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Project Manager Strategies for Strengthening Communications Within Project Teams

Christine Taylor
Walden University

<u>Walden University</u>

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Christine Taylor

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Review Committee
Dr. Romuel Nafarrete, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Terrance Cusaac, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Ronald Jones, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

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2018

Abstract

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MBA, Columbia Southern University, 2013

BSBA, Hawaii Pacific University, 2011

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Communication inefficiencies are among the reasons for poor or substandard performances in project teams. The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the strategies used by project managers in the health care industry to strengthen communication within project teams. The conceptual framework for the study was McQuail's mass communication theory and Craig's communication theory. Participants of the study were 4 project managers from 2 leading medical supply companies located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Data were collected using semistructured interviews and a review of company documents. The summarized interview responses were validated by participants through the use of member checking. The 3 key themes that emerged from thematic data analysis highlighted strategies that project managers used to strengthen communications with project teams: communication planning, management, and ethics. Project managers can use the study's findings to increase team members' motivation, improve project results, and bolster organizational profitability, which may positively contribute to the growth, development, and betterment of the communities served by their companies.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my #1 supporter, my son, JaQuille Marquis Dawson. You have supported and encouraged me throughout this whole journey. There were times when I wanted to quit, but your belief in me led me to strive harder towards my goal of completion. Thanks for being that constant reminder that with dedication and hard work, we can accomplish anything we put our minds to. To my parents, Florence and Robert, thanks for raising such a strong, driven, and ambitious daughter. Because of you, I am the person that I am today. To my family and dear close friends, thanks for being that sounding board, encouraging and believing in me. You have helped me more than you will ever know. I love you all!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

A growing body of literature indicates that many project managers (PMs) possess inadequate communication skills, the lack of which often has an adverse impact on project team engagement, productivity, and overall profitability (Project Management Institute [PMI], 2018). Experts agree that, for these managers, project failure is the rule rather than the exception (Singh & Jankovitz, 2018). They have suggested that the adoption of effective communication strategies by PMs will contribute to the success of the project (Singh & Jankovitz, 2018) as well as help minimize the costs associated with project failure (Lauren, 2018).

The nature of projects requires teams to work on complex projects from varied remote locations. Yet, there are limited studies on the best strategies and techniques that PMs can use to boost communication, based on my review of the literature. This lack of such research is problematic because many managers lack the necessary expertise to improve employees' communications (Espinosa, Nan, & Carmel, 2015). Usually, organizations forfeit the opportunity to increase workers' engagement and productivity and, accordingly, corporate profitability is negatively affected (Sundaray, 2011). The benefit of having this type of knowledge is that effective communication can provide a pathway for PMs to attain prearranged project outcomes (Ogunde, Joshua, Amusan, & Akuete, 2017). In addition, awareness of quality communication is partly the process that lies at the core performance related to overall work environment. However, effective communication among managers has not received much attention from researchers in the past (Adams, Blandford, Budd, & Bailey, 2005). The lack of project communication has resulted in deteriorated cooperation and profitability in organizations due to project delays (Adams et al., 2005).

Background of the Problem

Concerns regarding efficiency in communication within project teams have continued to attract the attention of researchers (Foong, 2014; Parker, Kunde, & Zeppetella, 2017). For example, subprime mortgages were issued by financial institutions without necessarily liaising with other lenders. The lack of such communication between these entities resulted in a housing bubble that consequently led to high rates of foreclosures and defaults (Foong, 2014). There was a consensus among scholars that the major financial institutions failed to work with the relevant regulatory authorities (Haddon, Loughlin, & McNally, 2015). The communication breakdown led to the most significant and worst global financial crisis in modern-day history, which affected virtually all sectors of the global economy (Foong, 2014). Effective communication could be useful in solving this problem as it strengthens cohesion between project teams and enables them to work together against a common challenge.

In addition, poor communication strategies usually affect project team members' understanding of various objectives. According to Browne, Ha, Manzoni, and Mere (2016), team members of global businesses with advanced communication strategies are more likely to complete their projects successfully. One reason for this increased likelihood, experts contend, is that the project managers of such businesses are often well aware of what to achieve from the initial stages of the project execution processes due to the adoption of proper communication systems (Browne et al., 2016). Although there is a significant association between quality communication and project success, there is scant literature about the impact of communication practices on project failures (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). To address this gap in the literature, I sought to provide in-depth insights into the strategies that can be used by PMs to strengthen communication within project teams.

Problem Statement

In a 2014 survey, researchers concluded that the primary reason why workers do not enjoy teamwork was communication disconnects at organizational and team levels (Zerfass, Verčič, & Volk, 2017). According to Cheung, Yiu, and Lam (2013), ineffective communication among team members can result in project failure. One out of five projects fail due to ineffective communication, which has a negative effect on project progressions in various industries (Römmele & Schober, 2013). A government report concluded that $145 million is at risk for every $1 billion spent on a project due to ineffective communication (Römmele & Schober, 2013). The general business problem was that communication failure among project teams leads to challenges such as team conflicts, inefficiency, and the inability to meet specific projects' objectives (Hirst & Mann, 2004; Thamhain & Wilemon, 1987). The specific business problem was that some PMs in the health care industry lack strategies to strengthen communications within project teams.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies used by PMs in the health care industry to strengthen communication within project teams. The targeted population consisted of project management professionals (PMPs) from two leading medical supply companies in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States who had successfully implemented and executed strategies to strengthen communication within their teams. The implications for social change include the potential for PMs in the health care industry to identify and implement strategies to strengthen communication, thereby potentially increasing motivation, improving project results, bolstering profitability, and supporting the development of companies that can positively contribute to the growth and development of communities.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative methodology was appropriate for this research study. A qualitative researcher explores a phenomenon by analyzing the experiences and observations associated with participants' actions and behaviors (Yin, 2018). Conversely, researchers applying the quantitative method use statistical processes to obtain data and test hypotheses that address the relationships or differences between two or more variables (Poore, 2014). A quantitative research method was not appropriate for this study because I used immeasurable variables to support the assertions and ultimately arrive at the key findings. If researchers use mixed methods to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, they should consider subjectivity of qualitative methods and objectivity associated with numerical data (Palinkas et al., 2015). Therefore, a mixed-methods approach was not appropriate for the study's objective of exploring strategies that PMs in the health care industry use to strengthen communication within project teams.

I used a qualitative case-study design for the current study. This research design has numerous advantages. A notable advantage of case-study designs, as highlighted by Lewis (2015), is that researchers can use a smaller sample size, hence, saving on cost and analyzing the topic of study with greater depth and more detail. Furthermore, a case-study design is useful for exploring a social phenomenon because it typically involves analysis of multiple data sources such as participants' observations, interviews, audiovisual, and archival records (Dasgupta, 2015). A phenomenological design was not appropriate for this study because it does not involve documenting participants' experiences (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). A narrative design involves gathering stories about participants regarding one or more phenomena (Dasgupta, 2015) and, therefore, did not offer the descriptive focus I needed to answer the research question. Ethnographic studies involve analyzing the participants' culture in their real-life setting (Case, Todd, & Kral, 2014; Yin, 2018). This research design was not suitable for this research study because I did not study a culture.

Research Question

The research question for this study was, What are the strategies used by PMs in the health care industry to strengthen communication within project teams?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use to strengthen communication within project teams?
2. What strategies have been the most effective in enhancing communication within project teams, and why?

3. How do you select the best strategy to apply in influencing successful communication for particular project teams?
4. What barriers did you encounter when implementing strategies to strengthen communication for project teams?
5. How did you address the key barriers to better communicate within your project teams?
6. What metrics do you use to measure the success of a communication strategy?
7. What are your experiences on any add-ons or tools that you can integrate with the communication strategies to augment their success?
8. What changes have you applied to your communication strategies to make them compatible with the workplace setting and specific attributes of project teams?
9. What other information would you like to share regarding the development and implementation of strategies to strengthen communication within project teams that we have not discussed?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this study consisted of McQuail’s (2010) mass communication theory and Craig’s (1999) communication theory. These two theories provide comprehensive information on the procedures necessary for the successful development and deployment of communication strategies. McQuail considered several previous theories of mass communication, making the approach appropriate for the study of dissimilar forms of communication flow, in the corporate world and in wider society (McQuail, 2010). The theory’s primary principles support the individualization of personal considerations and opinions, and combined application of intellectual incentive, inspiration, and ideal stimuli (Singer, 2018). Furthermore, McQuail’s theory complements previous theories by advancing the concept that mass communication requires addressing the integration of multiple factors to ensure its application, especially in a business context (McQuail, 2010). Mass communication theory provides a helpful lens to explore different elements for developing and implementing successful strategies that PMs can embrace to strengthen communication within project teams (Valkenburg, Peter, & Walther, 2016). Mass communication such as meetings give team members to present their opportunity, opinions, and contribute ideas on how they can work together to make the project successful.

Craig’s (1999) theory of interpersonal and medicated communication is comprised of two primary principles: the constitutive communication model and the hypothesis of practice (Sanderson, 2017). These two major principles focus on distinguishing communication, through an approach that simultaneously defines communication and the attendant challenges (Craig, 1999). Craig drew from seven traditions of communication theory to explain the dissimilar perceptions and understandings of effective communications (Crane & Glozer, 2016). I believe the wide scope covered by Craig’s theory makes it potentially relevant for application to real-life communication, particularly in a business or project context. Craig (1999) specifically stated that the integration of communication theories could prevail through analyzing the similarities and variances of communication and depicting how specific elements relate to specific subject fields. For this study, I used the main principles of the McQuail’s

(2010) mass communication theory and Craig's communication theory to create a firm foundation for studying the real-life occurrences and challenges of communication in project teams.

Operational Definitions

Communication: The multifaceted transmission of messages through different media from one point to the other (Cornelissen, Durand, Fiss, Lammers, & Vaara, 2015). In the management context, communication is the verbal and nonverbal exchange of information between and among employees and management (Cornelissen et al., 2015).

Communication strategies: The planned methods, content, time, and channels of communication that organizational staff use to transmit messages to the target population. Therefore, communication strategies constitute the blueprint for information exchange between PMs and their subordinates (Butt, Naaranoja, & Savolainen, 2016).

Effective communication: The exchange of verbal and nonverbal messages between two or more people in an easy, accurate, and open way. The arrangement involves using the right medium to convey the right messages for accurate contextual interpretation and understanding (Dudo & Besley, 2016).

Knowledge management (KM): The manner in which organizations systematically manage intellectual property and knowledge assets to create value and attain strategic and tactical superiority in the market (Xiaojun, 2017).

Mass communication: The process by which the organization generates and disseminates messages through technology-based media channels to a large group of employees simultaneously in a manner that is readily receivable, understandable, and interpretable, yet cannot be manipulated easily (Gaur, 2017).

Project manager (PM): An individual who uses technical, leadership, and management skills to initiate, plan, execute, control, and monitor unique and temporary organizational activities. Successful PMs are able to accurately and effectively manage time, resources, scope, and money (Blaskovics, 2016).

Social change: The planned transformation in the social and cultural behaviors of employees as they adapt to new organizational practices, strategies, and culture (Sonenshein, 2016).

Workers engagement: The emotional, psychological, and effective connection that employees establish with their workplace and the organization in general. The understanding here is that workers are committed, attached, and involved in the development and execution of adopted organizational strategies. Employees should demonstrate dedication, accountable, enthusiasm, and carefulness in executing organizational strategies (Jindal, Shaikh, & Shashank, 2017).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The validity and analysis of data are highly influenced by the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of a study (Jindal et al., 2017). Thus, the identification of assumptions, limitations, and delimitations will enable researchers to show their understanding of the research study. This subsection contains the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the current research.

Assumptions

An assumption is a realistic expectation that is believed to be true although there is often no adequate evidence to support it (Kriegler et al., 2014; Snbhvvrpl, Roy, & Pmignhi, 2017). Usually, assumptions are statements that are taken for granted, for instance, a leader has enough experience to efficiently run an organization. According to Wolgemuth, Hicks, and Agosto (2017), assumptions in research studies provide the basis for developing research instruments. Assumptions significantly influence the process of executing research studies.

I made some assumptions in conducting the current research. First, I assumed that the participants would provide accurate data on whether PMs use relevant strategies to communicate their expectations to the project team. In other words, the assumption was that the participants had a basic understanding of effective communication strategies. I also assumed that I collected, analyzed, and developed meaningful themes that formed the basis for the current study.

Limitations

Holste (2015) defined limitations in the context of research studies as shortcomings that are beyond the control of the researcher yet place significant restrictions on the research methodology adoptable and ultimately the study's findings. As is the case for most studies, the research was subject to a number of weaknesses. One of the main limitations of the study was about the use of a small sample size. Although the study was qualitative in nature, which implies that it used small sample size, it is doubtless that the sample size for the research study was not large enough for the researcher to obtain credible findings. In particular, the study was limited to PMs within the health care sector, a factor that implies that only respondents who met the selection criterion took part in the study particularly as sources of data. The second limitation of the study was that its findings were not generalizable in settings other than the project management teams within the health care sector. This is so because; similar to other qualitative studies, the findings of this research study were limited to the target study population (Velte & Stawinoga, 2017). Although the results of this study could be transferable to other studies on the same topic in the future, it is impossible to generalize these findings to the entire population given the nature of the study. Another important limitation of this research study was about the insufficient number of previous studies on the specific topic of the research. Whereas there are many credible studies on communication systems, there are very few that are specific to communication systems adoptable by PMs in the health care sector. Therefore, I found it a bit of a challenge to collect sufficient empirical and credible evidence from previously completed case studies for supporting the study's key assertions and ultimately arriving at its findings.

Delimitations

Delimitations in the context of research studies are the boundaries that the researcher has set for effective execution of the research study (Cassiano & Borges-Andrade, 2017). Delimitations often comprise of things that the researcher has deliberately declined to do although he/she ought to have reasonably done them. One of the notable delimitations for the research study was that the researcher restricted the process of data collection exclusively to PMs for projects within the health care sector.

This is so because the researcher aimed at focusing on the findings of the study only to project teams in the health care industry. The second delimitation of the study was that it focused exclusively on the analysis of the communication systems adoptable in project teams. Whereas project management has many issues that are worth consideration, this research study was only limited to the communication aspect of project management.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The potential primary significance of my research was its contribution to applied business knowledge. The research demonstrated effective solutions in its findings to specific business problems thus adding to the business communication skills for PMs. In addition, the outcomes of the current work, demonstrated the effective solutions suitable for improving the effectiveness of organizational communications. The multiple case study and locations entailed a development in the quality of evidence presented. These enhancements contributed to future training in optimal communication skills, which is a primary objective for PMs to enable them to strengthen communication within their business-oriented project teams.

Implications for Social Change

Knowledge from the research work provided PMs with evidence-based information to enhance the strategic management of communication, for increased productivity and profitability in projects, which may help the local communities. Apart from the study’s business potential for effecting global beneficial social change, a focus on the local community goes beyond benefits to organizations. Employees’ social change among themselves and their PMs can progress and enhance through effective communications (Craig, 1999). Effective communications enable the PMs to play the role of ensuring that the project team (employees) initiates, plans, designs, executes, monitors, and controls the project, as expected for business's success with potential for the betterment of local communities, through increased productivity and profitability in projects.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore the strategies used by PMs in the health care industry to strengthen communication within project teams. For the literature review section of the study, I used evidence from credible publications, particularly seminal scholarly books, professional journals, and reports, to provide a detailed overview of effective communication systems that can be adopted within the health care sector. I retrieved information exclusively from sources published in credible online databases, namely Google Scholar, ProQuest, EBSCO, Sage, BioMed, PubMed, and PsycINFO. Using evidence from such sources helped in attaining high levels of credibility and validity of the study's assertions and findings. The primary search terms I used were *effective project management strategies*, *effective communication strategies in project teams*, *proper communication systems in health care projects*, *communication strategies within the health care industry*, and *communication in the medical sector*. To determine the most appropriate sources, I reviewed the abstracts of all identified sources and selected the ones that best fit this study's objectives for thorough review and analysis.

The overall study consists of 221 sources. A majority of these sources were peer-reviewed journals published between 2014 and 2018. Nonpeer- reviewed journals and books comprised a small percentage of the sources used. Table 1 gives a detailed breakdown of the sources used in the research.

Table 1

Literature Review Sources

Literature review content	Total no.	No. of resources published between 2014-2018	% of peer-reviewed resources published between 2014-2018
Peer-reviewed journals	189	165	87%
Non peer-reviewed journals	30	26	87%
Dissertations	2	2	100%
Total sources in literature review	221	193	87%

The main subtopics included in the literature review are theoretical perspectives on communication, other theories applicable to the conceptual framework, the application of these theories to project communication, factors that affect communication, communication planning, communication management, the benefits of effective communication for project management, communication resources, project communication strategies, designing communication strategies, internal communication strategies, and communication risks.

The role of effective communication in project management is critical in achieving optimum project outcomes. Quality communication allows leaders of contemporary organizations to not only develop and sustain competitiveness but also to establish healthy work environments and achieve the desired objectives of a project (Kaiser, El Arbi, & Ahlemann, 2015). Hasty messages and decisions affect communication efficacy, while lack of communication skills may lead to communication failure (Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013). Moreover, negligence in communicating messages is an ultimate implication of a communication failure. Hovland and Lumsdaine (2017) affirmed that PMs are supposed to use historical information to facilitate communication among all team members as such knowledge portends long-term gains. However, a teleconferencing communication strategy may provide a more natural exchange of messages (Sense, 2015). The reason is that it enables individuals to communicate in real-time, circumventing delays and time wastage associated with such modes of communication as letters and emails. Consequently, organizations, using their PMs can expeditiously plan projects for the benefits of the concerned stakeholders

Internal communication research conducted at Ericsson Goteborg indicated that creating learning networks and sharing knowledge is essential in improving project communication. Most PMs understand the role of effective team communication. However, many PMs expend little effort in developing winning strategies to streamline the process (Tushman, 2017). In essence, the primary reasons why workers do not enjoy teamwork is due to communication disconnects at the organizational and team levels (Tushman, 2017). Consequently, in this qualitative research study, I used empirical evidence from a wide range of sources to analyze the strategies that PMs in the health care industry used to strengthen communication within project teams.

