

## **An Increasing Usefulness for Managerial Communication Research on the Main Topics of Management**

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*Effective communication is necessary across all management tiers and functions. In addition, it is an integral part of managerial decision-making. Over the last 10 years, interest in the nuances of communication as related to management has intensified. These studies have fostered diverse approaches to linking management and communication. Our investigation, using 2x5 and 2x4 factorial ANOVAs, reveals that differences exist among the means of five professional communication fields. Numerous articles published between 2004 and 2013 were examined, and we found an increasing usefulness for managerial communication research on the main topic of management.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

No longer a need exists to argue that managerial communication [managerial communication being interchangeable with management communication] is an independent field of study (Bell & Martin, 2008; Smeltzer, 1996) distinct from organizational communication (Mumby & Stohl, 1996), business communication (Bell & Muir, 2014), and corporate communication (Smeltzer, Glab, Golen & Gilsdorf, 1986). These arguments on the disciplinary distinction of the professional communication fields, for the most part, have already been settled, including a “de facto definition and focus of management communication” (Smeltzer, 1993). In addition, popular press business books are rife with advice on communication for management success (Bell, 2009a). Articles published in reputable, scholarly management journals cover communication competency issues without any scientific difference among the tiers of the journals (Bell, 2012a). Bell and Martin (2014) argue that managerial communication (MC) is a merger and a combination of four fields: corporate communication, business communication, organizational communication and management. The argument of the four fields merging together to form MC is supported by an insurgency of articles published most recently in the academic literature. To date, there has been no synthesis of the five professional communication fields to the main topics of management.

Taking a first glance of the data, an upward trend in management related publications appears that includes communication content. Table 1 shows the total number of documents found from 50 custom-range Google Scholar searches, for five professional communication fields, 10 periods for each field. All search terms were entered into the search window in quotation marks for the Google algorithms to search specifically for the terms and nothing else. The search, therefore, for “Business Communication,”

“Corporate Communication,” “Managerial Communication,” “Organizational Communication,” and “Technical Communication” yielded results for the 10 periods examined. A period is one calendar year. There are 10 periods, with dates from January 1, 2004-December 31, 2004 to January 1, 2013-December 31, 2013. The number in each cell in Table 1 corresponds to the total number of published documents found for that period and field. For example, when “Business communication” was the search term for the period 2004-2004 there were 2540 published documents found. When “Business Communication” was the search term for the period 2013-2013 there were 6,010 documents found. When “Technical Communication” was the search term for the period 2013-2013, there were 2,990 documents found. There were 149,349 total documents found in 50 Google Scholar custom-range searches. We combined the management communication and managerial communication Google search results in Table 1. Hereafter, when we refer to management communication (MC) and managerial communication (MC) we will refer to the combined data as MC.

**TABLE 1**  
**GOOGLE SEARCH RESULTS FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION FIELDS**  
**FOR 10 YEARS, 2004-2013\*\***

Periods	Business Communication	Corporate Communication	Management & Managerial Communication*	Organizational Communication	Technical Communication	Period Avg.
<b>2004-2004</b>	2540	864	1902	1810	1940	1811.2
<b>2005-2005</b>	2830	989	2216	2000	1950	1997.0
<b>2006-2006</b>	3160	1180	2502	2290	1950	2216.4
<b>2007-2007</b>	3600	1350	2877	2520	2190	2507.4
<b>2008-2008</b>	3810	1530	3232	2860	2080	2702.4
<b>2009-2009</b>	4620	1780	3546	3100	2440	3097.2
<b>2010-2010</b>	4710	2040	4023	3270	2640	3336.6
<b>2011-2011</b>	5210	2540	4340	3850	2800	3748.0
<b>2012-2012</b>	5870	2850	4953	4120	3100	4178.6
<b>2013-2013</b>	6010	2890	5005	4480	2990	4275.0
Field Sums	42360	18013	34596	30300	24080	
Field Avg.	4236.0	1801.3	3459.6	3030.0	2408.0	

\*\*Data was collected on December 14, 2014. \*Managerial and Management Communication were combined.  
 $\Sigma = 149,349$ .

Figure 1 illustrates the line graph for the five communication fields for 10 Periods (1-year each). The initial view of the data is an apparent upward trend in documents that include content on the professional communication fields published over a 10-year period. The averages for the five fields increase year-by-year and they are each accelerating year-by-year. As you can clearly see, business communication is above the other four fields. Documents that include MC are also above the period average for all 10 periods. Organizational Communication hugs the mean for all 10 periods. Corporate communication is below the mean for all 10 periods. Technical communication is below the mean for eight of the 10 periods.

**FIGURE 1  
COMMUNICATION FIELDS ACROSS 10 PERIODS**

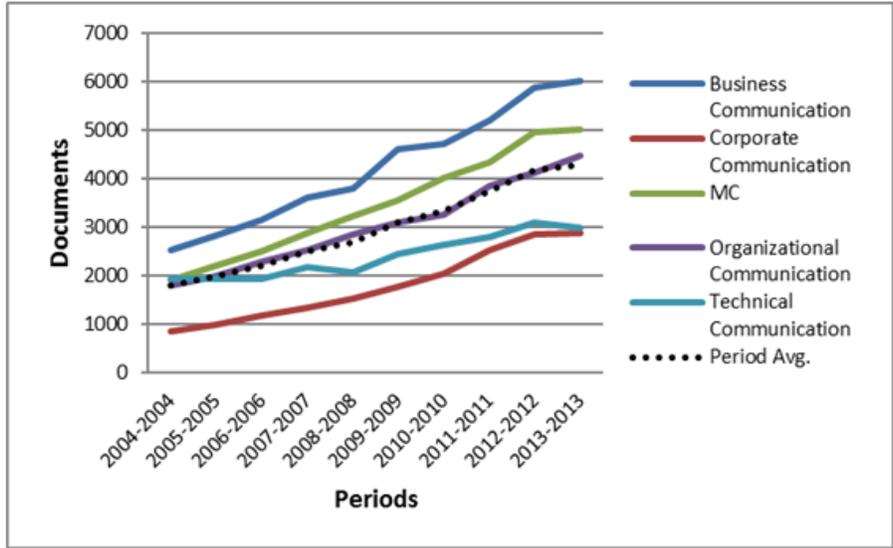


Figure 2 illustrates the pie chart of percentages for 10 periods (1-year each) 2004-2004 to 2013-2013 for total documents found  $\Sigma = 149,349$ . The pie chart clearly shows that 28% of the search results (published documents found) are covered during periods 2012-2012 to 2013-2013, or the most recent two years. The most recent three years accounts for 40% of the published documents found in a Google Scholar search results. The most recent four years, 2010-2010 to 2013-2013, accounts for 51% of the published documents found. The Pie Chart indicates clearly an upward trend in published documents that includes content on five professional communication fields.

**FIGURE 2  
COMMUNICATION FIELDS BY PERIODS**

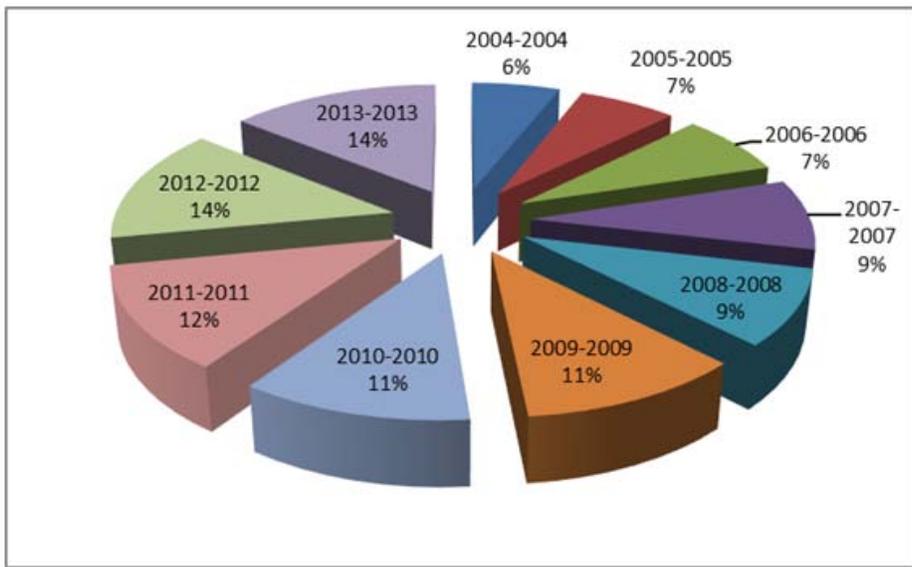


Figure 3 illustrates a line graph for two 5-year periods, 2004-2008 vis-à-vis 2009-2013, as percentages of the total documents found  $\Sigma = 149,349$ . Business Communication accounts for 42,360 results or 29% of the total documents found. While the second highest is MC which accounts for 34,596 results, or 23% of the total documents found. Business Communication and MC combined together account for 52% of the documents found in the Google Search results. Organizational Communication accounts for 20% of the results, or 30,300 published documents. Clearly the period of 2009-2013 has substantially more Google documents found in all fields than for the period 2004-2008. Notice the plots mirror each other for each field in direction of documents found.

**FIGURE 3  
COMMUNICATION FIELDS BY 5-YEAR PERIODS**

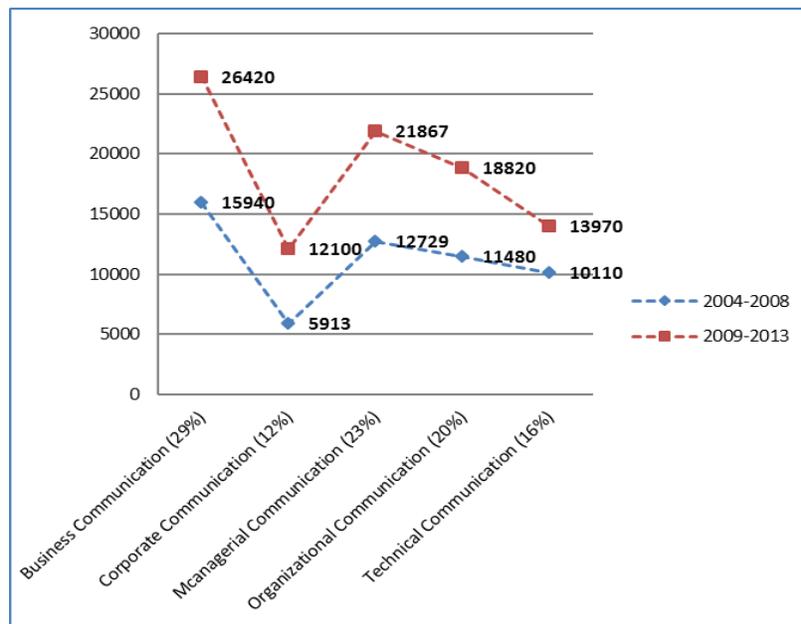


Table 2 illustrates the custom range of Google Scholar searches for “Managerial Communication” in quotes. The search revealed large increases in published articles and books on MC between periods 2004-2004 and period 2004-2013. However, for the period of 2004-2013, there were 20,850 published documents that included MC, more than 10 times as much from the period 2004-2004. Table 2 also shows a rise of researchers’ interest in MC. Notice that for the period 2004-2004, Google Scholar is reporting 1902 documents with MC as content. For the period 2013-2013, there were 5027 published documents with MC as a subject matter. Furthermore, Period 2013-2013 has nearly three times the number of published documents covering MC topics than the period 2004-2004. Articles on MC published over a 10-year period, between 2004 and 2013, reflect an increase. The snapshot of 10 consecutive years of MC documents found in the Google Scholar does not reflect mean differences. We do not know if these upward trends indicate mean differences among five fields of professional communication. And, we cannot know from percentages if MC differs statistically from the four other professional communication fields.

