



SCHOOL OF GRAGUATE STUDIES

**EFFECT OF ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION ON STRATEGIC
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION: THE CASE OF ETHIOTELECOM**

MBA THESIS

YEMANE BIRHAN

DECEMBER, 2024

WOLKITE, ETHIOPIA

Wolkite University

School of Graduate Studies

**Effect of Organizational Communication on Strategic Plan
Implementation: The Case of Ethio-telecom**

**A Thesis Submitted to School of Graduate Studies, in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Art in Business
Administration (MBA)**

Yemane Birhan

Main Advisor: Birhanu Tereda (Assist. Prof.)

Co-Advisor: Alemayehu Takele. (MA)

December, 2024

Wolkite, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this MBA thesis is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other university, and all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Yemane Birhan

Signature: _____

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

ADVISORS' APPROVAL SHEET

We hereby certify that we have read and evaluated this Thesis titled “**Effect of Organizational Communication on Strategic Plan Implementation: The Case of Ethio-telecom**”, prepared under our guidance by **Yemane Birhan**. We recommend that the Thesis shall be submitted as fulfilling the requirements for the award of Master’s Degree in Business Administration.

Birhanu Tereda (Assist. Prof.) _____

Major adviser

Signature

Date

Alemayehu Takele.(MA) _____

Co-advisor

Signature

Date

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

EXAMINERS' APPROVAL SHEET

As members of the Board of Examiners of the Masters of Art Thesis open defense examination, we have read and evaluated this Thesis prepared by Yemane Birhan Muche and examined the candidate. We hereby certify that, the thesis is accepted for fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration.

1. _____

Name of External Examiner

Signature

Date

2. _____

Name of Internal Examiner

Signature

Date

3. _____

Name of chairman

Signature

Date

Final approval and acceptance of the Thesis is contingent upon the submission of its final copy to the Council of Postgraduate Program (CPGS) through the candidate's department or school graduate committee (DGC or SGC).

December, 2024

Wolkite, Ethiopia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am so much grateful to the Almighty God for his kind and priceless help He has offered me throughout my life. I would like also to extend my gratitude to my lovely family who encourages me to accomplish this thesis.

I must convey my thanks to my main advisor Birhanu Tereda (Assist.Prof.) and co-advisor Alemayehu T. (MA) who gave me invaluable comments, encouragement and support I needed to accomplish the proposal as well as the thesis.

I would like to express my deep heart-felt thank to my friends who have made themselves available in providing me with the help I needed.

Finally, but most importantly, I would like to thank all ethio-telecom employees in South South Western Region branches willingness and participated in filling the questionnaire to provide all the necessary information.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CER	Central Ethiopia Region
ECA:	Ethiopian Communication Authority
HRM	Human Resource Management
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SSWR	South South West Region

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
1. INTRODUCTION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem	3
1.3. Objectives of the Study	7
1.3.1. General Objective.....	7
1.3.2. Specific Objectives.....	7
1.4. Hypothesis of the Study.....	7
1.5. Significance of the Study.....	9
1.6. Scope of the Study.....	10
1.7. Limitations of the Study	11
1.8. Organization of the Study.....	11
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1. Theoretical Review.....	13
2.1.1. Definition of Strategy	13
2.1.2. Strategic Planning.....	13
2.1.3. What Contributes to Strategic Planning Success?	15
2.1.4. Strategic Plan Implementation	17
2.1.5. Communication	19
2.1.5.1. Internal Communication: Mediums, Messages and Perceptions	20
2.1.5.2. External communication.....	29
2.1.6. Organizational Communication and its Effectiveness.....	30
2.1.7. Why is Communication Important?	33
2.2. Empirical Studies Review	34

2.3. Conceptual Framework of the Study	38
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1. Background and Strategic Plan of the Organization	41
3.1.1. Background of the Organization.....	41
3.1.2. Ethio – Telecom Three years LEAD Growth Strategy [2022 – 2024]	42
3.2. Research Design	45
3.3. Research Approach.....	45
3.4. Target Population	46
3.5. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination.....	46
3.5.1. Sampling Techniques	46
3.5.2. Sample Size Determination	47
3.6. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments	48
3.6.1. Sources of Data.....	48
3.6.2. Data Collection Instruments	48
3.6.2.1. Questionnaire.....	48
3.6.2.2. Interview.....	49
3.6.2.3. Document review.....	49
3.7. Variables and Measurements.....	50
3.7.1. Dependent Variable	50
3.7.2. Independent Variables	50
3.8. Data Collection Procedures	50
3.9. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments	52
3.9.1. Validity	52
3.9.2. Reliability Test	53
3.10. Methods of Data Analysis.....	54
3.10.1. Descriptive Statistics	55
3.10.2. Correlation Analysis.....	55
3.10.3. Inferential Statistics.....	55
3.10.4. Qualitative Data Analysis.....	57
3.11. Ethical Considerations.....	57
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	59
4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	59

4.2. Descriptive Statistics on the Status of Organizational Communication	60
4.2.1. Internal Communication	61
4.2.1.1. Internal Communication Quality	62
4.2.1.2. Internal communication accessibility	63
4.2.1.3. Effective use of Internal Communication in the organization culture	66
4.2.1.4. Effective use of Internal Communication in HRM.....	68
4.2.2. External Communication.....	69
4.3. Status of Strategic Plan Implementation	71
4.4. Relationship between Organization Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation.....	73
4.5. Effect of Organization Communication on Strategic Plan Implementation	75
4.5.1. Diagnostic Test: Evaluation of Regression Model Assumptions	75
4.5.2. Model Fitness Test: Statistical Significance of the Independent Variables as a Whole	79
4.5.3. Model Summary: The Explaining Capacity of the Independent Variables	80
4.5.4. Predictor Model Interpretation and Contribution of each Predictor Variable	81
4.5.4.1. Predictor Model and its interpretation	81
4.5.4.2. Contribution of each independent variable.....	83
4.5.5. Hypothesis Test Results: Significance Effect of each Independent Variable.....	84
4.5.5.1. Effect of internal communication quality	85
4.5.5.2. Effect of internal communication accessibility	85
4.5.5.3. Effect of effective use of internal communication in organization culture	86
4.5.5.4. Effect of effective use of internal communication in HRM	87
4.5.5.5. Effect of external communication	87
4.6. Results and Discussions on Interviews.....	88
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1. Summary of Major Findings	94
5.2. Conclusions	97
5.3. Recommendations	99
5.4. Suggestion for Further Study.....	101
6. REFERENCES	102
7. APPENDIX	117
Appendix A: Questionnaire.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix B: Interview	122

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Sample Size Distribution Resulted from Cluster Sampling Technique	47
Table 3.2: Reliability Test Results	54
Table 4.3: Sex, age, educational qualification, and work experience of the respondents	59
Table 4.4: Respondents view on Internal Communication Quality.....	62
Table 4.5: Respondents view on Internal Communication Accessibility.....	63
Table 4.6: Respondents view on Effective use of Internal Communication in the organization culture	66
Table 4.7: Respondents view on Effective use of Internal Communication in HRM	68
Table 4.8: Respondents view on External Communication	70
Table 4.9: Respondents view on the status of Strategic Plan Implementation	72
Table 4.10: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis	73
Table 4.11: Non – Multicollinearity test of the Independent Variables	78
Table 4.12: ANOVA output part I: SPI with the five organization communication	79
Table 4.13: Model summary.....	80
Table 4.14: Results of multiple linear regression analysis	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1:- Conceptual Framework of the study.....	40
Figure 4.2: Regression Standard Residual Histogram.....	76
Figure4.3: Scatter plot for homogeneity of variance for SPI.....	77

ABSTRACT

Strategic planning is the art of creating specific business strategies, implementing them, and evaluating the results of executing the plan, in regard to an organization's overall long-term goals or desires. It focuses on integrating various departments within an organization to accomplish its strategic goals. The objective of the study was to investigate role of organization communication on strategic plan implementation in the case of selected ethio-telecom centers in South-South West Region. Explanatory research design was utilized. The target population of the study was all employees working in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region. Cluster sampling technique was employed to select 347 employees. In addition, ten managers from the selected ethio-telecom service centers also selected to conduct interview. Primary data was collected through self-administered structured questionnaire and interview. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviations. In addition, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression analyses were used to investigate the effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The findings of the study revealed positive and significant relationship between internal communication quality, accessibility, effective use of internal communication in organization culture, effective use of internal communication in human resource, and external communication and strategic plan implementation. On the other hand, the multiple linear regression analysis result also indicated that those five organization communication strategies have positive and significant effect on strategic plan implementation and 79.1% of the variations in the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers were jointly accounted by the five predictor variables, of those variables, internal communication accessibility has the greatest effect (contribution) for the strategic plan implementation. Therefore, the study concludes that the five organizational communication have significant effect and decisive for the effectiveness of the strategic plan implementation in most of the ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region. Hence, this study suggests that all ethio-telecom service centers in the study area, better to prioritize the use of internal and external communication when conveying useful information pertaining to strategic plan implementation.

Key word: *internal communication, external communication, strategy plan implementation*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In the rapidly evolving landscape of the telecommunications sector, the implementation of strategic plans is crucial for achieving organizational objectives and maintaining competitiveness. The role of communication within this context, particularly through internal and external strategies, has emerged as a fundamental factor influencing the successful execution of these plans. This study aims to explore the impact of organizational communication strategies on strategic plan implementation, focusing on global, African, and in particular in Ethiopian contexts.

Internal and external communications are the two broad categories into which organizational communication can be divided. Internal communication refers to the channels and techniques used to spread information within a company or an organization, encouraging cooperation and unity among staff members. On the other hand, interactions with external stakeholders such as clients, vendors, and government agencies that influence public opinion and an organization's reputation are referred to as external communication (Brahm & Kleiner, 2022).

In the telecommunications industry, where rapid technological advancements require staff adaptability, internal communication facilitates knowledge sharing and innovation, driving implementation success (Great Place to Work, 2023). Clampitt (2018) found that organizations with rigorous internal communication frameworks significantly improve employee participation and commitment to strategic initiatives. Effective internal communication fosters a culture of transparency and trust, which is essential for employee engagement and morale.