The primary principles of McQuail's (2010) mass communication theory are the individualizing of personal considerations and opinions and the combined application of intellectual incentive, inspiration, and ideal stimuli. Besides, the broad scope covered by Craig's (1999) theory makes the theory potentially relevant for use to real-life communication (McQuail, 2010), particularly in the context of business projects. Through the literature review, I sought to affirm other researchers' findings that effective communication helps PMs to ensure that the project team (i.e., employees) initiate, plan, design, execute, monitor, and control the project to achieve its objectives (Trees, 2017). Effective communication may increase the productivity and profitability of projects, fostering the success of companies and, potentially, the betterment of local communities (Trees, 2017).

Theoretical Perspectives on Communication

McQuail's mass communication theory. Communication is a dynamic and continuous process that involves human interaction, which leads to varying responses (Trees, 2017). Communication has a situational paradigm, where certain messages have meanings that differ in various settings (Trees, 2017). In the health care sector, shared information should flow and be well structured, organized, and planned to enhance its effectiveness. Often, human communication integrates the whole communication system to avoid potential interactional failures (Knapp, Vangelisti, & Caughlin, 2014). McQuail (2010) explored the role of mass communication theory in establishing appropriate communication flow channels and personal traits that facilitate the development of communication strategies. Communication does not take place in a vacuum; therefore, meeting several parameters are critical to make communication efficient.

According to McQuail (2010), time is a critical aspect of mass communication. The component defines when communication occurs and how long the action takes (McQuail, 2010). Second, communication takes place in an established location, which also reflects features that match its context (McQuail, 2010). The *locality of communication* defines a place for its inhabitants, which often include coworkers, family members, classmates, or gangs (McQuail, 2010). Moreover, the ability to convey information establishes an identity among the individuals involved as communication allows people and places to connect (McQuail, 2010).

The concept of mass communication and the application of McQuail's (2010) theory support the assertion that communication is power. According to McQuail, communication can oblige or compel, which is a dominant trait that allows the people involved to exercise power to meet the intended goal of sharing information. In social relationships, power is a force imposed on one party by another, legitimately or not (Taras & Rowney, 2007). I believe People exert power to allow others to follow them. The ability of individuals to use communication and information to compel others makes these powerful tools.

Craig's communication theory. Craig's (1999) communication theory is also central to the current study's conceptual framework. During communication, mental activities or operations are fundamental to establishing behavior (Craig, 1999). Communication may be verbal or nonverbal (Cervone, 2014). The latter reflects the use of planned psychological activities and various methods of communication to influence audience attitudes (Craig, 1999). Moreover, the communication of planned psychological activities is through any preferred channel, provided the identified plan meets its intention of altering the behavior and perception of its anticipated audience in achieving the objectives.

The rhetoric tradition examined in the mentioned conceptual framework involved coining the theory to facilitate persuasion through psychological means. The art of rhetoric is mostly concerned with the use of public speech to engage the listeners' mind in thought (Taras & Rowney, 2007). In the end, the listeners' opinions, or moods change motivated or discourage the individual to act. However, the speaker must be credible in other's eyes based on what the theory outlines. Listeners need to sense authoritativeness and trustworthiness. According to Craig (1999), the speaker must perceive himself as a good and honest individual, a character trait that must resonate with the audience's goodwill to judge the speaker's intentions. An emotional proof occurs when the audience agrees with the speaker as evidenced by not only their understanding but also their ability to accept the speaker's arguments (Taras & Rowney, 2007).

Other Theories Applicable to Conceptual Framework

Cultural theories. The theory application entails not only a low-like proposition, but also an approach that outlines the systematic use of ideas that help to understand a phenomenon, guide action, and predict consequences (McFarland, 2014). In mass communication, the application of various theories helps to understand a set of strategies as shaped and defined by culture, operational approaches, and social engagements (Ngai, Tao, & Moon, 2015). The indicated form of association among individuals relies on socially scientific theory and ventures that researchers identify in establishing working relations. Evidently, social scientific theories describe nature based on an evaluation of systematic and objective of media application platforms and other sources related to mass communication (Alexandra-Mihaela & Danut, 2014). Other relevant sources are crucial in putting into perspective the validation and rejection of mass communication methods (Smarandache & Vladutescu, 2014). A large body of researchers defines socially scientific approaches in mass communication. However, researchers lack consistency and organization owing to a broad spectrum of society and individual communication involved in sending and receiving information.

The cultural theories also offer a critical framework for communication practices. The theories identify cultural paradigms that shape character. Apparently, cultural theories offer an evaluative and differentiated viewpoint in describing cultural relics that are integral in establishing information quality (Lang, 2013). However, some researchers have attributed cultural theories and their application in mass communication as challenging hierarchical organization (Alexandra-Mihaela & Danut, 2014). Hierarchical organizations emerge as irrelevant to the true significance of culture. From a cultural perspective, mass communication has generated an understanding of communiqué either as an ethical practice or as a social-cultural practice. Moreover, mass communication applies to literature, graphic art, and television. To implement cultural theories in mass communication, scholars must take a keen interest in their role in establishing clear arguments and articulation (Schiavo, 2013). Coherence, consistency, and ideation form the other parts of cultural theories in mass communication (Walther, 2017). Cultural approaches further negate testing and validating observation, which is a cornerstone of mass communication strategies (Walther, 2017).

Normative theories. Mass communication also incorporates normative theories. The study of mass communication focuses on examining and prescribing how the media operates in the wake of certain social values (Ngai et al., 2015). A social-philosophical or ideological narrative is essential in analyzing the normative theory; in fact, the element shapes constitution of ideas related to communication strategies (Smarandache & Vladutescu, 2014). Normative theories are crucial in mass communication. These theories signify legitimacy and help shape media institutions (Lang, 2013). Moreover, normative theories have considerable influence on societal expectations as defined by social agencies and media's audience (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). One can argue that there is the need to identify norms within society and culture, in improving communication approaches, shapes research on mass media communication channels and strategies (Schiavo, 2013). The same applies to society's normative theories in shaping their media as signified by existing laws, regulations, policies, and ethical codes of conduct (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). However, the theories are not subjective and can rely on objective methods as applied in the study of Social Sciences (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017).

Operative theories. Finally, operative theories are useful in analyzing mass media and its role in communication. The theories help to understand the practicality of ideas in establishing rules that govern media practitioners in their line of duty

(Muszynska, 2015). In organizational and professional settings, there are rules, policies, and guidelines that govern the application of mass media, consequently, supporting operative theories in establishing mass communication strategies (Smarandache & Vladutescu, 2014). Operative theories help organizations to develop solutions to fundamental tasks, which revolve around news selection, need to satisfy an audience, and conducting advertising. Additionally, the theories also enhance organizational performance relating to resources, societies, and defining communication channels (Lang, 2013). It is imperative to note that the mentioned theories are interchangeable with the normative theories since both sets of theories define journalistic ethics and codes of practice.

Theoretical Application in Project Communication

Research indicates that human communication is 0% to 5% efficient, meaning that the other percentage in communication is wasted (Kwon, Ogawa, Ono, & Miyake, 2015). Although communication emerges as a planned process, one might have trouble in predicting human behavior. Knapp et al. (2014) asserted that if communication perceived as one that could not fail. There are chances that communication will most likely fail (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). Despite articulate and execution of communication in the health care sector, inevitably, the mode of conveying information can still fail to deliver deliberate decisions or messages owing to mistakes, misunderstandings, and external interference (Knapp et al., 2014). The receiver of any communication message can affect the process due to misunderstandings on their part (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). Mass communication forms a large body of Social Science as the exchange of information entails an understanding of human communication (Gaur, 2017). Communication science refers to an understanding about the interplay between production, processing, and effects of various symbols and signals integral to the development of testable theories (Eveland & Cooper, 2013).

Additionally, communication science entails the ability to understand laws and phenomenon explanation strategies associated with production, processing, and outlining communication effects (Timm, Hum, & Druckenmiller, 2016). Inevitably, there arises a bias due to the application of quantitative studies, especially concerning communicative behaviors as well as its fundamental causative effects (Timm et al., 2016). Scholars and researchers have found it difficult to handle the nature of communication symbols and their significance; the process through which organizations can derive meaning as defined by the various social and cultural contexts (Gaur, 2017). The development of new technological paradigms has also repressed the definition of communication, especially, when considering differences associated with public and private communication (Eveland & Cooper, 2013). The definition has a blurred line in distinguishing mass and interpersonal communication, thus making the arrangement a challenging one to define due to circumstantial reasons.

Factors That Affect Communication

Communication is not independent and self-sufficient since several factors such as economic, legal, political, and ethical considerations must have a part in the process (Timm et al., 2016). One can conclude that communication is an interdisciplinary topic. Communication must adopt various social, economic, political, and ethical norms in establishing communication approaches and strategies. In reviewing mass communication issues and its role in shaping communication strategies, PMs must study different societal and organizational levels as well as their process (Dudo & Besley, 2016). The provided understanding of communication is analyzable, and one may argue that establishing a project must be through a network of interjectors that enable the transmission and exchange of information (McQuail, 2013). Accordingly, mass communication is a venture that connects many receivers to one source of information, but conversely, new media technologies have shaped communication by providing interactive connections at different levels. However, Dudo and Besley (2016) concluded that mass communication is not the only platform that communication can take place. Other non-communication channels integrate into society-wide networks to enhance communication. Telecommunication infrastructure and postal services incorporate as part of non-communication channels and strategies that shape organizational communication approaches (Timm et al., 2016). As a result, noncommunication networks work in situations that require special responses or in unusual circumstances, for example, during crises or other emergencies.

Communication Planning

Often, companies' projects are demanding, resulting in the need to develop planning strategies that meet the unique needs and requirements. In fact, communication is a vital component that makes an organization offer many benefits if appropriately practiced (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). Employees, both individually and in teams, are the primary audiences who provide a link to external audiences such as stakeholders during project management exercises (Butt et al., 2016). Business leaders must set clear goals and expectations to build strong relations not only among co-workers but also with external players (Mikhieieva & Waidmann, 2017). One can affirm that effective communication is fundamental. In almost every organization, rules regulate the employee expectations to ensure the feedback offered meets the desired goals (Katz, 2015). The essence of boosting organizational trust and loyalty is entrenched in focusing communication on individual needs while also providing information with the necessary feedback (Rider et al., 2014). Loyalty and trust are crucial elements in fostering healthy relationships within organizations and among teams.

The receiver may have the best intentions to create a meaningful analysis based on the sent message, but in the end, the interpretation can fail to gain intended responses or conclusions (Treweek et al., 2013). Health care professionals communicate to improve services. Therefore, when team members become satisfied with inform heard and read, the communication approach may have attained its intended objective. According to Knapp et al. (2014), if PMs become satisfied with the communication approach, the interpretation is that the given message is for self (personal) consumption rather than for team members (Gaur, 2017). PMs in the health care sector must identify the recipients' previous knowledge on the issue, their opinions, and interest (Lang, 2013; Muszynska, 2015). Commonly, some issues can improve and raise recipients' internal defense mechanisms, which lead to communication failure. In effect, a negative change in the way for misunderstandings creates an avenue for misleading work-performance structures and strategies (Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013). Misunderstandings are a recipe for conflicts between employees and team members (Kash, Spaulding, Johnson, & Gamm, 2014). Kwon et al. (2015) argued that recipients' experiences might affect communication as people base their responses on their conceptions, which distort the intended meaning.

The more people communicate can create a sense of worse the outcome based on the intended message. However, the interpretation is not for people to communicate less, what becomes vital is the need for moderation (Palmer & Schibeci, 2014). When the team members and their PMs communicate more, there is the possibility misunderstandings will occur. The possibility of communication and message misunderstandings taking place leads to the creation of new misinterpretations (Keil, Smith, Iacovou, & Thompson, 2014). The analysis is true for mass communication. The current state of affairs indicates that communicating how different arrangements seem to be. Mass communicators discuss topics that happen near people, geographically, either culturally or socially. There is a need to maintain an important, relevant, and appealing source of information for all (Keil et al., 2014). However, mass communication centers at identifying faults, mistakes, and abuses (Newhouse, Lupiáñez-Villanueva, Codagnone, & Atherton, 2015). Interestingly, there is a quote that states, "It does not become news when a dog bites a man, but when a man bites a dog" (Gaur, 2017, p. 559). Consequently, Shabir, Safdar, Imran, Mumtaz, & Anjum (2015) hold the view that mistake within the confines of an organization may be more important than a terror attack happening thousands of miles away. However, if a victim is a relative, friend, or an important person in the organization, then such news becomes essential. According to Christensen and Cornelissen (2013), if a situation is overbearing, then, employees and managers tend to forget essential things that were important seconds ago. Persson and Napier (2015) agreed that human nature is characterized by instances of being stressed and in the advent of such situations, thus, hindering the message (Persson & Napier, 2015).

Ruben and Gigliotti (2016) considered communication to have its shortcomings and people must communicate enough; not too little, not too much. There is importance when senders shape the message in accordance with recipients. However, the approach becomes easier when the involved audiences comprise few receivers (Gaur, 2017). Mass communication becomes a challenge when communicating with multitudes. The crowd will decide whether to react to the message (Cooper, Courtwright, Karlage, Gawande, & Block, 2014). Essentially, the message's origin should be reliable as people tend to be skeptical of communications relayed by undependable individuals (Cooper et al., 2014; Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013). In parallel, reliable messages conveyed by unreliable persons are a recipe for uncertainty, inconsistencies, and negative perceptions (Keil et al., 2014). For communication to become reliable, the perception about the message and the sender must be authentic.

Communication Management

Managing information in projects is crucial since this necessity helps guide steps for maintaining the project on course. According to Ngai et al. (2015), formal and informal communication channels exemplify information control. The information allows the establishment of plans central to project information gathering. Information in the form of plans prepared and shared to meet the specific individuals' needs that are involved in the project (Katz, 2015). The planning ensures those requiring communication to understand the process by instituting information relevance, clarity, and accuracy (Kaiser et al., 2015). Newhouse et al. (2015) affirmed that exchange of information must also be completed and presented in a timely and appropriate manner using the correct channels. Communications management entails not only information distribution but also a process that involves the creation, collection, and distribution of project evidence (Gaur, 2017). Miller and Barbour (2014) further asserted that the information must be stored, retrieved, and dispositioned through a project management plan. The project stands to benefit when information flow to stakeholders is relevant (Keil et al., 2014). Project leaders must ensure appropriate generation and understanding of provided information to seal loopholes associated with communication mismanagement.

Project owners and customers stay in the loop of project performance. According to Manojlovich, Squires, Davies, & Graham (2015), PMs need to communicate with the customers and business owners concerning progress made and reporting performance. The project team is composed of key personnel whom the business leaders must rely on for crucial information (Cheung et al., 2013). All project team members are liable to provide accurate information regarding process execution. On the other hand, vendors are also important component in the teams' performance project must relay information about work execution, delivery, and progress (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017). Performance reporting points to the collection and distribution of progress information that requires the entire team to periodically identify, collect, and analyze actual data relating to the project.

Tourish (2014) argued that formatting is essential. All performance related information should have the right format as provided by the organization or through the guidance of business manager/project leader. Team members act as informants by requiring the PM to provide storage facilities to ensure documentation is professional (Cornelissen et al., 2015).

Project teams show no fewer traits than other social relationships in communication. PMs are supposed to define communication strategies to guide their teams towards achieving set goals. Leonardi (2017) affirmed that in all communication aspects, PMs should underline the importance of communication competence as shaped by knowledge, motivation, and skills. Regarding motivation, the act involves respect hence the suggestion to have an interpretation and understanding of messages by the audience (Muszynska, 2015). Leadership and communication are complementary, PMs must demonstrate astute leadership skills in expressing their opinions (Verghese, 2017), and motivation is a role that cannot be underrated. A PM is expected to ensure the teams work together towards achieving a common goal and thus the necessity for underlying commitment and motivation (Liang et al., 2014). Project management and communication complement one another. As suggested by (Verghese, 2017), the need for effective communication increases when projects are bigger and complex. Koschmann and McDonald (2015) agreed that in a health care setting, the commitments towards achieving set goals depend on effective communication. The corporate world, business, organizational, and public relations, requires leaders to display certain characters and attitudes in motivating their teams (Dudo & Besley, 2016). In project communication, PMs should communicate the project targets, results, and discuss these parameters among project team members and towards people committed to the project (Liang et al., 2014). As a result, managers can build team spirit by clarifying the scope and project targets, while also creating an avenue for feedback.

Project team members discover various opportunities arising from innovative ideas built on open communication with companies. Expression of ideas among team members develops where there is a link between respect and knowledge input (Verghese, 2017). Primarily, if team members understand their value and contributions, then, there is a high chance that their efficiency will be evident in almost every aspect entailing the project (Keil et al., 2014). Business managers must be at the forefront of providing information that identifies the project's purposes, the products, and services on offer and the gains expected (Butt et al., 2016). If business leaders communicate organizational culture to their teams, there is a high possibility that the individuals involved will pass on the mantle of positive feedback to other audiences involved in the project (Butt et al., 2016).

Benefits of Effective Communication for Project Management

Organizational leaders emphasize the role of communication in improving performance and productivity (Parks, 2018). Business managers maintain open communication channels; in fact, project members outperform their competitors in crucial project's segments, mostly in growth, profitability, and project feasibility (Koskinen, 2014). In high performing project teams, the line of communication ensures a flow of information. A command of a communication system that allows the flow of information top down, which enable every member to be involved in team's performances (Gaur, 2017). However, in most cases, a tell-and-respond communication structure is ineffective as an exchange of information in such an arrangement only commands project teams and other employees to perform certain tasks without questioning the intents of objectives to be met (Koskinen, 2014).