**Therefore, this study sought to answer one research question:**

*Question 1: Is the usefulness for MC research on the main topics of management covered in documents published over a 10-year period from 2004-2004 to 2013-2013 increasing or decreasing significantly?*

The best way to determine the scientific difference between MC and the four other professional communication fields is with multivariate statistical analyses. The communications in which managers engage is a mixture of the main topics of management. Simon (1947) explicated the particular techniques of communication essential in managerial decision-making processes for maintaining control in organizational structure. Riccucci (2005) mentioned that good policy and law would certainly incentivize workers to achieve the desired goals and objectives of any organization. Nonetheless, agreeing on what MC is and is not as a field of study does not tell us about what the increasing number of recently published documents in the management field is saying about MC usefulness on the main topics of management compared to the other professional communication fields.

**TABLE 2**  
**GOOGLE SCHOLAR SEARCH FOR MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION PUBLICATIONS**  
**FROM 2004-2004 TO 2004-2013\***

<b>Periods</b>	2004-2004	2004-2005	2004-2006	2004-2007	2004-2008	2004-2009	2004-2010	2004-2011	2004-2012	2004-2013
<b>Documents</b>	<b>1902</b>	<b>4128</b>	<b>6620</b>	<b>9507</b>	<b>12799</b>	<b>15730</b>	<b>17300</b>	<b>18600</b>	<b>19510</b>	<b>20850</b>
<b>Google Scholar Search for Managerial Communication Publications for 10 years, 2004-2004 through 2013-2013</b>										
<b>Periods</b>	2004-2004	2005-2005	2006-2006	2007-2007	2008-2008	2009-2009	2010-2010	2011-2011	2012-2012	2013-2013
<b>Documents</b>	<b>(1902)</b>	<b>(2226)</b>	<b>(2502)</b>	<b>(2887)</b>	<b>(3232)</b>	<b>(3546)</b>	<b>(4023)</b>	<b>(4341)</b>	<b>(4963)</b>	<b>(5027)</b>

**Bold ( )** represents total documents in the custom search results.

\*Managerial Communication and Management Communication were combined.

Data was collected on December 30, 2014.

**We, therefore, make the following Hypotheses:**

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: Means among five professional communication fields (business communication, corporate communication, mc, organizational communication, and technical communication) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: Means between two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: Means among five professional communication fields (business communication, corporate communication, mc, organizational communication, and technical communication) across two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.

Table 3 illustrates the means and standard deviations for periods 2004-2008 to 2009-2013 compared across five fields. To test for differences among the means of the five professional communication fields and two time periods, five years for each half-decade, we ran a 2x5 factorial ANOVA. Table 4 includes the tests of between-subjects effects for five fields. The Adjusted R Squared of .851 is an indication that the two factors (field and half-decades) account for 85.1% of the variance in the dependent variable: documents. The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was non-significant (p= .051).

**TABLE 3**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR FIVE FIELDS**

Field	Half-Decade	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BCOM	2004-2008	3188.000	525.7090	5
	2009-2013	5284.000	641.5450	5
	Total	4236.000	1235.3515	10
CCOM	2004-2008	1182.600	268.1899	5
	2009-2013	2420.000	493.5079	5
	Total	1801.300	752.0195	10
MCOM	2004-2008	2545.800	525.7682	5
	2009-2013	4373.400	621.1564	5
	Total	3459.600	1105.5102	10
OCOM	2004-2008	2296.000	415.9687	5
	2009-2013	3764.000	577.0009	5
	Total	3030.000	907.4629	10
TCOM	2004-2008	2022.000	110.3177	5
	2009-2013	2794.000	265.1038	5
	Total	2408.000	449.6616	10
Total	2004-2008	2246.880	764.9453	25
	2009-2013	3727.080	1170.6061	25
	Total	2986.980	1231.5449	50

We reject  $H_{01}$ . Means among five professional communication fields (business communication, corporate communication, MC, organizational communication, and technical communication) did differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in the Google Scholar search results. The main effect is significant. We can reject  $H_{01}$ , with  $F(4, 40) = 39.110$ ,  $p = .000$ , which suggests that communication field has a strong effect on the number of documents which contain content on the communication field. The Cohen (1988) rule states that values between  $\eta^2 .01$  to  $.06 \sim$  small,  $\eta^2$  higher than  $.06$  to  $.14 \sim$  medium, and  $\eta^2$  higher than  $.14 \sim$  large. Partial Eta squared is large for a sample size between 40 and 60 observations, accounting for 79.6% of the variance in the dependent variable (documents found) when using  $\eta^2 =$  estimates of effect size.

**TABLE 4**  
**TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS FOUR FIVE FIELDS**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	65302023.780 <sup>a</sup>	9	7255780.420	32.189	.000	.879
Intercept	446102476.020	1	446102476.020	1979.068	.000	.980
Field	35263262.480	4	8815815.620	39.110***	.000	.796
Half-Decade	27387400.500	1	27387400.500	121.500***	.000	.752
Field * Half-Decade	2651360.800	4	662840.200	2.941*	.032	.227
Error	9016413.200	40	225410.330			
Total	520420913.000	50				
Corrected Total	74318436.980	49				

a. R Squared = .879 (Adjusted R Squared = .851). \*\*\*Denotes  $p < .001$ ; \*Denotes  $p < .05$ ; Dependent Variable: Documents

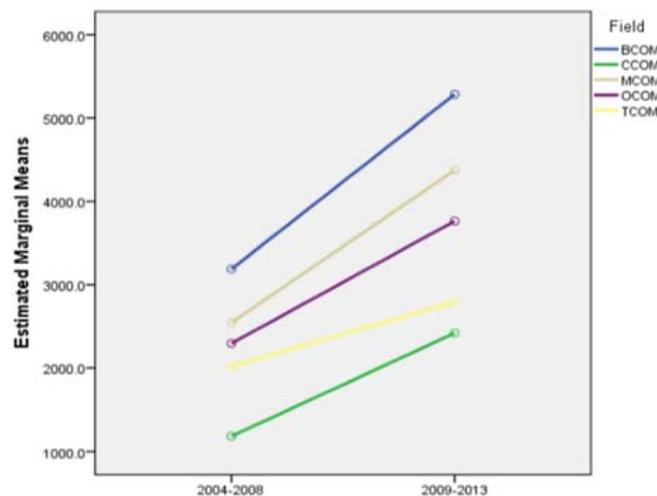
We reject  $H_{02}$ . Means between two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results. The main effect is significant. We can reject  $H_{02}$ , with  $F(1, 40) = 121.500$ ,  $p = .000$ , which suggest that a half-decade has

a strong effect on Google search document results. Partial Eta squared is large, accounting for 75.2% of the variance in the dependent variable. There are nearly twice as many documents included in 2009-2013 than found in documents published in 2004-2008, with a mean difference of -1480.

We reject  $H_{03}$ . Means among five professional communication fields (Business Communication, Corporate Communication, MC, Organizational Communication, and Technical Communication) across two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results. We can reject  $H_{03}$ , with  $F(4, 40) = 2.941$ ,  $p = .032$ , which suggests that the field and the half-decade (time) have a strong effect on documents containing content on the five professional communication fields. Partial Eta squared is large, accounting for 22.7% of the variance in the dependent variable. Time suggests that the hierarchy among the fields is a true hierarchy.

Figure 4 is the best way to illustrate the differences among the estimated marginal means for documents found in the Google Scholar search. The plot indicates a hierarchy of communication fields showing BCOM, MCOM, OCOM, TCOM and CCOM to be in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place, respectively. Pairwise comparisons show that all means differ between pairwise comparisons among each field in the expected direction. This clearly indicates a hierarchy among the fields that differs statistically. All the pairwise comparison results for the five fields compared over the half-decades are shown in Table A in the Appendix.

**FIGURE 4**  
**PLOT OF THE ESTIMATED MARGINAL MEANS FOR FIVE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION FIELDS**



**Hypotheses for a Reduced Model, Excluding MC:**

- Ho<sub>4</sub>: Means among four professional communication fields (business communication, corporate communication, organizational communication, and technical communication) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.
- Ho<sub>5</sub>: Means between two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.
- Ho<sub>6</sub>: Means among four professional communication fields (business communication, corporate communication, organizational communication, and technical communication) across two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) do not differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results.

Table 5 illustrates the means and standard deviations for periods 2004-2008 to 2009-2013 and fields. To test for differences among the means of the four Business Communication, Corporate Communication, Organizational Communication, and Technical Communication fields (excluding MC) and two time periods 2004-2008 to 2009-2013, we ran a 2x4 factorial ANOVA. Removing MC would reduce the degrees of freedom and reflect the impact of removing MC on the model's Adjusted R Squared. Table 6 includes the tests of between-subjects effects on four fields. The Adjusted R Squared of .872 is an indication that the two factors (field and time) reduced model (fewer degrees of freedom) account for 87.2% of the variance in the Google search results. The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was non-significant ( $p = .020$ ).

**TABLE 5**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR FOUR FIELDS**

Field	Half-Decade	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BCOM	2004-2008	3188.000	525.7090	5
	2009-2013	5284.000	641.5450	5
	Total	4236.000	1235.3515	10
CCOM	2004-2008	1182.600	268.1899	5
	2009-2013	2420.000	493.5079	5
	Total	1801.300	752.0195	10
OCOM	2004-2008	2296.000	415.9687	5
	2009-2013	3764.000	577.0009	5
	Total	3030.000	907.4629	10
TCOM	2004-2008	2022.000	110.3177	5
	2009-2013	2794.000	265.1038	5
	Total	2408.000	449.6616	10
Total	2004-2008	2172.150	807.1785	20
	2009-2013	3565.500	1229.7517	20
	Total	2868.825	1245.7820	40

We reject  $H_{04}$ . Means among four professional communication fields (Business Communication, Corporate Communication, Organizational Communication, and Technical Communication) differ scientifically when compared on the number of published documents found in Google Scholar search results. The main effect is significant. We can reject  $H_{04}$ , with  $F(3, 32) = 54.396$ ,  $p = .000$ , which suggest that theory has a strong effect on the Google search results. Partial Eta squared is large, accounting for 83.6% of the variance in the dependent variable.