On the other hand, external communication is equally critical as it enables organizations to align their strategic objectives with stakeholder expectations, thus enhancing relevance and responsiveness. Recent studies highlighted that telecommunication firms that invest in

strategic external communication are better positioned to address challenges such as regulatory compliance and competitive pressures while ensuring customer satisfaction (Wang & Rahman, 2022).

Effective strategic implementation is highly valued in the changing global telecoms sector. Businesses that have integrated internal and external communication strategies to support their business initiatives include Verizon and Vodafone. In order to ensure that strategy cascades efficiently throughout the firm, these corporations have created extensive communication protocols that cut across hierarchical boundaries (Meyer & Rowan, 2022). Additionally, their dedication to communicating openly with consumers has improved market placement and brand loyalty.

In African context, for instance, Adebayo et al. (2023) found that inconsistencies in infrastructure and regulatory environments require adaptive communication strategies tailored to local contexts, such as the use of mobile technology by organizations to interact with customers in remote areas, underscoring the importance of effective external communication in bridging connectivity gaps. In contrast, communication strategies in the African telecommunications sector take on unique dimensions influenced by regional socio-economic factors. Moreover, diversity in the workforce and cultural attitudes toward communication styles often make it difficult for African telecommunications companies to communicate internally. This calls for the creation of context-specific internal strategies that encourage inclusivity and create a cohesive organizational culture, which has been associated with improved strategic plan execution because employees feel more appreciated and committed to the organization's mission (Muriu, 2023).

In Ethiopian context, Ethiopia presents a noteworthy case within the African telecommunications situation, particularly following the liberalization of its telecommunications market in 2020. The Ethiopian Communications Authority's engagement with private investors reflects a shift towards more structured external communication strategies aimed at promoting competition and innovation (Horne, 2023). However, internal communication remains a formidable challenge, with legacy mindsets impacting employee adaptation to new operational paradigms (Tessema & Abebe, 2023).

In Ethiopian context, the Ethiopian Communications Authority's engagement with private investors reflects a shift towards more structured external communication strategies aimed at promoting competition and innovation (Horne, 2023). Ethiopia still faces a significant challenge in internal communication, with legacy mindsets affecting employee adaptation to new operational paradigms (Tessema & Abebe, 2023). Ethiopia is a notable example in the African telecommunications situation, especially after its telecommunications market was liberalized in 2020.

The necessity for strategic communication within Ethiopian telecommunications firms has been recognized as pivotal in aligning stakeholders during this transformative phase. Further empirical study by Mekonnen (2023) indicated that organizations that prioritize internal communication significantly enhance their ability to implement strategic plans amidst changing market dynamics.

In general, from the above scenario it can be noticed that organizational communication strategies, encompassing both internal and external communication, are vital to the successful implementation of strategic plans in the telecommunications sector in various perspectives, in particular in Ethiopian context. The distinct challenges and opportunities underscore the necessity for tailored communication strategies that enhance employee engagement and stakeholder alignment. Therefore, this study attempted and focused on empirical analyses of communication effectiveness and its correlation with strategic outcomes in the case of Ethio telecom, South-South West Region.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

An organization's strategic plans cannot be successfully implemented without effective communication, especially in the telecommunications sector where interactions are intricate and wide-ranging. Communication is essential for coordinating employee behaviour with organizational objectives, which makes it easier to carry out strategic initiatives (Welch & Jackson, 2020). The differentiation between internal and external communication is crucial; the former cultivates a unified organizational culture, while the latter influences stakeholder engagement and corporate reputation (Grunig et al., 2019).

In recent years, the telecommunications industry has undergone significant transformation, especially in emerging markets like Africa. The African telecommunications sector has experienced rapid growth due to increased mobile penetration and digitalization. As noted by Gatzweiler et al. (2021), effective communication strategies can enhance market responsiveness and customer engagement, ultimately driving strategic success. In countries such as Ethiopia, where the telecommunications landscape is evolving with liberalization efforts and foreign investments, the importance of tailored communication strategies becomes particularly pronounced (Berhe, 2022).

A strategic plan's implementation is a crucial phase where an organization transforms its goals and objectives from abstract ideas into practical actions. Effective communication promotes alignment across organizational levels as employees strive toward strategic goals in addition to improving staff clarity and understanding, according to Harlow (2020) successful strategy execution in the telecommunication industry, which is characterized by rapid technological advancements and intense competition, depends on the effectiveness of internal and external communication.

An organization's internal communication is the foundation for promoting a shared vision and collaboration. Previous research in the African context has shown that organizational culture has a significant impact on communication practices (Ngulube, 2019). Ineffective communication can lead to implementation challenges, misalignments in departmental objectives, and ultimately, failures to achieve strategic goals. For instance, in Ethiopia, where workforce capabilities and telecommunications infrastructures are constantly changing, ineffective communication can exacerbate existing issues, impeding progress toward strategic aims. According to the World Bank (2022), the lack of reliable communication channels often leads to inefficiencies in public service delivery and impedes the effective dissemination of information. In a nation with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the ability to communicate effectively is essential for fostering inclusivity and ensuring that all voices are heard in developmental initiatives. Furthermore, the African Union's report on digital transformation in Africa highlights that achieving the continent's ambitious development goals necessitates strengthening communication frameworks (African Union, 2023).

Moreover, the Ethiopian government has recognized the importance of enhancing communication capacities as part of its Vision 2030 strategic plan, which emphasizes the role of technology in fostering economic growth and social cohesion. However, as noted by Assefa (2021), many regions still face challenges in accessibility and quality of telecommunications, which can lead to misinformation and social unrest. These dynamics illustrate that while Ethiopia's telecommunication infrastructure is evolving, the current inefficiencies in communication can significantly detract from the nation's strategic aims.

External communication encompasses interactions with customers, suppliers, regulators, and the wider community. In the highly competitive global telecommunications market, effective external communication is vital for organizations aiming to maintain their reputation and ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks. In Ethiopia, ethio-telecom, face unique challenges shaped by a rapidly evolving market and shifting consumer expectations. The rise of digital communication platforms necessitates a robust strategy for managing customer relationships and public perceptions. In this regard, Kiraso et al. (2022) stated that effective external communication strategies in Ethiopia depend on an understanding of the socio-economic environment and local cultural quirks, which allow businesses to customize their messaging to appeal to a variety of customer segments. Additionally, given the rapid expansion of mobile technology in the region, businesses must modify their communication to cater to the unique needs and concerns of Ethiopian consumers in order to foster loyalty and trust.

In contrast, the regulatory landscape in Ethiopia presents distinct hurdles that influence external communication strategies. The Ethiopian Communications Authority (ECA) has instituted policies designed to ensure fair competition and protect consumer rights, which organizations must navigate carefully to avoid reputational damage and legal repercussions. As noted by Tesfaye (2021), companies operating within this context are required to maintain transparency and engage in ongoing dialogue with regulators and stakeholders to uphold compliance. This regulatory environment underscores the importance of strategic communication that is not only culturally informed but also aligns with governmental expectations. By proactively addressing regulatory requirements and employing transparent communication practices, telecommunications firms can differentiate themselves in the

marketplace while simultaneously contributing to the broader goal of improved consumer welfare and market integrity.

Recent research emphasizes that an organization's branding and stakeholder engagement efforts profoundly influence the implementation of strategic plans (Akaranga & Muga, 2021). On the other hand, a study by Tadesse and Fanta (2021) emphasized that a breakdown in communication channels can lead to significant public backlash, particularly in an industry where customer loyalty is paramount. This is further echoed by the findings of the Ethiopian Communication Authority, which reported that frequently uncommunicated service outages led to a 20% increase in customer churn rates in 2020 (ECA, 2020). Furthermore, the lack of transparent communication regarding regulatory compliance has been identified as a source of contention between service providers and regulatory bodies, leading to strained relationships that hinder collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing service delivery.

Besides, the importance of aligning internal and external communication strategies also cannot be underestimated. A robust internal communication framework is essential for the proper flow of information that influences external communication. This relationship is particularly crucial in rapidly changing industries like telecommunications, where swift developments can quickly make existing strategies obsolete (Baker, 2023). Therefore, it is imperative for organizations to prioritize the alignment of their internal and external communication strategies in order to bolster their ability to implement strategic plans effectively.

In general, the issue concerning the influence of organizational communication strategies, both internal and external, on the implementation of strategic plans within the telecommunications sector, especially in the Ethiopian context, is complex. Addressing the challenges related to internal communication, such as cultural differences and technological integration, along with external communication considerations, including stakeholder involvement and regulatory compliance, is essential for effective management.

Furthermore, despite the recognized importance of effective communication, there is a notable lack of research exploring its influence on strategy implementation specifically within ethio telecom's operations in the South - Southwest region. Therefore, this study

aimed to address this research gap by investigating the role of organizational communication in the execution of ethio telecom's strategic objectives.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study was to examine the effect of organizational communication on the strategic plan implementation in ethio telecom the case of South - South West Region.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The following were specific objectives of the study:

- To examine the status of organizational communication in the selected ethio telecom service centers found in South - South West Region.
- To assess the status of strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio telecom service centers found in South - South West Region.
- To investigate the effect of organizational communication strategies on the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio telecom service centers found in South - South West Region.

1.4. Hypothesis of the Study

Hypotheses were tested to achieve objectives of a study based on different empirical research and theoretical review. According to Creswell (2009), more formal way of stating research questions is developing hypotheses between explanatory variables and dependent variable. The hypothesis may be stated as alternative hypothesis specifying the exact results to be expected. It can also be written in null hypothesis form indicating no relationship between the dependent and the explanatory variables. Thus, the researcher used directional null hypotheses and the alternative hypotheses to achieve the third specific objective and tested using the 5% level of significance, customary level used when working on significant effect relationship (Brooks, 2008).

H_{o1}: Statistically, internal communication quality has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{a1}: Statistically, internal communication quality has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{o2}: Statistically, internal communication accessibility has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{a2}: Statistically, internal communication accessibility has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{o3}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in Central Ethiopia Region.