Effective communication is a platform that supports business operations and ensures the timely completion of projects. Statistically, business managers who embed effective communication have a higher rate, 80%, of outperforming other project team members in organizations that do not have such a practice (Katz, 2015). PMs have identified the management of projects as a challenging process because of their oversight role in the project scope and every involved activity (Butt et al., 2016). During projects, business managers have the role of initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing projects, although all these processes and steps rest on effective communication. Research has shown that communication is a fundamental factor in ensuring the successful completion of projects (Cheung et al., 2013). PMs have identified the benefits of effective communication, stating that where channels of communication are poor, a project is likely to fail (Kwon et al., 2015).

In the health care sector, like other sectors, strategic management in projects has become an imperative concept that driven by articulate communication and interactions. Project members must think of how to conceptualize complex dependencies, and later become integrated into decision-making to improve project outcomes (Koskinen, 2014). The long-term implications of messages in an organization best define the interplay between communication and project management (Keil et al., 2014). Elements that are crucial to a company' success can be broken down into four segments: strategy, communication, competence, and leadership (Kamensky, 2010). However, these elements must work together for projects to succeed. These aspects form what Kamensky considered the strategic diamond of success (Kamensky, 2010). The four fundamentals interlink in improving the overall long-term success of a project and the organization (see Figure 1 for a visual rendering of the fundamentals).

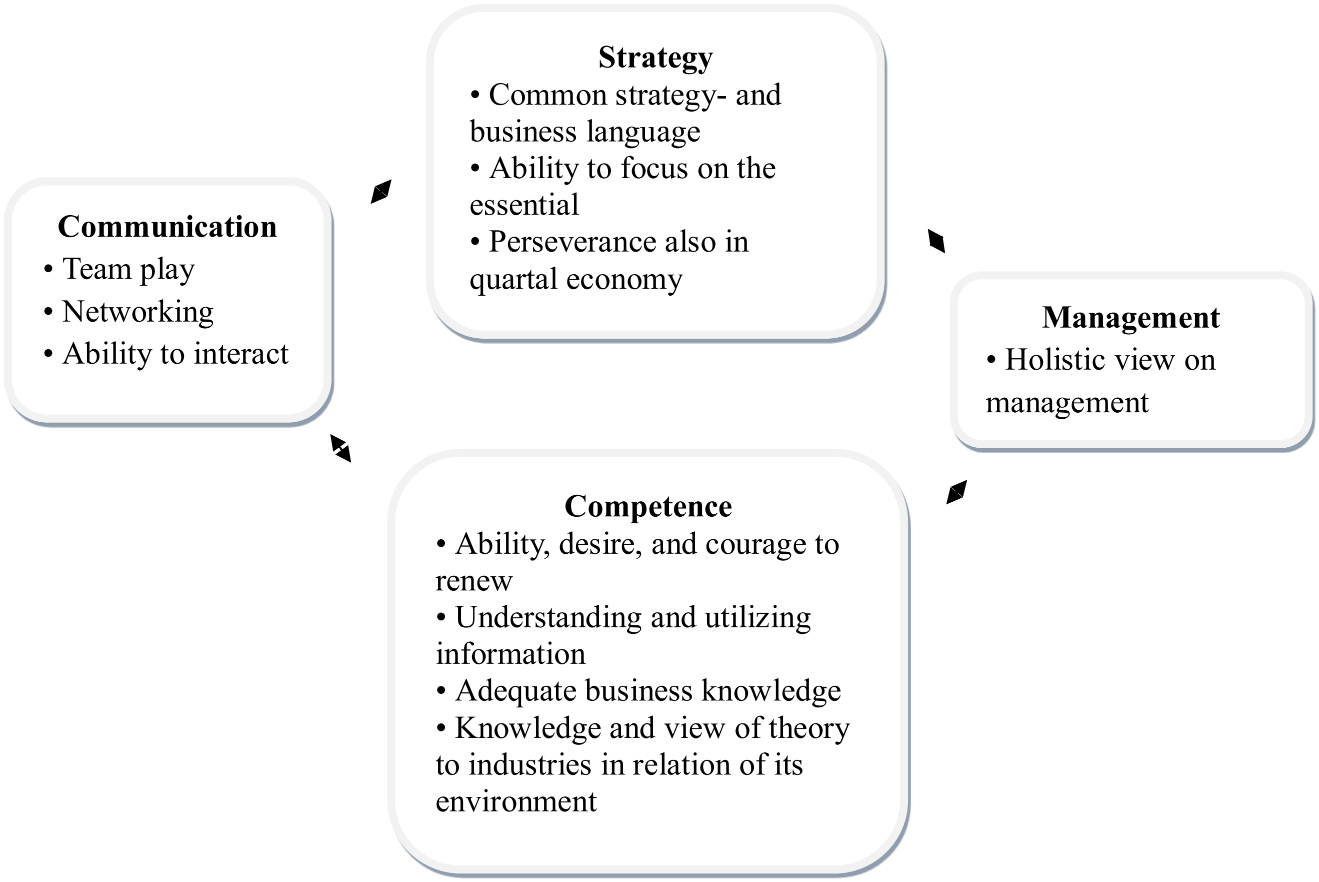

Figure 1. Elements of effective communication that shape companies' success (Kamensky, 2010).

Notably, the foundations of Kamensky (2010) diamond success in project management also apply in the short-term. Project management goals strategically align to facilitate the achievements of not only the organization but also patients and clients' expectations (Katz, 2015). PMs are required to apply a holistic conceptualization of where the project heads to enhance competency in the execution of set project objectives (Koskinen, 2014). Teamwork arises when effective communication creates coherence in project management.

Communication Resources

The financial aspect of project management rests on the auspices of all people and institutions using their resources mostly finance, through competency. In all organizations, resources are scarce, strengthening the desire to use them wisely. Resource, in communication, creates an avenue for the use of material and immaterial assets that have been availed by management to manage and implement communication (Hwang & Ng, 2013). Resources, as applied to every organization, set the stage for the achievement of goals. PMs must define the aims and purpose of communicating resources. Moreover, quality and quantity are two dimensions that define resources. On the other hand, time and objectives also define resource use (Cooper et al., 2014). Knowledge is a resource that creates an avenue for benchmarking operations along with other functions in an organization (Cooper et al., 2014). Knowledge management aims at facilitating the production, processing, and delivery of communication in a way that improves project management and other operations within an organization (Katz, 2015). Communication is vital in defining roles and responsibilities, with the appointment of

Communication directors crucial to enhancing projects and organizations. Communication, through these offices, becomes a management segment that improves astute decision-making, while also fostering the acquisition of real-time information (Cooper et al., 2014).

Organizations have not been quick to decentralize communication through the creation of networks. Decentralizing communication and setting up networks is fundamental in bringing every individual on board in an interactive process that fosters growth (Cooper et al., 2014). Project management is an overlapping exercise that allows team members to work in different sectors/segments in a project. PM's roles become paramount, as these personnel have to be versatile in the management of simultaneous external relations while also facilitating internal integration (Katz, 2015).

PMs have a crucial role to play in ensuring project teams work according to the project scope as defined by their goals and objectives. Nonetheless, managers also play a fundamental role in communication (Henderson, Stackman, & Koh, 2013). Communication, from a project management perspective, ensures that the PM can build team spirit and support every employee to meet set expectations (Mnkandla, 2013). PMs are sometimes required to integrate a personal approach when communicating by combining tailored messages based on the individual needs of each team member (Verghese, 2017). Importantly, PMs must know that each team member has different needs and ways of receiving information. Managing professionals at the workplace, primarily, by identifying their specialty, requires PMs to be flexible in their communication approaches and strategies (Marzagão & Carvalho, 2016). Among professionals, PMs must take a back seat and only coordinate actions, allowing the professionals to work out their tasks without interfering with their lines of operation (Marzagão & Carvalho, 2016)

Project Communication Strategies

PMs are involved in analyzing and communicating project scopes and offer advice on the way forward (Bubshait, Siddiqui, & Al-Buali, 2014). PMs must align project objectives with organizational goals by communicating tasks and actions towards improving project outcomes. PMs are required to visualize the scope to convey the responsibilities ahead through a tone that is favorable to the project team members or receivers (Henderson et al., 2013). For example, a PM must analyze a project flow chart and all the phases involved, and later communicate the various elements required to every team member (Marzagão & Carvalho, 2016). Hence, the manager will help analyze any forthcoming issues that may be of concern to the project members and prioritize the most straightforward and most effective communication strategy in outlining the tasks.

PMs are not the only individuals involved in communication. Team members also need to detect issues that may arise during execution and draw precise conclusions (Bubshait et al., 2014). The presentation of findings to PMs or the entire team improves the coordination of tasks, follow-up, and feedback when necessary (Mnkandla, 2013). Members are also required to work independently and must be proactive in communication. While PMs are communication moderators, team members are crucial in facilitating communication cooperation, both internally and externally (Blaskovics, 2016).

Furthermore, team members help their PMs in communicating project requirements and management expectations. Project team members perform better when there is a constant exchange of information, mainly, through teleconferencing and/or face-to-face communication (Katz, 2015). PMs must acknowledge the potential communication risks involved and the probable impacts on the scheduling, costs, as well as implementation procedures associated with a project (Katz, 2015). Importantly, PMs must enhance the quality of information considering that quality in communications project management reflects information accuracy and reporting standards that must meet organizational requirements (Blaskovics, 2016). Drawing message conclusions are paramount among PMs as this effect allows them to define critical paths that are necessary for project success. The arrangement also helps members prioritize issues of concern that might pose risks in a communication setting (Blaskovics, 2016). In almost all companies and project management platforms, emphasizing an organizational culture that fosters willingness and openness in information sharing is crucial in mitigating communication risks (Koskinen, 2014).

However, it is important to note that the management may not share all information with the project team. Nonetheless, collecting project information, at a go, easies the ability to update teams (Blaskovics, 2016). Arguably, project teams face varying challenges in updating project reports and using different updating concepts. In turn, the limitation prompts a necessity for project’s managers to communicate report filling processes and information update strategies (Katz, 2015). Most importantly, managing cultural differences will go a long way in eliminating language barriers that affect information flow and message retrieval (Kwon et al., 2015).

Designing Communication Strategies

The benefits of designing a compelling communication strategy rest on the auspice of ensuring the process parameters are in tandem with relevant project strategic interventions (Cheung et al., 2013). Monitoring and evaluation of strategic interventions will help business leaders decide on effective strategic interventions and the platforms necessary to communicate the responses (Cheung et al., 2013). A practical approach based on several steps will be integral in designing an effective project's team communication strategy as indicated in the figure below.

1. Reviewing project literature
2. Conducting formative research
3. Establishing draft communication strategy
4. Analyzing proposed project interventions
5. Finalizing communication strategy

Figure 2. Steps integral in designing effective communication strategies for project teams. (Kaiser et al., 2015)

The first step in project review entails an analyzing project's study document. The examination offers a snapshot of what the project aims to achieve and the goals that the project team must rely on to meet the set objectives (Kaiser et al., 2015). The second step, the formative research, involves an investigation into proposal loopholes by identifying some concerns that the project has not integrated into the plan, but are fundamental in facilitating project success (Kaiser et al., 2015). In the third step, the project team and business manager must outline a draft strategy that founded the final document (Hirst & Mann, 2004; Kaiser et al., 2015). The fourth and final steps entail reviewing possible interventions critical to ensuring all project goals. In turn, this analysis establishes a link between strategy and planning respectively (Kaiser et al., 2015). The business leader should provide a communication strategies document to the project team to level the structure and project's purpose in a combative way that is clear to all team members (Kaiser et al., 2015).

Theoretically, managers are required to facilitate team spirit within their teams by supporting and clarifying each member's role and expectations. According to McQuail (2010), mass communication must allow the audience time to interpret the relayed message. Dispute and uncertainty, in communication, arises where project team members rely on assumptions derived from the message. However, there is a no unique source of meaning and people cannot always agree (Tushman, 2017). From a theoretical perspective, the expectation is that nature solves the issue of cause and effect (McQuail, 2010). Mass communication further creates an identity where people feel a sense of belonging, especially, to cultural manifestations of social grouping. Work, language, and belief systems shape character, and mass communication (McQuail, 2013). PMs need to establish identity by communicating effectively, and the process requires the placement of communication strategies used for the project. Identity formation, maintenance, and dissolution are parts of mass communication and must be at the center of shaping the project team's perspectives (McQuail, 2010).

Projects are part of economic ventures and communication is crucial in improving the degree of concentration and commercialization of message content. Consequently, several risks may arise where the project team members do not share project progress (McQuail, 2010). Critical theory exposes mass communication underlying issues, linking them to specific values and social concerns (McQuail, 2010). The same can applies to business processes and projects. The theory has been instrumental in exposing communication issues where team members fail to grasp the project's concepts and objectives involved (Koskinen, 2014). Moreover, a lack of communication from the PM may facilitate project underachievement, while project teams can be blind to project problems. PMs can fail or forget to relay essential data or even withhold crucial project information. These risks emanate from poor communication (Koskinen, 2014). McQuail (2010) established that mass communication creates a sense of identity with the audience, consequently, allowing them to be on par with project formalities. Creating a character through communication enables PMs to device communication strategies and approaches that can improve project management. Cheung et al. (2013) support the sentiment through an argument that PMs must create a sense of trust through their communication approaches. However, the entire process of trust is not possible if the project team lacks an identity. Espinosa et al. (2015) further stated that PMs must understand their team’s level of knowledge in interpreting information. In other words, PMs need to know their target audience, a crucial fragment in optimizing messages for them.

Lack of a communication strategy is a significant issue that leads to poor project performance. Overall, however, the channel, mood of communication, and PMs’ communication competencies affect team members. Discussions of the rhetorical tradition of communication and speech allude to a hypothesis in the application of persuasive communication. Craig (1999) used rhetoric theory to underline the psychological underpinnings that improve communication. PMs must be able to adjust their viewpoints and ideas to people and vice versa using language and symbols. By using rhetoric, PMs can persuade their teams through arguments (Kwon et al., 2015). The presentation of arguments has the backing of sound reasoning and conclusions, while also projecting positive project results. To achieve the mentioned arrangement, PMs need to communicate a course of actions to ensure all team members have the same understanding (Turkulainen, Aaltonen, & Lohikoski, 2015). A manager's ability to persuade the project team depends on his/her ability to shape and reinforce responses through communication. Occasionally, PMs have a social appeal, which can blind the team members based on the sender's position when presenting a detailed argument (Koskinen, 2014). Therefore, the PMs need to navigate the social blindness and develop communication strategies that will persuade team members to accept and act on the information provided.

According to Craig (1999), the attitude system as defined by perceptions, cognitions, beliefs, and behavioral changes are central in inferring influence on the recipient's actions. In developing communication strategies, PMs are required to establish a sociopsychological tradition with the aims of altering the behaviors of others by targeting their emotions and cognition (Turkulainen et al., 2015). The composition of project cycles and components take various dimensions, while also considering the need for resources and the time consumed executing them (McQuail, 2010). Essentially, PMs must possess necessary skills to aid in resource management considering communication is a crucial venture that may determine the success or failure of projects (Turkulainen et al., 2015).

Internal Communication Strategies

The use of the qualitative methodology for the current research lays bare the foundation for an evaluation of PM's communication strategies in improving project teams' operations. PMs, in the health care setting, are required to provide direction and innovation on how to achieve health care goals, especially in the wake of new health care interventions and innovations geared towards providing quality assurance. Moreover, PMs role in the health care sector is to facilitate communication strategies geared towards building team spirit, supporting employees, and ensuring everyone know and performs their expected roles and duties.

According to Espinosa et al. (2015), the use of personal approaches and tailored messages goes a long way toward improving communication. As evidenced in Espinosa et al. (2015) findings, each team member receives and interprets messages in various ways as codified by their intuitions, due to the necessity that a PM relays the message in a way that is precise to individual employees (Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013). In almost every organization, PMs are required to interpret the project picture for all employees and project team members (Espinosa et al., 2015). Visualizing the overall scope involves the input by PMs to show astute communication in relaying phases and address any issues of concern. Henderson et al. (2013) are categorical that PMs must have data in place to allow effective communication to take place. Accordingly, the use of data, mostly stored in templates goes a long way in offering references on project handling (Turkulainen et al., 2015). As a result, the information creates a communication opportunity where managers can reference stored data to employees on how to report project progress. The incorporation of a designated communication space such as web page to show project-day status is crucial in providing historical information on cumulative and targeted milestones (Espinosa et al., 2015). The study involved an evaluation of communication strategies and incorporated managers and frontline supervisors with the aim of understanding strategic approaches that enhance communication channels at Ericsson Goteborg. Importantly, the case study investigated the appropriate communication strategies such as meetings and conversations, internal newsletters, and electronic communication.

Personal approaches. According to Sewestianiunk and Voitovici (2013), using internal surveys, employees preferred teleconferencing and/or face-to-face communication as part of a natural affinity perspective to improve validity. In turn, the application of personal approaches supports the mass communication theory and the hypothesis that signifies team members' preference for a social interaction platform that best suits communication practices in any organization (Espinosa et al., 2015). According to Keil et al. (2014), teleconferencing and/or face-to-face communication provides a platform where PMs and their teams can resolve misunderstandings and offer motivation to digest information better. Moreover, teleconferencing and/or face-to-face communication is the easiest form of exchange where participants lay bare their priorities and concerns in facilitating project success (Sewestianiunk & Voitovici, 2013).

Additionally, in the same research by Sewestianiunk and Voitovici (2013), some respondents (87%) supported the use of teleconferencing and/or face-to-face communication as the most appropriate media of internal communication between managers and their teams. The teleconferencing and/or face-to-face method has a direct impact in the organizational setting as the respondents agreed that the technique fosters a more profound sense of community, avoids misunderstandings, and plays a useful role in communication job-related tasks (Sewestianiunk & Voitovici, 2013). However, if there is a limited room for telecommunication type of communication, owing to a clogged-up project exercise, the phone conversation applies. Keil et al. (2014) found that phone conversations are the second best but have their issues considering attentiveness and the lack of visual feedback. Mnkandla (2013) argued that phone conversations allow distance transfer of urgent information especially when PMs are in consultations with project stakeholders in another location.