**TABLE 6**  
**TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS FOR FOUR FIELDS**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	54159598.575 <sup>a</sup>	7	7737085.511	38.884	.000	.895
Intercept	329206275.225	1	329206275.225	1654.474	.000	.981
Field	32471141.675	3	10823713.892	54.396***	.000	.836
Half-Decade	19414242.225	1	19414242.225	97.569***	.000	.753
Field * Half-Decade	2274214.675	3	758071.558	3.810*	.019	.263
Error	6367343.200	32	198979.475			
Total	389733217.000	40				
Corrected Total	60526941.775	39				

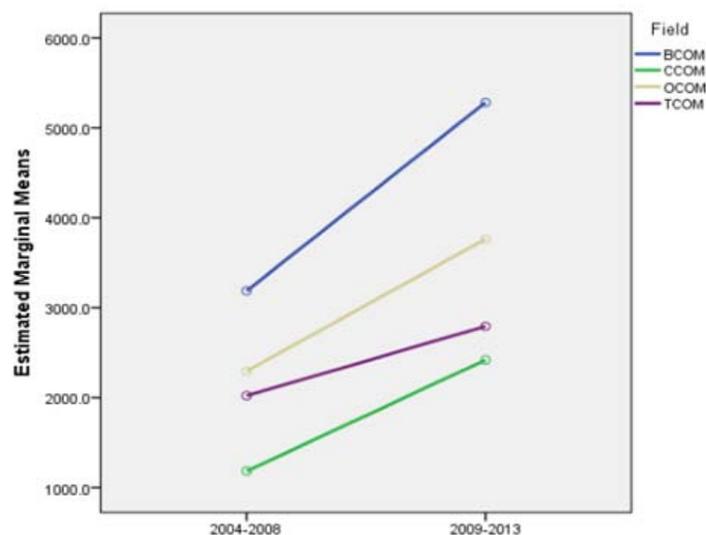
a. R Squared = .895 (Adjusted R Squared = .872). \*\*\*Denotes  $p < .001$ ; \*Denotes  $p < .05$ .  
Dependent Variable: Documents

We reject  $H_{05}$ . Means between two periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) differ significantly when compared on the number of published documents found in the Google Scholar search results. The main effect is significant. We can reject  $H_{05}$ , with  $F(1, 32) = 97.569$ ,  $p = .000$ , which suggest that theory has a strong effect on the Google search results. Partial Eta squared is large, accounting for 75.3% of the variance in the dependent variable.

We reject  $H_{06}$ . Means among four professional communication fields (Business Communication, Corporate Communication, Organizational Communication, and Technical Communication) across two time periods (2004-2008 to 2009-2013) differ significantly when compared on the number of published documents found in the Google Scholar search results. The interaction effect is significant. We reject  $H_{06}$ , with  $F(3, 32) = 3.810$ ,  $p = .019$ , which suggest that communication field and period have an effect on the documents found in the Google search, even after MC was removed. Partial Eta squared is large, accounting for 26.3% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Figure 5 is the best way to illustrate the differences among the estimated marginal means for Google Scholar Search results. The plot indicates a hierarchy of communication fields showing BCOM, OCOM, TCOM and CCOM to be in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> place, respectively. Nevertheless, this is the same hierarchy shown in Figure 4 earlier. Excluding MC and reducing the degrees of freedom from 4 to 3 in the two-way interaction clearly had little impact on the Adjusted R Squared (increasing slightly from .851 to .872) and the two-way interaction in the reduced model is significant ( $p = .019$ ). However, the two-way interaction was significant ( $p = .032$ ) when MC was included in the model, a slightly less significant difference, however both models reveal scientific differences. Clearly, this is an indication that the fields differ from one another and the arguments for disciplinary boundaries hold (Bell & Martin, 2008; Bell & Martin, 2014; Bell & Muir, 2014; Smeltzer, 1996; Smeltzer, et al 1986; Smeltzer, 1993; Mumby & Stohl, 1996). The powerful mean differences indicate that the professional communication fields are offering unique content and the management documents seem to be prioritizing business communication and management communication research over the other fields. Pairwise comparisons show that all means differ between pairwise comparisons among each field in the expected direction. This clearly indicates a hierarchy among the fields that differ statistically. All the pairwise comparison results for the four fields compared over half-decades are shown in Table B in the Appendix.

**FIGURE 5**  
**PLOT OF THE ESTIMATED MARGINAL MEANS FOR FOUR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION FIELDS, EXCLUDING MC**



## INCREASING USEFULNESS FOR MC

The main topics of management covered in 20 MC articles featured in Table 7, published during the period 2004-2013, served as a guidepost for further review of articles in MC. There are dozens of MC articles, published between 2004 and 2013, which have informed our understanding of the usefulness of communication to management. Table 7 illustrates the number of citations each for 20 representative articles, two articles for each year, had received as of October 18, 2014 in the Google Scholar search with the average citation of 23.450. This was done through a search of “managerial communication” as our descriptor term using the Google search engine. Also included in the table are authors, journals and titles of the articles (in **bold**) and main topics of management found in the abstracts. Notice the diversity of journal outlets. The citation frequency of the 20 articles is strong, with van den Hooff’s and De Ridder’s (2004) article receiving 432 citations or 34.042% (432/1269 \* 100) of the total citations for all 20 articles. These articles are essential for understanding the relevance of MC scholarship to the main topics of management; therefore, we will discuss them further in some detail along with many others.

**TABLE 7**  
**TWENTY RECENTLY PUBLISHED MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION ARTICLES**  
**COVERING THE MAIN TOPICS OF MANAGEMENT**

Citations*	Article Information	Main Topics of Management from the Abstracts of MC Articles
6	Asumeng, M. (2013). <b>The effect of employee feedback-seeking on job performance: an empirical study</b> . <i>International Journal of Management</i> , 30(1), 373.	Subordinate, Staff, Feedback, Job Performance, Feedback-Seeking, Employee Feedback Seeking
9	Schoeneborn, D., & Trittin, H. (2013). <b>Transcending transmission: Towards a constitutive perspective on CSR communication</b> . <i>Corporate Communications: An International Journal</i> , 18(2), 193-211.	Dissonant, Communicative Practices, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Greenwashing, Accountability, Commitment, Organization, Involvement of Third Parties.
14	Bell, R. L., & Martin, J. S. (2012). <b>The relevance of scientific management and equity theory in everyday managerial communication situations</b> . <i>Journal of Management Policy and Practice</i> , 13(3), 106-115.	Communication, Employees’ Feelings of Unfairness, Frederick Winslow Taylor, Equity Theory, Inequity, Training Subordinates
6	Dasgupta, S. A., Suar, D., & Singh, S. (2012). <b>Impact of managerial communication styles on employees’ attitudes and behaviours</b> . <i>Employee Relations</i> , 35(2), 173-199.	Communication, Supervisory Support, Employees’ Satisfaction, Supervisors, Organization-Based Self-Esteem, Job Performance, Training Programs, Performance, Commitment, Absenteeism.
9	Pompper, D. (2011). <b>Fifty years later: Mid-career women of color against the glass ceiling in communications organizations</b> . <i>Journal of Organizational Change Management</i> , 24(4), 464-486.	Change, Glass Ceilings, Diverse Upper-Level Management, Career Advancement, Policy Decision, Negotiate Organizational Hierarchies
28	Zeffane, R., Tipu, S. A., & Ryan, J. C. (2011). <b>Communication, commitment &amp; trust: exploring the triad</b> . <i>International Journal of Business and Management</i> , 6(6), p77.	Relationships, Communication, Trust, Hierarchy, Management, Employees, Organizational Commitment. Management Practice
65	Agarwal, R., Croson, R., & Mahoney, J. T. (2010). <b>The role of incentives and communication in strategic alliances: An experimental investigation</b> . <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> , 31(4), 413-437.	Value Creation, Strategic Alliances, Decisions, Economic Incentives, Communication, Outcomes
20	Ahmed, Z. et al (2010). <b>Managerial communication: The link between frontline leadership and organizational performance</b> . <i>Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict</i> , 14(1), 107-120.	Frontline Managers, Communication High Productivity, Organizational Goals Objectives, Influence Goodwill, Employees, Relationship.
16	Prati, L. M., McMillan-Capehart, A., & Karriker, J. H. (2009). <b>Affecting organizational identity a manager’s influence</b> . <i>Journal of Leadership &amp; Organizational Studies</i> , 15(4), 404-415.	Environment, Emotional Intelligence, Clan Culture, Subordinates’ Organizational Identity, Managers Relational Coordination
41	Nielsen, A. E., & Thomsen, C. (2009). <b>CSR communication in small and medium-sized enterprises: A study of the attitudes and beliefs of middle managers</b> . <i>Corporate Communications: An International Journal</i> , 14(2), 176-189.	Corporate Social Responsibility, Ethical, Moral Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises, External Stakeholders, Societal Commitment
67	Garnett, J. L., Marlowe, J., & Pandey, S. K. (2008). <b>Penetrating the performance predicament: communication as a mediator</b>	Role, Communication, Public Administration, Garnett’s Performance Predicament, Organizational Performance, Mediating

	<b>or moderator of organizational culture's impact on public organizational performance.</b> Public Administration Review, 68(2), 266-281.	or Moderating Organizational Culture, Rule-Oriented Culture, Mission-Oriented Culture, Task Orientation, Feedback, Upward Communication
38	Jabri, M., Adrian, A. D., & Boje, D. (2008). <b>Reconsidering the role of conversations in change communication: A contribution based on Bakhtin.</b> Journal of Organizational Change Management, 21(6), 667-685.	Change Agents, Anthropology, Organizations, Communication
115	Bartels, J., Pruyin, A., De Jong, M., & Joustra, I. (2007). <b>Multiple organizational identification levels and the impact of perceived external prestige and communication climate.</b> Journal of Organizational Behavior, 28(2), 173-190.	Communication Climate, Influence, Organizational Identification, Perceived External Prestige, Employee Identification, Bottom-Up Process
81	van Vuuren, M., de Jong, M. D., & Seydel, E. R. (2007). <b>Direct and indirect effects of supervisor communication on organizational commitment.</b> Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 12(2), 116-128.	Organizational Efficacy, Feedback, Manager, Communication, Organization Influence, Employees' Perception, Values, Capabilities
25	Douglas, C., Martin, J. S., & Krapels, R. H. (2006). <b>Communication in the transition to self-directed work teams.</b> Journal of Business Communication, 43(4), 295-321.	Self-Directed Work Teams, Managers' Influence, Strategies Change, Organizations, Team, Communication, Soft Influence Tactics
40	Barrett, D. J. (2006). <b>Strong communication skills a must for today's leaders.</b> Handbook of business strategy, 7(1), 385-390.	Communication, Groups, Strategy, Writing, Speaking, Emotional Intelligence, Listening, Coaching, Teams, Meetings, Internal and External Stakeholders, Leadership
93	Johnson, A. M., & Lederer, A. L. (2005). <b>The effect of communication frequency and channel richness on the convergence between chief executive and chief information officers.</b> Journal of Management Information Systems, 22(2), 227-252.	Convergence (i.e., Mutual Understanding), Communication Frequency, Channel Richness CEOs, CIOs, Information Systems (IS), Information Technology (IT), Role, Media Richness
97	McLean, G. N., Yang, B., Kuo, M. H. C., Tolbert, A. S., & Larkin, C. (2005). <b>Development and initial validation of an instrument measuring managerial coaching skill.</b> Human Resource Development Quarterly, 16(2), 157-178.	Managerial Coaching Skill, Open Communication, Team Approach, Value Human Resource Development Effective Managers
432	van den Hooff, B., & De Ridder, J. A. (2004). <b>Knowledge sharing in context: the influence of organizational commitment, communication climate and CMC use on knowledge sharing.</b> Journal of Knowledge Management, 8(6), 117-130.	Knowledge sharing, Within Groups Organizational Commitment, Communication, Computer-Mediated Communication, Communication Climate
67	Barge, J. K. (2004). <b>Reflexivity and managerial practice.</b> Communication Monographs, 71(1), 70-96.	Managers, Responsive Approach, Reflexivity, Conversational Practice, Situated Judgment, Timing, Rhythm, Inclusive, Empowerment

\*Google Citations: the average number of citations for 20 recently published managerial communication articles, between 2004 and 2013, two from each year, as of October 18, 2014 equals 1269/20 (100) = 63.45.