H_{a3}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{o4}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in HRM has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{a4}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in HRM has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{o5}: Statistically, external communication has no significant and positive effect on strategic

plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

H_{a5}: Statistically, external communication has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West Region.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Effective organizational communication is fundamental to the successful implementation of strategic plans within any institution, including ethio-telecom's South-South West Region. This study aimed to elucidate the significant impact that both internal and external communication channels have on strategic plan implementation, thereby benefiting various stakeholders, including managers, employees, researchers, and academicians.

For managers at ethio-telecom service centers, understanding the dynamics of organizational communication is essential for guiding strategic initiatives. Effective communication fosters clarity around goals and objectives, ensuring that all team members are aligned and informed. This alignment not only enhances operational efficiency but also improves decision-making processes, enabling managers to allocate resources more effectively and respond swiftly to market changes.

Employees, as vital components of the communication framework, benefit significantly from clear and transparent communication. When internal communication is healthy, employees are more likely to engage with the strategic objectives of the organization, leading to higher levels of motivation and productivity. This study will provide insights into the communication practices that enhance employee involvement and commitment to strategic goals, which ultimately drives the overall performance of the service centers.

For researcher, this study fills a gap in the existing literature regarding telecommunication organizations in developing regions, particularly in the study area as well as for peripheral regions and also the country as well. The findings may serve as a foundation for future research, providing empirical evidence on the relationship between communication and strategic implementation. Such insights will be invaluable for researchers who seek to further explore these concepts in different contexts or sectors.

Academicians also stand to gain from this study by incorporating its findings into theoretical frameworks related to organizational behavior and strategic management. The significance of communication in strategic execution can enhance educational programs, preparing future leaders and managers to prioritize effective communication strategies in their professional practices.

In general, the study of the effect of organizational communication on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom is of paramount importance. Its implications for managers, employees, researchers, and academicians emphasize the critical role communication plays in organizational success. By understanding and improving communication processes, ethio-telecom, in particular South-South West Region, can enhance its strategic initiatives, thus contributing to its overall performance in the telecommunication sector of the country.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study has geographical, variables, and time scopes. Geographically, even though, there are twenty eight ethio-telecom service centers in South - South West region, characterized by its diverse population, economic activities and geographical challenges, has been identified as a priority area for development by the government, the study was delimited to examine the relationship between the organizational communication and strategic plan implementation at selected fourteen ethio-telecom centres in South – South West Region, namely, Wolkite, Woliso, Werabe, Butajira, Hawassa, Enseno, Halaba, Hosana, Shashemene, Jimma, Durame, Dilla, Arba Minch and Wolaita Sodo which are structured and located in different parts of the region. This is because they are strategically significant towns within this region and are known for their vibrant economic activities; variation in terms of service quality and accessibility, due to their proximity, and in order to make the data manageable.

In terms of content and variables, the study was delimited its extent on investigating the type of communication (internal and external) and their influential form of communication that was used to disseminate strategic plan implementation information, because to determine and to get better gain in understanding of the relationship that could exists between the variables: internal communication quality, internal communication accessibility, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, effective use of internal communication

in HRM, external communication and the outcome variable – strategic plan implementation. These variables were selected based on literature review and personal insight of the researcher from many variables that could have effect on strategic plan implementation for the sake of tractability as compared with the capacity of the researcher in managing a number of variables in the study.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Limitations are influences beyond the researcher's control. Despite the popularity of this communication topic, some key limitations for this study have been identified. First of all the study was mainly focused on examining the effect of organizational communication on strategic plan implementation in the case of ethio-telecom centers found in South-South West Region. In doing so, this study encountered with lack of literature review on the issue under consideration in the study area.

The other limitation was generalizability issue (failing to include the other ethio-telecom regions), since the study assessed the effect of organizational communication in the selected ethio-telecom centers; as the result of this conclusions drawn from this study may not be a representative and therefore cannot be generalized to other ethio-telecom service centers found outside of the SSWR and in the country as well, i.e., the results of the findings of the study do not necessarily apply to other ethio-telecom centers operating outside of the SSWR and in the country as well.

In general, even though, the researcher has faced the above limitations, these limitations did not have significant impediment on the outcomes of the study.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction and background of the study, statement of the problem, Objectives of the study, hypothesis, significance, scope, limitations, and organization of the study. The second chapter comprises of related theoretical and empirical literature review as well as conceptual framework of the study. The third chapter of the study presents materials and methods of the research. It covers the research design and approach, target population, sources of data, sampling techniques and

sample size determination, instruments of data collection, validity and reliability test and method of data analysis. The fourth chapter involves presentation, analysis and discussion of gathered primary data. The final chapter deals with summary of major findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section comprises of three parts which are the theoretical, empirical reviews, and conceptual framework. The purpose of the literature review is to examine key concepts and related research relevant to examine the effect of organizational communication on the strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom. The following topics are identified as important: the concept of strategy and strategic plan; strategic implementation; communication and its types: internal and external communication; organizational communication and its effectiveness, why communication is important. Finally, it presents empirical studies related literatures as well as conceptual framework of the study.

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1. Definition of Strategy

Organizational technique refers to the activities and approaches made by administration planning to guarantee the victory of the organization (Schweiger et al., 2019). On the other hand, in accordance with the mentioned idea strategy also can be taken as management's road map for their respective organization (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019). Furthermore, elaborating the idea, they stated that management creates methodologies to direct how an organization conducts its commerce and diagrams that exact way in which it will accomplish its overall objectives and destinations. Good administration is appeared by formulating a clear and brief strategy, effective communication of strategy and successful strategy implementation.

2.1.2. Strategic Planning

In the implementation of strategy for an organization or a company, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of the concept of strategic planning. Strategic planning is a process of carefully and thoughtfully aligning the strengths of an organization's business to the opportunities that are available to the company in its chosen business environment. On the other hand, it is also "a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that

shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it.”, as pointed out by (Bryson, 2021). It involves the formulation of long-term goals and the identification of the necessary actions to achieve those goals.

The process of strategic planning typically encompasses several stages, including the assessment of the internal and external environment, the establishment of a vision and mission, setting objectives, and formulating strategies to achieve those objectives (Harrison & John, 2022). By engaging in strategic planning, organizations can adapt to changing market conditions, anticipate potential challenges, and seize opportunities, thereby enhancing their long-term viability. In general, it serves as a fundamental framework that enables organizations to navigate complexity, align resources with goals, and achieve sustained success.

Nonetheless, strategic planning is profoundly influenced by how it is conceptualized and studied, significantly shaping evaluations of its effectiveness and the reasons behind its performance (Poole et al., 2000). In variance studies, specific variables are regarded as stable and consistent causes, producing predictable outcomes over time. This aligns with Aristotle’s concept of efficient causation, a traditional understanding of causation prevalent in scientific inquiry. However, strategic planning is inherently a purposeful endeavor, which introduces the notion of final causation. Both efficient and final causation provide useful insights for research on strategic planning, highlighting its complexities and the interplay of consistent variables with evolving purposes. An understanding of these dual aspects of causation can improve our comprehension of the dynamics at play in strategic planning and its assessment. This perspective emphasizes the goal or purpose (telos) behind actions or processes, similar to the idea of "rallying around a cause" (Falcon, 2015; Pollitt, 2013). If strategic planning is motivated by specific objectives that may change over time, teleological explanations become especially pertinent.

The relationship between strategic planning and its contextual influences has emerged as a central theme in contemporary academic literature. Contributors to this special issue collectively affirm that strategic planning cannot be disentangled from the specific contexts within which it operates. This perspective is echoed in variance studies, which emphasize the necessity of controlling for contextual factors to yield valid findings. For instance, George et

al. (2021) demonstrate that after accounting for various demographic variables, divergent information processing styles significantly shape perceptions concerning both the usability and perceived utility of the strategic planning process. Moreover, this perceived utility is linked to an increased commitment to the strategic plan, highlighting the importance of contextual factors in enhancing plan adherence (George et al., 2021).

Additionally, Lee, McGuire, and Kim (2022) offer strong evidence that, when contextual factors are taken into account, there is a strong positive correlation between the processes used to formulate the strategic plan and its overall design and effectiveness, highlighting the importance of context in determining the operational success of strategic initiatives (Lee et al., 2022). Supporting these findings, Johnsen's (2023) found out a direct relationship between the strategic planning process and perceived effectiveness, but he does not find a clear impact on objective performance measures, suggesting that although context affects perception, the conversion into quantifiable results may be less clear.

Finally, the work of Cepiku, Giordano, and Savignon (2022) highlighted a similar pattern, pointing out those contextual factors profoundly shape interpretations of planning adopted by Italian cities in response to the financial crisis, and affect the relationship between these planning efforts and resource allocation. In qualitative investigation, Tama (2021) identifies a variety of contextual contingencies that impact the goals, structure, and implementation of quadrennial strategic reviews by U.S. federal agencies. His findings show how these elements shape not only the planning objectives but also the indirect results of these assessments.

In general, the mentioned literature consistently emphasized the significance of context in strategic planning. From shaping perceptions and commitment to influencing effectiveness and implementation, contextual factors are integral to understanding the dynamics of strategic planning processes. Therefore, based on the above viewpoints this study attempted to investigate the current status of strategic planning practice of

2.1.3. What Contributes to Strategic Planning Success?

Strategic planning is an essential process for organizations aiming to navigate complex environments and achieve their long-term objectives. The success of strategic planning is

contingent upon various factors, including organizational communication, stakeholder engagement, and the establishment of clear objectives. In the context of telecommunications in Ethiopia, organizational communication emerges as a crucial element influencing the effective implementation of strategic plans. According to Ansoff (2020), the alignment between organizational communication practices and strategic planning significantly enhances the ability of firms to adapt to market dynamics and achieve their strategic goals.