E-mails. E-mails also play a critical role in many projects by facilitating information exchange. Qualitative research by Alatalo (2013) investigated the role of e-mails in improving communication strategies in projects. The research examined high-technology product development projects and offered the perfect synthesis in the health care sector since technology is crucial in improving health care. The study was empirical and involved interviewing employees involved in projects that develop high technology products from various fields. According to Alatalo (2013), the use of e-mails is fundamental in helping employees in their day-to-day activities. Workers did not appreciate the use of emails as overwhelming due to the number of messages received. E-mails are the most common internal communication channel in project management. However, the interviewees confirmed of having overlooked or ignored many messages, with some considering them to amount to information surplus.

However, according to Mnkandla (2013), the use of e-mails leaves the responsibility to read, interpret, and respond to the receiver, meaning the sender has the least control over the recipient's reactions. Moreover, we are in a modern era of quick responses, which implies that sending emails can be slow and unreliable compared to other communication mediums like voice calls, video calls and real-time chatting (Mnkandla, 2013). Conversely, the use of regular joint meetings offers the best platforms where PMs can discuss project progress and emerging issues with the project members. Meetings allow the project team to raise questions and discuss different matters, hence, to facilitate active engagement (Kwon et al., 2015). Muszynska (2015) supported the argument. However, he viewed meetings as affecting communication since not all members assume active roles. Considering that project targets are common and equally shares the matters at hand can influence the role of individual team members.

Chat rooms. Schiavo (2013) analyzed the concept of chat rooms particularly as it is applicable to individual roles affected and suggested that the use of internal chat-tools would significantly improve communication. Mifsud (2013) conducted qualitative research of effective communication among medium-sized co-funded projects in EU. The study entailed an investigation of communication-related issues plagued projects among midsize companies with difficulties such as excessive bureaucracy, and unclear roles pointed out. According to Mifsud (2013), the use of web-based project management tools (WPMs) such as chat rooms was observed to improve communication between PMs and their teams while reducing bureaucracy in approving project documentation. Majority of such tools are online and create an interactive avenue that is dynamic and allow instant messages and feedback (Mifsud, 2013). Importantly, it is possible to save these types of conversations and discussions just like emails. WPMs chat rooms simplified the transfer of necessary project documents while also enhancing storage and access to information (Mifsud, 2013). Nevertheless, on the other hand, WPMs seem informal (Mifsud, 2013).

Weekly meeting. Weekly team meetings are among the most effective project communication tool to use. Team meetings allow team members to participate and give their opinions regarding different issues affecting the project (Schiavo, 2013). Regarding weekly meetings, Smarandache and Vladutescu (2014) emphasized how crucial it is for PMs to put in place detailed action trackers that list and follow-up on every individual task. By implementing detailed action tracker programs, PMs will be able to simplify, schedule follow-ups, and enhance individual team member's commitment to the project course (Schiavo, 2013). Inevitably, PMs must simplify the ability to understand the weekly meeting arrangement. There is the need for the team members to display their inputs, actions, and processes involved in a logistical flowchart to outline the project's big picture, scope, and legitimacy (Creasy & Anantatmula, 2013).

The success of a project rests on the compilation of visual and straightforward documents such as flowcharts. Hovland and Lumsdaine (2017) suggested the importance of incorporation of templates, which form part of visual reports during meetings. An effective assurance is that every team member is able to read and interpret the templates. Team members contain detailed tasks that offer perspectives and drive the project team towards meeting set goals (Schiavo, 2013). PMs use models and visual documents to provide logical frameworks that help team members synchronize the updates (Hovland &

Lumsdaine, 2017; Keil et al., 2014; Muszynska, 2015; Smarandache & Vladutescu, 2014). PMs must emphasize the use of professional and straightforward communication techniques.

Communication Risks

Research by Timm et al. (2016) indicated that risks in communication are bound to occur owing to inconsistencies in status updates and other project issues. Team members can affect communication where they disagree on sharing of status updates and achievements while also failing to solve problems and issues that occur during the project (Timm et al., 2016). Muszynska (2015) validated the argument by stating that where any project member commits a mistake, the project members must aim to identify the individual and ensure the same fault does not occur again. Imperatively, individual member follows up the complaints and recognize any inconsistency that may have led to failure (Gharaibeh, 2016).

Another issue of project communication occurs where there is the deliberate withholding of essential data or sharing with a customer. Marzagão and Carvalho (2016) insisted that communication risks arise when internal information leaks to the public or customers. Deliberate communication prompts an occurrence of risks. The purposeful leakage of internal information is a potential failure on PM’s role and the team (Marzagão & Carvalho, 2016). Lang (2013) also attributed the presence of potential risk to misinformation and a lack of adequate communication from the project lead or manager. Crucially, team leaders must know their members level of knowledge and tendencies to interpret information (Gharaibeh, 2016). Moreover, PMs must understand the communication target group and facilitate the formulation of optimal messages to avert future inconsistencies. Knapp et al. (2014) also suggested that team members must know their PM well enough to ensure that when communicating, they are courageous to point out issues of concerns, as well as offer direction.

Problems also occur when the team involved is significant, and a manager cannot identify where the issues are arising. PMs must track personnel changes to avert any communication crisis (Marzagão & Carvalho, 2016). Health care facilities emphasized a project-oriented platform through different procedures and tools of communication. Predetermined communication channels must also be in places such as steering meetings, to avert communication concerns (Turkulainen et al., 2015). Kamensky (2010) argued that different communication phases integrate within the project team to facilitate project progress and follow-up. Essentially, managers with the help of project teams, document these events in a fixed form (Timm et al., 2016). In turn, managers are able to share information with stakeholders the perspectives on the project and monitor progress (Turkulainen et al., 2015). Regarding the association between managers and stakeholders, Hwang and Ng (2013) concluded that in project communication, progress is strategic and efficient when the team is racing towards a common goal while updating information for future utilization. A manager oversees all communication layers within the project and must give updates on project status and tasks by providing continuous information (Hwang & Ng, 2013). PMs must also enhance the quality of communication, which reflects information accuracy and topical standards (Hwang & Ng, 2013).

Transition

The study provides an in-depth insight into the strategies that are most effective among project teams in enhancing communication and gives an evidence-based review of the process for selecting the best approaches adoptable for influencing successful communication for particular groups. Furthermore, a clear analysis of the barriers encountered when implementing strategies to strengthen communication for project's teams are depicted. Section 2 contains a comprehensive analysis of various research methodologies and research designs as dictated by the need for qualitative research and analysis. Furthermore, I ensured that there was no bias in the distribution of information, and all facts central to the current study were confidential. Finally, in Section 3, I analyzed various findings concerning communication strategies that are effective in improving project team communication. The outcomes related to the present research demonstrate effective solutions to specific business problems; hence adding to the business communication skills for PMs. The review of professional literature lays the foundations for application qualitative research methodology.

Section 2: The Project

The second section begins with a restatement of the study's purpose. The section also includes discussion of my role as a researcher and the strategies that I used to ensure that the study would be successful. Importantly, I describe the approach I used to identify appropriate participants based on the study's inclusion criteria. I also discuss ethical considerations and demonstrate the way a qualitative research design was used in obtaining the study's results. Other topics include the data collection technique, data analysis, and evaluation of the reliability and validity of the research. The section concludes with a summary of key points.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore the strategies that PMs in the health care industry use to strengthen communication within project teams. The targeted population consisted of four PMPs from two health care organizations in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States who successfully implemented and executed strategies to strengthen communication within their teams. The implications for social change include the potential for PMs in the health care industry to identify and implement strategies to strengthen communication, thereby increasing motivation, improving project results, bolstering profitability, and supporting the development of companies that can positively contribute to the growth and development of communities.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher and as the key data collection instrument, I performed various activities to ensure that the research project was successful. A qualitative researcher must identify the critical data collection instrument and prepare questionnaires that are in line with qualitative research design; then, the researcher must issue them to the participants (Yin, 2018). Some of my major tasks were the selection of a suitable research approach, recruitment of respondents, and provision of relevant knowledge to the participants about their role in the study. Importantly, I also briefed the participants about the overall significance of the research and informed them how knowledge arising from the study might result in the overall improvement of project deliverables. Sutton and Austin (2015) asserted that researchers ought to possess critical skills and abilities -- for example, sensitivity and knowledge when conducting research dealing with human participants. A researcher needs to be knowledgeable regarding different research instruments and their applicability. I believe I demonstrated sensitivity and knowledge in how I worked with the participants.

In conducting my investigation, I also sought to minimize the potential for bias. I avoided recruiting participants from my previous or current workplaces. I omitted them in the study to minimize biases when interacting with the selected respondents, and thus ensured that I had no prior knowledge about these participants. Specifically, I focused the study on the adverse effects of poor communication in projects and establishments. However, I had identified in my research that poor communication systems, in which managers were not able to network and understand the seriousness associated with unsecured loans issued to their clients, caused the 2008 financial crisis (Foong, 2014). My quest for a better world, where people could share their opinions and feelings, prompted me to conduct the research and provide managers with key insights on how to improve communication.

Unlike a researcher conducting a scientific experiment, a qualitative researcher has to interact with participants. Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, and Cheraghi (2014) argued that the involvement of human subjects, in research, poses ethical challenges. The reason is that researchers are expect to respect privacy and confidentiality of participants where need be and to obtain informed consent where the situation demand (Sanjari et al., 2014). As a result, I considered it critical to follow ethical guidelines as stipulated by learning institutions. A researcher has a mandate of observing the rights of all human participants and ensuring that unethical issues do not affect the quality of the research. Hébert et al. (2015) affirmed that researchers have to protect participants from psychological, physical, and social risks. I considered the key principles of the Belmont Report as highlighted by Vollmer and Howard (2010) when collecting data, particularly where human participants were involved.

The respect for persons was the most important ethical principle I embraced in the study. Adherence to this principle requires that human participants in research studies be treated as autonomous agents, and those with diminished autonomy be entitled to protection by the researcher (Vollmer & Howard, 2010). I meticulously ensured that I receive informed consent from each participant prior to the commencement of the data collection process. Securing informed consent enabled me to ascertain that the participants were not only aware of what the study was about and what their role in conducting the study was, but also ensured that participants took part in the study of their personal volition. This, in turn, guaranteed the confidentiality of participants of the study, hence complying with one of the fundamental ethical principles of the Belmont report (Vollmer & Howard, 2010).

A researcher has to exercise confidentiality in his or her interactions with various participants. Human subjects are entitled to protection even when data collection is through the Internet -- for example, when sending, receiving, responding to questions, and resubmitting filled-in questionnaires through e-mail (Pisani et al., 2016). As the researcher, I ensured that participants were enlightened about the research and its expectations prior to involving them in the study. Informed consent is necessary to ensure that respondents understand everything about the study to make informed decisions throughout their participation in the study (see Compagnone et al., 2017). I also took measures to protect all participant information to ensure that it was not accessible to unauthorized parties. For instance, the consent forms containing participants' details were placed in a locked cabinet which I was the only one who had access. Also, data collected was saved in an encrypted file protected by password to prevent access by unauthorized persons.

Research outcomes can become ineffective due to a researcher's bias. Scholars have found that researchers' biases lead to one-sided outcomes that do not represent the views of respondents (Roller, 2015). If a researcher becomes biased, he or she can influence the results and, ultimately, affect study results (Holman, Head, Lanfear, &

Jennions, 2015). To mitigate bias, I sought to avoid influencing the participants based on my beliefs and opinions. I abided by the established rules and controlled my emotions even when the respondents failed to uphold my views. I also followed qualitative study protocols. Consequently, I believe that I conducted the research effectively and attained valid and reliable results.

Moreover, to ensure that I gathered information from all respondents in a uniform and organized manner, I developed an interview protocol (see Appendix A), which I used to guide my steps throughout the interview sessions with each respondent. Using the protocol, I managed to pose similar questions to each respondent and obtain what I thought were their honest and candid views on each aspect of the research topic. Alshenqeeti (2014) argued that this interviewing approach allows a researcher to collect accurate and comprehensive data from respondents because the method is quite flexible when contrasted with the use of questionnaires or observation methods of data collection. I followed the interview protocol as expounded by the Eurocall (Helm, Bradley, Guarda, & Thouësny, 2015).

Furthermore, use of the interview form enabled me to engage the study's participants in an in-depth manner to ensure I get as detailed (in terms of depth and breadth) information for all questions. Each interview session took a maximum of two hours; a period within which each participant answered all predetermined questions as listed in the interview form. More importantly, the process of data collection commenced only after all the parties, especially respondents of the study, confirmed that they understood the details of the study, were content with all the requirements, and were ready to take part in the research voluntarily.

Participants

For the current study, the participants consisted of four PMs who were members of a Project Management Professional (PMP) association, working in two distinct medical supply companies in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The primary inclusion criterion for this study was that all respondents must be registered members of the Project Management Institute (PMI). PMI is a global institution that provides PMs with professional knowledge to ensure the advancement of their careers as well as attainment of their personal goals (PMI, 2018). Saunders et al. (2017) pointed out that data saturation has become an accepted aspect of qualitative studies. Importantly, one needs to understand the concepts involved in managing information. Ranney et al. (2015) defined data saturation as the point where additional information presented in research does not benefit researchers.

Notably, I reached data saturation by ensuring that only the participants briefed about the research will be involved in the data collection exercise. The attainment of data saturation was important for the study primarily because it ensured that inconsistencies were eliminated and that the final results would be valid and reliable (Saunders et al., 2017). Furthermore, as I indicated earlier, experience in data collection and management is crucial. Hence, I involved only participants that were serving as PMs in the Health care sector and using different techniques to enhance efficiency in communication within their project teams.

Specifically, I decided that I would obtain some contacts from PMI. My decision was based on the fact that the PMI had members interested in new challenges. I anticipated that the PMI coordinator provided me with details about its members and that would enable me to contact them through their e-mails. Additionally, I obtained permission to connect with some of PMI members through social media sites, for example, Facebook and LinkedIn. As aforementioned in the purpose statement, I managed to interview four respondents in the study who were PMs in health care facilities in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. On identifying the participants of the study, I sent them comprehensive e-mails with details about the study to help them make the decision on whether to take part in the study. I obtained informed consent, which allowed the participants to commit themselves to take part in the study voluntarily.

I also adopted a guided approach to collect data for this study. Particularly, I instructed the participants to confirm their voluntary involvement in the research prior to the commencement of data collection process. I built trust to ascertain that the selected subjects disclosed information that would be important in generating the outcomes (Wall, Jenney, & Walsh, 2018). Respecting the views of others and their cultural backgrounds help a person cultivate trust (Lyon, Mšllering, & Saunders, 2015). I ensured that I informed respondents of their right to withdraw from the research activities once they feel that they are not comfortable with its proceedings (Garner et al., 2017). Ultimately, I also created a positive research environment, and I maintained meaningful relationships with all the respondents to achieve reliable and valid outcomes (Devlin, 2018).

Research Method and Design

I intended to use this research to explore the strategies adoptable by PMs to enhance communication among project teams within the health care sector. I also aligned the mentioned topic with the qualitative research design to attain consistent outcomes. Qualitative research approach was appropriate for this study because it analysis social issues that are not quantifiable (Glaser & Strauss, 2017).

Research Method

According to Almalki (2016), the essence of qualitative research is often to understand and explore certain social phenomenon or human-related problem. A researcher draws key information from people that have experienced various negative or positive occurrences (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2017). The mentioned research design is inductive, and a researcher that uses a similar method suggests that the variables studied are not easy to measure and are complex in nature (Almalki, 2016). Furthermore, qualitative research is usually interpretive and/or explorative in nature (Yin, 2018). The research's application construes to social factors. I used qualitative inquiry methodology. The necessity is that the indicated approach allows a researcher to explore social problems (Schwandt, 2014). I wanted to understand the effect of ineffective communication strategies and their impact on limiting PMs in their desires to complete projects successfully. The described method is useful in explaining different activities. The approach enabled me to gather data from a specific region, and I was able to understand the participants' personal views about the topic.

The choice of data collection technique is crucial. The Qualitative research is helpful in exploring different social constructs and varied opinions shared by a group of people (Yin, 2018). Benson and Filippaios (2016) suggested that qualitative research is useful in the organization as well as management research activities. Researchers use the qualitative method to comprehend the intricate social issues. Qualitative researchers combine both practical and cognitive contexts and provide data that tackle management problems. One is able to conduct qualitative research activities over the internet (Salmons, 2015). As a researcher, I managed to identify the link between PMs' communication skills and the overall success of various projects. If the outcomes show a specific pattern, it would be possible to enlighten managers on how to improve business operations by putting in place suitable communication strategies.

I followed the qualitative research guidelines as provided by Yin (2018). I used semistructured interviewing whereby I had predetermined (open-ended) questions listed in the interview form, which I used to guide the interview session with each respondent. In other instances, participants would be required to illustrate their opinions concerning specific issues that affected communication. I conducted the interviews with each respondent through teleconferencing, where I used video conferencing technology to moderate the interview sessions with each respondent. I did not use quantitative research design to avoid making the case study complex and challenging to explain the outcomes. Additionally, mixed-research methods, which involve qualitative and quantitative research designs, were not useful in the identification of strategies adoptable by managers to enhance communication efficiency within project teams. The use of mixed methods research design is time-consuming and technical, since it involves an integration of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Almalki, 2016; Turner, Cardinal, & Burton, 2017). A researcher needs to be clear on the applicable guideline and research design to follow (Parker, 2017), and this case, the qualitative research design is preferable to other designs.