Over the last 10 years, from 2004 to 2013, there have been dozens of articles that have been published with an emphasis on MC competency. These articles are showing up as reference materials in modern management textbooks, on the Internet in professional blogs, and in library databases such as ABI Informs and ProQuest. The one thing obvious about the MC related literature is the breadth and depth of management topics covered. The main topics include conflict resolution, crisis communication, customer service, corporate social responsibilities (CSR), ethics, delegation and authority, diversity, employee assistance programs (EAPs), equity theory, motivation theories, performance appraisals, impression management, and effective presentation skills (Bell & Martin, 2014).

### We can now answer our one research question:

*Question 1:* Is the usefulness for MC research on the main topics of management covered in documents published over a 10-year period, from 2004-2004 to 2013-2013 increasing or decreasing significantly?

*Answer 1:* Yes, the usefulness for MC research on the main topics of management covered in documents published over a 10-year period, from 2004-2004 to 2013-2013 is increasing significantly.

Figure 6 illustrates many of the main topics of MC (but certainly not all) found in the titles and abstracts of the articles reviewed in this study for the period 2004-2013. The circles in the figure are not

mutually exclusive and do not represent formal separations of main topics; they are merely ways to organize an alphabetical list of topics found in the MC articles into succinct categories. Organizing the literature this way helps us to delineate the MC articles and their usefulness to the main topics of management. Moreover, reading the chart clockwise, readers will note that all the topics are germane to the management functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling in some way. Most principles of management textbooks will outline a chapter with the functional areas as the main four parts of the text (Bell & Muir, 2014). These main topics are a clear indication that MC theories are used to resolve a broad range of management problems. The articles reviewed in this study show that the particular techniques of communication are inextricable to the main topics of management. We will now explicate clockwise, each of these categories in the chart shown in figure 6.

**FIGURE 6**  
**MAIN TOPICS OF MANAGEMENT FOUND IN THE TITLES AND ABSTRACTS OF**  
**MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION ARTICLES REVIEWED IN THIS STUDY FOR PERIOD**  
**2004-2013**



**ACCOUNTABILITY, CHANGE, CLIMATE, COACHING, COMMITMENT, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, AND CONSULTANCY/CONSULTATION**

**Accountability**

When employees and managers receive communication relative to standards for decisions and performance behaviors, they feel a need to be accountable and to abide by those standards. The standards guide and inform them regarding how their work will be evaluated. Confusion, conflict, and anxiety are reduced because the expectations have been shared and made known (Davis, Mero, & Goodman, 2007;

Mero, Guidice, & Brownlee, 2007). If employees and managers do not feel accountable, it is often because standards and performance expectations have not been communicated or have been poorly communicated (Gelfand Lim, & Raver, 2004). Wallace, Johnson, Mathe and Paul (2011) found that if accountability is high within an organization, there is a significant and positive indirect effect on an empowering leadership climate.

### **Change**

Bell (2009b) argues that during organizational change, top managers must always be dialed into the hidden hierarchy (informal networks) of the organization to prevent communication at this level from turning the entire organization towards the depravity of poor moral choices. Leaders are shown to be the catalysts for organizational change through their MC activities (Bell & Bodie, 2012b). Patrizia and Gianluca, (2013) stated that dialogue and communication become the key tools for strategic change and that there is a relationship between managerial actions, communication processes and stakeholder engagement. While top managers may initiate change, middle managers must operationalize change initiatives and align their departments or teams to executive mandates (Balogun & Johnson, 2004). This alignment comes through open and honest communication with employees. Key communication skills such as listening and dialogue become paramount during times of change. According to Luscher and Lewis (2008), managers must communicate their understanding, particularly in the midst of organizational change, in a way that provides their subordinates with a workable certainty. Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, & DiFonzo (2004) adopted the position advocated by Lewis and Seibold (1998) who stated that change implementation is essentially a communication problem. Poor communication from management can result in rumors, resistance to change, and decreased job satisfaction. The quality of MC will affect uncertainty experienced by employees, perceptions of control, and job satisfaction. The success or failure of transforming the attitudes of employees is determined to be a byproduct of the leader's style to gain support of the change from their employees (Appelbaum, Berke, Taylor, & Vazquez, 2008).

### **Climate**

Research tends to link managerial action to organizational climate by positing organizational climate as a mediator between managerial action and individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and performance (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008; Kuenzi & Schminke, 2009). Schein (2004) suggests that managers are able to subtly but potently embed and communicate the underlying ethical values and expectations of the organization's rules and codes to their subordinates. When employees understand and embrace the expectations and values inherent in organizational rules and codes in their everyday decisions, the result is an ethical climate

### **Coaching**

Coaching is defined as a set of managerial skills that demonstrate effective coaching characteristics in terms of openly communicating with others, taking a team approach to tasks, valuing people over tasks, and accepting the ambiguous nature of the working environment for the purpose of developing employees and improving performance (McLean, Yang, Kuo, Tolbert, & Larkin 2005). Filsinger (2014) found coaching is becoming a core skill for managers. Ladyshevsky (2010) proposed that managerial coaches need to build trust, employ emotional intelligence, use communication skills, be aware of their perceptions of power and authority, understand the role of values, and frame the performance management process. Ellinger Beattie, & Hamlin (2010) stated that managers need to give and receive feedback, communicate and set clear expectations, and create a supportive environment, which are all conducive to coaching. Clearly, coaching and MC are intertwined.

### **Commitment**

Research studies have indicated that top MC is directly related to organizational commitment while other research indicates that top MC is related to organizational commitment indirectly through its relationship with organizational efficacy and person-organization fit (vanVuuren, de Jong, Seydel, 2007).

Hamm (2006) argued that top MC and involvement are important factors in promoting a high-commitment work culture.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Bell (2013) advocates that removing the source of conflict from conflict situations is up to the individual manager not to delay decision making regarding unfavorable options. Managers play an important role in influencing organizational conflicts (Goldman, Cropanzano, Stein, & Benson, 2008). According to Goldstein (2007), managers exert influence on complex systems by encouraging, constraining, and shaping interaction to bring about novel patterns, structures, dynamics, and properties. In fact, middle managers are often in a position to engage in such enabling behaviors because of the managers' access to resources and their direct involvement in the boundary conditions for the system's production level (Goldstein, 2007). To build trust and a strong culture, managers should pay special attention to the conflict parties' opportunity to voice their perspectives instead of aiming at a quick resolution of the issue, no matter how clear the case may seem (Siira, 2012).

### **Consultancy/Consultation**

Jolivet, Johnson, and Bell (2007) suggest using a communication consultancy as a buffer in the downsizing environment. Because consultants are outside of the organization, they are able to recognize the contingency of the client system's observations and the underlying premises and blind spots of observations. In so doing, they are able to arrive at an enhanced understanding of problems. In this respect, consultants' externality creates and furthers their opportunities for giving advice and helping the client system to achieve a greater capacity for reflection by means of communication (Röttger & Preusse, 2013) Empirical studies indicate that external communications service providers are predominantly employed to handle the operational production of communication products (Fuhrberg, 2010; Röttger & Zielmann, 2009a). Consultative communication is intended to be an asymmetrical dialog shaped by different observational positions with respect to the client's decision-making style as well as the different process management and professional competencies of consultants and clients. It is the consultant's task to enable the client to access new observational positions that he/she did not initially have because of his/her position (Steiner, 2009).

In comparison, consultation is defined as the extent to which managers are perceived, by employees, as soliciting and listening to employees' suggestions or concerns on work-related issues that encourage voice by providing employees with a sense of direct access to the managers (e.g., Ashford, Sutcliffe, & Christianson 2009; Edmondson, 2003). Managers who have greater influence/power are perceived as more useful sources of support and, therefore, have higher ability to induce positive motivational states in employees (e.g., Venkataramani, Green, & Schleicher, 2010). It has been argued that consultation is likely a key predictor of upward communication that challenges the status quo (e.g., Edmonson, 2003). Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) found in their study that the effects of the manager's consultation on employees' upward voice via their perceived influence were stronger when the manager was seen to have higher status and when the employees had higher work self-efficacy and overall job satisfaction. It has been argued that employees are hesitant to speak up to high-status leaders unless such leaders are seen to set a facilitating context for voice (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008b). Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) results support this proposition by indicating that once the effects of leader consultation, which enhances employees' sense of influence and agency at work, are parceled out, high perceived status of the leader only discourages voice.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES (CSR), CULTURE, CUSTOMER SERVICE, DELEGATION, AND DIVERSITY TRAINING**

### **Crisis Management**

Communication is the best way to manage crisis situations and avoid disasters (Bell, 2011c). An established disaster program and plan will provide an organization with a structure and process for

communicating information, both internally and externally (McClain, 2007). One of the most important parts of crisis management is a continuous line of communication (Carides, 2005; Gurchiek, 2005); however, communication is one part of disaster planning that is often taken for granted (Gurchiek, 2005). Valackiene and Susnienė (2013) claim effective crisis management requires effective crisis communication. Bernstein, 2004; Turney, 2004; and Luecke, 2007 found that communication and mastering the media are important tools for crisis management in each active stage of the process: contingency planning, containment, and resolution. Liu and Pompper (2012) found that effectively managing crises involves issues of culture, ethnicity, and/or race and is not solely about mitigating damage to reputations, but also about building genuine, long-term relationships with communities and media of various ethnicities and cultures, and others who can enhance communication before, during, and after crises. Gittel, Cameron, Lim, & Rivas (2006) argued that managers must maintain and enhance strong employee relationships (relational reserves) during a crisis to ensure commitment and productivity.