One of the primary contributors to strategic planning success is the clarity and effectiveness of communication within the organization. A research by Yusof & Waller (2021) highlighted that transparent communication channels enable organizations to disseminate strategic goals efficiently, ensuring that all employees understand their roles in the implementation process. In the telecommunication sector in Ethiopia, where rapid technological advancements and regulatory changes occur, effective internal and external communication becomes vital for aligning strategic initiatives with market conditions. As identified by Alemayehu (2022), a lack of effective communication can lead to misunderstandings, misaligned priorities, and ultimately, failure in executing strategic plans.

Moreover, stakeholder engagement plays a pivotal role in the successful implementation of strategic plans. Engaging various stakeholders such as employees, customers, and regulatory bodies can promote a sense of ownership and commitment to the strategic objectives. According to Kearins (2023), organizations that prioritize stakeholder engagement are more likely to achieve strategic alignment and swift execution of their plans. In the Ethiopian telecommunications context, where competition is intensifying, stakeholders' feedback can provide valuable insights into consumer preferences and regulatory expectations, thus enhancing strategic responsiveness and adaptability.

In general, the success of strategic planning in the telecommunications sector in Ethiopia is significantly influenced by effective organizational communication and active stakeholder engagement. These elements contribute to clarity in implementing strategic objectives, aligning organizational efforts with market demands, and promoting a collaborative environment conducive to strategic plan success. Therefore, in this study attempts were made to explore the relationships between communication, stakeholder involvement, and strategic

outcomes to provide deeper insights into enhancing strategic planning effectiveness in emerging markets in the case of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in the study area.

2.1.4. Strategic Plan Implementation

Strategic plan implementation refers to the process of translating strategic objectives and initiatives into actionable steps, ensuring that an organization achieves its desired outcomes. In the context of the telecommunications industry, this phase is critical, as its dynamic environment necessitates the alignment of innovative technological advancements with organizational goals. Effective implementation focuses significantly on the quality and clarity of organizational communication, which facilitates stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and performance monitoring.

Organizational communication encompasses the various ways in which information is disseminated and exchanged within a company. It plays a paramount role in strategic plan implementation by ensuring that all employees understand the strategic vision, their roles within it, and the interdependencies between different departments. In the telecommunications sector, where rapid changes often occur, robust communication channels can mitigate resistance to change and enhance adaptability. For instance, according to Smircich and Morgan (2022), successful strategic implementations are greatly supported by open communication frameworks that promote collaboration and trust among employees.

Moreover, effective communication allows for the continuous feedback loop necessary for monitoring progress and making adjustments to the plan. A study by De Mello and Riquelme (2023) highlighted that in telecommunication companies, where strategic initiatives often involve technical challenges and cross-functional teams, transparent communication can significantly influence project outcomes and employee morale. When employees are well-informed and engaged, it leads to improved performance and better alignment with the strategic goals of the organization.

In this regard, many organizations prioritize strategy creation and implementation by dedicating significant amounts of financial and physical resources, personnel and time to formulate their goals and strategies. Gartenstein (2018) agreed by stating that strategy formulation and implementation is important because it ensures that organizational goals are

set while allocating the necessary time, resources and personnel towards achieving the objectives. A study by Kabeyi (2019) has estimated that 70% – 90% of organizations fail to realize the success of implementing their strategies; only 63% of financial objectives envisioned by companies' strategies are achieved, and strategies most often fail because of ineffective execution. Furthermore, he explained that the challenges that prevent implementation can be grouped into internal factors within the organization and external factors that are beyond the control of the organization and emphasized that the volatile global economic situation, limited resources and political interference are the most notable challenges which affect organizations.

On the other hand, there are many internal factors that can affect strategy implementation. One of the internal limiting factors is the organization's lack of resources (Clark, 2017). Strategy implementation requires a range of resources such as funds, infrastructure, staff and time. Dalum (2018) stated that another internal factor that affects the implementation of strategies is the lack of follow-up and support. It is a common occurrence for firms to develop strategies but experience low execution levels post strategy planning. Left to themselves, people seldom stick to their long to do lists and do not implement them because of procrastination (Tawse, Patrick & Vera, 2018). It has also been observed that one of the major internal factors that hindered strategy implementation is the resistance to organizational change (Rooke et al., 2010). New strategies often require new ways of doing things, new processes and new ways of thinking. These changes can be met with resistance if they are not introduced well throughout the organization. Poor communication is one of the critical barriers to implementation of strategies (Ramokgadi, Moreme & Boikanyo, 2019).

Prior studies revealed that there are several ways of ensuring implementation. Kabeyi (2019) believed that ensuring alignment between the new strategy and existing organizational culture and structure is an effective way of enhancing the implementation of strategies. Establishing the alignment will also ensure that the implementation process runs smoother, without any major issues. Effectively managing the organization's resources through prioritizing is another method of overcoming the implementation challenges. Managers should aim to allocate and distribute resources based on the potential value to be derived from the area to which they are allocated. Hrebiniak (2008) stated that organizations should

concentrate on strategies which will ‘milk the cash cow’ first and then allow the success to filter through to the other areas of the organization. The importance of managing change well is clearly important for effective strategy implementation. In order for strategies to be implemented well in an organization, every aspect of the strategy needs to be communicated effectively throughout the entire workforce of the organization (Andersson & Jansson 2020). The empirical results of the study by Engert and Baumgartner (2016) revealed that internal communication processes play an important role in managing change. Effective communication at all levels of the organization helps in transferring the correct and useful information relating to the strategies which have been created. In order for communication to be effective, Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008) advised that the organization should be structured in a way that allows information to be communicated in three specific ways: horizontally, upwards and downwards. Clear understanding of strategy implementation activities breeds affective commitment and dedication. This ultimately results in improved business performance and implementation of organizational strategies (Shonubi & Akintaro, 2016).

2.1.5. Communication

Dunn and Goodnight (2016:14) defined communication as ‘the process of conveying information from one person known as the sender to another person known as the receiver’. Communication is seen as a crucial component in the organization, as it is the tool that is used to unify all employees and ensure that everyone is doing the work required to execute and achieve the overarching goals, strategies and objectives of the organization (Liaw et al., 2018).

Types of communication

Organizations use various communication types to send suitable and detailed messages to employees (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). According to Wambui, Kibui and Gathuthi (2012:2), there are two main types of communication; these include verbal communication and nonverbal communication. According to Olds College OER Development Team (2015), verbal communication includes speaking, listening and writing. The sender utilizes words and letters to code the information and speaks the message verbally to the receiver; the

receiver then decodes the words for understanding and meaning. This type of communication forms an important part of the professional world as it is used to create work relationships, increase productivity and ensure organizational success. Presentations, discussions, meetings, formal and informal conversations are some of the examples where verbal communication is used (Paramitha, 2018).

Despite the importance of verbal communication, the nonverbal aspect of communication has been deemed as more important (Friedman, 2019). Research has shown that ‘55% of in-person communication comes from nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, body stance and smell’ (Olds College OER Development Team 2015). The nonverbal channel encompasses any method of communication that could transfer a message that is not contained in words themselves. Friedman (2019) stated that body language, gestures, appearance (dressing, jewellery), facial expressions, sounds, smells are all examples of nonverbal cues which can convey a message to other people.

2.1.5.1. Internal Communication: Mediums, Messages and Perceptions

Internal communication is defined by Schoeneborn and Sandhu (2013) as the form of communication within an organization that facilitates goal achievement. Grunig et al. (2002, p. 486) as referenced in Kim (2005), characterize internal organizational communication as a distinct field that investigates communication practices within organizations and the characteristics of effective communication systems. Many organizations still lack a comprehensive understanding of internal communication and underestimate its significance in fostering mutual understanding between upper management and staff (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). By fostering effective communication through appropriate channels, organizations can enhance teamwork, ultimately leading to improved employee performance (Thao & Hwang, 2010).

Internal communication plays an indispensable role in the functioning and success of contemporary organizations. Chmielecki (2015) emphasized that effective internal communication facilitates a cohesive work environment, enhancing employee engagement and fostering a culture of collaboration. The significance of this communication channel has long been acknowledged; as early as the 1980s, Bland (1980) identified it as a vital

management tool, a sentiment reiterated by Kevin (2017), who noted its potential in driving organizational effectiveness.

Further supporting the criticality of internal communication, Clutterbuck and James (1997) argued for its rigorous examination, asserting that it has emerged as one of the fastest-growing disciplines in organizational management. Their findings revealed a concerning statistic: only 40% of organizations adeptly utilized internal communication to effectively convey their business mission and vision. This gap underlines the necessity of prioritizing internal communication within management strategies to optimize organizational performance.

Defining the breadth of internal communication, Kim (2005) elucidates that it encompasses all interactions and exchanges among employees, influencing not only individual performance but also the overall organizational climate. In a rapidly changing business environment, the value of fostering clear and consistent internal communication cannot be overstated; it serves as the backbone of successful teamwork and helps organizations navigate challenges effectively.

Recent studies continue to affirm the importance of internal communication. For example, a 2022 report from the Institute for Public Relations highlights that organizations with robust internal communication strategies experience higher employee satisfaction and retention rates (IPR, 2022). These findings reinforce the notion that internal communication should not be viewed merely as a supplementary function, but rather as a cornerstone of organizational success.

Chmielecki (2015) stated that the ultimate beneficiaries of internal communication are peers, employees, employers, clients, the community, and the company, which finds itself with efficient and committed employees, satisfied clients and community respect, suggesting research and improvement of internal communication must be ongoing. One of the internal communication functions focuses in this study was related to effective communication between middle managers and to gain more insight into how middle managers and employees can be engaged in an organization's related activities.

The potential benefits of internal communication according to Welch (2012) are that it relies on appropriate messages reaching employees in formats useful and acceptable to them. Abdullah and Antony (2012) stated that within the organization, face-to-face communication is an important internal means of communicating. It can also be considered that specific behaviors during transmitting the messages (Dăneci-Pătrău, 2011) determine how the receivers accept and respond to the messages. Without effective internal communication in an organization, it not only makes manager-employee relationships complicated, but makes it impossible for the organization to communicate with external parties such as customers, government, society, suppliers, etc., leaving the organization open to failure (Schwarz, Watson, & Callan, 2011).

