

# Employee Outcomes of Effective Internal Communication: A Case Study of Manufacturing Firm in Thailand

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine internal communication quality on employee outcomes including organizational commitment and job satisfaction in a manufacturing firm. Objectives include establishing a theoretical model of causes and consequences of internal communication. The study has been conducted as an online survey of employees within the organization, including managerial and non-managerial employees, with analysis conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM). The analysis shows that social acceptance of communication (appropriateness and acceptability) influenced perceptions of two dimensions of communication quality (flow and content). Perceptions of organizational communication structure, flow, content, and climate positively influenced internal communications quality perceptions, while employee resistance to change negatively influenced internal communications quality perceptions. The study also demonstrates that internal communications quality is thus positively associated with commitment and satisfaction while negatively associated

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with continuance commitment. The implication of this research is that internal communications research needs to examine employee characteristics more thoroughly.

**Keywords:** Change Resistance, Internal Communication Quality, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment

## ผลลัพธ์ต่อพนักงานที่เกิดจากประสิทธิภาพการสื่อสาร ภายใน: กรณีศึกษาของบริษัทผู้ผลิตในประเทศไทย

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### บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาคุณภาพการสื่อสารภายในองค์กรว่าจะมีผลต่อพนักงาน รวมถึงความมุ่งมั่นที่มีต่อองค์กรและความพึงพอใจในงานการผลิต การศึกษาใช้แบบสำรวจออนไลน์ กับพนักงานภายในองค์กรทั้งที่เป็นผู้บริหารและพนักงานทั่วไป การวิเคราะห์ที่ใช้เครื่องมือที่ชื่อ Structural Equation Model (SEM) การศึกษาครั้งนี้ พบว่า สังคมยอมรับว่าการสื่อสาร (ความเหมาะสมและการยอมรับ) มีอิทธิพลต่อคุณภาพการสื่อสาร (ช่องทางและเนื้อหา) โครงสร้าง การสื่อสารช่องทาง เนื้อหา และบรรยากาศมีผลต่อคุณภาพการสื่อสารภายในองค์กรทั้งสิ้น แต่ การต่อต้านต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงของพนักงานในเรื่องการเปลี่ยนแปลงคุณภาพการสื่อสารภายใน องค์กรมีผลต่อการรับรู้ภายในองค์กร การศึกษายังแสดงให้เห็นว่าคุณภาพการสื่อสารภายในองค์กร มีความสัมพันธ์เชิงบวกกับความมุ่งมั่นและความพึงพอใจ แต่กลับมีความสัมพันธ์เชิงลบกับความมุ่งมั่น ระยะยาว จุดเด่นของกรณีศึกษานี้ คือ มีการค้นพบว่าการสื่อสารภายในองค์กรจำเป็นต้องมีการตรวจสอบองค์ความรู้ของพนักงานในเชิงลึกด้วย

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## 1. Introduction

This research examines internal communication from the perspective of a case study of a large Thai manufacturer. Internal communication refers to a set of communication practices, strategies and structures that connect individuals at different levels of the organization (Welch & Jackson, 2007). Internal communication can include formal strategies or informal strategies, formalized role-based relationships and informal personal relationships, and interaction between different levels of the organization, such as individual, team, or even business unit (Welch & Jackson, 2007). The process of organizational communication can occur at multiple levels and has multiple meanings within and between organizations (Cheney, Christensen, Zorn, & Ganesh, 2010). Internally, organizational communication influences the organization's structure and effectiveness, formation of organizational culture and organizational identity, formation and maintenance of personal and group relationships and social networks, and information sharing and decision processes. Externally, organizational communication influences supplier and buyer relationships, regulatory and market relationships, and interorganizational relationships (Cheney, et al., 2010). Thus, organizational communication can be a highly complex area that is often poorly defined (Feldner & D'Urso, 2010). At the same time, it is known to have far-reaching consequences within the organization, and as a result it must be acknowledged as a concern.