### **Corporate Social Responsibilities**

Internal dialogue characterizes the functioning of the managerial action that promotes openness negotiated to external communities, and therefore results in socially responsible behavior (Patrizia & Gianluca, 2013). Several studies (Dawkins, 2005; Levy & Kaplan, 2008; Ligeti & Oravec, 2009) have shown the relationship between communication and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) focused on CSR communication and internal communication within an organization. More recent research has demonstrated how environmentally active employees could be used as internal communicators to spread environmental activity internally. These researchers concluded, “a central aspect in managing CSR and stakeholder relationships in organizations is communication”. Increasingly, CSR communication researchers (Birth, Illia, Lurati, & Zamparini 2008) have pointed to the importance of adopting stakeholder approaches, communicating and developing relationships with them.

Managers are considered role models and therefore envoys of the company’s values (Lam, Kraus, & Ahearne, 2010), so it carries weight when they refer to CSR in communications, participate themselves, or encourage employees to participate in volunteering or fundraising. CSR can affect job performance, but it is not equally effective for all frontline employees (more so for those who already consider CSR important to their self-view) and only occurs to the extent that it fosters identification with the organization, the customers, or both (Korschun, Bhattacharya, & Swain, 2014).

### **Culture**

According to Burlacu and Graur (2003), MC is a component of managerial and organizational culture, and its specific purpose relies on increasing the performances of the organizations. The lack of communication or the poor management of communication leads to the alteration of several components of the company’s management. The lack of certain abilities and of the organization’s culture regarding these components make the communication process invalid (Elida-Tomița, Diana-Elena, & Dumitru, 2013). Lenox and King (2004) found that managers play an important role in getting subordinates to buy into and accept the practices that they advocate and implement. CEOs who actively promote a positive organizational culture, focusing on positive organizational traits and strong employee relationships, will build a reservoir of goodwill that can buffer bad news (French and Holden, 2012). Organizational culture impacts the employees’ perception of results and consequences. Thus, it influences employees to behave in a particular manner (Campbell & Gorlitz, 2014). Howard (2007) indicated that organizational culture determines and shapes employee satisfaction and commitment. Employees of an organization think, communicate, act, and behave in ways that are heavily influenced by the organizational culture. Organizational culture influences the performance, communication, commitment, and engagement levels of employees. Organizational culture aligns with organizational and individual performance (Rampersad, 2008). Managerial leaders should develop methods and procedures to encourage much greater and more regular informal contact and communication between managers and staff (Tourish & Hargie, 2004).

## **Customer Service**

Kang and Hyun (2012) found five types of communication styles (attentive, friendly, impression leaving, open, and relaxed) had a positive impact on customer-oriented service employees, while one communication style (contentious) had a negative impact. Clearly how managers communicate with service employees has an impact on how the employees then communicate with customers. Specific behaviors, such as smiling, initiation of a pleasant conversation, attentive customer service, and knowledge sharing, have been identified as techniques employees use to build rapport with customers (Gremler & Gwinner, 2008). Therefore, it could be said that managers should also use these techniques with their internal customers.

Research supports the idea that positive interpersonal relationships are a key to creating positive energy in people's lives (Dutton, 2003). Outstanding customer service is almost impossible without supportive communication. Employees and managers need to use supportive communication skills to resolve the issues that customers have. Active listening in supportive communication is important to keep customers satisfied (Talukder, 2012). It can be concluded that the significant impact of customer satisfaction is caused by active listening with high correlation for both managerial and non-managerial employees. Both managerial and non-managerial employees need to employ active listening to create smoother flows of information and to minimize discrepancies, which will lead to better coordination and understanding (Talukder, 2012).

The value of communication is an integral part of the perceived service value by consumers in any interaction with the company, both personal and media based (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2005). It is the communicator's task in the early stages to build awareness, develop consumer preference (by promoting value, performance, and other features), convince interested buyers, and encourage them to make the purchase decision (Ndubisi & Chan, 2005). Communication during service encounters has definitely created an impact on customers' perceptions of the image of the company. Effective communication, from the beginning or the onset of the service encounter, which is often a distress call to the service provider, goes a long way in contributing to the quality of the service and importantly to the satisfaction of the customer (Jain, Sethi, & Mukherji, 2009).

## **Delegation**

Managers should go about delegating authority by removing rhetorical obstructions in the way of an old paradigm (Bell & Bodie, 2012a). Harris and Raviv (2005) showed that the probability of delegation increases with the importance of the agents' [employee] information and decreases with the importance of the principal's [manager] information.

Effective delegation requires mindful communication, even for routine tasks (Anthony & Vidal, 2010). Clarification of questions regarding the exact nature of the task, limits of authority and accountability, deadlines, relationship to larger projects, resources, and timing of updates is important to the successful delegation process (Urbaniak, 2005). Protch (2006) noted that delegating authority worked best when authority was delegated along with responsibility. For the delegation process to work, the manager must 1) select the correct person with the necessary maturity and technical skills; 2) define the task so that the delegate has a clear understanding; 3) establish a schedule of progress points, measurements, and deadlines; 4) transfer appropriate authority to achieve the task; and 5) focus on the accomplishments rather than the method with which the task is accomplished (Battles, 2005).

Some managers are destined to commit the seven deadly sins of delegation (Wilson, 2010), which are: 1) the "do it my way" syndrome; 2) believing our people are not ready yet; 3) abdicating, not delegating; 4) not providing clarity or specificity; 5) lack of communication to others; 6) taking it back; and 7) not establishing clear return and report processes.

The current literature seems to suggest that managerial delegation is a key to get subordinates and peers working collectively towards goals (Hunter, 2008). In addition, delegation is a critical factor in helping anyone become a leader (Lemberg, 2008). It may be a surprise to some managers that the reason they fail in delegating authority, no matter how sincere the manager might be, is because they do not

understand the process requires trust. They fail because they fail to trust and have difficulty giving up control (Bell & Bodie, 2012).

### **Diversity Training**

Managerial leaders are responsible for using communication to promote diversity initiatives (Thibeaux, Tillotson, Falls, & Bell, 2006). Strong communication skills that include insight into culture, diversity, nonverbal communication, and technology can help achieve goals and develop relationships that benefit the organization (Talukder, 2012). Organizations face a need to work and communicate competently with an expanding heterogeneity of internal and external audiences, including differences in gender, age, race, religion, ethnicity, and cultural background (Barker and Gower, 2010). Diversity needs to become part of any organization's social fabric to understand behavioral differences among group members in relation to other groups (Roberson, 2006). Individuals and organizations create and share social, historical, and cultural values through their communication practices (Sha, 2006).

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, EMPOWERMENT/ENGAGEMENT, EQUITY THEORY, ETHICS, AND EXPECTANCY THEORY**

### **Employee Assistance Programs**

Managers use communication skills to improve the lives of troubled high-value employees through employment assistance programs (Bell, 2010). It can be noted that communication is essential to assuage employee perceptions of inequity (Bell, 2011a). The spotlight placed on MC and its effectiveness in the academic literature tends to mask the active involvement of work group members in turbulent organizational events such as downsizing. However, this involvement may be equally impactful in explaining the communicative outcomes associated with restructuring and downsizing. The survivors of a restructured EPA unit continued to seek opportunities to influence their environment. Despite setbacks, they recognized that an effective communication program is one key to coping with organizational restructuring and downsizing. Interestingly, during the restructuring, they assigned whatever positive outcomes they experienced to the communication practices of the work group rather than the communication practices of management (Haas, 2007).

### **Empowerment/Engagement**

Havill (2010) refers to communication as one of the drivers of engagement for accounting firms. According to Saks (2006) organizations seeking to enhance employee engagement should capture the perceptions of their employees towards the support and encouragement provided by the organization through appropriate channels and suitable cultural practices. Organizations with effective communication have shown to have lower turnover rates than other organizations (Gallup, 2006). Nakra (2006) suggested that employee motivation and their identification with their organization are critically dependent on effective communication. Yates (2008) stated that high-effectiveness companies are those who leverage strengthening the communication skills of their managers and supervisors for improving "line of sight" and commitment of employees". Sarangi and Srivastava (2012) determined that private banks striving to increase engagement of employees should focus on strengthening different dimensions of organizational culture and communication.

One common thread in many ethical scandals is the absence of communication and lack of employee empowerment. Through empowerment, managers can bolster employees' sense of personal responsibility for individual decisions, thus discouraging the development of egoistic-local climates and consequently reducing the incidence of ethical crises. Managers could employ empowerment practices to motivate a sense of reciprocation in their subordinates, which in turn, will elicit a benevolent-local climate in the workplace (Parboteeah, Lin, Chen, Lee, & Chung, 2010). Empowerment also signals to employees that their judgments and decisions are trusted by both the organization and their supervisors (Butts, Vandenberg, Dejoy, Schaffer, & Wilson, 2009). They are more likely to feel that both managers and the

organization care for their well-being and value their contributions and, reciprocally, to act in ways that maximize the well-being of others and the organization and minimize self-interested decision-making.

One perspective underlines the potentially critical role that managers play in increasing voice. Employees are said to speak up more when their managers remain open to and seek input from them (Ashford, Sutcliffe, & Christianson, 2009; Detert & Burris, 2007; Detert & Trevino, 2010). Non-supervisory employees are the face of modern organizations; therefore, involving them in the decision making process is one form of empowerment that is both motivating and inclusive. Offering incentives and adhering to a fair reward system positively contribute to an increase in employee morale and to the organization's bottom line (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

### **Equity Theory**

Equity theory is built on the premise that relational partners consider the contributions they make to, and the benefits they receive from, the relationship (Dainton & Zelle, 2006). Research conducted on the role that equity plays in interpersonal relationships has revealed that individuals in equitable relationships use relational maintenance behaviors at a higher rate than those individuals in inequitable (i.e., over benefited or underbenefitted) relationships (Stafford & Canary, 2006; Yum & Canary, 2009). A direct approach to rebalancing an inequitable relationship is preferred (Westerman, 2013).

Adams's Equity Theory can be used by managers to communicate with their subordinates to understand that equity and fairness exist among employees. Many times if managers simply talked with their subordinates and explained what was required at a given position to get a certain raise, or how a given amount of monies were distributed, their employees would be more likely to understand and neither reduce their output nor leave the organization. When workers see that the manager cares and is trying to be equitable, they are more likely to be satisfied in their given position. Of course, this assumes that management is trusted by the employees. Often, employees will not consider management behaviors or claims to be credible (Bell & Martin, 2012)

### **Ethics**

Schein (2004) suggests that managers should embed the priorities and values they hold in the day-to-day decision-making of their subordinates to create a positive organizational climate. Examples of corporate scandals at Enron and WorldCom showed that employees were seldom involved in decision making; there was a lack of communication as well as poor communication; and a lack of employee empowerment (Seeger & Ulmer, 2003). This lack of communication created a vacuum in which employees did not feel guilty when behaving unethically. No ongoing communication meant a lack of openness, which allowed ethical issues to be masked. Communication and lack of empowerment are two critical precipitants of corporate scandal, which imply that organizational communication and empowerment are critical practices for managers to maintain an ethical organizational culture (Thorne, Ferrell, Ferrell, 2008).