Research Design

I chose a case study design due to its advantages; for example, the design is straightforward and allows one to understand a social concept holistically (Ledford & Gast, 2018). The approach aligns with the qualitative research method and ensures adequate and comprehensive coverage of the topic of study (Kaiser & Buxmann, 2017). Additionally, I adopted a case study design due to its key benefits among them being the fact that it provides legitimate and highly reliable empirical evidence for supporting the main assertions and findings of qualitative research studies (Yin, 2018). A case study approach, according to Yin (2018), was suitable due to its ease of application and ability to assist in understanding social constructs. Moreover, a case study was a preferable research design for the study of other qualitative approaches since the former is flexible and a researcher can use this design in different contexts (Scholl, 2017). I did not find other qualitative research approaches, particularly phenomenological research design, suitable for this study. This is mainly because the phenomenological research design usually has high levels of subjectivity whereby to accurately establish the validity and reliability of the findings is often very difficult (Flynn, & Korcuska, 2018). Moreover, the phenomenological research design was inappropriate for this study because it is more susceptible to researcher-induced biases since the design relies hugely on researcher's interpretation to make sense of the study's findings (Allen, 2017; Bastug, Ertem, & Keskin, 2017).

Data Saturation

Faulkner and Trotter (2017) affirmed that data saturation occurs when additional information given by participants in research does not lead to new insights or ideas. Data saturation has become a gold standard in qualitative studies (Aldiabat & Navenec, 2018). Researchers ought to make sure that they do not continue to collect data even after reaching data saturation levels (Tran, Porcher, Tran, & Ravaud, 2017). Given that I embraced case study analysis research design for this study, I worked towards attaining data saturation by organizing data into correct forms and arranging the details into themes (Kirsch, Paul, & Schmitt, 2017). According to Wu, Lu, Su, Shi, and Wu (2017), qualitative protocols are essential in the identification of similar outcomes. Hence, I used qualitative protocols to identify when obtaining similar outcomes after reaching a certain number of respondents.

Population and Sampling

Defining the Population

The purpose of this study was to explore the strategies that PMs apply to facilitate strengthened communication within project teams. The targeted population was four PMs who were members of a PMP association, working in two different Health care organizations in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The sample size for the study was four, and comprised of people with extensive knowledge in project management particularly in the area of communication strategies within project teams. Moreover, I complemented the interview analysis with case study methodology. The case study methodology was appropriate for the study because it is effective in its application to identify patterns that are evident in the entire sample.

The necessity to work with a sample is vital based on a selection from a group. The target population refers to an entire set of subjects who have the desirable characteristics under study (Martínez-Mesa, González-Chica, Duquia, Bonamigo, & Bastos, 2016). Identification of a small sample can affect the outcomes. Sample size is an important consideration due to the effect of data saturation, which can waste time (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016). There was another explanation for the working of a sample. Malterud et al. (2016) concluded that a suitable sample size depends on (a) sample specificity, (b) research purpose, (c) the theory selected by the researcher(s), (d) analysis approaches, and (e) quality of dialogues.

Sampling

As a researcher, I decided to adopt a purposeful sampling technique to sample the participants. There are different reasons for adopting this sampling approach. First, purposive sampling enabled me to gather accurate data and ultimately attain valid and reliable outcomes. Purposive sampling has been widely used in qualitative research designs and researchers in their attempt to gather data concerning a particular social phenomenon (Palinkas et al., 2015). Notably, there are different forms of purposive sampling techniques. However, Palinkas et al. (2015) suggested that criterion sampling is the most popular among researchers. I issued participants of the study with an interview form to prepare them for interview sessions that would come afterward. The aim of issuing the interview forms was to familiarize respondents with the topic of study and allow them ample time to conduct extensive research on the research areas targeted by the study to ensure high levels of accuracy in their responses to attain optimum rates of reliability and validity (Fikkers, Piotrowski, & Valkenburg, 2017; Steenks, Türp, & de Wijer, 2018).

The identified participants were crucial in ensuring that I would attain the projected outcomes. Indeed, participants of the study were knowledgeable about a variety of activities that occur in the project management sector. Typically, respondents are aware that there are negative consequences of not having suitable communication strategies when working with teams. Given that, I adopted the purposive sampling method for this research study. Martínez-Mesa et al. (2016) affirmed that purposive sampling is useful when handling specific groups of professionals who have common experiences.

For the purposes of data collection, I used interviews to gather the required information from the participants. To attain data saturation, I was thorough in the interview sessions to ensure that I attained detailed information relevant to the study's research questions, and collect much information from relevant case studies to ensure exhaustive analysis of the topic of research. The approach was timesaving since it prevented the possibility of collecting data that had no significant outcomes on the research topic. I organized data appropriately and identified the patterns that would alert me when I attained data saturation. Comparative analysis was the key activity that I performed in the data collection exercise. I made extensive comparisons and contrasts to the information retrieved from different sources to determine uniformity and flaws in the findings of previous researchers as published in different sources on the topic of study (Raven, 2017).

In contrast, purposive sampling has various limitations. One of the main limitations of this sampling method was the lack of clarity on the specific sample to include in a research project (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016). The mentioned limitation is a typical issue at the beginning of any qualitative study. Moreover, there is no clarity if the sampling approach is superior to other methods that are used in qualitative research (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016). I could manage to solve this problem by conducting two sampling procedures. The attained results would enable me to gauge the usefulness of sampling method and the reason why the technique was the best to apply for the current case.

Explicitly, I adopted expert sampling method for this research study. Expert sampling is part of purposive sampling. It involved selecting respondents who have certain levels of professional and workplace experience in a particular area of study. Therefore, in this research study, as aforementioned, I only involved project managers who are experienced in communication strategies within project teams. Their expertise further narrowed down to project management within the health care sector (Khong, Berlach, Hill, & Hill, 2018; Lunze et al., 2017). Thence, only experts (four) in project management within the health care sector responded to the interview in this searching study for the purpose of data collection. The interview sessions with each respondent happened at a time that mutually agreed upon by the researcher and individual respondents, and would last for 45-60 minutes. Since I adopted the teleconferencing technology to conduct the interviews, the location for the interview sessions was not a matter of great concern because the sessions would go on without interviewees and me meeting in person. This is so because the sessions took place on Internet-enabled computing devises through video-conferencing technology.

Data Saturation and Sampling

I worked towards attaining data saturation in this research study. Faulkner and Trotter (2017) argued that data saturation occurs when further data does not lead to the discovery of any new information in a data collection exercise. Data saturation can act as a guide for a researcher to stop the data collection procedure. Usually, the attainment of data saturation occurs when the researcher reviews the topic of study exhaustively. An effective data organization ought to ensure the researcher attains data saturation (Zhao, Li, Zheng, & Han, 2018). During data analysis, a researcher should avoid confusion and present findings accurately (Hancock, Amankwaa, Revell, & Mueller, 2016). When a researcher does not achieve data saturation, the findings of the study can have significant inconsistencies, and hence likely to have highly unpredictable outcomes (Hancock et al., 2016). I collected data from the participants and analyzed the raw facts afterward. Eventually, I compared the findings from the interviews with those from the reviewed company documents to determine similarities and differences and to find out if I had attained data saturation. Through the general results of this research study, I was able to comprehend the communication strategies adoptable extensively to enhance outcomes of project teams.

Ethical Research

The research adhered to the highest degree of integrity, including completion of correct research and frameworks. The adherence to ethical standards for research studies has enabled me to come up a study that boasts of high levels of reliability and validity as well as the attainment of research findings that are justifiable and robust (Taverne, 2018). According to Kamat (2016), a researcher needs to maintain the maximum level of research ethics. The central question regarding possible research is the extent of accuracy for capturing and/or gathering data. This is to ensure adherence to the identified fundamental guidelines of ethics and privacy policies for research studies (Vayena, Gasser, Wood, O'Brien, & Altman, 2016). Thus, performing the research should be an arrangement corresponding to the guidance for professional research and research frameworks on ethics as issued in the correct areas.

Following the identification of specific participants of the study, I managed to contact them at a personal level to inform them about my intention to involve them in the study as sources of data. At this point, I also sent the participants the consent form, encompassing comprehensive information of the topic of study, what was expected of participants, and informed them of their role in the study. All respondents acknowledged their understanding of the essence of the research, asked any questions for the purpose of clarity, and agreed to participate in the research study voluntarily. I obtained informed consent of the participants.

Although obtaining informed consent would mean that the participants had volunteered to take part in the study, they still had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences. The only thing respondents would need to do is to inform the researcher of their decision to withdraw from the study in an e-mail (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Resnik, 2015).

Inasmuch as there are no monetary benefits to which respondents of the study are entitled to taking part in it, it is doubtless that participating in the study would bring so many benefits to them and the entire profession of project management. Most notably, the findings of the study add to the knowledge banks on effective communication strategies adoptable by PMs to enhance projects' outcomes. The fact that participants are supposed to take a central role towards the completion of a credible and reliable study whose findings can be transferable to other studies in the future is an incentive enough to encourage them to take part in it (Garg, Round, Daker-White, Bower, & Griffiths, 2017).

Another significant deliberation of the study was to ensure complete adherence to ethical considerations of participants. I guaranteed respondents of the of ethical protection by having the participants sign the consent form, which is a legally-binding document that demands from the researcher to observe the highest levels of ethical standards for scientific research when conducting this study. Each respondent retained a copy of the signed “Consent Form,” which served as evidence against him in the court of law for breaching the ethical standards of research studies (Garner et al., 2017; Sanjari et al., 2014). Moreover, the researcher was expected to store interview transcripts and/or recorded audio-visual interview sessions with each respondent in encrypted formats in a personal computer and further protect it with strong passwords to prevent unauthorized people from accessing them (Ma, Chen, Lan, & Ren, 2018; Wang et al., 2016). I also managed to store the data collected from each respondent securely (in encrypted formats and protected with passwords) for 5 years (since the date when the data was collected) in order to protect the confidentiality of respondents (Ma et al., 2018). Furthermore, the names of respondents and their organizations as well as all other private and confidential information about respondents and their organizations would remain protected by the researcher in form of encrypted data (using high technology encryption software-CryptoExpert 8) and only be omitted from the research paper (Sanjari et al., 2014).

Prior to commencing with the data collection process, through the interviewing data collection instrument, I sought for the approval of the Internal Review Board (IRB). According to Caldamone and Cooper (2017), IRB approval is a mandatory requirement for research studies that involve human subjects as respondents. The essence of attaining IRB approval for this study is to ensure I (the researcher) live up to my ethical obligations as required of me as per the set ethical standards for scientific research (Sonne et al., 2018). I also obtained an IRB approval number from the Walden University’s IRB (approval number: 08-29-18-0552573).

Data Collection Instruments

Interviews and review of company documents were my primary data collection methods while using qualitative techniques. As a researcher, I was able to connect with the participants through the internet. Specifically, I sent the four respondents of study the “Consent Form” through e-mails. Participants were supposed to read and understand the contents of the form, revert with any feedback or concerns through the same e-mails, and confirmed their willingness to participate in the study through the same platform voluntarily. A teleconference interview session was scheduled with each of the respondent. The interview sessions lasted for 45-60 minutes with each respondent. I obtained informed consent before starting the interviews. I also gave each of the respondents a specific number (Number 1 through 4) with which I identified them in order to preserve or protect their identity. In essence, I also identified the respondents with their respective numbers rather than real names or organizations the respondents represent in order to maintain their confidentiality. The research protocol (see Appendix A) was maintained throughout the interview to maintain orderliness and objectivity in the data collection process (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Moreover, I also recorded the interview sessions in audio-visual devices for easy and repeated review during data analysis.

Notably, I would be the primary data collection instrument for the study. Brod, Tesler, and Christiansen (2009) argued that in a qualitative study, the researcher becomes the primary data collection instrument for the reason that he or she sees, hears, and interprets the information. I utilized my time and energy to collect data for analysis.

The second source of data that I used for the research study was the review of organizational documents. According to Wu (2015) and Fish et al. (2016), many case study researchers, especially when using qualitative research approach, review company documents and other publicly available organizational reports as sources of data. In this regard, I searched for a wide range of relevant company documents, including organizations’ strategic plans, companies’ annual reports, and legislative reports that are relevant to the topic of the study and incorporate key concepts regarding effective communication strategies in project management from the documents into the study. Siegel (2016) stated that the review of company documents gives firsthand information on the topic of study since it provides an overview of the strategies adopted by the company and the outcomes of these strategies. Thence, with the review of organization documents as method for data collection, I managed to gather the most appropriate information on the communication strategies embraced by project managers within the health care sector, and incorporate these ideas in the research report. However, to attain credibility and reliability in the findings, Davis, Sunderland, and Bernstein (2018) and Beckley, Rajaniemi, and Varga (2016) reiterated that the researcher ought to be sure to review only relevant and up-to-date company documents for the purpose of data collection for a study. Thus, I ensured that I reviewed company internal documents within the past 5 years and discuss about communication strategies adoptable for project management. By so doing, I managed to achieve high levels of credibility and reliability in the findings of the study.

As a qualitative researcher, I derived meaningful information from complex and ambiguous data retrieved from company documents and interview sessions. Although methodological texts give useful frameworks to channel the process of converting filed data to credible conclusions, analysis and interpretation of qualitative data will involve me, the researcher, as the primary tool for deriving rationality from the phenomenon under research. In other words, I had the main role of collecting different categories of qualitative data. In actual sense, the researcher is a factor that validates information (Brod et al., 2009). My experience and communication skills enabled me to ask the proper questions to the interviewees. By doing so, I was able to arrive at meaningful findings that are credible and valid, with minimum shortcomings.

Interviews (Teleconferencing)

Advancing technology, especially online communication, had drastically changed data collection strategies adoptable by researchers (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Teleconferencing technology was competent to conduct interviews with respondents for the research study. The interviews involved four respondents that are PMs from two health care organizations in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. In consultation with individual respondents of the study, I selected appropriate dates and time for each interview session, which lasted for 45-60 minutes (Silverman, 2016). I conducted the interviews based on a pre-established list of questions and a detailed interview protocol (see Appendix A). Teleconferencing interview method was effectual to collect data from respondents, because it could allow me to engage each respondent with the aim of gathering relevant data for the study through the Internet. Specifically, the use teleconferencing interview method was essential to facilitate active discussions between the interviewees and me on a video conferencing platform. This implies that although participants could not be at the same geographical location at the time of the sessions as me, our interaction could be real-time (Dikko, 2016). More importantly, with teleconferencing, the interviewer and respondent were able to see and hear each other throughout the sessions. The teleconferencing interview method had several advantages with the main ones discussed below.

Capture emotions and behaviors. The use of teleconference interviews helps capture a participant's emotions and behaviors (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The identification of nonverbal cues enables the determination of absolute precision of the hidden subjects' opinions of the research objective (Dikko, 2016).

Keep focus. Due to my solo control over the session, I kept my subjects focused until the interview sessions ended. Unlike other methods of interviews, such as online surveys where the respondent is occasionally distracted by texts, video streaming or surfing, teleconferencing interviews could be more efficient and less time consuming since the respondents paid complete attention (Dikko, 2016).

Member Checking

Member checking would be an important perspective while collecting data. With member checking, I could manage to send back the draft of final data (prior to analysis and compilation of the final research report) to the original respondents of the study to verify and/or countercheck their responses to determine whether I accurately interpreted their responses (Harper & Cole, 2012). The completion of the process both officially and unofficially as opportunities for member check could arise during the normal routine of observation and conversation. Using the member-checking approach could also act as an opportunity to understand and evaluate what the member intends to go through his or her actions. The member-checking framework could also give partakers a chance to correct mistakes and challenges perceived to be incorrect interpretations. Furthermore, member checking facilitates the ability of a participant to provide credible results when he/she is encouraged to engage in data collection process (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). One can also note that the framework guides as a useful tool that gets participants on the record with their reports. Participants have an opportunity to summarize preliminary findings. As well, a researcher appreciates the benefit of member checking approach to give members a possibility to evaluate the adequacy of information and preliminary outcome in addition to the ability to corroborate particular aspects of presented data.

Nevertheless, there are limitations to the use of member checking approach. As Harper and Cole (2012) note, member checking can rely on the supposition that there will be a hard truth of reality, which the respondents should confirm and researcher account for. However, from the perspective interpretation, understanding can be co-created, and there could be no objective truth or reality for comparison with the results of the study. Secondly, the process of member checking could lead to confusion in place of confirmation as participants could change their thinking about the subject (Birt et al., 2016). However, the interview could have an effect on participants' original opinion and new experiences (from the time of contact) since one has to intervene (Thomas, 2017). Another drawback of the member checking approach would be that respondents could disagree with the researcher's interpretations (Birt et al., 2016). The presence of created discrepancy may create dilemma on whose understanding and/or interpretation is accurate. There is also a sense of conflict of interest in the way of explanation issues, especially given that, both the members and I, are key stakeholders in the study process and we have dissimilar stories to narrate and agendas to promote. The evident disagreeing could result in perceiving differing interpretations (Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'brien, & Rees, 2017).

Data Collection Technique

Interviews

By conducting interviews, a researcher is able to receive comprehensive and extensive data. The use of teleconferencing interviewing technique for data collection meant that I had the chance to build a more elaborate understanding of the subjects' responses. Researchers are bound to uncover rich and deep insights into and discover information that may have otherwise missed (Jullien, 2017). As noted by Anyan (2013), a researcher's presence in person would offer additional comfort to the participant and such an arrangement help the researcher to gather accurate information from respondents and to make appropriate clarifications where needed. Therefore, I ensured that I was persistent, and displayed a good measure of professionalism to the interviewees to significantly improve the rate of response.

The teleconferencing interview technique had some shortcomings. For instance, poor (weak) Internet connections could significantly affect the clarity of pictures and audio during the interviews, and this would quickly lead to communication breakdown during the sessions (Almalki, 2016). Since I was not a trained interviewer with the required soft skills to conduct the processes, a slight compromising of the effectiveness of the interview sessions potentially occurred.