Kim (2005), however, sees internal communication as a system associated with employee organization relationships, playing the role of antecedents of internal relations. More specifically, Kingston (2007) explained a one-way communication flow from the top down was negatively related to employees' commitment, performance, trust, and satisfaction whereas upright internal communication was shown to be associated positively with common goals, developing good relationships and playing an important part in the success of change initiatives. Internal communication is, therefore, a holistic management process associated with developing within organizations the necessary channels to transmit messages about behaviors, attitudes, understanding, roles, culture, and skills (Clutterbuck & James, 1997).

Nonetheless, prior studies have shown that effective internal communication can enhance employee performance, and recommend that strong communication mediums should be emphasized to ensure the effectiveness of communication (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). In this context, according to Zagan (2008) the road towards increased efficiency means an organization needs to handle continuously internal and external communication, with the aim of improving and perfecting it. According to Hola (2012), communication mediums and their implementation are necessary for the organization and market success as well. It is necessary to realize that the main task of communication mediums is satisfying the information needs of individuals in organizations. —*In the main, they need basic information for managing their job duties.* Hola (2012) added that internal mediums included face-to-face meetings or computer-mediated and group discussion, and are relevant to those working in public

relations or marketing within organizations. Adams, Roch, & Ayman (2005) also claimed that effective communication mediums must involve face-to-face and electronic tools between managers and employees. Rogala & Bialowas (2016) explained the importance of internal communication in their findings including six functions it serves:

- i. Providing employees with the up-to-date information necessary for their proper functioning in the organization
- ii. Uniting employees around the mission, values and strategy of the organization
- iii. Motivating employees to work for the benefit of the company
- iv. Creating a positive atmosphere in the workplace
- v. Building a positive image of the company among employees
- vi. Preparing employees for upcoming changes

Ideally, internal communication strikes a balance between extremes. Communicating too little creates a vacuum that causes mistrust and speculation. However, too much information can result in communication overload or the paradox of plenty in which an overabundance of information is ignored.

2.1.5.1.1 Communication Mediums

An essential aspect of effective communication is the selection of the communication mediums that are best suited to resolving the problem (Gorse & Emmitt, 1999). Orlikowski (2017) believed that *a communication medium is* one of the ‘genres’ in communication studies. He compared memos and electronic mail in the organization and found that both are useful for organizational evolution. Understanding the functions of effective communication mediums and knowing which mediums to be used will assist with employee willingness in doing tasks (John & Matterson, 2002). The choice of communication technology use in employee communication is important. Organizations can choose to communicate either face-to-face, online, or through various forms of mediated communications (Men, 2014). The selection of communication mediums is based on how effective they are in achieving bottom-line organizational goals and how they fit in a communication process. Computers, interactive videos, and other information technologies are very useful in informing

employees about important internal messages as well as gathering new ideas (Wright et al., 2014).

With the adoption of new communication technologies in employee communication, it has increased the overall level of organizational communication (Miller et al., 2011). The electronic communication media used in workplaces include telephones, video-conferencing and internet facilities such as email, intranets and social media networks. Besides electronic technologies, face-to-face communication is also used in employee communication. Face-to-face communication can be started with formal and informal one-to-one meetings which include eye contact, facial expressions, body movements and the tone of message that indicates the importance of the message. The way to interpret the message will also change based on the differences of the expressions.

The choice of communication medium significantly impacts both the manner in which individuals express messages and their reactions during interactions, whether through traditional or modern methods. Research indicates that face-to-face communication remains the most effective channel when compared to alternatives such as email or voicemail (Sharma, 2015). As a result, there is an increasing interest in examining the effects of new communication technologies within organizational contexts, particularly regarding employee development and performance enhancement. These tools can foster a work environment that encourages employees to be not only proactive but also skilled and efficient. The dynamics of organizational communication have evolved; the traditional, one-way communication model from managers to employees is no longer the norm. With advancements in technology, communication can now occur ubiquitously, transcending geographical and situational boundaries.

As the result, it becomes important to emphasize effective use of communication mediums or channels to bring about high performance. Any breakdown in the communication process or chain can have serious adverse effects on organizational performance (Chidiebere et al., 2015). In an era of information and communication technologies (ICT), computer-mediated communication is a necessary infrastructure that every organization needs to be equipped with. The use of digitization for example has affected the world in which people live, work

and learns. With the adoption of communication software, it helps the flow of communication within the organization and among employees alike. The use of computer-mediated communication has significantly changed the way organizations and employees communicate with each other.

In their research, Schiller and Cui (2010) found that communication channels, including face-to-face interactions and instant messaging, facilitate connectivity among employees within departments, benefiting both managers and staff in maintaining their relationships. Their investigation, conducted in the contrasting cultural environments of the United States and China, revealed a higher prevalence of face-to-face communication over instant messaging. The findings indicated that American employees tended to exhibit greater openness during in-person discussions compared to their Chinese counterparts, particularly among peers. Conversely, when utilizing instant messaging, Chinese employees demonstrated significantly greater openness than American employees across various communication dynamics, including downward, peer, and upward exchanges (Schiller & Cui, 2010).

Similarly, face-to-face communication was also found to be most effective in another study, as it provides instant feedback and multiple cues like expression, emotions, and personal focus (Mishra & Mishra, 2009). However, there is a contradiction found in studies by (White, Vanc, & Stafford, 2010) who suggested face-to-face communication was not the richest communication channel. Electronic channels, if used thoughtfully, can flatten the traditional style of internal communication and can give employees at all levels of the organization the sense of hearing things first-hand, from the top.

D'Ortenzio (2012) reported group e-mails, regular meetings, message boards and memo systems may be considered appropriate to increase staff efficiency and productivity by improving communication channels throughout the organization and ensuring that all relevant parties were informed of new information, changes, and policies. Another study by Merten and Gloor (2009) about electronic communication found that when receivers received the same e-mail many times they were found to be least satisfied with their job performance. An e-mail which is supposed to receive feedback or a 'reply' from the receiver may not be read.

By understanding the communication process, those involved in the conversation – particularly senior managers or middle managers can select the optimum communication mediums to increase the efficiency of manager to employee communication, with benefit to the productiveness of daily work. For example, the application of traditionally online discussion forums in the organizations may be still appropriate if the organization is among the small industry players. The types of social media tools that are regularly being adopted by certain organizations for the purposes of communication and knowledge sharing are Twitter and other social networking sites, the most popular at present being Face book and Linked In (Baxter, 2015). This is a major development in communication mediums with a shift from traditional styles of internal organizational communication to new media. These new communication technologies have changed the way employees communicate with each other through multi communication channels (Vegiayan, Baghestan, & Asfaranjan, 2013).

While each medium has its own impact into communication effectiveness, prior research has shown that technological advances in communication are often considered useful but not essential due to its time-consumption, for example giving feedback is perceived as too time consuming to be prioritized through the medium. Gordon & Stewart (2009) in their study stated that a lean communication medium such as e-mail typically is ineffective for negotiating shared understandings about issues that are complex such as discussion about performance appraisal or discipline issues.

In addition to social media being used for internal organizational communication, Berger (2011) predicted other mediums based on the virtual environment can also be used internally by organizations such as blogs, podcasts, wikis, chat rooms, discussion forums, RSS feeds, and websites. Social media can contribute to a number of organizational dimensions: improvement of communication processes, community development, facilitation of information flow, promotion of values, consolidation of organizational culture, and stimulation of creativity, even of collective intelligence, under optimum conditions (Badea, 2014). In most organizations, the communication medium is mostly the same. The difference is how the medium and tools are used. Are there clear objectives? Can their effectiveness be measured? This is where a strategic approach to research, analyze, communicate, and evaluate communication mediums comes in and part of developing a solid plan is

determining which communication mediums are appropriate for the organization's message and audience (Rana, 2013).

2.1.5.1.2 Messages and perceptions

Organizational communication encompasses a variety of methods, including face-to-face interactions, telephone calls, emails, online forums, and social networking, which facilitate the sharing of information and the enactment of change within the workplace (Husain, 2013). Over the past few decades, as noted by Leonardi (2014), there has been a notable rise in the utilization of technology to enhance the visibility of communication as a professional activity. Traditional communication methods, such as telephone conversations or in-person discussions, tend to remain private, accessible only to the individuals involved or those within earshot. Consequently, the likelihood of a wider audience overhearing such exchanges is limited compared to the overall size of teams and organizations. In contrast, modern communication tools, including email and instant messaging, enable information to be easily disseminated and visible to a larger group.

A study done by Tripathi (2017) pointed out that corporate managers spend downwards of 80 percent of their work time on communication centered activities. Tripathi further explained that in the organization, managers should be across to whom they need to speak, email, or telephone to avoid misunderstanding and missed functions. On the other hand, Yildirim (2014) unraveled that the value of effective communication is not only necessary to build up proper channels between managers and employees, but also necessary to contribute implicitly to the overall performance of organizations. Besides, Gonzales (2011) stated that in order to help others become motivated; managers need to use effective strategies during communication that will increase collaboration, trust, risk-taking, job satisfaction, morale, performance, and success. One such strategy is getting feedback from employees and ensuring two-way communication by the right channels.

Herman and Gioia (2001) emphasized that communication through specific channels requires a reciprocal approach, which involves assertively sharing information and being highly responsive to any questions that may arise. These practices foster the development of strong relationships among employees. Falkheimer et al. (2017) corroborated that communication

plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational effectiveness, both internally and externally, and they underscored the necessity for further development of communication within organizations. When middle managers adopt effective communication strategies, they are likely to cultivate greater job satisfaction among their employees, which can subsequently enhance their performance in everyday tasks (Dobre, 2013).

To achieve effective communication, quick feedback upon receiving messages is an important value discussed in previous studies. Sigvardsson and **Marthouret** (2016) showed that positive and quick feedback shapes employees' motivation and performance. Indeed, if there are two types of feedback (negative and positive) the employee needs to receive positive feedback, first and foremost. The employee must feel confident and safe before he or she can listen to bad feedback. The result further shows that in order to formulate accurate and impactful feedback, the manager needs to have a good communication strategy and encourage face-to-face communication. Communication effectiveness is also positively associated with managers' perceived performance. The implication here is that managers who are perceived to engage in effective communication are also seen as exhibiting strong performance (Neufeld et al., 2010). It is not enough for middle managers to have strong management convictions; they must also act on those convictions through effective communication. Without effective communication, management is essentially irrelevant.

