages, as it provides detailed data on the actual reality of the phenomenon or research topic. It also offers a realistic interpretation of the factors related to corporate communication in the era of digital platforms. A field study was conducted on a sample of Facebook users from the University of Oum El Bouaghi's official page and group. Data was collected from the study field, analyzed, and interpreted to explain the relationship between variables.

1. Research Population:

The original research population in our study consists of all students, professors, employees, and contracted staff at the University of Oum El Bouaghi. Given that the university has multiple branches, the available population includes users and affiliates of the university's central campus in Oum El Bouaghi.

2. Research Sample:

Since the research population is diverse, the stratified random sampling method was adopted by dividing it into homogeneous groups and randomly selecting samples from each group. This method relies on classifying the population according to the nature of the required data, with prior knowledge of its units to ensure the accuracy of selection. The research sample was determined to consist of 140 individuals, ensuring proportional representation of each stratum according to its actual size. This procedure aims to guarantee the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the results.

3. Data Collection Tools

In this study, we employed the questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, as it aligns with the research methodology and topic.

Through this tool, we were able to gather data from the selected sample and assess the role of digital platforms in enhancing corporate communication. The questionnaire was designed based on the study's sub-questions to ensure a structured and comprehensive data collection process.

Secondly. Literature review :

Defining concepts is one of the most important steps in scientific research, as it helps in guiding the study for both the researcher and the reader alike.

1. Communication:

- **Linguistically:** The word "communication" is derived from the Latin root *communication*, meaning "shared," which is related to the English word *common*, meaning "widespread" or "familiar." Communication refers to the process of transmitting and exchanging information to achieve a specific purpose (Hijab, 2003, p. 09).
- **Terminologically:** Sociologists define it as a tool for connecting social phenomena through the cohesion of individual units. Charles Cooley defines it as the mechanism through which relationships exist and develop, and mental symbols are spread across time and space through various media (Al-Baqi, 2003, p. 276). It is also defined as the process of transmitting information from a sender to a receiver, which may include opinions, ideas, or orders (Hareem, 2009, p. 251).
- **Operationally:** Communication is an interactive process through which ideas and information are exchanged among individuals and groups using various methods and means to achieve mutual understanding and specified goals.

2. Corporate Communication:

- Defined as all communication activities carried out by an institution, whether to convey news about itself, its activities, or to enhance its presence and position on various issues (Shaker, 2005, p. 87).
- Losad Vasquez defines it as a set of relationships encompassing all aspects of organizational interaction, forming an official expression of the institution through various means (Delio, 2003, p. 24).
- **Operationally:** Corporate communication is the process of communication within and outside an institution to ensure its continuity, achieve its objectives, and enhance its image among audiences. This is what the University of Oum El Bouaghi seeks through its digital platforms.

3. Digital Platforms:

- Defined as a set of technologies with unique features used for digital interaction through content prepared and designed for communication purposes.
- Also defined as a complex technological system consisting of information systems, analysis tools, and data visualization methods (Issaoui,2021, p. 85).
- **Operationally:** Digital or electronic platforms are websites linked to the web, relying on modern communication technology for transmitting information. They offer features such as
- interaction, uploading, sharing, and commenting.

These platforms are linked to the University of Oum El Bouaghi through their contribution to the educational and administrative aspects, enhancing their role in activating Corporate communication.

Thirdly. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

- **Engagement with the university's website and Facebook page**

Table 1: Represents the respondents' engagement with the university's website and Facebook page

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Always	58	41.42%
Often	25	17.58%
Sometimes	47	33.58%
Rarely	10	7.14%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

From the quantitative results obtained, we conclude that a large percentage of university members regularly follow the university's website and Facebook page, followed by those who engage occasionally, then often, and finally rarely.

This trend is attributed to the characteristics of these platforms, such as ease of use, free access, time and effort efficiency, and the ability to stay updated with the latest information. Additionally, respondents'

engagement reflects the importance of the content published on these platforms.