Internal communication is one of the topics studied under the umbrella of organizational communication, a field devoted to understanding how individuals, groups or teams, and organizations communicate both internally and externally (Feldner & D'Urso, 2010). However, there are many gaps in the research in this area. One of these gaps is that the study of internal communication has mostly taken place in Western organizations, typically using qualitative analysis (Vercic, Vercic, & Sriramesh, 2012). Cultural differences in communication preferences, which are formed by cultural ideas like time perceptions, notions of hierarchy, power and others, mean that organizational communication can vary substantially between different countries and even within individual countries (Cheney, et al., 2010). Another gap relates to firm size, which is known to affect communications; for example, a study on CSR policies found that large firms had formalized communication strategies that addressed this issue while small firms do not have such formal policies, and may not communicate routinely at all about CSR

(Graafland, Van de Ven, & Stoffele, 2003). At the same time, internal communication in small firms, unhindered by formal policies and procedures, may be faster and more flexible than one employed in larger firms, which can provide a significant advantage for some activities like innovation and management development (Gray & Mabey, 2005). However, many researches have taken place only in small firms. This research focusing on internal communication in a large Thai company will help address these gaps and improve understanding of internal communication beyond Western cultures.

## 2. Organizational and Internal Communications

Organizational communication is a complex and interdisciplinary topic, which exists at the intersection of communication theory and organizational theory (Miller & Barbour, 2015). This leads to myriad theoretical and pragmatic perspectives on organizational communication, which will address issues such as power, control, inequality, organizational justice, internal and external relationships, organizations as systems, and etc. One of these perspectives is institutional theory which distinguishes between microphenomena (individual communication events) and macrophenomena (broader communication structures, arrangements and so on) (Lammers & Barbour, 2006). Internal communication may be defined as “the communication flow among people within the boundaries of an organization (Mazzei, 2010, p. 221).” This perspective accounts for both the microphenomena of communication events and the macrophenomena of communication flows.

There are several models of internal communication available, of which the most comprehensive is provided by Welch and Jackson (2007). They addressed the role of internal communication in response to Van Riel’s (1994) model of organizational communication, which views internal communication primarily as managerial communication, or one-way, downward communication through formal channels. This model is deemed to be too unidirectional and too driven by a public relations perspective, viewing employees as an undifferentiated communication target rather than a set of diverse stakeholders. In response, Welch and Jackson (2007) choose a stakeholder-based perspective on internal communication, identifying different types of internal communication based on the stakeholder groups to which they were directed, such as employees, management coalitions and groups, supervisors, project teams, and working teams. This stakeholder-based model is also adopted here.

## 2.1 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is modeled as a combination of social acceptance and communication structure. Social acceptance including perceived appropriateness of the communication channels and acceptability of the communication message, has been found to influence perceptions of communication flow quality and content quality (Welch, 2012). Welch (2012) found that the perception of the communication itself – the channels through which it flowed and the content it included – affected the perceived quality of the communication. However, he did not find that these characteristics influenced the culture or context of communication (Welch, 2012). In fact, since perceived appropriateness and acceptability are culturally determined, the causality could be the other way. Thus, perceived appropriateness and acceptability apply to the communication itself, rather than the context or culture of the communication process and the structure of communications within the organization. Thus, this research begins with the proposed relationships:

Hypothesis 1: Social acceptance of communication, including (a) perceived appropriateness and perceived acceptability, will influence assessment of communication quality, including (a) flow quality and (b) content quality.

Components of internal communication include Structure (formal and informal internal communication channels), Flow (the process of communication), Content (what is communicated about), Climate (the organization's emotional and social climate) and Culture (the organizational norms, practices and beliefs of the organization) (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Van Riel and Fombrun (2007), building on the work of Van Riel (1995) proposed that these five components of the internal communication system within the organization were what determined the perceptions of communication quality. For example, the structure of communication channels affects how much communication occurs and how it occurs, while the communications flow determines who has access to communication and how this communication occurs. Different types of communication flows can include one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many interpersonal communications, electronic communications, written communications, and other forms of communication (Van Riel, 1995; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Some common communication flows in modern organizations include printed materials like brochures and handbooks and online communication like email and discussion groups (Welch, 2012). The content