The value of effective communication lies in what communication mediums are used to explain bad or good news, which might result in different impacts. Westerman et al.(2014) suggested that managers might choose a leaner medium (text messages) to deliver negative information because it implies personal detachment from the message and thus allows them to get the message across while preserving relationships with employees. However, their finding suggests that receivers might not like this style to inform them of negative matters. Observed normative preferences may be dependent on characteristics associated with richer channels.

2.1.5.1.3. Employees preference

Studies revealed that there are various communication medium preferences by employees. For instance, Kelleher (2001) found that different communication medium preferences

related to different work roles; for examples managers favoring face-to-face communication, and technicians preferring written communication. Chitraoa (2014) found group meetings and e-mail are two preferred mediums by respondents of his study, especially if the purpose of the communication was to update team members on upcoming events. Ean (2010) observed that print communication seems to be losing preference to electronic forms of communication. Despite, many of the prior studies of internal communication covers the use and preferences of communication mediums, Ruck and Welch (2012) stressed this raises question about which mediums might truly influence employee preferences for internal communication. In this regard, Gabriel and Koh (2016) in their study confirmed that social media (social networking) is a preferred medium by the respondents who used it to make business news, updates and announcements.

Ruck and Welch (2012) meanwhile found ‘leaders’ communication’ was a preferred communication source by all employees. They found in terms of information transmission, face-to-face communication as a primary method was preferred by their respondents in receiving prompt and useful feedback. Kupritz and Cowell (2011) in their study about productive management communication stressed that misuse of e-mail, however, can negatively affect an organization’s bottom line.

2.1.5.2. External communication

External communication refers to exchanging information between a company and external entities such as customers, suppliers, investors, media, and the general public. It involves conveying messages and information about the company, its products or services, and its values to the outside world. External communication can be practiced in many different ways. For example, service desks or call centers, but also email or phone calls (Payne & Frow, 2005). Karakostas et al. (2005) argued that with good use of these kinds of communication technologies, organizations can offer their customer a variety of products, lower prices and personalized service. Bakir (2016) argued that inquiries from customers can be divided into three categories: Low controversial, moderate controversial and high controversial inquiries. In low controversial inquiries, there is no uncertainty on how to deal with the problem because they occur commonly. To solve the problems, routinized practices

have to be performed. Moderate controversial inquiries, on the other hand, are complex but still common problems. In this case, a low level of uncertainty is present, but the staff has a general idea on how to solve the problem. New actors are called in to bring more knowledge which helps solve the problem. Lastly, high controversial inquiries are the most complex problems. There is a lot of uncertainty and very loose outlines for solutions. In this case, more actors are needed to provide the needed knowledge for solving the problem.

2.1.6. Organizational Communication and its Effectiveness

There is ample evidence that highlights the importance of effective communication in successful organizations (Ramokgadi et al., 2019). One of the ways for organizations to ensure effective communication is to prioritize management-level communication. Zambas (2019) stated that organizations that have managers who adopt effective communication strategies are able to improve overall productivity. They achieve this by giving clear instructions and fostering good employee relationships, which promote teamwork so that all employees work towards a similar goal. Hussein et al. (2014) concluded that managers who apply effective communication strategies reported higher employee satisfaction, engagement and less instances of employees lodging complaints. In addition, effective internal communication within an organization enables strong bonds to be formed between personnel at all levels of the organization, which results in improved collaboration and coordination across all the departments. It has also been observed that managers who resolve conflict utilizing effective communication and dialogue have a higher chance of successfully guiding the organization through significant organizational change (Braun et al., 2013).

In organizational communication, there are various variables affecting its effectiveness, among those the following factors such as credibility of communication, speed of communication, provision of feedback in communication, flexibility of communication, channels of communication and organization culture were discussed as follows.

Credibility of Communication: The credibility of information that is communicated throughout the organization is another factor, which needs to be considered. Gomez and Dailey (2017) stated that trust, credibility, openness and candour are vital properties of an ideal communication climate in organizations. For employers to act towards and successfully

implement strategies, they need to believe the information which they receive. Research by Tenhiälä and Salvador (2018) found that there are differences in the levels of credibility between the formal channel and the informal channel of communication. They found that formal communication channels are more specific, transparent and less ambiguous than informal communication channels. These findings were more present in organizations in the aviation or military industry, which are adamant in utilizing the formal channels in day-to-day operations and strategy implementation. In contrast, informal communication is more prone to spreading information with errors, ambiguity and deviations from the true message which was intended by the organization (Gomez & Dailey, 2017; Surbhi, 2018).

Speed of Communication: The speed with which information travels from the source to the intended target is an important factor to consider. With the improvement of technology, there are now ways for information to go out to the entire organization simultaneously via both the informal and formal communication channels such as e-mails and instant messaging platforms (Calin, 2019). Hauer, Harte and Kacemi (2018) found that real-time information can be utilized much faster within the organization. In addition, using real-time information makes employees perform their jobs easier and can implement strategies more efficiently. Despite some similarities in the speed of both the channels of communication, there are also some differences that are present. Hauer et al. (2018) observed that some forms of formal communication take too much time to prepare and process. For official organization news to come out, it needs to be vetted and edited by many people before it is released. On the other hand, the informal channel does not require such long preparation times.

Provision of feedback in communication: Provision for feedback is the fourth factor that has been found to have an impact on communication. Surbhi (2018) posited that organizations that have an open-door policy for employees to ask questions and provide some feedback can help them to perform the right tasks and ensure that the strategies of the organizations are implemented accordingly. In addition, feedback is important to employees of an organization because it enables them to fully participate, engage with and experience the information which is being conveyed in the message. This helps to reinforce the messages and lead to better action (Tyagi & Kumar, 2004). Lunenburg (2010) pointed out

that the informal communication provides a clear path of feedback because it is used freely and makes employees feel comfortable enough to express their feelings and their attitudes regarding various aspects of the organization. It can also be concluded that it is also relatively easy to provide feedback in formal communication because organizational channels of communications are outlined and there is a record of the communication.

Flexibility of Communication: The flow of information between the various levels and departments of the organization is also an important factor to consider. The information flow largely depends on the communication structure which has been set up by the organization and the channels in which the information flows (Calin, 2019). Calin (2019) believed that different communication structures and channels impact the organization's communication linkages and access to information; these in turn affect employees' participation, satisfaction and ultimately performance. Gomez and Dailey (2017) stated that some forms of communication are viewed as rigid in nature, highlighting examples such as handbooks, policy manuals and reports as documents which cannot be altered once they have been released. Other forms of communication, on the other hand, are regarded as flexible in that they can easily be altered and modified to fit the need and take advantage of the constant changes in the business environment (Winter, 2018). In addition, Xu and Li (2013) stated that the flexibility of the informal communication enables messages to convey employee's thoughts, attitudes and motivations. The aforementioned communication flexibility differences display the potential differences in the overall effect which can be present pertaining to strategy implementation.

Channels of communication: The last variable is the channel of communication, namely the formal and informal channels. Gulam (2010) indicated that the formal communication channel involves official messages and news that flow through recognized channels or routes officially laid by the organization. Such communication is well planned and intentional and occurs across all levels of the organization, such as between entry-level employees and their supervisor, among employees at same level or between the top management and departmental managers. Gomez and Dailey (2017) pointed out that the types of formal communication that are widely utilized in organizations include the following: official memos or notices, e-mails, conferences, structured meetings, employee handbooks and

company magazines. According to Turkalj and Fosic (2009), the main disadvantage with organizations that rely heavily on formal communication is of information overload. Too much information that is given in short spaces of time can become a burden to employees and lead to inefficiencies. In contrast, Kaplana (2014) found that formal communication has the following notable advantages to organizations: it is effective and dependable, it provides accurate information majority of the time and it has documentary evidence which can be used for future reference. Informal communication, on the other hand, considers the socio characteristics of the employee as an individual in the organization. It is largely unofficial and outside the officially designed channels. In addition, this form of communication reflects the employees' perception of the organization and is useful in gaining the information that leads to the success of the organization (Turkalj & Fosic, 2009).

2.1.7. Why is Communication Important?

The definitions of internal and external communication have been explained. However, why is it important to give it attention? According to many scholars, internal communication plays an important role within organizations. Kalla (2005) argued that companies with effective communications strategies are usually successful, while others tend to fall short of optimal performance. Effectively sharing information is fundamental for maintaining a competitive advantage. According to Welch and Jackson (2007), poor internal communication results in workplace inefficiency.

The openness of internal communication plays an important role in people's day-to-day work. Furthermore, Kalla (2005) stated that more sharing of information increases employees' feeling of security. Creating an open and secure atmosphere contributes to a more secure working atmosphere. Parker, Axtell and Turner (2001) confirmed that a higher level of communication quality leads to a safer workplace.

On the other hand, Hargie and Tourish (1993) refer to several scholars, who argued that a good communication strategy is vital in improving the quality of working relationships, which leads to greater organizational cohesion and enhanced effectiveness. Good working relationships are an important determinant of job satisfaction as well. This leads to reduced levels of absenteeism and increased productivity (Argyle, 2001). Clampitt and Downs (1993)

argued that improving internal communication leads to improved productivity, reduced absenteeism, higher quality of services and products, increased levels of innovation, fewer strikes and reduced costs. Quirke (2002) pointed out that the people of a company produce value. Internal communication is the core process by which businesses can create this value. Hargie & Tourish (1993) summarized that a company which is not communicating well as *“an orchestra which constantly tune-up, but never play a symphony.”* To summarize, good internal communication leads to more efficiency and effectiveness, happier employees and more productivity.