It is widely known that communication is crucial to the success of organizational values, norms, and codes (Leung, 2008; Stevens, 2008; Suchan, 2006). Stevens (2008) indicated that organizational communication enhances the effectiveness of organizational codes and rules. While Parboteeah, Chen, Lee and Chung (2010) found communication is positively associated with principled-local climates and provided further evidence that principled-local ethical climates can be developed and enhanced by communication. Ethical cultures can be built if managers consider the importance of their communication in terms of transmitting and embedding an organization's assumptions and values in its employees' daily operations (Schein, 2004). Specifically, through communication, managers are able to subtly but potently embed and transmit the underlying ethical values and expectations of the organization's rules and codes to their subordinates. When employees understand and embrace the expectations and values inherent in organizational rules and codes in their everyday work, an ethical culture will be built.

When employees perceive a lack of communication regarding norms and rules, they feel it is acceptable to behave unethically (Suchan, 2006). Schein (2004) indicated that the absence of MC gives

subordinates a powerful signal to interpret the assumptions and values of the organization in their own way.

If codes of ethics are written ambiguously, managers will need to communicate more frequently to ensure that ethical expectations of the organization are well understood by employees (VanSandt, Shepard, & Zappe, 2006). Such results also correspond with the findings of previous studies that ethical climates are manageable and controllable in the workplace with ongoing and frequent communication (Parboteeah & Kapp, 2008).

Promoting a positive ethical climate is a sound business practice (Mulki, Jarmillo, & Locander, 2008) and thus, managerial practices associated with local ethical climates are therefore of particularly great importance to managers. To foster a principled-local climate, managers should promote frequent formal or informal organizational communication of what is and is not acceptable as organizational rules and procedures cannot work by themselves (Stevens, 2008). The falls of Enron and WorldCom have confirmed that complete reliance on rules and regulations is inadequate to protect organizations from ethical scandals, as these two organizations both had extensive codes and rules (Stevens, 2008). It was a breakdown in communication and the concomitant failure to create a principled-local climate, not an absence of codes and rules, that precipitated the demise of Enron (Seeger & Ulmer, 2003). Communication is critical to fostering a principled-local climate and should by no means be neglected (Parboteeah, Chen, Lee & Chung, 2010). A Gallup poll in 2010 found that only 15% of those surveyed perceived business executives as having high to very high standards of honesty and ethics (Crawford, 2011).

### **Expectancy Theory**

Communication should be clear, consistent, correct, and complete to be effective between employer and employee, and is a necessary ingredient to understanding employee needs. Employee satisfaction, coupled with communication process, can be a factor in the complex process of motivation (Chun-Fang, SooCheong, Canter, & Prince, 2008). Satisfaction with the extent to which communication in the organization motivates and stimulates employees to improve performance is the moderator between expectancy and work motivation. Supervisors and managers, who are open to ideas, who listen and pay attention, and who offer guidance for solving job-related problems and who offer feedback, show the moderating effect of instrumentality on work motivation, which is reflected in employees who receive pay raises, bonuses, opportunity for advancement and have a feeling of accomplishment. Communication allows employees to clearly understand the greater rewards they receive for improving their performance. The moderating effect of valence on work motivation shows satisfaction with effective and organized communication that motivates employees to work hard to achieve organizational outcomes (Chun-Fang, SooCheong, Canter, & Prince 2008).

## **FEEDBACK, FINANCIAL REPORTING, HIERARCHIES, INCIVILITY, LEADERSHIP, AND NEGOTIATING**

### **Feedback**

Managers have long used feedback as a tool to facilitate professional growth and development as well as advancement within organizations and businesses (Levy & Williams, 2004). Managers often complain that giving feedback is often a time consuming task (Clausen, Jones, & Rich, 2008). In addition, many managers do not like to deliver negative feedback (Timmerman & Harrison, 2005; Dibble & Levine, 2010). However, managers need to provide helpful, constructive feedback when employees perform poorly so they can use that feedback to improve their performance (Moss & Sanchez, 2004).

In general, people respond better to positive than negative feedback. Westerman and Westerman (2010) found that both distributive and interpersonal (also known as interactional) justice were perceived to be higher when a feedback message was delivered with face-saving content rather than without it. Employees have identified the ability to give feedback as the number one key characteristic of great managerial leaders. Employees value their manager's ability to give frequent, transparent feedback. In her

study, Sullivan (2013) found that individuals unexpectedly rated proactive feedback practices as more important and influential than leadership experience and technical knowledge.

Interestingly, women are perceived to have strong interpersonal communication skills, which may facilitate their ability to give and receive feedback (LaMarr, 2010). A study by Caliper (2005) found that women use an inclusive style of leadership based upon open lines of communication. Lizzio, Wilson, Gilchrist, & Gallois (2003) found that female managers were identified the most with using an effective feedback strategy.

Peterson (2009) has stated that managers need training to understand the value of feedback and the dynamics involved in the giving and receiving feedback. Training is a critical step for a manager to become a source of tactful, quality performance information for subordinates. Harms and Roebuck (2010) incorporated feedback training into their graduate classes and found that their students, who were full time managers and employees, did not know how to give feedback or receive feedback and had little, if any, workplace training in feedback skills. After their classes ended, students shared in course evaluations that the performance feedback training they had received had given them the skills and knowledge they needed; and the practice in class had helped them deliver better and more efficient feedback at work.

One of the most important determinants of organizational performance is a manager's ability to listen and respond to feedback. Top management, including the board of directors of a company, should solicit employee feedback. Organizational strategy is only successful if feedback is actively encouraged from those who are directly responsible for implementing the strategy (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

### **Financial Reporting**

According to Bell (2007), the manager's role in financial reporting is one of a risk consultant's perspective. One of the main tasks of the manager is to motivate and communicate, which is a basic skill needed for a manager (Bell, 2011d). In a survey of Fortune 500 companies carried out by Laskin (2009) preparing financial documentation was identified among the most frequent of business activities, spanning across investor relations, finance, and communication departments. Voluntary financial disclosure is on the rise, as it helps companies have more control over the message they wish to communicate, achieve greater visibility to distinguish themselves from competitors, and enhance perceived value (Williams, 2008). Voluntary reporting also promotes an image of transparency (Schlegelmilch & Pollach, 2005), which has become particularly important in an era of ongoing financial turmoil and widespread lack of trust in "big business" among the general public.

When companies are faced with challenging situations that can have a negative impact on reputation, the ethical dimension of their communication practices takes on a particularly important role. Griffin's (2009) study of Merck's open letters to stakeholders during the VIOXX crisis used Aristotle's construct of ethos to show how the company communicated good moral character and sense of responsibility to generate trust and goodwill among stakeholders. This strategy was adopted after the company initially attempted to hide or downplay damaging reports about the product. With particular reference to ethics in financial communication, Loughran, McDonald, and Yun (2009) detected the presence of the ethics-related terms: ethic(s), ethical(ly), responsible and responsibility in 10-K annual reports. Interestingly, they found that companies that (a) had poor corporate governance scores, (b) were involved in class action lawsuits, and (c) operated in so-called "sin" industries (i.e., gambling, alcohol, and tobacco) were more likely to use these terms in reports than other companies. The authors of the study interpreted these results to reflect systematic misleading of the public. The language in the report committed the firm to acting ethically, but this was not always borne out by its behavior.

For senior leaders, participating in earning calls is one of their most important activities. According to Larcker and Zakolyukina (2010), doing so requires that leaders prepare carefully and even rehearse, while also trying to anticipate the content of questions during the question and answer session that follows the sharing of the financial reports. When executives use ethics-related language, it reflects their aim to reassure audiences of the company's commitment and confidence in the future, and thus counterbalance any financial weaknesses they have had to report (Crawford, 2011).

## **Hierarchies**

Boxall, Haynes, and Freeman (2007, p. 219-20) conclude their multi-country study (of formal participation schemes) by suggesting that "smaller firms should do all they can to provide informal voice opportunities, whereas larger firms should provide multiple systems of voice to enhance the most job satisfaction, and employee commitment." It could be argued that allowing communication is even more in large firms because of their size and number of levels in the hierarchy. Indeed, Mohr and Zoghi (2008) argue for an open management style involving communication with workers where no formal system exists or where formal practices are not implemented effectively by line managers.

Nolan, Conway, Farrell, and Monks (2010) identified eight essential areas of managerial competency, which include professional knowledge/operational skills, interpersonal, communication, information technology, human resources, finance, sales, and marketing. There is little doubt that good communication is vital for organizational effectiveness, as it has been recognized as one of the key managerial competencies (Cheney, 2007). According to Robbins and Judge (2007) and Tsai (2006), oral (e.g., meetings and group discussion), written (e.g., emails and faxes), and nonverbal (e.g., body language) communication are the most popular and basic methods by which members of organizations transfer meaning.

Three kinds of trust in leadership (by its hierarchical level) play a mediating role between managerial practices and organizational outcomes, and the effects of trust are mediated by teamwork, which requires communication. While trust in department leadership and trust in leadership team have both direct and indirect influences on performance, trust in the supervisor does not seem to have a direct impact on performance. It only indirectly affects performance through teamwork. By the level of hierarchy, the routes in which trust in leadership impacts organizational performance are differentiated (Cho & Poister, 2014).

In their study, Bisel and Arterburn (2012) found that hierarchical relations encouraged workers to justify their silence by believing the manager was responsible. Many of these workers drew upon the identities invited by the organizational hierarchy to make sense of their communication strategy of silence. These findings provide further evidence that relational dynamics codified in hierarchies alter workplace messaging—at times, in ways that are ultimately detrimental to individuals and collectives alike (Bisel, Kelley, Ploeger, & Messersmith, 2011; Kassing, 2006; Ploeger, Kelley, & Bisel, 2011).

Expectations are useful in that they help us manage uncertainty. Yet, expectations about how work relationships will unfold (e.g., only supervisors are the source of corrective feedback) may create outcomes in which actions (e.g., withholding upward negative feedback) produce the social contexts (i.e., climates of silence) by which the certainty of the predictions are judged (e.g., "My supervisor won't listen because that's how things work around here"). Obviously levels of hierarchy shape communication messages (Bisel & Barge, 2011).

## **Incivility**

Shane-Joyce and Bell (2010) found that communication practices of managers have an impact on the predictability of uncivil communication responses. The instigator of uncivil behavior is more likely to be a person of higher status, such as managers and supervisors (Azulay, 2007). Uncivil communication rendered to a victim or to the innocent bystander can cost to the organization in performance. Managerial, legal, and human resources is significant and cannot be ignored. Employees who are subjected to these behaviors may become distracted and withdraw to protect themselves from such people as suggested by Sutton (2007).