of the communication influences perceived quality because it determines the depth of communication and the relevance of the communication to the workplace (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). For example, an organization where communication content includes issues such as long-term strategic goals and immediate happenings is likely to be perceived as better quality than one where the communication is shallower and less informative. The organizational climate for communication, including the social climate in which the communication occurs, can influence communications quality because it establishes listeners' readiness to receive communications (Van Riel, 1995; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Finally, the culture of communication within the organization determines what types of communications are considered appropriate and how these communications are received (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). For example, in an organization with a culture of very open communications patterns, efforts to exclude information or to only direct it to a small number of receivers could be perceived to degrade communication (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). This research accepts Van Riel and Fombrun's (2007) model of internal communication quality and its five dimensions, positing that each of these five dimensions could influence perceived communications quality within the organization. The hypothesis related to the role of internal communication components is:

Hypothesis 2: Perceived quality of internal communication components, including (a) communications structure, (b) communications flow, (c) communications content, (d) communications climate, and (e) communications culture, influence employee perceptions of internal communication quality.

## **2.2 Employee Resistance**

The novel aspect of this research is the inclusion of employee resistance in perceptions of internal communication quality. Historically, academic researchers in organizational communication have not focused on employee resistance, but rather focusing on policies, procedures, and processes (Mumby, 2005). Research focuses on employee resistance in terms of individual supervisors or processes they view as unjust or inappropriate (Kassing, 2007). However, employee resistance to change can be a powerful force in the organization, especially when efforts are being undertaken to change the organization (Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009). Employee resistance can come from different sources, ranging from technical and policy disagreements with the direction of a change or

the implementation of a policy to perceived threats to self-identity, job security or other fundamental aspects of the individual's role (Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009). Some authors have demonstrated that the perceived quality of change communication does affect change resistance, lowering resistance and increasing change receptivity (Frahm & Brown, 2007; Lewis, 2006). In this study, we considered whether change resistance could negatively affect the perception of internal communication quality, reversing the observed relationship (and potentially testing a co-constituted relationship). This statement was formulated as:

Hypothesis 3: Employee resistance to change will have a negative influence on internal communication quality.

### 2.3 Employee Commitment

This research adopts the three-component model of employee commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), which has been commonly employed. Theoretically, internal communication is considered to be positively associated with organizational commitment, as it enforces organizational trust and the employee's identification within the organization (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007; Vercic, et al., 2011; Welch & Jackson, 2007; Welch, 2011). However, there are only a small number of empirical studies supporting this relationship, consistent with the general trend of internal communication research from a managerial perspective (Ruck & Welch, 2012). Studies that have been conducted generally do show a positive relationship between internal communication and organizational commitment, especially (though not only) affective commitment (Ahmad & Al-Borie, 2012; Bakar, Mustaffa, & Mohamad, 2009; Marchalina & Ahmad, 2017; Mazzei & Ravazzani, 2015; van Vuuren, de Jong, & Seydel, 2007; Zeffane, Tipu, & Ryan, 2011). However, not all studies do have a positive effect, with a few showing either a very weak effect or no effect at all (Tsai, Cheng, & Chang, 2010). This hypothesis is stated as:

Hypothesis 4: Internal communication quality is positively associated with three dimensions of organizational commitment, including (a) affective commitment, (b) normative commitment, and (c) continuance commitment.

### 2.4 Job Satisfaction

The final outcome of this model is job satisfaction, which is defined as “a positive feeling about one's job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics (Robbins & Judge, 2013, p. 75).” This research uses the job characteristics model, which reflects dimensions of