Review of Company Documents

I reviewed relevant company documents with the aim of gathering important data for supporting the findings of the research study. Researchers use documentation review as a major data collection technique due to its effectiveness acquiring data since documents tend to be manageable and applicable resources. Documents are common, in diverse forms, readily accessible, and are highly reliable (Ary et al., 2018). The analysis of documents also saves on time and cost. Documentation review has several advantages. Notably, researchers can interpret and review documents several times. In addition, research processes can hardly alter their content. It is also important to review both publicly available documents and private company documents that elaborate on the communication strategies that different organizations, especially within the health care sector, have adopted to enhance efficiency within their project teams. In my review, I gave more attention to documents, such as companies' annual reports and organizations' strategic plans. Liaising with the management of health care organizations was important to have access to private documents and conduct extensive research on a wide range of publicly available company documents that explain project management systems and strategies. As a way of acquiring vital information that could add value to the research study, it was essential to review the documents with the intention. I also incorporated key findings on appropriate communication strategies for enhancing the performances of project teams within the health care sector, as found from the reviewed company documents, in the research report. To maintain the credibility, validity, and reliability of the research study, it was important to review up-to-date company documents (published within 5 years from the time of conducting the research). Furthermore, I cited all the documents properly and integrated the information in my study to validate the study's key assertions and findings.

Member Check

As Birt et al. (2016) affirmed, the member-checking technique helps researchers to explore the credibility of the study's findings. In essence, it involves returning the results of the study to participants to allow them to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences (Birt et al., 2016). I used this technique of data collection to validate the findings of the study. I managed this by giving respondents of the interviews an opportunity to engage with, add to, and interpret the findings of the study just before compiling the final report for the research (Birt et al., 2016). By so doing, I succeeded in having the have study results validated by the respondents just before compiling them in the final research report.

Data Organization Technique

Data management is a substantial undertaking. Proper organization and storage of data is an essential activity of researchers; to store results in a manner that is not only safe (secure from unauthorized access and possible distortion), but also in a way that is easy to retrieve (Sutton & Austin, 2015). I created folders that allowed me to store data and lock the documents. I categorized the information in accordance with the patterns evident after the answering of various questions. I also encrypted the data before storing it in personal computer's folders and then added another layer of protection using strong passwords. Thus, anyone who had not signed the confidentiality agreement could not access the data.

The creation of an appropriate reference system ensured that I could retrieve data when the need arises. For easy retrieval of the data, I classified and stored it in folders based on the category of findings, and named them (the folders) appropriately in correspondence with the kind of data stored in.

Other approaches can also ensure that information is recognizable for quick use. Sutton and Austin (2015) recommend the aspect of systems for numbering revision. I used whole numbers to note key changes to a file. For instance, v1 would be version one, and v2 the second version. The use of minimal but significant variations on the naming systems of the folders to denote alterations on the versions of the files is critical. Specifically, I used an underscore sign, for instance; v01_01, to denote a minor alteration on the first version, and v06_01 to denote a minor alteration on the sixth version.

The available body of research underscores the importance of tracking any changes in a stored data (Milos, 2017). In case I sent out draft documents for amendments, upon return, the documents would have additional information to show the person who carried out the changes as posited (Anyan, 2013). For each essential document, the use of a *version control table* assisted in tracking different adjustments and their respective dates alongside the document’s correct version number. If I realized that the approach was helpful, I would also include file names and their version number. As Milos (2017) stated, using elaborate labeling systems helps researchers to distinguish different sets of data in databases, especially following alterations or modification of the information contained in the folders. Therefore, the use of an elaborate labeling system was important to distinguish different sets of data in the database for this study particularly after making some adjustments on different datasets. Specifically, I made small changes like the use of underscores and numbers to different sets of data that have similar content except for small adjustments as will be necessary for the research project (Sheriff, 2018). Moreover, it is imperative to note that I stored safely and securely all raw data collected for this research study for at least 5 years from the day I compiled the final research report. This act would not only help to preserve the confidentiality of participants' private information but also to preserve the integrity of the study.

Hierarchically, I structured my folders starting with the list number of folders for the broader topics and within them; creating folders that were more specific. I could also separate ongoing and finished work. Sutton and Austin (2015) identified the need for a researcher to try to keep folders that he or she actively works on closely while transferring those that are not in current use to different storage areas to maintain a neat and well-organized workplace (Cai & Vasilakos, 2017). I backed up my work for purposes of the study findings. Information loss, misplacement, or even distortion can occur. Hence, without a backup storage system, one would have to start all over again, which in most cases cannot happen because of a number of reasons, including resources and time. Therefore, I employed a comprehensive backup data storage system whereby I stored copies of every raw and finished data used for this study in a cloud-computing infrastructure for easy and remote retrieval whenever need be (Langmead & Nellore, 2018).

Data Analysis

Data analysis entailed gathering and organizing information to arrive at substantiated findings and conclusions (Peersman, 2014). Data analysis process allowed a researcher to solve problems, answer questions, and derive crucial facts (Peersman, 2014). There are generally two methods of data analysis, namely, quantitative and qualitative data analyses. Usually, in the qualitative analysis where such methods of data collection as the use of focus groups, experiments, interviews among others, involve recognizing common patterns from the responses given and analyzing them critically to achieve research objectives (Bryman & Bell, 2015). For quantitative studies data analysis, the researcher engages in critical interpretation and analysis of numbers and figures and tries to develop the rationale behind the surfacing of main conclusions (Nardi, 2018). These methods without primary data gathering can engage a discussion of common patterns in addition to controversies in the secondary information directly connected to the area of research.

For this research study, I employed thematic data analysis strategy. Thematic data analysis strategy involves collecting, arranging and organizing data in explicit manners in order to identify specific patterns from the responses given by respondents with the aim to derive answers to the research questions and to eventually achieve the study's objectives (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). As such, by employing thematic data analysis strategy, I managed to code the data properly to identify specific patterns and eventually used them to arrive at conclusions of the study. To achieve this, I categorized the data into specific themes, which are relevant to the study's objectives, and determine consistency and inconsistency in the data with the aim to accurately analyze the research's phenomenon. With this, I arrived at the findings of the study based on the patterns derived from the data collected in the research study.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The holistic approach for qualitative research entails discovery. The analysis involved here is the non-numeric management of data such as transcripts, audio recordings, text documents, interview, and images (Roller, 2015). There are five categories of qualitative data analysis classification:

Content analysis. Content analysis delineates the process of grouping behavioral or verbal information to categorize, summarize, and tabulate the information. In another definition adopted by Zhang and Wildemuth (2016), qualitative content analysis is a research method that assists in ascertaining subjective interpretation based on the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.

Narrative analysis. The method entails the reconstruction of stories presented by participants considering the context of every case and different experiences of every person.

Discourse analysis. In discourse analysis method, the researcher analyzes naturally occurring conversation and all forms of written information (Shanthi, Lee, & Lajium, 2017).

Framework analysis. The framework is a more complicated method that involves several levels such as familiarization, spotting a thematic framework, mapping, coding, charting, and interpretation of data.

Grounded theory. The method starts with analyzing a single case to create a hypothesis. Then, the researcher uses other relevant case studies to strengthen the theories and assertions of the research study.

Steps for Conducting a Qualitative Data Analysis

Step 1- Creating and applying codes. A code can be a short phrase or a single word that represents an idea or a theme. Codes indicate meaningful titles. A broad range of elements that are not quantifiable for instance events, activities and behaviors among others, can be coded (Salmons, 2015). The three main types of coding include:

- *Open coding*- Tries to organize raw data to create logical information.
- *Axial coding*- The component interconnects and links codes' categories.
- *Selective coding*- Tries to formulate the story by linking the groups.

Researchers can either code qualitative data manually or use the software. Some of the widely used qualitative analysis software includes HyperRESEARCH 2.8, MAXQDA, NVivo, Atlas ti 6.0, and Aquad. When to apply the manual coding I used the folders, filing cabinets, and wallets to assemble materials that are similar analytic ideas or themes as suggested by Anyan (2013). However, it is doubtless that manual coding will be tiresome and time-consuming (Wicks, 2017). In contrast, when using software-based coding, I managed to replace physical files and cabinets with computer-based files and directories in a computer database. I used the MAXQDA software for qualitative data analysis to analyze the data collected for this research study. I preferred this particular software to any other because it is effective, can analyze large data, is fast, cost-effective, and easy to use.

Regarding the software aspects, I needed to learn about its working. The understanding would allow me to access and evaluate data, amend boundaries of coded sections, rename, merge or split codes, provide writing spaces, provide spaces for me to give opinion on the data and spaces to “play” with the information, to rearrange the system in diverse ways and to visualize its components (Anyan, 2013). All the features would support the process of analysis to get deeper into data and try to understand the facts. After coding, I prepared data for further analysis and examination. For example, ATLAS.ti software is usable when the codes-PD table and the code-cooccurrence explorer and the purpose will be cross-cased for comparisons (de Melo, Mendes, Fernandes, & Biff, 2018). Saving the identified outcomes can be in different forms as a foundation for new queries, for example assisting me in spotting out types and typologies in the information

Step 2- Identifying patterns, relationships, and themes. In a qualitative analysis of data, there is a lack of universally applicable methods adaptable to formulate findings unlike in quantitative techniques. A researcher needs to understand the working of analytical and critical reasoning skills as important ones when using qualitative method (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Generally, qualitative analysis methods do not often give similar results, even on repeating the study with all factors kept constant (Coolican, 2017). Nonetheless, a set of techniques are applicable to formulate common themes, relationships, and patterns within responses of participants in relation to specified codes in the preceding stage. In particular, the most effective theme that I will use in qualitative data interpretation comprises the following:

- Word and phrase repetitions – The process is doable by looking at primary data for words and phrases repeated by respondents in addition to words and phrases used with odd emotions.
- Comparison of primary and secondary data – Involves comparing the findings from the documents review and interviews with the literature review findings and outlining differences between them.
- Exploring for missing information – I attained the specification of exploring information by discussing aspects and issues that were not mentioned by participants, although I expected to find similar results.
- Analogs and Metaphors– I compared primary data findings with phenomena from different area and discussed similarities and differences

Step 3- Summarizing the information. Here, the last stage of research findings involved interlinking the applicable theories with the research objectives. When formulating a data analysis chapter, I integrated important quotations from the text to show the main themes from the findings and the probable contradictions. This conformed to the assertion by Malterud et al. (2016), which affirmed that integrating important quotations from works of previous scholars and citing them appropriately gives research studies credibility, validity, and reliability. Hence, a researcher needs to outline the major points about the study and use appropriate evidence to validate the themes.

Triangulation Method

One can understand the aspect of triangulation method and its application in various ways. Qualitative methods have several drawbacks, among them subjectivity, on the basis of a single, unreliable source of information (Sanjari et al., 2014). However, with the exclusion of some case research work, qualitative research combines insights from multiple information sources, methods, and analysis to build a deep understanding of the topic of research. Triangulation refers to the comparison and combination of different results from research methods (Almalki, 2016). I triangulated nearly all the constituent components related to the research process including method, theory, information, and investigator.

With methodological triangulation, I focused on examining information from different subjects, which I gathered using a similar method. This is in line with the findings of Hill and Tams (2018), which showed that triangulation enables a researcher to use different research methods and data collection approaches to analyze the topic of study from a wide perspective hence arriving at reliable and credible findings. Each subject had a unique and suitable point of view, and my work as the researcher involved trying and determining patterns or contradictions above individual experience as outlined by Almalki (2016). A researcher can identify the need to triangulate between information gathered at different times to confirm variations in experience.

Given that every method has weaknesses or potential bias, the solution is to gather data for qualitative research projects in many different ways to develop a better picture. As a result, my project collected information from same or different contributors using a variety of methods. With the triangulation design, the measurement assists researchers in gathering facts but distinctively on the same topic based on an integrated analysis and interpretation (Almalki, 2016). My work was to design a qualitative research study. In this study, I used teleconferencing interviewing and review of organizational documents as the main instruments of data collection. I also triangulated the approaches of data collection and analysis (for interviewing and review of organization documents) to achieve data saturation and perceive the topic of study from diverse perspectives. Ultimately, this gave me more depth and breadth in terms of analysis and exploration of the topic of study (Renz, Carrington, & Badger, 2018). One would expect the technique to take the structure of a qualitative survey, where participants would rank an experience or service, integrated with an interview, open-ended comments, or even qualitative focus group.

There are other aspects of triangulation method. For example, there is the theoretical triangulation where I used several theories to interpret data, such as context analysis, discourse, and narrative as indicated by Nie (2017). The approach enabled distinctive ways of splitting and illuminating data and comparing them. Lastly, there was the association with an ‘investigator triangulation, which is a collaborative strategy that ensures that potential for a mixed method of research is maintained (Archibald, 2016). In my case, I tried to compare my own interpretations of information with that of my respondents.

Despite the fact that there are many aspects to consider while applying the theory of triangulation, there would be not as much about actually practicing the approach.

There is a possibility that doing the triangulation could be much technical and more engaging. This is attributable to the tendency of data sources being challenging to combine and thus the essence of remarkably different interpretations and discourses (Almalki, 2016). For instance, if I could notice ‘anger’ and ‘dissatisfaction’ during the interviews among some business managers’ participants, I could understand that the difficultness to triangulate such emotions with the official language based on the policy document on service delivery.

In fact, one needs to remember that triangulation and multiple methods will not be an easy way to use and develop comprehensive research (Sarvimaki, 2017). Still, I would need to do justice to all sources to ensure comprehensive and proper analysis of information from each method and to interactively code the information where appropriate. The benefit of triangulation is that the framework makes a researcher develop intuitive sense while acquiring information from different sources and methods (Varpio et al., 017). I also kept going back and forth; analyzing information from other methods to ascertain data will be well integrated and considered.

Reliability and Validity

In as much as reliability and validity are important aspects of any research study, Johnson and Rasulova (2017) stated that qualitative researchers often focus on producing reliable, confirmable and credible findings more than to have valid and reliable findings. This is so because; the findings of qualitative studies are hardly replicable (reliability), especially given that the researcher arrives at them following the analysis of opinions of respondents, which are bound to vary from one person to the next. However, these findings must be dependable and credible to be transferable in future research studies (Bath-Hextall, Nalubega, & Evans, 2017). Furthermore, it is imperative that researchers of qualitative studies use legitimate and/or credible sources of data such as expert respondents and professional case studies in order to arrive at confirmable findings. This helps in the boosting of the integrity and credibility of the study's findings (Ates, 2013; Nicholls, 2017).

Reliability

Bolarinwa (2015) defined reliability as the extent to which the outcomes of any given research are replicable in the future studies. The researcher maintained throughout the study that the questionnaire was correctly prepared. The lack of reliability was attributable to a variety of factors, for instance, when the data collection instrument does not meet the expected quality levels (Bolarinwa, 2015). A researcher often strives to improve his or her research reliability by avoiding conflicts of interests when undertaking different projects. The measurement encompasses various subtopics, which include conformability, credibility, dependability, and transferability.

I used different approaches to measure the reliability of the current study. One of them involved the test-retest strategy that directs a researcher to conduct two assessments to evaluate if the consistency of the outcomes (Roller, 2015). The tests are doable at different times to avoid various issues, such as bias. In the present study, I assessed if the respondents had given truthful information by asking them question after a week or two.

Besides, I assessed reliability by issuing parallel forms that intend to probe similar information. In many instances, a consistency method enables a researcher to give two tests, at the same time, and to the same group (Roller, 2015). I analyzed the outcomes of the study to determine consistency in the findings.

Moreover, a researcher can assess inter-rater and internal consistency. The inter-rater approach is gauges the depth and accuracy of responses given by respondents (Roller, 2015). Humans cannot give uniform answers due to their differences in thinking and experiences. There is a need to assess the reliability of answers in any study. The internal consistency helps to evaluate if a data collection instrument is consistent and able to collect the right type of data.

Dependability

Dependability helps to define the consistency as well as the reliability of research outcomes (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). Any person with auditing skills can approve the measure of reliability to determine the extent to which the entire research process is effective due to minimum faults, which can have a negative impact on the entire findings. Dependability is essential for this approach given that the measurement can assist to identify the existing link between communication and project outcomes (Moon et al., 2016). Usually, a researcher can rely on data provided to an individual without bias (Green & Thorogood, 2018). Moreover, Yin (2018) affirmed that researchers could enhance dependability by ascertaining that researchers follow the correct methods of data collection and analysis.

Dependability is measurable by evaluating the quality of respondents' queries (Welch, 2018). The assessment provides experiences regarding how dependability shapes subject's understanding. Establishing if the respondents have been PMs is crucial in ensuring that the information given is highly dependable.

Transferability

The concept of transferability indicates the extent to which the outcomes of the present research are adaptable in other future studies to support its assertions and build on their findings (Moon et al., 2016). The approach is critical, especially, when a researcher intends to provide solutions after a research activity. Moreover, Yin (2018) stated that whereas the findings of qualitative studies are not generalizable to the larger population in different contexts, these findings are usually dependable and credible, hence adoptable by other researchers who study a similar research topic. I believed that the study would attain high-level transferability and the work will enable PMs to use its proposals to enhance communication within their establishments or existing projects. The key themes and patterns would provide crucial information to every reader who would study the current work (Symon, Cassell, & Johnson, 2018). An investigation needs to maintain a right number of participants to avoid anomalies and attain the desirable characteristics.

Credibility

Credibility is level of confidence that people can have in relations to the findings generated by research (Anney, 2014). Interested parties can be able to assess if the study's findings are in tandem with the data provided by respondents or if the researcher has included false information. There are various strategies employable by researchers to complete highly credible studies. For example, a researcher can invite peers to check on his/her study and critique its findings. The described method can be essential in ascertaining that research improves in certain areas, which can jeopardize the entire study (Anney, 2014).

Another method researchers used to boost the credibility of research papers is methodological triangulation (Johnson et al., 2017). The approach provided a researcher with accurate outcomes given that the tool allows multiple data collection and analysis strategies. Triangulation is a source of comprehensive and trustworthy data. Moreover, the method permits research to collect data using a variety of methods, for example, interviews, observation, focus groups, digital diaries, and so forth (Johnson et al., 2017).

The member check approach will be helpful in the stud, particularly in enhancing the credibility of its findings, as the researcher will send the interview transcripts back to the participants for verification and interpretation. The described step was critical in gauging the accuracy and research outcomes by providing the participants with another chance to correct the mistakes and/or omission in their initial responses. Besides, I took keen interest in the explanations given by PMs on certain questions, allowing one to expound on what he or she has answered in a previous section.