- **The devices used by respondents**

Table 2: Represents the devices used by respondents.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Mobile phone	122	66.66%
Tablet	5	2.73%
Laptop	38	20.77%
Desktop	18	9.84%
Total	183	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that most respondents prefer using mobile phones to access the university's website and Facebook page. This preference is mainly due to the mobile phone's communication advantages, including speed, ease of use, compact size, and internet connectivity, making it a superior technological communication tool.

The integration of communication and information-processing technologies has led to an advanced communication system that enhances connectivity, information accessibility, and rapid information exchange, marking a significant evolution in media and communication (Al-Bayati, 2015, p. 24).

- **Frequency of respondents following the university's website and Facebook page for information**

Table 3: Represents the frequency of respondents following the university's website and Facebook page for information

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Always	61	43.57%
Sometimes	61	43.57%
Rarely	18	12.86%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The findings suggest that the majority of respondents rely on the university's website and Facebook page for information. This reliance is attributed to the unique features of these platforms, reinforcing their role in corporate communication.

While most respondents find these platforms useful, a small percentage follow them rarely. However, this minority should not be overlooked in corporate communication strategies.

- **Opinions on the university’s website and Facebook page compared to traditional media**

Table 4: Respondents’ opinions on the university’s website and Facebook page compared to traditional media

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Good	70	50%
Fair	58	41.42%
Poor	12	8.58%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

Most respondents consider the university's website and Facebook page to be better sources of information compared to traditional media. This preference highlights the efficiency of digital communication tools and the shift towards modern technologies (e.g., mobile phones, laptops) for accessing information.

Although a small percentage rated the platforms poorly, this may be due to individual differences or lack of familiarity with digital communication technologies.

- **Reasons for respondents' reliance on the university’s website and Facebook page for information**

Table 5: Reasons for respondents' reliance on the university’s website and Facebook page for information

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Speed of access	51	25%
Ease of access	62	30.40%
Time and effort-saving	82	40.19%
Other	9	4.41%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that the primary reason respondents rely on the university’s website and Facebook page for information is time and effort efficiency, followed by ease and speed of access.

This suggests that integrating these platforms within the university system significantly improves communication efficiency, providing users with seamless and immediate access to information beyond spatial and temporal limitations.

- **Perspectives on the role of the university’s website and Facebook page**

Table 6: Respondents' perspectives on the role of the university’s website and Facebook page

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Introducing the institution	27	13.84%
Showcasing institutional activities	64	32.83%
Communication and information dissemination	104	53.33%
Total	195	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The majority of respondents believe that the university utilizes its website and Facebook page primarily for communication and providing information to its members, followed by showcasing institutional activities and finally introducing the institution.

This suggests that digital platforms are essential tools for university communication, eliminating spatial and temporal constraints while reinforcing institutional interaction and engagement.

- **Opinions on whether the university provides these platforms for expressing opinions and engaging with updates**

Table 7: Respondents' opinions on whether the university provides these platforms for expressing opinions and engaging with updates

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	110	78.57%
No	30	21.43%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that the majority of respondents perceive the university's website and Facebook page as essential communication tools provided by the university administration for its users and affiliates to express their opinions and engage with updates. This reflects the success of these platforms as effective means of communication within the university institution, demonstrating their efficiency, particularly in an era dominated by modern technologies and digital advancements. Consequently, the university has adopted these platforms to enhance its communication strategies. However, a small percentage of respondents do not consider them as communication tools.

- **Opinions on the use of the participatory principle by website and Facebook administrators**

Table 8: Respondents' opinion on the use of the participatory principle by website and Facebook administrators

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	96	68.57%
No	44	31.43%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS.

The results indicate that most respondents believe that the administrators of the university's website and Facebook page employ the principle of participation with their users. This suggests that the university institution, in its communication process, applies this principle, which is associated with democracy and freedom, whether in terms of criticism, interaction—both positive and negative—on posts or content, and considering others' suggestions.

However, approximately a quarter of the respondents disagree, which could be attributed to their lack of familiarity with the concept of participatory communication. This aspect should not be overlooked by the university institution.