Troester (2007) reported that there is a need for civility in business and professional communication in the workplace. He stated that civil communication works and solid evidence shows that civil communication leads to greater goal achievement in interpersonal and public settings. Being respectful and civil toward others will result in more successful professionals, more pleasant and productive businesses, and even a more peaceful and livable society. Fame (2002) stated that: "Encouraging civility in the workplace is becoming one of the fundamental corporate goals in our diverse, hurried, stressed, and litigation-prone society. A civil workplace is good for workers, since the workers' quality of life is

improved in such an environment. But a civil workplace is also good for the customers, since the quality of the service they receive from happier and more relaxed service providers is improved." (p. 2). According to Snavely and Ankeny (2007), training managers and instituting respectful communication practices in performance reviews and terminations can keep such situations from spiraling out of control. Additionally, treating employees with due civility is key to creating a happy, productive work environment.

In the article entitled "Manners Maketh the Businessman," in *The Economist*, the author stated that the economic crisis prompted an outbreak of politeness in business. Given that money and deals were scarce, people had to be nicer to all the people with whom they interact. The article suggested that rudeness is out, and civility is the new rule in an uncertain world since there is so much uncertainty about who will end up having power (2009).

Frost (2007) defines "toxic employees" as those who are rude, temperamental, abusive, spread gossip, create factions, distort communications to their ends, and sabotage work processes, colleagues, and managers. Naturally, subordinates and supervisors can both be considered "toxic employees," but subordinates do model supervisors' behaviors that connote breaches of professional misconduct. When managers engage in communication practices of incivility, especially yelling at others, the communication back is predictably violent. Yelling at people is a behavior that predicts workplace violence and does not display emotional intelligence (Joyce, Shane, & Bell, 2010).

## **Leadership**

A general definition of leadership is the ability to motivate subordinates to do their jobs willingly, without coercion or harm to themselves or to others. The practice of effective communication is a leadership attribute that facilitates managers becoming prospective leaders of their organizations (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

Gaines-Ross (2003) studied the relationship between CEOs, their personal reputations, and their companies' success. Coining the term *CEO capital*, Gaines-Ross's book of the same name cites a 1998 poll of the general public indicating that a CEO's reputation accounted for 48% of a company's reputation. Gaines-Ross argues, "The CEO must come to terms with the idea of being the ultimate spokesperson for the organization, the embodiment of the brand, and the official storyteller who knits together the company's past, present, and future" (p. 39). Park and Berger (2004) argue that CEOs are the public face of a company, particularly during organizational crises, and as such warrant particular attention as the subject of crisis research. Davis (2010) writes that what organizations need now is more leadership presence where leaders are intense, transparent, and authentic. She states "leader communication" in this form demands that leaders "show up, giving the straight story, providing context, talking it through, and keeping at it" (p. 24).

When human resource management practices are positively perceived as management's commitment to employees, employees reciprocate by showing valued attitudes and behaviors (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). When employees believe that their leadership is committed to their well being and development, they positively respond to the organization with higher performance, better commitment (Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013).

## **Negotiation**

Effective communication during the negotiation has the potential to build long-lasting business relationships. On the other hand, poor communication can have far-reaching negative effects such as protracted processes, costly renegotiations, or the breakdown of relationships. Communication in negotiation entails that negotiators find a balance between cooperation and competition (Schoop, Kohne, & Ostertag, 2010). Communication is the central element of negotiation: it creates negotiation, reflects negotiation and is the major mean in obtaining benefits. Any discussion about negotiation in MC could be questioned and considered useless through the simple statement that negotiation is a complex notion. We can also ask ourselves if negotiation plays an important role in the management of an organization. Of

course, because people are the heart and soul of an organization and they need to negotiate to obtain benefits and be productive. (Iosim, Iancu, Popescu, Pîrvulescu, Merce, & Radac, 2012).

Negotiations are also an integral part of the work carried out by the managers. Each negotiator decides to negotiate to meet his/her own interests and reach goals (Donohue, 2004). Before the negotiators decide to negotiate, they need to think carefully whether the circumstances to negotiate are appropriate, because negotiation requires communication, resources, time and engagement (Završnik, 2007).

Gibson, Maznevski, and Kirkman (2009) have argued that the influence of culture on individuals' behaviors is strongest in negotiation situations that do not provide specific guidance or explicit rules on how to deal with cultural differences, as well as those that require close collaboration among people. Mixed motive and multi-issue negotiation that involves both distributive and integrative bargaining is one such situation. Lee, Yang, and Graham (2006) noted that there are extra sources of tension in intercultural negotiations, including decreased trust, lack of interpersonal attractiveness, and reduced willingness to cooperate. When negotiators feel comfortable communicating with each other, there is less pressure for closure and individuals are less likely to hold onto cultural stereotypes associated with the other party, especially negative ones that lead to suboptimal negotiation outcomes (Chiu, Morris, Hong, & Menon, 2000).

## **PERFORMANCE, PRESENTATION SKILLS, REPRIMANDS, AND SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT**

### **Performance**

Research shows that organizational performance improves when communication is permitted to flow uninterrupted and employees are empowered, provided incentives, and given the necessary resources to perform at an optimal level. Managers at the technical core of an organization are obligated to develop good working relations with their staff by providing them with a comfortable work environment and swiftly resolving issues that could possibly hinder performance. In addition, managers play a pivotal role in inspiring their subordinates to maximize efficiency and enhance productivity. The spirit of teamwork among employees correlates with the inspirational leadership role of management. Managers should lead and motivate their staff to perform at a level that inspires them to achieve the goals and objectives set forth by the organization (Bell, 2014). Performance problems normally arise when mixed messages are prevalent in the communication channel with leaders saying one thing and doing another (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

Although managers significantly influence organizational performance, Bal (2008) believes that performance improvements are accomplished by the efforts of the team itself and have very little to do with the management team's efforts. In other words, employees are the major players in many facets of organizational success; therefore, the solicitation of their knowledge and feedback is essential when evaluating the successes, failures, and future aspirations of the organization.

Regardless of the performance evaluation method, managers must communicate with their employees using supportive and empathic communication (Goje & Prada, 2014). Performance appraisal and communication are related to trust in a supervisor. Although a performance appraisal is helpful in facilitating trust in a supervisor, effective communication is much more critical. For managerial leaders, at all levels, communication is the key factor closely related to trust (Cho & Poister, 2014).

Finally, managers must have a mind-set to think beyond their job titles and focus more on developing and inspiring employees to accomplish organizational goals. In the future, managers will understand that performance improvements have little to do with them and everything to do with their team and how well they can get them to work at top performance (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

### **Reprimands**

A reprimand is theorized to be a teaching tool and should indicate the incident, rationale and remedy when administered to an employee to safeguard the relationship between manager and employee (Bell &

Martin, 2010; Bell & Ramdass, 2010). At work, the managerial reprimand is the means by which supervisor corrects behavioral inadequacies and ensures adherence to established company policies. If unacceptable behavior is a persistent problem or if an employee is involved in a misconduct that cannot be tolerated, a managerial reprimand should be used to correct behavior. However, a managerial reprimand should not be used to embarrass an employee. (Bell & Ramdass, 2010). Having to reprimand an employee, particularly in today's litigious environment, is difficult for most managers. However, putting everything down in writing and having both people sign it with a Human Resource person present generally works well (Bell & Martin, 2010).

### **Scientific Management**

Bell (2011e) proposes that present-day employees should be taught the value of scientific management. Bell and Martin (2012) highlighted the relevance of scientific management and equity theory in everyday MC situations. Present-day managers are not likely to equate the importance of communicating to their employees the importance of time and motion, in relation to corporate profits (Bell & Martin, 2012). Schachter (2010) provided evidence that Taylor's work on efficiency has had an enormous impact on management education in the progressive era. Further, she argued that Taylor's impact has implications for present-day managers, which make Taylor's methods relevant in a modern management environment. Schachter (2010) credited Taylor as being the originator of the science of work. Taylor was among a small number of scholars in his day to begin thinking about work and efficiency of time and motion as it relates to productivity.

## **STAKEHOLDERS, STRATEGIC PLANNING/CAREER DEVELOPMENT, TEAMS, TECHNICAL CORE, TRAINING/WORKPLACE LEARNING, TRUST, AND VALUE CHAIN**

### **Stakeholders**

The creation of shared value occurs in an organization when it communicates with its stakeholders (Gazzola & Meo Colombo, 2011). Managers need a new approach to engaging internal stakeholders, and organizations must incorporate interaction with stakeholders in decision making at every level of the organization (Browne & Nuttall, 2013; Patrizia & Gianluca, 2013). Stakeholder engagement not only reduces the conflict of interests (Ienciu, 2012), but helps a company to manage its relationship with the stakeholders. This relationship can and should include a wide variety of activities: not just corporate philanthropy (Porter & Kramer, 2011; Porter & Kramer 2006), community programs, and political lobbying, but also aspects of product design, recruiting policy, and project execution.

### **Strategic Planning/Career Development**

Strategic planning and career development play major roles in determining trust in managerial leaders, where career development has a larger impact. For trust to occur with managerial leaders, strategic planning, career development, and communication are critical factors. Among the three, communication is most strongly associated with trust in managerial leaders.

Changes driven by the globalization have led to situations where communication needs to be placed at the center of strategic planning and should play a key role within the organization's structure. Communication can have a direct impact on the stock valuation of a company. Information spreads instantly with social media channels, which offers a complex toolkit for communicators and marketers (Breakenridge, 2008). These challenges combined with a need for professional crisis management (and reputation management) move communication to a strategic level.

The interconnected reality of social media demands communication to be co-created by multiple stakeholders. These networks are established in the context of multi-stakeholders initiatives (Porter, Donthu, MaacElroy, & Wydra., 2011; Shumate & O'Connor, 2010). Corporate communication helps in defining a company's objectives and strategy; therefore, managers need to be provided with advanced tools to shape strategic practices of corporations in this complex environment (Bochenek & Blili, 2013).

## **Teams**

Managing virtual teams, while a fairly new area, is being increasingly explored in the management and business literature (Filsinger, 2014). Effective teams have members who become more efficient working together than alone; they function so well that they create their own magnetism; they do not have the same leaders; and members care for each other and have trust among the members (Whetten & Cameron, 2007). The importance of teamwork is even more salient due to changing conditions in the workplace. Using a team arrangement is prevalent these days, in which case teamwork becomes more critical. In addition, teamwork is the immediate outcome generated by enhanced trust (Cho & Poister, 2014).

The communication need requirements of team-based management differ dramatically from those of bureaucratic management because many bureaucratic strategies are removed from the communication repertoire (Douglas, Martin, & Krapels, 2006). In team communication, information is shared by team members to conduct daily activities. A positive communication relationship is characterized by trust, mutual respect, and openness between superiors and subordinates as well as among coworkers (Kets de Vries, 2005).