Confirmability

After a study, a researcher considers that other studies are able to confirm the findings. The results are attainable when a researcher analyzes and presents the outcomes based on the data (Anney, 2014). Hence, a researcher avoids imagination and guesswork to ensure confirmable findings. In qualitative studies, conducting an appraisal assists to ascertain research confirmability (Anney, 2014). Other techniques adoptable include triangulation and reflexive journal (Anney, 2014). A researcher has to be neutral, and he or she should not be judgmental when handling the participants and their answers. The confirmability for the current work will include case study protocols, notes, and other gathered databases.

Data Saturation

Data saturation is an essential concept in a qualitative study. As indicated in earlier sections, data saturation refers to a state, in research, when additional data does not lead to the discovery of any new information in a data collection exercise (Faulkner & Trotter, 2017). Data saturation can act as a guide for a researcher that he/she should stop the data collection procedure (Nelson, 2016). In the research study, I employed various strategies to ensure that I attained data saturation in the study. Specifically, I used the member-checking technique to verify the findings of the study particularly by allowing respondents to countercheck their responses and ascertain accurate interpretation of their responses to give appropriate meaning to the study (van Rijnsoever, 2017). I was also thorough in interviewing respondents to make sure that I get as detailed information on the topic of research as possible to exhaustively cover every aspect of the topic of study as relevant to meet the study's objectives (Aldiabat & Navenec, 2018).

Transition and Summary

In summary, Section 2 contains the purpose of and my main motive for undertaking the current study. The presentation also highlighted my role, as well as that of the participants, the incorporated method, and design. In particular, I illustrated that the PM had a critical role in enhancing communication involved in the entire project to improve team performance and overall attainment of project goals. The research design selected for the current study was a case study. The selected research methodology is qualitative method research. The study also incorporated the aspects of reliability and validity. Moreover, the study has given a comprehensive and detailed review of the data collection and analysis procedures for the study.

The IRB approved the current research, which enabled me to proceed to the next section. Section 3 includes the implications that the current research had on professionals and the general practice. Section 3 also contains the findings and recommendations regarding how PMs can enhance communication in teams. At the same time, the section contains a discussion of the vital insights into areas of research future researchers might explore and examine. Furthermore, Section 3 included the implications for social change.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore the strategies that PMs in the health care industry use to strengthen communication within project teams. In Section 1, I discussed how PMs must coordinate and integrate various functions through managed communication approaches among various stakeholders (Moura, Carneiro, & Diniz, 2017). PMs must practice effective communication to ensure a positive outcome for a project to limit its failure. However, a significant number of PMs do not possess the required skills in communication, negotiation, planning, and leadership (Project Management for Development Organizations [PM4DEV], 2018). Effective communication is a potential tool that can be used to ascertain PMs' abilities to facilitate approved project outcomes (Ogunde et al., 2017).

The data collection for this qualitative research involved semistructured interviews with nine predetermined questions and a review of company documents. I decided to use the qualitative research method because it enabled me to conduct thematic data analysis. The targeted population was PMs, specifically members of a PMP association who offered their services in the health care sector in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. I selected four participants from two distinct medical supply companies in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States as research respondents. The data selection technique I used helped to ensure that only informed participants participated in data collection. As captured in the themes, the four participants interviewed enhance proper communication planning and management as well as observe communication ethics in their use of specific communication strategies in their project management work.

Presentation of Findings

The aim of this study was to find answers to the following research question: What are the strategies used by PMs in the health care industry to strengthen communication within project teams? Based on the study results, three themes emerged: communication planning, communication management, and communication ethics. The research participants were able to share their responses through a nine-question interview. I integrated their responses with findings from existing literature as well the study's conceptual framework, which consisted of McQuail's (2010) mass communication theory and Craig's (1999) communication theory.

Different issues inspired the need to identify various themes depicted in this particular qualitative research study. Having clear knowledge of data saturation was important while conducting this research. A researcher conducting a qualitative study must recognize that data saturation is an important concept in managing information, according to Saunders et al. (2017). Hence, the identification of the three themes was an important undertaking that enabled me to ascertain consistency in data analysis. Each of the three identified themes encompasses strategies that can be used to strengthen communication for a project team. These strategic themes are communication planning, communication management, and communication ethics.

Theme 1: Communication Planning

The first theme to emerge was the importance of communication planning when PMs communicate with their clients and project teams. The theme specifically revolved around the idea that PMs must be responsible for promoting a collaborative environment with project teams and clients. Moreover, they need to consider the extent to which participants of a project can promote communication among themselves and hence avoid the issue of limited management skills. Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were useful in constructing and expounding on the theme (see Table 2). All of the interviewed participants clarified that communication is a tool that allows for effective service delivery in various projects. Active engagement among major stakeholders of a project prompts an increased level of collaboration, boosts the performance of the success rate of a project, and facilitated a reduced level of risk (PMI, 2018, “Pulse of the Profession”). The explanation here is that an approach to strengthen communication among PMs is ensured through an analysis of the extent to which team members are able to collaborate because of the intended project outcomes. Communication is a tool that promotes interactions in a group through coordination. According to Participant 1, team engagement is a necessary element to promote communication planning.

For the purposes of authenticating these responses, I performed an intensive review of the company’s annual reports for FY17. As evident in the report, the company continuously makes information available to all employees through a variety of communication channels. For instance, the company actively used newsletters and social media to keep their employees informed of latest developments. My review confirmed the notion that communication is critical to the development of an organization.

The significance of this theme was consistent with the study's conceptual framework, especially McQuail's (2010) mass communication theory. In line with the findings of the study, McQuail's theory emphasizes the importance of collaborative communication in group work. According to the framework, communication facilitates the ability to compel, in which a person is able to exercise dominancy with an intention to facilitate shared information and, more so, ensure that a group responds to the intended goals (McQuail, 2010). Besides confirming the validity of the framework, Theme 1 was consistent with the findings of Butchibabu, Sparano-Huiban, Sonenberg, and Shah (2016). In their research, Butchibabu et al. showed that effective information sharing required coordination among group members. Alternatively, there is an explicit level of coordination, in which PMs request that information be shared among team members in order to increase the degree of association (Butchibabu et al., 2016). Collectively, the conceptual framework, Butchibabu et al.'s research, and the findings of this study delineated the importance of the PMs ensuring that a team achieves the set objectives. In doing so, communication can be a tool to exert power and allow the team members to interact for the benefit of successful outcomes.

Further, the findings highlighted the importance of embracing teamwork during communication processes. Interestingly, all four research participants stated that teamwork interventions are effective ways to promote performance within a group. This observation is consistent with what McEwan, Ruissen, Eys, Zumbo, and Beauchamp

(2017) noted in their article. The scholars contend the necessity for teamwork interventions is for the welfare of all members since this strategy is crucial in enhancing team effectiveness within project teams. Further, McEwan et al. (2017) noted that teams should make sure that maintaining the operations of a project occurs through teamwork.

The importance of teamwork when developing communication strategies as delineated in this present study further confirmed the observations by Katz (2015) and Mikhieieva and Waidmann (2017). Consistent with the findings, the scholars revealed the importance of developing collective planning strategies that meet the unique needs and requirements. The implication here is that effective communication occurs only through collective planning processes. For this reason, it is certain that for this happen; business leaders must set clear goals and expectations to build strong relations not only among co-workers but also with external players. Effectively, these observations confirmed the importance of the unification of the communication strategies as delineated by the used conceptual framework. As already highlighted, Craig’s communication theory emphasized the significance of unifying the communication strategies by analyzing the similarities and variances of communication and depicting how specific elements relate to specific subject fields. One can now affirm that effective communication is fundamental to organizational performance. Undoubtedly, the aim of every organization is to ensure the feedback offered meets the desired goals. To achieve this, communication plays a vital role in communicating the desired goals to all the major stakeholders. Indeed, Rider et al. (2014) posit that the essence of boosting organizational trust and loyalty is entrenched in focusing communication on individual needs while also providing information with the necessary feedback. In other words, loyalty and trust are crucial elements in fostering healthy relationships within organizations and among teams.

Table 2

Participants' Mentions of Communication Planning Strategy

Source	No. Reference	Percentage[a]
Participant 1, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 8	9	83%
Participant 2, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4	8	80%
Participant 3, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 8	4	56%
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4	9	71%

([a]Percentage values are rounded off to the nearest whole number)

Theme 2: Communication Management

The responses to questions 2, 4, and 8 of the interview questions regarding the influences of communication strategies in managing team projects highlighted the importance of communication management (see table 3). Hence, ample evidence existed regarding the emergent theme of communication management in project teams. The responses from the four participants rated over 50%, indicating how the participants considered the importance for the PMs to embrace the ideal of communication management. The identification of how communication can be ascertained through formal and informal channels as indicated by the findings was a crucial element in the practice of PM. Therefore, one can note that different communication media allows PMs to gather various types of information to assist to achieve the set goals.

As observed from the responses of Participant 1 and 4 in this study, communication management is an integral tool that influences productivity. This finding is consistent with Gaur (2017) observation in which he contemplates that communications management integrates information distribution, creation, collection, as well as distribution. The implication is that PMs must create a plan that ensures proper organization of information to ensure that the relevant parties are aware of their expectations. These observations are consistent with the review of the company's filed reports. Across the entire site, it was evident that clear information about various issues related to reports such as financial statements, cash flow statements, and audit statements was well organized. Notably, the site is designed in such a manner that even the less educated can easily follow and access a specific report. Evidence from this facility delineated the importance of good communication strategies in the management of organizational resources.

The findings of the study closely aligned with the findings of Nkanunye and Obiechina (2017) who found that communication management is attained within a group by facilitating the ability for an individual to promote awareness. Specifically, in the health care setting, obtaining information assists individuals in receiving or imparting influence to others to improve patients' health (Nkanunye & Obiechina, 2017).

One can also appreciate the influences of successful communication strategies for project team through Craig's communication theory. A peculiar characteristic of Craig's theory is that the framework identified the working nature of human communication (Kuehn, 2016). In other words, communication practices are effective in influencing the failures of a project based on individuals' ways of engagement. Managers with the ability to recognize the operations of their organizations are able to capture the behavioral human patterns and hence influence the outcome of project teams (Kuehn, 2016). The explanation of Craig's theory is that perceptions of understanding the working of a team prompt a sense of influences among its members (Craig, 1999). Hence, the PMs can appreciate the fact that creating a firm foundation for communication is through different influences.

There are other influences of communication that work for the effective operations of an organization. Question 8 of the interview questions was applicable in providing significant influences faced by a PM. The question asked about the communication strategies that a PM applied to be compatible with the workplace setting and specific attributes of project teams. Participant 3 considered that communication influenced individual's ability to adjust. This is closely associated with Mutisya (2016)'s observations which posit that upward communication "influences personnel and operational decisions, as well as adjustments in policies and strategy." Alternatively, a manager can influence the level of communication flow and the intended productivity among employees. Further, Mutisya provided the aspect of team meetings and the extent to which a leader can exert communication due to the intended engagement. Hence, the author pointed out that individual's personality of manager by exhibiting extrovert attributes influence organizational team meetings. For example, research has documented that PMs have considered trustworthiness to be a communication strategy used to influence stakeholders' expectations. Generally, project owners and customers stay in the loop of project performance. PMs need to communicate with the customers and business owners concerning progress made and reporting performance. Therefore, there is an importance for project managers to embrace the art of flexibility in their practice. As noted by the responses in question 7, all project team members are liable to providing accurate information regarding process execution. Ruben and Gigliotti (2017) concurred with this observation by positing that PMs, who are also important component in the teams' performance project, must relay information about work execution, delivery, and progress. They further contend that performance reporting entails the collection and distribution of progress information that requires the entire team to periodically identify, collect, and analyze actual data relating to the project. Cornelissen et al. (2015) share similar sentiments, albeit with slight modifications and noted that all performance related information should have the right format as provided by the organization or through the guidance by business manager/project leader. Team members act as informants by requiring the PM to provide storage facilities to ensure documentation is professional.

Koschmann and McDonald (2015) agreed that in a project setting, the commitments towards achieving set goals depend on effective communication. The corporate world, business, organizational, and public relations, requires leaders to display certain characters and attitudes in motivating their teams. In project communication, PMs must communicate the project targets, results, and discuss these parameters among project team members and towards people committed to the project. As a result, managers can build team spirit by clarifying the scope and project targets, while also creating an avenue for feedback.

Table 3

Participants' Mentions of Communication Management Strategy

Source	No. Reference	Percentage[a]
Participant 1, Interview Questions 2, 4, 8	6	51%
Participant 2, Interview Questions 2, 4, 8	8	75%
Participant 3, Interview Questions 2, 4, 8	7	63%
Participant 4, Interview Questions 2, 4, 8	7	67%

([a]Percentage values are rounded off to the nearest whole number)

Theme 3: Communication Ethics

The importance of observing communication ethics is another theme that emerged from responses. The four research participants involved in this study responded to all 9 questions including questions 4 and 5 in the list of interview questions. These two questions addressed the barriers that the face and how they provided solutions during their practice as PMs. Participant 1 noted that he often gets demotivated whenever his supervisor communicates with him with arrogance. On the same note, Participant 2 echoed similar sentiments by positing that poor communication is a distraction to work motivation. Participant 3 argued that it is important for managers to communicate with their juniors in a manner that demonstrates a certain degree of respect. On the same token, Participant 4 contemplated that an organization can only move forward by embracing the art communication ethics. Apparently, the responses from the four participants pointed to the theme of communication ethics emerged. To confirm the validity of the participants’ responses, I critically analyzed the company’s strategic plans to evaluate how the PMs communicated the plans to employees. Across all the strategic plans, the company had put in place clear communication guidelines to guide how PMs communicate with their juniors. In particular, the PMs were required to communicate with their subordinates in a manner that demonstrated human dignity.

A number of recently published studies and sources confirmed the importance of the theme of communication ethics. In most of the sources, it is apparent that communication ethics is one of the strategies found out in the research findings that PMs in the health care industry use while working hard to strengthen communication within their respective project teams. Thomas and Mengel (2008) confirm these findings by positing that since different stakeholders make up project teams, the basis of all forms of communication should include strong ethical consideration. Simply, they posited that by observing the high codes of communication ethics, project team members will be able to engage fully in the project implementation since there will be positive communication.

To observe ethical communication, all the four research participants reported that they consider the removal of all the barriers that might hamper the positive interaction within the project teams. These barriers include but not limited to psychological barriers, economic barriers, political barriers and cultural barriers. However, in spite of these barriers, the participants agreed that their PMs always embraced the appropriate ethics while interacting with other project stakeholders. It is therefore essential for the PMs to adopt the highest level of the communication ethics whenever they provide their professional services in the stakeholder management segments of the project teams. Participant 1 and 2 argued further by positing that ethical communication results to positive organizational outcomes. Similar sentiments by Araujo Galvão, Abadia, Parizzotto, de Castro Souza Pião, and de Carvalho (2017), who posited that ethical management in project implementation is an essential strategy that determines the outcome of the project teams' desired goals.

First, Araujo Galvão, et al. (2017) explained that holding to a code of ethics ensures that all decisions made by the project teams are in alignment with the projected missions of the given group. Secondly, it is important for the PMs to enhance ethical communication since the idea results in admirable actions that are always to the best interest of not only the project in implementation, but also the stakeholders involved in the whole process (Araujo Galvão, et al., 2017). PMI (2018) concurred with these observations by recommending the appropriate values to achieve the ethical conduct in communication. For instance, being fair, responsible, honest, and respectful enables one to discharge high leadership qualities to the project team. In the end, the teams led by such a PMP potentially enjoy ethical communication that results in both faster and proper decision-making process. This benefits the project team since there would be high chances of achieving the set goals during the implementation period.

In terms of barriers to communication ethics, Perić, Đurkin, and Lamot (2014) complement the study’s findings by claiming that marginalization of some stakeholders in the project team can impede effective communication during the project implementation process. Additionally, marginalization plays an observable role in weakening the cohesiveness of the project teams. This form of poor communication results in the divisions within a single team mandated to implement a significant project within the health care sector. Intragroup marginalization results in the interpersonal distancing since it is a poor form of communication. To avoid such distancing within the project teams, the four respondents said that they observe communications ethics to satisfy all the stakeholders (Perić et al., 2014).

In sum, the findings concerning the importance of communication ethics allude to the need for PMs to take into consideration the interests of all stakeholders. To achieve this, project managers should always ensure the fair treatment of the personnel. At the same time, the findings and literature confirm the importance of mastering the diplomacy art as a strategy to achieving communication ethics. This means that project managers should be more proactive while managing stakeholders as team members will not always be right. It is by being able to control the discussion sessions that will determine if the leaders are on the right path towards achieving the project's mission or are being defeated by the communication barriers sired by team members. Collectively, the findings presented by respondents and the explored literature mirror the observations made by the used conceptual framework. McQuail's mass communication theory concurred with research findings by advocating for the importance addressing the integration of multiple factors during communication processes. The theory provides the lens to explore different elements for developing and implementing successful strategies that PMs can embrace to strengthen communication within project teams.

Table 4

Participants' Mentions of Communication Ethics Strategy

Source	No. Reference	Percentage[a]
Participant 1, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 5	7	64%
Participant 2, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 5	6	56%
Participant 3, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 8	6	57%
Participant 4, Interview Questions 1, 2, 4, 5	8	77%

([a]Percentage values are rounded off to the nearest whole number)

Application to Professional Practice

The basis and foundation of this study was the problem that PMs are good communicators yet they fail to communicate effectively. Hence, the present research contributes towards the field of project management in many ways. PMs can learn about communication management and planning as strategies that can strengthen interaction among stakeholders through increased motivation (Borca & Baesu, 2014), improved project's success rate (Vartiak, 2015), increased profitability level (Mentula, 2015), and development of a team in a positive manner (Royal College of Physicians, 2017). In the end, the entire community benefits from efficient communication within a project.