Communication with the customer, on the other hand, is also of great importance for organizations. As said earlier, the survival of companies depends on good interaction with their external environment such as customers (Dirsmith & Covaleski, 1983). Nienaber and Schewe (2011) stressed that good communication creates trust between the company and the customer. Payne and Frow (2005) forwarded that the importance of creating relationships with customers. By doing this, companies can improve shareholder value and create profitable relationships. Karakostas et al. (2005) stated that the acquisition of new customers is five times more expensive than generating repeat business from existing customers. Holding good relationships with customers and therefore keeping them as a client will increase profits as a result. Communication is a vital factor in maintaining good relationships with customers. Staying in touch and interacting are often mentioned as important factors in communication (Vavra & Terry, 1992). Roberts-Lombard (2011) indicated that communication with customers can help avoid or resolve conflicts before they become problems.

2.2. Empirical Studies Review

Many researchers have been carried out their study on issues related to the effect of organizational communication on the strategic plan implementation in telecommunication sectors. Therefore, in this section some foreign and local researchers’ designs, approaches, findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented below.

Leykun (2023) assessed strategic management practices in telecom context in the case of Ethio telecom. To conduct this study, the researcher used a descriptive research design to

explain the assessment of strategic management practices (strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation) on Ethio telecom. The overall practices of strategic management analysis findings show that the extent to which strategic management practice which incorporates strategic formulation, strategic implementation and strategic evaluation being applied by Ethio telecom was good, particularly the highest score belongs to strategic formulation, which implies that Ethio telecom is doing better in the environmental scanning to use as a basis for developing strategy, in generating and selecting appropriate strategic actions and initiatives to achieve corporate mission and objectives.

Otieno (2023) examined factors affecting strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global Information Technology firms based in Kenya. Explanatory research design was applied. The target population was the 825 top management (country managers) and middle level managers including head of operations, finance, human resource and marketing in the 165 global IT firms based in Kenya. The finding revealed that communication has a significant effect on strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya. Correlation results revealed that communication has a significant relationship with strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya ($r = 0.704$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). The analysis of variance showed that communication has a positive and significant effect on effect on strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya. The regression results revealed that communication had a positive and significant effect on strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya ($\beta = 0.364$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). The results show that an improvement in communication would lead to an improvement in implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya.

On the other hand, Lekisima, Ogolla and Nzili (2022) established the relationship between organizational communication and strategy implementation among energy generation firms in Kenya. The study applied a descriptive research design. The study targeted the 4 energy generation firms in Kenya. The study used methods of communications: verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual communications. Data for the study was analyzed through both descriptive and inferential analysis. Results of the study revealed that organizational

communication positively and significantly influences the strategy implementation among energy generation firms in Kenya.

Chirwa and Boikanyo (2022) investigated the role of effective communication in successful organizational strategy implementation in the services industry in Malawi. A quantitative research method was used. Data was obtained using an online questionnaire from a bank with 200 employees and financial services corporate with 28 employees. A combination of convenience and snowball sampling methods were utilized. Exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, statistics and inferential statistics (multiple regression) were used for the analysis of data. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between the three independent factors (credibility of communication, speed of feedback in communication and flexibility of formal communication) and the dependent factor (strategy implementation), with credibility of communication as the most significant factor. The study recommended that all organizations, regardless of size, should prioritize the use of formal communication when conveying useful information pertaining to strategy.

Muhaba (2022) assessed impacts of communication on implementation of strategic plans. Cross-sectional design was employed to quantitatively analyze the link between research variables of staff communication and implementation of strategy. Primary information was gathered via self-administered structured questionnaire. Ethiopian telecom employees who work in corporate offices made up the study's population. The findings demonstrated employee communication played a beneficial and statistically significant impact in implementing strategy and information about the implementation of a strategy was frequently sent through the vertical (Upward and Downward) communication flow.

According to Vigfússon, Jóhannsdóttir, and Ólafsson (2021) examined empirical studies conducted from 1980 till 2020 to identify obstacles and success factors affecting strategy implementation. The study analyzed empirical researches done so far and identified 18 key success factors and 16 obstacles that can either positively or negatively affect strategy implementation. They identified factors that have dual nature, which contain both elements to hinder and or facilitate the success of strategy implementation. In this regard, communication is one of the dualistic factors identified in the research. This underlines the significance of frequent and clear communication and the impact of lack of communication in both the

success and failure of strategy implementation. Another study by Getachew (2017) on the practices and challenges of strategy implementation at Ethiopian agricultural business corporation and observed that poor communication among others were the challenges faced in the strategy implementation.

According to the research findings of Köseoglu et al. (2020) communication and people are the key factors to implement the strategy. The study also describes effective communication of strategies at the organizational level as an essential element to bring strategic consensus which is a critical success factor for strategy implementation. As discussed above, studies from different part of the world provide an important understanding on the importance and direct relationship of employee communication and strategy implementation. The common finding is that clear communication positively affects the successful implementation of a strategy.

Ayusa (2016) examined the communication and strategy implementation in telecommunication firms in Kenya. Primary data was collected by the use of structured questionnaires. Thereafter, the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the target population of thirteen telecommunication firms in Kenya was analyzed. The researcher found out that the telecommunication firms applied the various channels of communication to convey or transmit information at the workplace to a great extent. These channels include face-to-face, electronic, mobile, broadcast media, and written channels of communication.

Alamsjah (2011) on eleven factors affecting successful implementation of strategy that have been well identified from previous research works, has found out a strong correlation between successful strategy execution and seven of the factors. Accordingly, communication is the third factor to have significant positive influence or to be highly correlated to successful strategy implementation. The researcher concluded that strategy execution will be more successfully when there is a shared understanding about how to do things within an organization (corporate culture support). The top management needs to communicate clear strategy and direction to middle-level managers in order for them to translate it into clear execution plans.

Aaltonen and Ikavalko (2002), in their research of strategy implementation in 12 service organizations, showed that so much of strategy implementation problems are related to communication, as communication has effect on the creation of common understanding of a strategy. According to the findings, the communication of strategy in those examined 12 service firms was mostly linear and top-down communication. However, continuous two-way communication with feedback and possibility of commenting and questioning it is important to understand and own the strategy. Fostering informal communication between superiors and subordinates helps to have a common interpretation, acceptance and adoption of the strategy among working units. Lack of understanding of strategy was one of the obstacles of strategy implementation observed in the study. The study showed that there were organizational members who typically recognized strategic issues as being important and also understood their content in generic terms; however the problem was while applying the strategic issues in their daily decision making.

2.3. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The role of organizational communication in shaping strategic plan implementation is critical, particularly within dynamic sectors such as telecommunications. This study aimed to develop a conceptual framework that explored the effects of both internal and external communication on the strategic plan implementation of telecommunication in Ethiopia. Given the rapid changes in technology and market demands, understanding the multifaceted nature of effective communication can empower organizations to align their strategic objectives with operational capabilities.

Internal communication encompasses multiple dimensions, including the quality, accessibility, and effective use of communication within an organization. Regards to **internal** communication quality: High-quality internal communication has been shown to enhance employee engagement, clarity of strategic objectives, and overall organizational performance (Men, 2014). In the Ethiopian context, where organizational hierarchies can be pronounced, ensuring that communication channels are transparent and reliable can significantly impact staff morale and productivity.

On the other hand, internal communication accessibility: Accessibility refers to the ease with which employees can receive and engage with internal communications. Prior research indicated that improved accessibility fosters inclusivity and encourages feedback, which is crucial for refining strategic initiatives (Zheng et al., 2015). In a rapidly evolving telecommunications landscape, organizations must ensure that information is not only disseminated but also available to employees at all levels.

As to effective use of internal communication in organizational culture: The integration of internal communication within the organizational culture can create a supportive environment for strategic plan implementation. Cultivating a culture that prioritizes open dialogue enables organizations to align their workforce with strategic objectives effectively (Ruck & Welch, 2012).

Finally, effective use of internal communication in human resource management (HRM): The role of HRM is pivotal in influencing internal communication to enhance employee performance, particularly during periods of change or strategic redirection. Effective communication practices in HRM, such as regular updates and active listening, can enhance the overall acceptance and execution of strategic plans (Brewster et al., 2016).

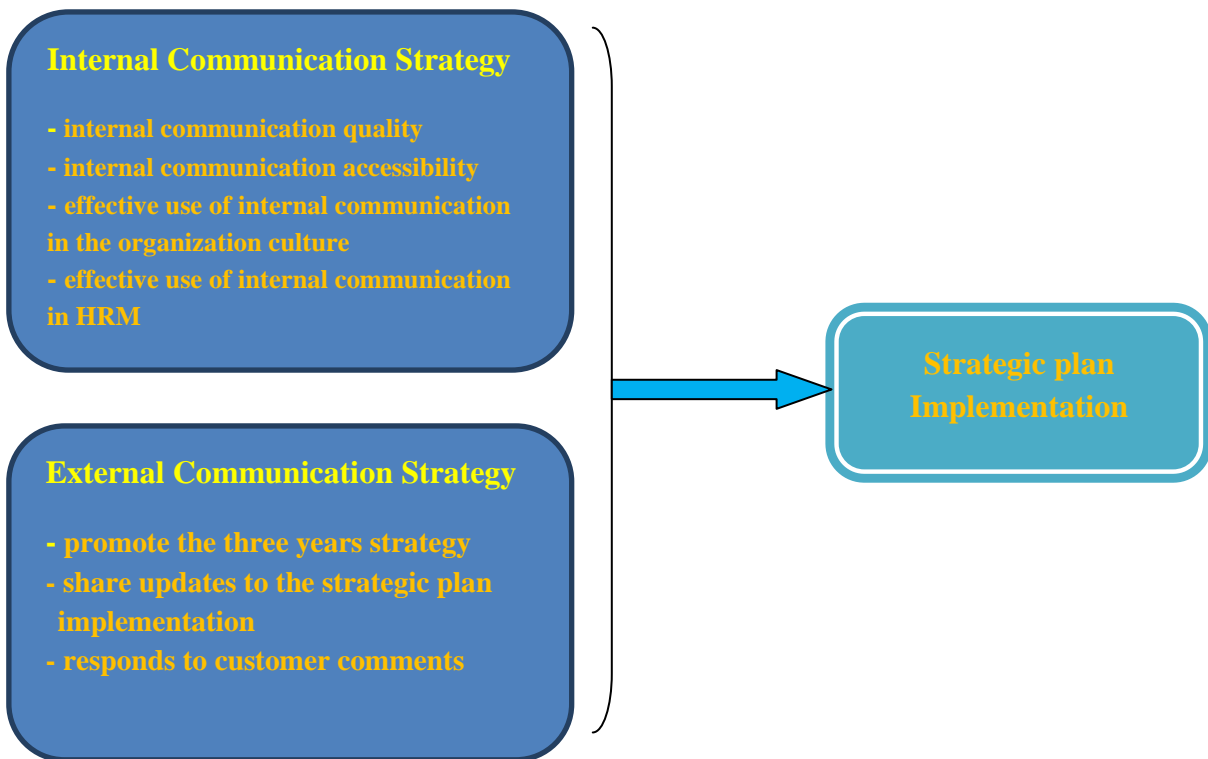
Beyond internal dynamics, external communication also profoundly influences strategic plan implementation. Organizations must effectively engage with external stakeholders, including customers, regulators, and partners. For instance, stakeholder engagement: Engaging external stakeholders is fundamental for ensuring that the strategic plans are well-received and supported. Effective external communication can help organizations gather valuable feedback that informs adjustments to strategic initiatives (Doh & Guay, 2006). Besides, brand reputation also crucial for effective external communication, because the perception of an organization in the telecommunications sector can significantly influence its strategic priorities. A strong, positive brand reputation, boosted by effective external communication, can enhance customer loyalty and market positioning (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004).