Work teams cooperate and help foster a climate characterized by fairness, openness, and trust as the teams place increased emphasis on coworker communication. As the firm moves from an autocratic management style to self-directed work teams, the team leaders must reduce their use of hard communication influence tactics and employ softer communication influence styles to implement day-to-day activities in the team environment. Postmes, Haslam, and Swaab,(2007) as well as Swaab and Galinsky (2007) found in their research that team leaders used soft tactics more often in the self-directed work team environment than they had previously in the more autocratic setting. Their study found that managers appeared more effective, and their actions also were perceived as contributing to team development. Their research showed that communication highlights a sense of unity among different individuals in a group and increases the tendency to cooperate (Postmes, Haslam, & Swaab, 2005; Swaab & Galinsky, 2007).

## **Technical Core**

One article discusses at length effectively using communicative approaches at the technical core of management (Baughman, Williams, Oatis, & Bell, 2007). Middle managers must make sure all front line managers know what's going on in terms of strategy, and then determine how to effectively communicate it to their subordinates (Wilbert & Army, 2010). Tactical goals are developed by middle managers and should have influence on the bulk of the employees. Middle managers who control the various units of the business will take respective chunks of the strategic plan and create tactical plans and goals. When all the tactical plans and goals developed by unit managers are combined, the overall strategy can be achieved. However, managers communicate strategy at the technical core by using a two-step process (Bell, 2012b). The first step is to communicate strategic goals by their component pieces and the second step is constantly monitor and praise employees' incremental contributions (Bell, 2012b).

## **Training/Workplace Learning**

Managers must strive to eliminate fillers and other bad speech habits from professional MC situations, demonstrate trustworthy behavior, and develop team performance (Bell, 2011b; Bell 2012c; Fulk, Bell, & Bodie, 2011) Organization needs to devise a unique and focused training program for employees and managers (Mathews & Edwards, 2005). Such endeavors help to develop visionary leaders. Supic, Bjegovic, Marinkovic, Milicevic, and Vasic, (2010) found improvements when managers were provided training and the biggest improvement was in the following skills: organizing daily activities, motivating and guiding others, supervising the work of others, leading group discussion, and analyzing situations. The least improved areas were: applying creative techniques, working well with peers, professional self-development, writing and planning at the operational level. Identified predictors of improvement were: shorter years of managerial experience, type of manager, type of profession, and

recognition of the importance of the managerial skills in oral communication, evidence-based decision making, and supervising the work of others.

Specific training programs related to strategic management can increase managerial competencies, which are an important source of competitive advantage for organizations. Kitching (2007) found that workplace learning-by-doing and learning-by-interacting were routinely considered more important than externally provided training, particularly certified training, even after the initial period of employment. Although no consensus on the workplace learning concept has emerged, this domain clearly includes both formal learning (e.g., training and structured learning activities) and non-formal learning (learning through day-to-day work activities) that occurs, in part or entirely, in the workplace (Beattie, 2006). Previous research has suggested that the majority of workplace learning occurs through informal means (Rainbird & Munro 2003; Conlon, 2004), and that informal learning and practice play considerable roles in developing professional expertise in the workplace (Conlon, 2004). The idea of 'learning by participation' has become a dominant approach to understanding workplace learning (Fuller and Unwin 2005). Sakakibara (2004) found that empowerment may encourage workers to acquire new knowledge or skills, and direct supervision from seniors may facilitate the sharing of knowledge or skills within the workplace. While Matsuo and Nakahara (2013) found that empowerment can effectively facilitate learning among members, while direct supervision can sometimes hinder workplace learning. Finally, managers must promote reflective communication in the workplace, where members have a chance to express their opinions and criticize each other's work to improve performance perspectives. By combining (plan, do, check, act) PDCA practices and reflective communication, managers can enhance learning in the workplace.

## **Trust**

According to Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert (2010), managerial leaders should provide greater focus on the objectivity, content, and brevity of messages, which will assist in the building of trust and respect between managerial leaders and their employees. Communication is the corporate function that builds trust. Companies can build a culture of trust by sharing information quickly and freely and by building relationships with employees and their stakeholders that enable their organizations to succeed (Beslin & Reddin, 2004). Top MC implicitly signals that top management is open to employee acceptance or criticism of the decisions taken by top management. However, by making top management more open to employee reactions, top MC also creates an atmosphere of openness and transparency within the organization. In this environment, employees who are kept informed of top management's actions are more likely to trust that top management is discharging its obligations in good faith (Mahajan, Bishop, & Scott, 2012). Mahajan, Bishop and Scott (2012) found that top MC and employee involvement were related to organizational commitment indirectly through their relationship with trust in top management. This suggests that employees respond positively to their organization, if an organization actively involves employees in setting organizational goals and keeps them well informed on its progress towards achieving these goals. By giving employees meaningful influence in decision-making, management signals that it values employee opinions and cares for their well-being. In response, employees are likely to develop a positive attitude towards management.

For trust to occur in a leadership team, communication is another critical factor. Obtaining sufficient and sound information decreases uncertainty within organizations, which helps to build trust in leadership (Thomas, Zolin, & Hartman, 2009). When managerial practices are carried out effectively, they positively affect employee trust in leadership, which in turn influence performance outcomes (Cho & Poister, 2014). Management can strengthen trust and confidence in employees by clearly communicating the need for layoffs, the organization's strategy for the decision, and the organization's nature success (Jolivet, Johnson, & Bell, 2007; Kowske, Lundby, & Rasch, 2009).

Beslin and Reddin (2004) shared some of the best practices from CEOs and senior HR executives, which included building trust among employees and managers within all tiers of the organizational structure. Trust can only be established and sustained if information is permitted to flow uninterrupted, regardless of the chosen channel. Employees that have a positive relationship with their supervisors feel

obligated to reciprocate hard work and dedication to their respective organizations. As a result, employees have a high regard for the organization and its stakeholders, which is evident in the quality of their work and their overall commitment. To earn the trust of employees, it is important that leaders walk the talk and instill confidence in their employees. Leaders must stay true to their words and do what they say they will do. Trust is something that must be earned and leaders should not take for granted the trust of their employees.

Companies can build a culture of trust by sharing information quickly and freely, and building relationships with employees and their stakeholders that enable their organizations to succeed (Beslin & Reddin, 2004). Employees are more motivated to perform for an organization when they are familiar with and understand the strategic direction of the company and how their contributions impact the organization's bottom line. It is important to develop the trust of the workers as people have a propensity not to follow leaders they don't trust; hence, productivity starts to decline. Trust is essential in building loyalty and credibility (Ahmed, Shields, White, & Wilbert, 2010).

### **Value Chain**

Supplier and customer value chains circle the globe and must communicate with each other. Another communication challenge is knowing how to communicate with individuals from different countries and to be aware of cultural differences (Lane, DiStefano, & Maznevski, 2006). Establishing quality objectives are associated with strategic management and implies value chain analysis is needed to identify changes that can bring competitive advantage (Popescu & Dascălu, 2011).

### **CONCLUSION**

The goal of this research project was to determine if managerial communication is an essential management competency and if it belongs as a main topic in the management literature. We reviewed the usefulness of managerial communication research on the main topics of management covered in the articles which were published over a 10-year period, from 2004 to 2013. Our statistical findings shown the topic of managerial communication is increasing. The literature is rife with examples of MC related research on the main topics of management and show the researchers' interest in MC is increasing at a rapid rate. It is hard to argue against so many MC articles written by management researchers. It is hard to ignore the fact that most of the articles cited in this paper are published in a broad range of management journals not directly affiliated with any communication associations or groups. The plethora of outlets publishing MC related content is proof positive that MC is an essential management competency currently being explored in the management literature.

As our research showed, the studies reviewed repeatedly pointed to the impact communication skill on the ability of managers and leaders to succeed or fail. The ability to communicate effectively may be the number one management quality" stated Chris M. Martin, Yahoo writer who himself holds a B.S. in Business Administration and a J.D. Managers and leaders need to understand how to use communication strategies to build their teams and organizations to achieve departmental as well as organizational objectives. Too often individuals move into management or leadership roles without an awareness of the need to improve their managerial communication skills. These individuals may be subject matter experts whose technical skills allowed them to succeed as individuals, but when placed in a management or leadership role, they failed because they lacked the needed managerial communication skills to foster collaboration. Since communication is the lifeblood of an organization and a critical competency for managerial leaders, managerial communication [MC] should be valued by researchers and practitioners as a research area within the management competency.

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## APPENDIX

**TABLE A**  
**MULTIPLE COMPARISONS FOR FIVE FIELDS**

Dependent Variable: Documents						
LSD						
(I) Field	(J) Field	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
BCOM	CCOM	2434.700*	212.3254	.000	2005.574	2863.826
	MCOM	776.400*	212.3254	.001	347.274	1205.526
	OCOM	1206.000*	212.3254	.000	776.874	1635.126
	TCOM	1828.000*	212.3254	.000	1398.874	2257.126
CCOM	BCOM	-2434.700*	212.3254	.000	-2863.826	-2005.574
	MCOM	-1658.300*	212.3254	.000	-2087.426	-1229.174
	OCOM	-1228.700*	212.3254	.000	-1657.826	-799.574
	TCOM	-606.700*	212.3254	.007	-1035.826	-177.574
MCOM	BCOM	-776.400*	212.3254	.001	-1205.526	-347.274
	CCOM	1658.300*	212.3254	.000	1229.174	2087.426
	OCOM	429.600*	212.3254	.050	.474	858.726
	TCOM	1051.600*	212.3254	.000	622.474	1480.726
OCOM	BCOM	-1206.000*	212.3254	.000	-1635.126	-776.874
	CCOM	1228.700*	212.3254	.000	799.574	1657.826
	MCOM	-429.600*	212.3254	.050	-858.726	-.474
	TCOM	622.000*	212.3254	.006	192.874	1051.126
TCOM	BCOM	-1828.000*	212.3254	.000	-2257.126	-1398.874
	CCOM	606.700*	212.3254	.007	177.574	1035.826
	MCOM	-1051.600*	212.3254	.000	-1480.726	-622.474
	OCOM	-622.000*	212.3254	.006	-1051.126	-192.874

**TABLE B**  
**MULTIPLE COMPARISONS FOR FOUR FIELDS**

Dependent Variable: Documents						
LSD						
(I) Field	(J) Field	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
BCOM	CCOM	2434.700*	199.4891	.000	2028.354	2841.046
	OCOM	1206.000*	199.4891	.000	799.654	1612.346
	TCOM	1828.000*	199.4891	.000	1421.654	2234.346
CCOM	BCOM	-2434.700*	199.4891	.000	-2841.046	-2028.354
	OCOM	-1228.700*	199.4891	.000	-1635.046	-822.354
	TCOM	-606.700*	199.4891	.005	-1013.046	-200.354
OCOM	BCOM	-1206.000*	199.4891	.000	-1612.346	-799.654
	CCOM	1228.700*	199.4891	.000	822.354	1635.046
	TCOM	622.000*	199.4891	.004	215.654	1028.346
TCOM	BCOM	-1828.000*	199.4891	.000	-2234.346	-1421.654
	CCOM	606.700*	199.4891	.005	200.354	1013.046
	OCOM	-622.000*	199.4891	.004	-1028.346	-215.654