- **Views on whether the university administration effectively communicates information and updates to the external environment**

Table 9: Respondents' views on whether the university administration effectively communicates information and updates to the external environment

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	115	82.14%
No	25	17.86%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS.

The findings indicate that the University of Oum El Bouaghi has succeeded in communicating information and updates to its external environment, as evidenced by the high percentage of respondents affirming this. This underscores the effectiveness of external communication, which is crucial in achieving institutional goals and engaging with the community, including service companies, clients, and the general public.

- **Opinions on the Contribution of the Website and Facebook Page to Enhancing External Communication Efficiency**

Table 10: Respondents' Opinions on the Contribution of the Website and Facebook Page to Enhancing External Communication Efficiency

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
A lot	57	40.71%
Somewhat	75	53.58%
No effect	8	5.71%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that more than half of the respondents believe that the university's website and Facebook page somewhat contribute to enhancing external communication efficiency. This suggests a degree of inefficiency in managing these platforms. However, nearly half of the respondents believe that these platforms significantly enhance external communication effectiveness, emphasizing the university's effort to disseminate information to its external environment. This highlights the correlation between the attempt to convey information externally and the effectiveness of external communication. The remaining respondents who believe these platforms have no impact may be influenced by individual factors such as limited technological literacy, financial constraints, or other personal reasons affecting their access to information.

- **Factors Facilitating coropate Communication through the Website and Facebook Page**

Table 11: Factors Facilitating coropate Communication through the Website and Facebook Page

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Speed and immediacy	38	18.27%
Time and effort saving	74	35.57%
Constant interaction	55	26.44%
Communication activation	41	19.72%
Total	208	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that the most significant factor facilitating coropate communication through the university's website and Facebook page is time and effort savings. This highlights the role of modern communication technologies in providing easy access to information. The second most significant factor is interaction, a key feature of the internet that allows users to control and exchange communication roles (Shahin, 2014, p. 66). Communication activation and speed/immediacy were also considered important, reflecting the success of these platforms in enhancing coropate communication within the university.

- **Importance of Topics Published on the Website and Facebook Page**

Table 12: Importance of Topics Published on the Website and Facebook Page

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	134	95.71%
No	6	4.29%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results indicate that the majority of respondents consider the topics published on the university's website and Facebook page to be important. This is attributed to the university's role as an educational institution, where the content is relevant to both its members and users, demonstrating the positive impact of employing these platforms.

- **Contribution of Digital Platforms in Improving Communication Compared to Traditional Methods**

Table 13: Contribution of Digital Platforms in Improving Communication Compared to Traditional Methods

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	130	92.85%
No	10	7.15%
Total	140	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The findings suggest that digital platforms have become essential in enhancing corporate communication compared to traditional methods. This underscores the positive impact of using these platforms to improve communication efficiency within the university.

- **Challenges Facing the Use of Digital Platforms in corporate Communication at the University**

Table 14: Challenges Facing the Use of Digital Platforms in corporate Communication at the University

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Administrative	59	33.71%
Technical	78	44.57%
Human-related	36	20.57%
Other	2	1.15%
Total	175	100%

Source: Prepared by the researcher using SPSS software.

The results show that technical barriers are the primary challenge in using digital platforms for corporate communication at the university. This is closely tied to the technological infrastructure, as effective digital communication requires advanced tools and systems (Al-Humaid, 2007, p. 24). Administrative barriers follow, often linked to rigid organizational structures that hinder smooth message flow (Al-Ta'i & Al-Alaik, 2009, p. 81). Human-related challenges are less significant but still play a role, particularly in terms of technical skills and organizational hierarchy, which can limit the effective use of digital platforms.

Fourthly. General Findings :

1. Most users regularly follow the university's website and Facebook page, using mobile phones as their primary digital communication tool, with a preference for audiovisual media.

This result supports the main hypothesis, which states that there is a positive impact of the website and Facebook page in activating corporate communication between the University of Oum El Bouaghi and its users, as the study showed users' preference for these digital platforms.

2. Users' inclination towards these platforms and their preference over traditional methods for obtaining information reflect the distinctive characteristics of these platforms, such as speed, ease of access, and the university's commitment to engaging with its audience.