satisfaction including work itself, pay, and promotion possibilities (task related dimensions) and supervisor and co-worker relationships (contextual dimensions) (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Several studies have examined internal communication as part of internal marketing, typically finding that there is a relationship between internal communication and at least some aspects of job satisfaction (Ahmad & Al-Borie, 2012; Al-Hawary, Al-Qudah, Abutayeh, & Al-Zyadat, 2013; Gounaris, 2008; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Tsai, Cheng, & Chang, 2010). However, the approach of these studies has been diversified. One study specifically focuses on employee perspectives on participative decision making (Appelbaum, et al., 2013), which is unusual in a body of research that is mainly managerial in nature and focuses on top-down and one-way communication (Ruck & Welch, 2012). Another study makes connection between logistics, internal communications and job satisfaction (Jacobs, Yu, & Chavez, 2016). Another study chooses to examine transformational leadership as an antecedent (Men, 2014). Meanwhile, Huang and Rundle-Thiele (2014) find that cultural congruence between national culture preferences and organizational practices moderated the internal communication-job satisfaction (Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014). Taken together, these studies support a positive relationship between internal communication and job satisfaction, although they also point to a diversity of theoretical frameworks and perspectives. This research tests the following relationship:

Hypothesis 5: Internal communication quality is positively associated with five dimensions of job satisfaction, including (a) the work itself, (b) pay and benefits, (c) promotion prospects, (d) supervisor relationships, and (e) co-worker relationships.