I identified communication planning, communication management, and communication ethics as crucial strategies that enhance interaction within a project team. There is a unique development of the former strategy. A consistent approach that PMs can apply to promote active engagement is through an increased level of collaboration since this arrangement raises performance of a project team (PMI, 2018). All participants of this study agreed that PMs can use communication management as an approach to promote relevance and accuracy within a project. There is benefit for team members due to open communication since there is a sustained link between respect and one's knowledge (Verghese, 2017). The findings of this study can be essential to PMs as they can appreciate different approaches to develop and integrate communication strategies.

Furthermore, observing communication ethics within project implementation processes is not only beneficial to the project managers but also to the entire project team as it enhances good communication during the process of project implantation. Basing on the findings of this particular research, PMs in the health care sector can appreciate the strength of diversity as a way of promoting communication ethics during serious decision-making processes. Precisely, accepting the strength of diversity will mean that project managers incorporate the views of the project team members regardless of their political, cultural, social, or economic status. Besides, treating both men and women fairly within the project implementation processes will likely increase the chances of such particular projects to succeed as planned.

Moreover, internal communications required that PMs are able to influence success of a project through making major changes that result in profitability of a business. Since strengthening communication strategies necessitates an adoption of a practical approach such as identifying crucial stakeholders and management skills, PMs can learn how to achieve such a reality from the current work. Profitability and success of a business are guided through effective internal communications since employees' satisfaction is attained (Ylitolva, 2015). Consequently, PMs may apply the resulting findings and consider the manner in which they can communicate effectively through internal communications. The benefit of internal communication application is that the arrangement promotes an increased level of intellectual capital (Ylitolva, 2015). In the end, PMs are able to enhance effective business operations since an increased intellectual capacity is a potential towards improved organizational practices and hence elevated profit margins for a business.

Implications for Social Change

The necessity for project communication strategies is that these techniques prompt an increased level of positive social change through raised motivation capacity, high level of business profits, and overall benefits to communities. When PMs enhance a meaningful communication arrangement, they are able to inform the stakeholders of a project and hence motivate them to support the proposed plan. Eventually, the team members are able to develop positive attitudes to the resulting changes. To mobile people, a leader is required have good mobilization ability (Korbi, 2015). The findings from the current study assist PMs to identify that creating collaboration is an approach geared towards generating significant level of business profits. PMs have to engage in constructive association with the external relevant stakeholders of a project for better performance.

The present study entailed the researcher to interact with participants who shared their firsthand experiences about ways to strengthen communication strategies within project teams. By the help of the interview questions, the four professional respondents gave a deep insight on the strategies they employ to enhance effective communication within their respective projects. Furthermore, the participants were able to highlight some social implications that their previous strategies bore after application in the real health care project management practice. All the four research respondents were able to distinguish communication as a skill to enhance social sustainability. Investigation indicates that cultural values influence the norms of communication (Korbi, 2015). PMs can learn different ways of promoting positive social change, as they are able to appreciate the fact that communication is an art and a technique to achieve communal needs. For instance, a study done on community development projects (CDF) in Kenya indicated that community participation influences timely completion of a project (Muchiri, 2014). Therefore, the role of PMs is to create a favorable environment that ensures collaboration to meet the expected communal gains from a project. The results of this research work enhance the applicability of vital knowledge about communication arrangements in a team to impact positive change.

The basic understanding that the current study aims to promote is the necessity to create effective communication and selection of best approach to influence successful project for PMs. Based on the mentioned explanation, there is a clear indication that PMs can benefit from crucial and strengthened communication processes for a project. Studies argue that the level of competency for PMs influences success of a project through a combination of the ‘right skills and individuals involved' (Payne et al., 2011). As a result, the social change impact attributed to the findings for the current study is that community members can learn their role in facilitating success of a project. Community members strongly influence the conducting and transparency regarding community projects intended for their benefit.

Further, the study delineates the importance of the adoption of effective communication skills during health care project implementation because it will result in the improvement of the health sector. Improved health sector is important for the wellbeing of the people as they can access quality services due to the success of implementing relevant projects that address the fundamental issues affecting the health consumers. In addition, improving health results in the improvement of other factors, such as political and economic aspects is paramount. For instance, sound health among communal people results in increased exploitation of resources that result in the growth of the respective economy. The health of a nation relies on the proper health care policies which come as a result of implementing proper health care projects. Therefore, adopting desirable strategies that enhance proper communication during project implementation will result in positive social impacts.

Recommendations for Action

The current work provided crucial findings that PMs might implement to improve project success rates through using effective communication during the project implementation processes. The findings of this study are of potential benefit for the project managers more so in the health care sector because of subjection to a myriad of significant strategies that can enhance effective communication while managing their respective projects. Notably, the crucial role is for PMs to identify ways to strengthen communication strategies that will result in the attainment of the project goals. A similar approach leads to improved business profitability and positive growth for a business in additional to increased appreciation of affected communities.

Moreover, the communication planning, communication management, and communication ethics themes provided the foundation for the recommendation actions for PMs to strengthen their communication strategies to ensure significant success of a project. The lack of communication within a team results in disconnected organizational levels (Zerfass et al., 2017), negative effect on project progressions in different industries (Römmele & Schober, 2013), increased government spending to fund professional researchers on ways to manage project failure due to infective communications (Römmele & Schober, 2013), and a lack of motivation and the inability to meet organizational objectives (Hirst & Mann, 2004). From the evidences depicted in the existing literature discussed, it is therefore true that project team members, project managers, organizations and government all stand to benefit from adoption of the strengthening communication strategies discussed in this research study. The following are the refined recommendations for action:

To maintain cooperation, PMs must understand that a project team requires a collaborative environment to achieve effective communication. The value of team building is important since its leaders are able to influence changes. Project development entails the ability to convince stakeholders to pursue a certain path due to resulting benefits. I recommend that PMs understand their level of competencies to manage a situation. Zulch (2014) articulated that PMs must recognize their style of leadership, its effect, and influences on project management as these attributes play a central role in promoting effective project completion. Further, Zulch (2014) added that communication is the foundation for basic components of projects such as cost, time, and quality as well as a pathway for achieving management of human resources, finance, and risks. The primary understanding here is that effective project communication by PMs positively influences efficient management of a project.

PMs might struggle to achieve success without considering active involvement of major stakeholders through effective communication. The recommendation is that PMs can ensure efficient and strengthened communication strategy through analysis of project outcomes. Hence, communication planning becomes a crucial action since the process can enhance the ability to achieve and sustain team engagement. Participant 1, 2 and 4 agreed that PMs cannot exert influence if they fail to share the intended objectives of a project in the most appropriate manner. Similarly, McQuail's theory of communication outlines that an individual exercises dominance with the sole intention to facilitate an expressed response to intended project goals (McQuail, 2010). Therefore, PMs must explicitly coordinate the performance of team members to ensure beneficial gains. The arrangement of communication planning also incorporates teamwork interventions through which PMs are responsible for enhancing team effectiveness.

The theme of communication planning I identified in the study supports the recommendation that PMs needs to understand communication system, methods, and styles as strategies to strengthen project communication. There are crucial benefits of this recommendation. According to Zulch (2014), planned times to meet as a team, discuss, as well as maintain communication records and avail them to team members promote communication. PMs are responsible for improved communication to ensure effective decision-making to influence the level of quality for a project (Zulch, 2014). I recommend that PMs develop an effective organizational structure that assists to identify, manage, and act upon stakeholders' opinions as indicated by Zulch (2014) since they are at the heart of information control system.

Communication is a tool that influences productivity. The communication management theme supports the proposal that using personal ability and intellectual capacity can be a crucial development for PMs. According to McQuail's mass communication theory, a person can use his or her intellectual capacity to stimulate other people's reactions (McQuail, 2010). The implication is that PMs can develop a plan that assists to capture the expectations of different stakeholders involved in a project. In this case, I recommend PMs to increase the level of awareness for organizational objectives by taking the perceptions of various involved team members into consideration. Studies indicated that managers who recognize organizational operations are able to discern behavioral human patterns and, consequently, influence the extent to which project outcomes are achieve because they have already developed a sense of working within a team (Kuehn, 2016).

The findings on various strategies to develop a strengthened communication approach for PMs are significant. In the same manner, the results affect different types of audiences since communicating effectively within a team is an initiative that facilitates personal and organizational growth. Other interested parties include health care professionals, community leaders, and business leaders. The need for them to be interested in the study is to ensure that these professionals understand the manner in which they can deliver projects through an effective communication strategy. Further, academicians and researchers might need the current study to advance their knowledge on ways to ensure a strengthened communication strategy for a project success. Moreover, I will disseminate the results in other ways. I will have the opportunity to present the findings of this study before the Oral Conference or DBA Doctoral Study Oral Conference. In particular, I will have the chance to present the findings of this study before the Oral Conference with the aim of convincing them of my academic credentials. Additionally, I intend to submit articles for publication in peer-reviewed journal such, as peer-reviewed journal, Research Journal of Finance and Accounting, and Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development among others.

Recommendations for Further Research

I confined the current research to an investigation of the strategies that PMs in the health care industry use to strengthen communication within project teams. Therefore, the purpose of this particular study serves as a primary limitation for this qualitative study. Specifically, the study failed to address other strategies appropriate for adoption by PMs in the health care sector while trying to strengthen the communication during project implementation process. There was also a limitation of the reliability of the study findings due to the small population size of only four PMs in two health care centers in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Hence, a recommendation for future study conducted is to use larger sample of subjects with project management skills as PMs and non-PMs from different sectors and geographical location. A future study ought to show

how data saturation of its sample shared divergent perspectives or experiences of their inquiry. Wu, Thompson, Aroian, McQuaid, and Deatrick (2016) argued that there is the need to decide on effect of sample size based on its context of evaluating and determining its influence on findings. In this case, a future qualitative study can contribute to an understanding of how PMs can employ communication strategies for increased project success.

Furthermore, the use of a case study represents a generalized way in which PMs consider project communication as an effective strategy for achieving project success. As a matter of fact, a solution should be to consider using different professions with project management skills to understand complex situations in which they have been able to promote effective performance through strengthened communication strategies. Moreover, the results of a quantitative research can enhance an understanding of communication strategies that PMs can employ to boost employees' engagement, productivity, and overall profitability. The current study aimed to clarify the experiences and influences of communication strategies for PMs. To ensure that the participants engage in the discussion in a most meaningful manner, a phonological study could be required. The subjects here are able to express their firsthand experiences and thus the phonological approach assists to capture crucial knowledge on effective communication strategies that result in sustainable project gains.

Reflections

A famous quote by Edwards Deming stipulates that, “If you can't describe what you are doing as a process, you don't know what you're doing”. Following this saying, it could be a challenge to me if I cannot reflect about the entire research work I had to accomplish for the entire doctoral study. My primary aim was to present a high-quality doctoral study based on the DBA Doctoral Study document. Hence, I was keen on these components. I developed and structured a research question to depict the communication strategies that PMs in health care field use in their project management task. Precisely, the aim of this research was to answer the question: what strategies do PMs in the health care industry use to strengthen communication within project teams? Preliminary results confirmed my presumption that PMs facilitate communication process among project teams. To maintain the scope of the study, I limited the strategies that PMs can utilize to boost the employees' engagement, productivity, and overall profitability. Meanwhile, I had to explore the impact of communication strategies to employees' engagement, productivity, and corporate profitability.

While conducting the DBA Doctoral Study was quite an advanced development of research work that I had performed, the process not only subjected me to understanding approaches to conducting a research study but also my areas for improvement. The project was a foundation to advance my skills in research methods, conceptual and empirical designs, as well as data analysis for a qualitative research. Regarding data collection procedure, I presumed that conducting an interview and presenting semistructured interviews were straightforward methods. Unfortunately, this preconception was inaccurate because I experienced challenges in scheduling timelines with PMs Professionals, let alone interviewing them. The actual moment of conducting the interviews was an interesting one. This is because I employed the teleconferencing advancing technology while collecting data from the respondents. Besides, I was able to ensure consistency in maintaining the required interview protocol (see Appendix A). All the involved participants positively responded to the presented questions. As I had prepared well to capture their responses, I took note of their answers in addition to recording them to ascertain that I maintained accuracy. Moreover, I was keen to note their emotions and behaviors when I asked them various questions. To avoid the lack of focus, I was able to control the interviewee's during the interaction session until its end. Furthermore, I was able to capture the details of communication planning, communication management and communication ethics as strategies for strengthening communication by PMs. The interviewed professionals were not new to project management as they were interested to work in this field. Additionally, I eliminated cases of boredom since the professionals were keen to share their experiences in project management and how they felt communication was fundamental to facilitate project success. In the end, I was excited to note that PMs need to strengthen communication within project teams as a strategy to boost the employees' engagement, productivity, and overall profitability.

Conclusion

The present study advances the literature on strategies for PMs to strengthen communication among team members of a project. In addition, the outcomes have shown that PMs' skills assist to improve the effectiveness of organizational communications (Butchibabu et al., 2016). Another interesting fact is that the current findings contributes towards knowledge through which PMs can rely on evidence-based information to enhance the strategic management of communication and attain increased productivity and profitability in projects which may eventually benefit the local communities.

According to Muszyńska (2016), implementation of any project aims at strengthening the capacity of existing organization or individuals through resource management. The present study thus contributes to approaches through which communication strategy can connect success and project management. By answering the research question through data collection and analysis, I have been able to confirm that communication support the ability to reach the intended changes in a proposed plan because of its role as a strategic management function. The identified themes have assisted to affirm that communication is a process that consists of sharing messages. Communication is also an arrangement to engage and empower stakeholders in a persuasive manner (Zulch, 2014). The multiple case study and locations may entail a development in the quality of evidence presented. These enhancements could contribute to future training in optimal communication skills, which is a primary objective for PMs to enable them to strengthen communication within their business-oriented project teams.

The current work had some implication on social change. Effective communications make PMs accomplish the central role of ensuring that the project team (employees) initiates, plans, designs, executes, monitors, and controls the project, as expected for business's success. The implication is that there is a profitability level created since the stakeholders are able to collaborate in a meaningful manner (Payne et al., 2011). Eventually, there is economic sustainability due to the fact that different stakeholders are now able to increase their level of association through a communication process, which results in raised levels of interaction among the team members.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Action	**Script**
Introduction and stage setting	Hello. I am <fill in as appropriate>. I am pursuing a doctoral degree in business administration (DBA) from Walden University. I am grateful to you for taking part in my research on strategies adoptable by project managers to enhance communication among project team members. The title for my research is - Project Managers (PMs) Strategies for Strengthening Communications within Project Teams/ Revision of previous papers. Each interview session will take 45-60 minutes. Responses from the interviews will be recorded for further reference during data analysis. I will as well conduct member-checking sessions prior to compiling the final report for the research study. I will send your

	(appropriate) copies of interview transcripts prior to the member-checking sessions. Please feel free to give your responses to the best of your knowledge. Honesty and candidness in responses will be highly appreciated. Please take note that there is no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. In case you have any questions regarding the interview sessions, please ask right away. I will be glad to respond to them prior to commencing with the session. Okay. We will then get down to the sessions, and we start with the first interview question.
	Interview Questions

a. Listen for verbal queues **b.** Paraphrase as needed **c.** Ask follow-up probing questions to get more indepth	1. What strategies do you use to strengthen communication within project teams? 2. What strategies have been the most effective in enhancing communication within project teams, and why? 3. How do you select the best strategy to apply in influencing successful communication for particular project teams? 4. What barriers did you encounter when implementing strategies to strengthen communication for project teams? 5. How did you address the key barriers to better communicate within your project teams? 6. What metrics do you use to measure the success of a communication strategy? 7. What are your experiences on any add-ons or tools that you can integrate with the communication strategies to augment their success?

	8. What changes have you applied to your communication strategies to make them compatible with the workplace setting and specific attributes of project teams? 9. What other information would you like to share regarding the development and implementation of strategies to strengthen communication within project teams that we have not discussed?
Wrap up of the interview session	Thank you so much for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, Please proceed. I will be glad to respond to it (them).
Schedule for follow-up, member-checking session(s)	I will want to have follow-up, member-checking session with you two weeks from now (before compiling the final research report). I will get in-touch with you when the right time comes to set the exact date and time for the session.
Follow-up, Member-Checking Session for Interview	
Action	**Transcript**

Introduction and stage setting	Hello. Thank you once again for accepting to participate in this follow-up, member-checking session. In this session, we will review the interview questions (as asked in the previous session) and countercheck your responses (as given in the previous session). In this session, please be precise and objective in your responses since no answer should exceed one paragraph. If you have any questions, please ask them. I will be glad to respond to them before starting the session. Okay. Now we may start with the first question.
Share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each individual question. Bring in probing questions related to other information that may have been found— information must be related so that probing and adhering to the IRB approval. Walk through each	I will now share the interview transcript for our previous session. Please open the transcript and let us go through each question and answers given to verify whether the interpretation I made was correct. I will ask you questions as needed to clarify on the responses. In case you need to add anything to

question, read the interpretation and ask: Did I miss anything? Or, What would you like to add?	your previous response, please feel free to do so.
	1. What strategies do you use to strengthen communication within project teams? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	2. What strategies have been the most effective in enhancing communication within project teams, and why? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	3. How do you select the best strategy to apply in influencing successful communication for particular project teams? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?

	4. What barriers did you encounter when implementing strategies to strengthen communication for project teams? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	5. How did you address the key barriers to better communicate within your project teams? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	6. What metrics do you use to measure the success of a communication strategy? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	7. What are your experiences on any add-ons or tools that you can integrate with the communication strategies to augment their success?

	1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	8. What changes have you applied to your communication strategies to make them compatible with the workplace setting and specific attributes of project teams? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
	9. What other information would you like to share regarding the development and implementation of strategies to strengthen communication within project teams that we have not discussed? 1. Succinct synthesis of response 2. Ask did I miss anything or is there anything you would like to add?
Wrap up of the interview session	Thank you so much for your time and consideration. If you have any questions,

	Please proceed. I will be glad to respond to it (them).