This result supports the first sub-hypothesis that corporate communication is effectively achieved through specific mechanisms on the website and Facebook page, as fast and easy interaction with content was observed.

3. The study concluded that the university follows the principle of participatory communication with its users, which has contributed to enhancing their satisfaction, as evidenced by the high level of interaction in various forms.

This result supports the second sub-hypothesis that there is a relationship between the forms of interaction with the content on the website and Facebook page and the improvement of corporate communication, as multi-form interaction positively affected corporate communication.

4. The study revealed that while the university makes efforts to communicate and provide its users with information, the effectiveness of this communication does not fully meet their expectations.

This result suggests that the use of the website and Facebook page has not sufficiently improved corporate communication performance at the university, implying that the third sub-hypothesis may not have been fully confirmed.

5. The study found that the use of digital platforms has facilitated corporate communication by enhancing engagement, saving time and effort, and ensuring ease and speed in accessing and obtaining information.

This result supports the main hypothesis that the use of the website and Facebook page has a positive impact on activating corporate communication, as these platforms contribute to speeding up and improving the communication process.

6. The study indicated that technical and administrative issues are the main obstacles impeding corporate communication within the university.

This result relates to the challenges of improving corporate communication using digital platforms, suggesting that these technical and administrative issues may be factors hindering the improvement of communication performance.

Conclusion :

Like other institutions, the university strives to achieve excellence amid the competition among various higher education institutions. Given its large organizational structure and the thousands of users and affiliates it serves, ensuring effective communication presents a considerable challenge. This challenge is particularly pronounced as the university is an educational institution responsible for graduating large cohorts of students annually while also maintaining stability and continuity in its operations. Effective communication between all levels of users and affiliates requires a well-structured and efficient communication framework, especially in an era characterized by digital communication technologies and online platforms.

This study, titled "The Effectiveness of Corporate Communication in the Digital Platform Era," aimed to explore the contributions that digital platforms can offer in terms of communication mechanisms, interactivity, and influence. The findings highlight the significant role that digital platforms (the university's website and Facebook page) play in enhancing and improving communication effectiveness at Oum El Bouaghi University.

Digital platforms have proven to be crucial in enhancing corporate communication within the university, as evidenced by the high number of users engaging with these platforms. The university administration has actively employed participatory communication strategies and made concerted efforts to disseminate information, which has, in turn, invigorated the communication process and led users to favor digital platforms over traditional methods for accessing information.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- **Enhancing the Use of Digital Platforms:** Universities should invest more in developing their websites and social media pages to ensure accurate and up-to-date information is available for all users and affiliates.
- **Expanding Participatory Approaches:** It is essential to engage different university groups (professors, students, administrators) in digital content by creating interactive spaces that allow them to contribute to enriching the communication process.
- **Improving Digital Infrastructure:** Providing advanced technical resources that support effective online communication,

such as improving internet speed on campus and upgrading university website servers.

- **Organizing Training Programs:** Conducting training courses for administrators and communication officers to enhance their skills in managing and utilizing digital platforms effectively.
- **Developing Clear Communication Strategies:** Establishing well-defined communication plans that align with technological advancements to ensure positive interaction between the university and its users.
- **Encouraging Digital Interaction:** Motivating students and staff to engage with digital platforms by providing engaging content, such as surveys, live broadcasts, and incentive strategies like digital competitions.
- **Regularly Evaluating the Effectiveness of Digital Platforms:** Conducting periodic studies to measure the impact of digital platforms on corporate communication and analyzing their effectiveness by monitoring interaction rates and access to information.
- **Integrating Artificial Intelligence Technologies:** Utilizing AI to enhance corporate communication through chatbots that can quickly and efficiently respond to student and user inquiries.
- **Reducing Dependence on Traditional Methods:** Minimizing reliance on paper-based communication and directing users toward utilizing digital platforms as the primary communication channel.
- **Enhancing Cybersecurity :** Strengthening data security measures to protect users' information and the institution's data from breaches or leaks.

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