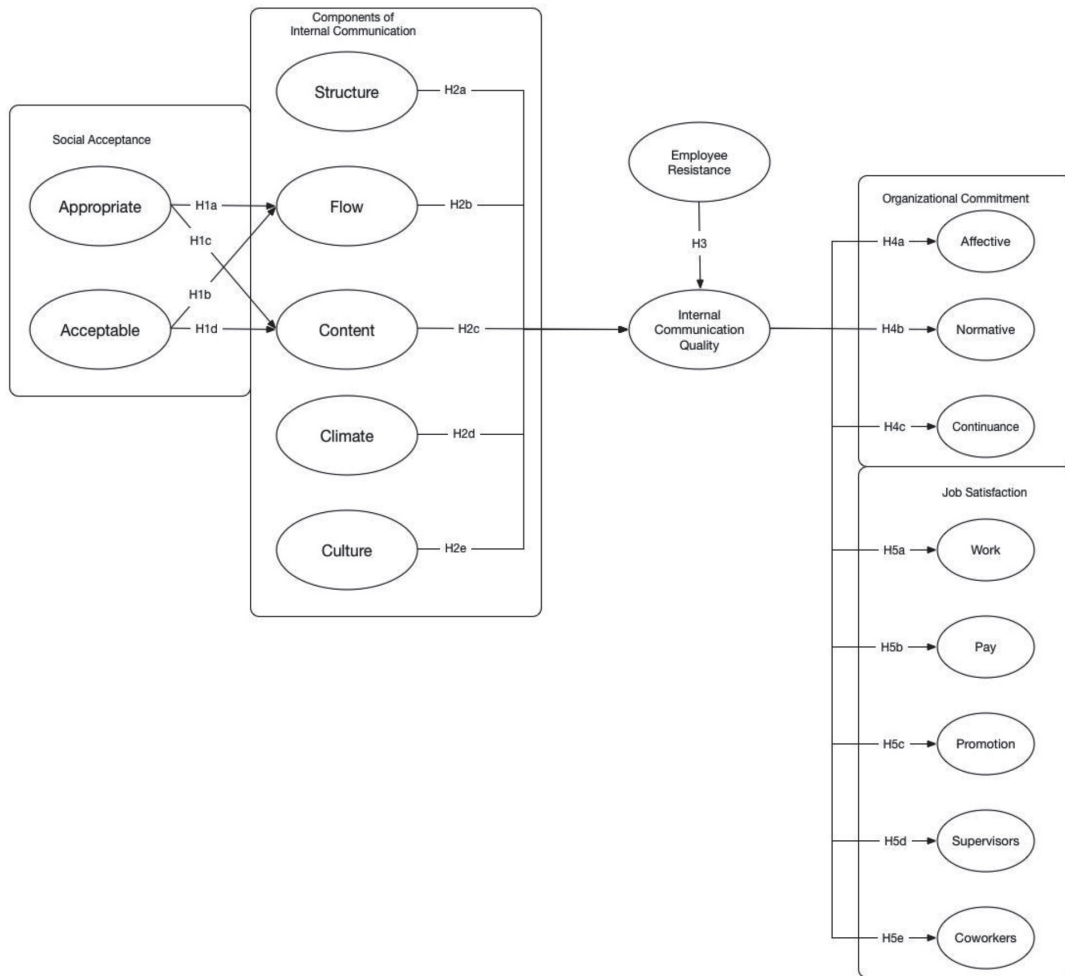


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

The aim of this research is to examine effective internal communication in a Thai firm. Objectives include establishing a theoretical model of causes and consequences of internal communication; Examining this model in the context of AAA Company; and generating recommendations and best practice for Thai firms based on the research findings. Conceptual framework for the research based upon five declared hypotheses is shown in Figure 1.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Company Profile

This research is based upon a quantitative case study of a large Thai manufacturing firm, AAA Company. AAA Company is a leading domestic and export-oriented manufacturer of wood and metal furniture. The firm hires approximately 560 employees, mostly working in the company's central headquarters location. The company is financially stable and has experienced slow growth over the past several years, but it has not yet experienced any major changes in management style, structure, ownership or other significant aspects of the corporate structure.

#### 3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

Analysis has taken place at the level of the individual employee. All management and non-management employees are solicited for the study with the cooperation of the organization's HR department. A minimum sample size of 200 members is targeted using a standard rule of thumb for SEM research because this is larger than the 173 members suggested by a priori analysis (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2011; Westland, 2010). The final sample size is 232 participants, including 73 managerial employees and 159 non-managerial employees. Data has been collected using an online survey, which is constructed using a combination of existing items drawn from previous studies and new items (Fowler, 2014). Each of the constructs is represented by a scale including three to four five-point Likert scale items, which are averaged for the SEM analysis. Cronbach's alpha is used for pre-testing to evaluate internal consistency of scales on the first 30 questionnaires. Convergent and discriminant validity are also evaluated using CR, AVE, and MSV (Hair, et al., 2016).

#### 3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of descriptive statistics and correlations, followed by structural equation modelling (SEM) in SPSS AMOS. SEM is a family of whole-model regression techniques, including confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and proprietary analysis tool LISREL (Byrne, 2016). This study uses CFA as the main analytical tool, along with path analysis and regression to determine the significance of individual relationships (Byrne, 2016). This approach is chosen because it enables full-model analysis of the relationships

in a complex and multi-stage research framework. All statistical outcomes are evaluated at  $p < 0.05$ , complying standard practice for statistical significance.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Preliminary Results

#### 4.1.1 Respondent Profile

Work characteristics and demographic characteristics are collected from the sample (Tables 1 and 2). Most respondents are non-managers (68.5%). Most have one to five years' experience working in the company with current obligation (55.2%). In terms of departmental representation, the Factory department has the most responses (44%), followed by the Warehouse and Inventory department (23.3%), Quality Control (10.3%), Delivery and Logistics (7.8%), Sales (8.2%), Human Resources (3.4%), and Finance and Accounting (3%). This is approximately consistent with the distribution of employees around the company, although Finance and Accounting and Human Resources are somewhat overrepresented. The group has a slight majority of male respondents (56%). Age groups are distributed, but the largest group is aged 18 to 25 (24.6%). Most respondents have either a high school or vocational diploma (38.8%) or a Bachelor degree (41.8%). This is consistent with AAA Company's relatively young workforce, which does not typically have a high level of education.

**Table 1:** Work Characteristics of the Sample

	Frequency	%
Manager	73	31.5%
Non-Manager	159	68.5%
Total	232	100.0%
<b>Years' Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1 to 5	128	55.2%
5 to 10	73	31.5%
11+	31	13.4%
Total	232	100.0%

**Table 1:** Work Characteristics of the Sample (cont.)

Department	Frequency	%
Factory	102	44.0%
Warehouse and Inventory	54	23.3%
Quality Control	24	10.3%
Delivery and Logistics	18	7.8%
Sales	19	8.2%
Finance and Accounting	7	3.0%
Human Resources	8	3.4%
Total	232	100.0%

**Table 2:** Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	130	56.0%
Female	102	44.0%
Total	232	100.0%
Age	Frequency	%
18 to 26	57	24.6%
26 to 35	40	17.2%
36 to 45	48	20.7%
46+	36	15.5%
Prefer not to say	51	22.0%
Total	232	100.0%
Education Level	Frequency	%
High School or Vocational Diploma	90	38.8%
Bachelor	97	41.8%
Master	34	14.7%
PhD	6	2.6%
Prefer not to say	5	2.2%
Total	232	100.0%

## 4.1.2 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Cronbach's alpha (Table 3) is all acceptable at a level of 0.8 or higher for multi-item Likert scales. Likewise, conditions for composite reliability ( $CR > 0.7$ ), convergent validity ( $AVE > 0.5$ ), and discriminant validity ( $MSV < AVE$ ) (Hair, et al., 2016) are all acceptable. Thus, the scales are of appropriate reliability and validity for this research.

**Table 3:** Summary of Validity and Reliability Characteristics

Scale	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	MSV
Communication Appropriateness (CAP)	.818	.929	0.610	0.506
Communication Acceptability (CAC)	.829	0.748	0.614	0.502
Communication Structure (CS)	.893	0.792	0.729	0.602
Communication Flow (CF)	.841	0.719	0.794	0.693
Communication Content (CC)	.888	0.722	0.672	0.632
Communication Climate (CCL)	.830	0.792	.703	0.607
Communication Culture (CCU)	.801	0.828	.794	0.782
Employee Resistance (ER)	.910	0.931	0.842	0.820
Internal Communication Quality (ICQ)	.902	0.902	0.832	0.600
Affective Commitment (AC)	.819	0.810	0.703	0.506
Continuance Commitment (CCO)	.818	0.840	0.738	0.708
Normative Commitment (NC)	.807	0.702	0.703	0.506
Job Satisfaction – Work (JSW)	.928	0.792	0.892	0.802
Job Satisfaction – Pay and Benefits (JSPB)	.926	0.838	0.784	0.732
Job Satisfaction – Promotion (JSP)	.918	0.818	0.794	0.650
Job Satisfaction – Supervisors (JSS)	.912	0.890	0.842	0.620
Job Satisfaction – Coworkers (JSC)	.949	0.920	0.850	0.560

#### 4.1.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for the aggregated variables are summarized below (Table 4), with correlations (Table 5) following. Skewness and kurtosis show that although most of the variables (except job satisfaction variables) are somewhat left-skewed, values fall within the range of -2 to 2 for a normal distribution. This is also true for kurtosis.

**Table 4:** Descriptive Statistics

Dimension	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
CAP	3.62	1.130	-1.367	-.147
CAC	3.47	1.173	-1.478	.051
CS	3.46	1.088	-1.284	.050
CF	3.50	1.120	-1.364	.008
CC	3.33	1.123	-1.320	.234
CCL	3.54	1.084	-1.263	-.131
CCU	3.58	1.080	-1.252	-.142
ER	2.92	1.418	-1.305	.010
ICQ	3.19	1.275	-.971	-.146
AC	3.53	1.309	-.889	-.502
CCO	3.57	1.352	-.890	-.395
NC	3.30	1.264	-.928	-.247
JSW	3.64	0.971	.504	-.796
JSPB	3.53	1.1014	.641	-.923
JSP	3.60	1.002	.404	-.823
JSS	3.64	0.938	1.030	-.974
JSC	3.57	0.999	.464	-.847

## 4.2 Structural Equation Modeling

### 4.2.1 Goodness of Fit

The goodness of fit of the structural model is adequate (CMIN/df = 2.21,  $p = .781$ , RMSEA = 0.04, AGFI = 0.89, CFI = 0.96, Hoelter = 216). The analysis then proceeds

to the regression stage.

#### 4.2.2 Regressions

Significant regression relationships include  $CAP \rightarrow CF$  ( $\beta = .356$ ),  $CAP \rightarrow CC$  ( $\beta = .291$ ),  $CAC \rightarrow CF$  ( $\beta = .482$ ),  $CAC \rightarrow CC$  ( $\beta = .392$ ),  $CF \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = .512$ ),  $CF \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = .434$ ),  $CC \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = .231$ ),  $CCL \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = .292$ ),  $ER \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = -.230$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow AC$  ( $\beta = .430$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow NC$  ( $\beta = .257$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow CC$  ( $\beta = -.190$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow JSW$  ( $\beta = .255$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow JSS$  ( $\beta = .347$ ), and  $ICQ \rightarrow JSC$  ( $\beta = .378$ ). Insignificant regression relationships include  $CCU \rightarrow ICQ$  ( $\beta = .129$ ),  $ICQ \rightarrow JSPB$  ( $\beta = .089$ ), and  $ICQ \rightarrow JSP$  ( $\beta = .072$ ).

**Table 5:** Regressions for Proposed Relationships

Hypothesis	Path	Unstandardized Estimate ( $\beta$ )	S.E.	t-value
H1a	$CAP \rightarrow CF$	.356	.047	16.222*
H1b	$CAP \rightarrow CC$	.291	.031	12.944*
H1c	$CAC \rightarrow CF$	.482	.048	11.930*
H1d	$CAC \rightarrow CC$	.392	.029	12.241*
H2a	$CS \rightarrow ICQ$	.512	.067	9.382*
H2b	$CF \rightarrow ICQ$	.434	.082	5.285*
H2c	$CC \rightarrow ICQ$	.231	.028	4.392*
H2d	$CCL \rightarrow ICQ$	.292	.039	5.292*
H2e	$CCU \rightarrow ICQ$	.129	.073	.992
H3	$ER \rightarrow ICQ$	-.230	.053	-2.290*
H4a	$ICQ \rightarrow AC$	.430	.063	12.291*
H4b	$ICQ \rightarrow NC$	.257	.079	4.441*
H4c	$ICQ \rightarrow CC$	-.190	.090	-3.321*
H5a	$ICQ \rightarrow JSW$	.255	.059	2.741*
H5b	$ICQ \rightarrow JSPB$	.089	.098	1.112
H5c	$ICQ \rightarrow JSP$	.072	.101	.941
H5d	$ICQ \rightarrow JSS$	.347	.057	13.324*
H5e	$ICQ \rightarrow JSC$	.378	.042	14.442*

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$



### 4.3 Discussion

The regression outcomes allow for the following statements to be made about the hypotheses. H1 is fully accepted, as perceived appropriateness and perceived acceptability have a significant positive effect on flow and content aspects of communication quality. H2 is mostly accepted. Elements of structure, flow, content, and climate have a significant positive effect on perceptions of internal communication quality, but communication culture is not found to have a significant effect. H3 is also accepted, as employee resistance towards change does have a negative effect on internal communication quality. H4 is partly accepted. While internal communication quality has a significant effect on affective, normative, and continuance commitment, the effect on continuance commitment is negative. Finally, H5 is also partially accepted. Internal communication quality has a significant positive effect on satisfaction with the work itself, supervisor relationships, and co-worker relationships, but does not have a significant effect on satisfaction with pay and benefits and promotional prospects. While these results are not entirely consistent with what has been expected from the literature, the non-significant relationships can be explained within the context of the theories used to establish these hypotheses. These relationships were generally as expected under the theoretical model used to measure internal communications quality as proposed by Van Riel and Fombrun (2007), but not entirely. The problem of the non-significance of communication culture can lie in the nature of organizational culture, which is often latent and is not acknowledged by the individuals working within the organization itself (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007; Van Riel, 1995). In other words, individuals may not recognize the elements of communication culture that contribute to the effectiveness of communication policies and procedures. This is due to organizational culture being a latent or somewhat invisible element of the communication structure of the organization (Welch & Jackson, 2007). Thus, while this relationship was not significant, this does not necessarily mean the model was wrong. Overall, Van Riel and Fombrun's (2007) model of internal communication performed well at predicting the perceived internal communications quality within the organization. The role of employee resistance to change (H3) was also validated. This proposed relationship had been based on evidence surrounding the role of employee resistance to change and the effect of change communication on this resistance to change (Frahm & Brown, 2007; Kassing, 2007; Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009). This study demonstrated that in fact this was a potential two-way

or co-constituting relationship, with employee resistance to change affecting perceptions of ICQ. This is a contribution to an area that is poorly covered in the literature (Mumby, 2005). Perhaps more importantly, it points out that there are barriers to internal communications quality that cannot be overcome by improving the communication itself; instead, more effort needs to be put toward changing the minds of individuals and encouraging acceptance of change and of communication.

The problem of the negative effect of internal communication quality on continuance commitment is also explicable, because continuance commitment typically exists in the absence of any more compelling reasons to stay with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In other words, individuals only tend to show high levels of continuance commitment when the only reasons they remain at a job are because of the switching costs associated with leaving. A negative perception of the internal communications quality at a company will be consistent with an individual with high levels of continuance commitment. Thus, this negative relationship can be explained by considering what continuance commitment means and what implies for the employee's perception of the organization. In terms of the effects on job satisfaction (H5), it is also possible to see the reasons for the relationships that are found here. Satisfaction with pay and benefits and with promotion prospects are not necessarily strongly influenced by communication, although they can be affected indirectly (for example, if the company provides pay reports in order to compare them to similar companies). In contrast, employees will be directly affected by internal communication quality in their ability to do their job, which can affect their satisfaction with the work itself. Employees will also perceive the effects of internal communication quality in their relationships with supervisors and co-workers, since interpersonal communication is one of the core elements of relationship formation between co-workers. These findings do show that internal communications quality has a significant effect on important organizational outcomes, which can affect the performance of the organization.

The positive finding in H3 shows that employee resistance to change can negatively affect internal communication quality. This implies that change resistance can also have an indirect relationship on outcomes like job satisfaction and organizational commitment, although this is not tested. This is one of the main contributions of the study to the literature, which has not focused much on employee characteristics or other bottom-up aspects of internal communications (Ruck & Welch, 2012). Thus, this research provides

support for understanding the role of employee characteristics in perceptions of internal communication quality and its outcomes. However, there is still more work to be done in this area, since other characteristics like personality characteristics, work characteristics (for example position), and interactions with factors like leadership styles and national culture may be able influence this relationship (Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Men, 2014).

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

This research has studied a holistic model of internal communications quality in the organization, incorporating a five-dimensional model of internal communications, along with social perceptions of communication and employee resistance to change to explain employee outcomes including organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mumby, 2005; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007; Welch, 2012). Although internal communications quality is acknowledged as an important strategic tool for the organization, this research has been conducted because most of the previous research has been directed from a management perspective (Miller & Barbour, 2015; Ruck & Welch, 2012). This makes it difficult to understand how internal communications quality works within the organization influence employee perceptions of the organization's communication and how the employee responds. Employee resistance to change is inclusive and particularly important as a contribution to the research, since this employee characteristic has not previously been studied in terms of internal communication quality. The negative effect of employee resistance to change on internal communications quality explains that employee resistance to change requires more consideration when examining organizational dynamics and the effects of communication within the organization. In conclusion, this research has demonstrated that internal communication quality does affect employee outcomes, which can affect the organization's performance in the long term.

This research has several important limitations. It only includes one employee characteristic (resistance to change), meaning that there is an opportunity to expand the number of employee characteristics that can be taken into account in further studies to better understand the interaction between employee characteristics and organizational practices. This research has been also conducted in a single Thai organization, meaning that only a single set of organizational procedures and cultural values are interacting with

the organization. By conducting a broader survey, for example including multiple organizations of different sizes in a single cultural context or by studying a cross-cultural dataset, it should be possible to extend the research to better understand the effect of organizational and national culture and factors like organization size and structure in the perception of internal communication quality and subsequent organizational outcomes. This further research may help extend the understanding of internal communications and its direct role on organizational outcomes, expanding the literature which has, to date, focused on managerial and strategic perspectives on communication quality.

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