In summary, the above conceptual framework underscores the pivotal role of organizational communication—both internal and external—in the implementation of strategic plans within the Ethiopian telecommunications sector. By focusing on the quality, accessibility, and

effective practices within internal communication, alongside proactive external engagement strategies, this framework aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how communication influences strategic outcomes. Therefore, this study attempted to test empirically these dimensions to offer comprehensive insights into the communication strategies that best support organizational success in this rapidly evolving context.

As shown in figure 2.1, the hypothesized conceptual framework model shows the relationship between variables of internal communication and external communication (independent variables), and strategic plan implementation (dependent variable).

Figure 2.1:- Conceptual Framework of the study



Source: Modified and adopted from Yanget al.(2010)

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Background and Strategic Plan of the Organization

3.1.1. Background of the Organization

Ethiopian Telecommunications Service Provider is Africa's oldest public telecommunications operator, having been founded more than a century ago. Prior to 1952, the operator was part of the Telephone, Telegraph, and Postal Services Department. In 1952, the Imperial Board of Telecommunications (IBTE) was established to expand and provide telecommunications services after proclamation No. 131/52. Later, in 1981, IBTE reorganized as a telecom regulator and operator. Regulation 10/1996 organized the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC) to operate telecommunications services, and that same year, proclamation 49/1996, established a separate regulatory body, the Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency (ETA) (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1996b). By November 2010, the Ethiopian government had finally changed the operator's name from ETC to Ethio Telecom. In 1894, the first long-distance telephone line was built, connecting Addis Ababa and Harar. Then the inter-urban network started to spread in all directions from the capital Addis Ababa.

In 1906, a telegraph line was established between the Ethiopian city of Dire Dewa and Djibouti (Ethio Telecom, 2021). Three separate Earth satellite stations were set up in Sululta for international communication between 1979 and 1987. After the implementation of the digital exchange in 1988, the operator launched a digital microwave link in 1989 and installed four high-capacity 60 channel domestic satellite stations in 1994 at Addis Ababa, Gode, Mekele, and Humera (ITU, 2002; Ethio Telecom, 2021). These circuits connected Ethiopia to more than 20 Southern and Eastern African countries via the PANAFTEL microwave network (ITU, 2002). Up until 2005, Ethiopia had a 60-channel old analog link with Kenya, a 34 Mbps link with Djibouti, and a 155 Mbps digital microwave link with Sudan. Eritrea's analog link was severed during the 1990s war and has not yet been restored.

After 2005, Ethiopian telecommunications services underwent a significant transformation and modernization, with the Chinese Import-Export Bank lending a USD 1.5 billion in 2006

to lay down 10,000 km of national fiber backbone and expand 2G coverage to over 85% of Ethiopian territory (Workneh, 2014; Wall Street Journal, 2014). The remaining international traffic was handled over Intelsat satellite ground station, which had 12,000 channels (ITU, 2002).

Ethio Telecom started to deploy 3G for 1.7 million subscribers in 2011 (Wei, 2017). Moreover, it deployed 3.5G and completed 4G in the capital city, Addis Ababa (Wall Street Journal, 2014; Wei, 2017). In 2019/20, Ethio Telecom collected a total of 47.7 Billion ETB (1.4 Billion USD) income, which is a 31.4% escalation from last year (Ethio Telecom, 2020). According to the operator, this 31.4% revenue rise in a single year was linked to network development and customer experience enhancement (Ethio Telecom, 2020). Massive tariff reductions in fixed broadband services, for example, have resulted in a 135% increase in subscribers compared to the previous year (Ethio Telecom, 2020). Additionally, the introduction of newly discounted products has contributed to a 19% increase in voice and a 130% increase in data usage.

3.1.2. Ethio – Telecom Three years LEAD Growth Strategy [2022 – 2024]

Since it began offering telecom services in our nation 129 years ago, Ethiopian Telecom has contributed to both the socioeconomic advancement of the country and the enhancement of the quality of life for its people. It has developed and put into action a three-year LEAD growth strategy that has allowed it to emerge as a major supplier of digital solutions in the cutthroat telecom industry. The strategy focuses on providing services beyond connectivity, enabling inclusive growth by providing digital and financial services and simplifying the daily activities of businesses and individuals. The first-year strategy execution was successfully concluded with outstanding performance.

A number of significant analyses have been conducted, including the interests and expectations of internal and external stakeholders (customers, employees, vendors/suppliers, and various government organs), past company performances, internal strengths, organizational resources and capacities, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the external environment, and market dynamics. This annual business plan has been developed while taking into account and reviewing pertinent government policies, international best practices,

and industry trends. Following these multifaceted observations and analysis of environmental conditions, strategic priorities have been identified and six strategic thematic areas have been formulated. Additionally, this new business plan will accommodate a changing reality, taking into account the nature of the business and the ongoing market conditions, in addition to the inputs from last year's strategy execution.

Given the telecom industry's rapid growth and inherent dynamic nature, this plan is not static; rather, it employs a "deliberate" and "emergent strategy approach," taking into account the industry's growth and changes, the government's development plans and directions, competition and further reform issues, and the state of our nation.

Vision: A leading digital solutions provider

Mission: to provide reliable communications and digital financial services to simplify life, and accelerate digital transformation of Ethiopia.

Values: Human-centric; integrity; excellence; socially responsible; togetherness

By effectively managing its human resources, expertise, and resources, the company hopes to become a company that its customers, partners, and stakeholders choose. Its strategic thematic areas include: Supreme customer experience, sustainable business growth, excellence in technology and solutions, operational excellence, leading brand, and people-centric high performance.

The corporate strategic objectives will be cascaded to respective work units along with relevant KPIs and targets for proper execution. The strategy is divided into six thematic areas with 17 strategic objectives and several strategic initiatives to address the strategic priorities and ensure the company's sustainable growth.

The strategy aims to meet the constantly evolving needs of customers, guarantee digital and financial inclusion, develop a digital economy, boost productivity, and redirect revenue from basic connectivity services to value-added and content-driven services by implementing new business streams and digital solutions, such as improved digital financial services.

Major Initiatives

During this fiscal year, the company intends to implement a variety of strategies to guarantee quality of service that boosts customer satisfaction and improves the experience, particularly through projects that increase network and system capacity, such as

- ✓ To meet the increasing demand of data users, 4G/LTE Advanced and 3G network expansions and optimization, as well as 5G network expansions, are strengthening telecom network expansion and service quality assurance activities. By the end of the fiscal year, total mobile service capacity will be 92M.
- ✓ Implementation of new and modern telecom infrastructure and systems expansion (Data center, cloud, business and operation support system...)
- ✓ Meeting client needs by offering reasonably priced, high-quality goods and services; develop new revenue streams; provide services that meet the needs of enterprise customers; provide enterprise customers with security solutions;
- ✓ Modernizing service delivery, notably boosting digital service delivery choices and swiftly reacting to customer service needs;
- ✓ Enhancing and diversifying digital financial services, engaging more partners;
- ✓ Expanding tele birr's accessibility throughout the country through customer awareness creation activities; Engaging in beyond connectivity services and strengthening financial capacity;
- ✓ Provide effective service to clients by upgrading internal procedures and business processes automation; Maintaining the financial soundness of the organization and strengthening cost-saving and effective resource usage techniques;
- ✓ Enhance resilience of our leadership to readily adjust to the demanding business climate and increase the ability to turn problems into opportunities; Take part in capacity-building exercises for staff members to foster a competitive mindset and enable them to offer clients competitive services; creating and executing a range of employee retention initiatives to maintain the company's competent and qualified workforce; and
- ✓ Using a variety of corporate social responsibility initiatives to support the community, improve the company's standing, and foster a sense of community acceptance and

ownership in order to establish a preferred brand recognized for providing high-quality, reasonably priced services.

(Ethio -.telecom, 2023).

3.2. Research Design

Explanatory study design was adopted in order to investigate the effect of organizational communication on the implementation of a strategic strategy in ethio telecom. This design was chosen since it is one of the correlational research designs that are employed in social science research (Creswell, 2012). More precisely, it allows the researcher to explain the kind of relationship that existed between various variables associated with the subject of the study. For example, to determine how much a change in one independent variable affects the dependent variable. It is also convenient to gather data from a relatively large sample of respondents at one point in time.

Moreover, it helps to investigate the current situation of the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers in the study area and more importantly, it is useful to describe the effect of the independent variables on the outcome variable using the correlation statistical test including the strength and the direction of the relationship between the variables so as to provide more information about effect relationship. Finally, it helped to make interpretations and draws conclusions from the statistical test results.

Therefore, based on the above scenario the researcher has attempted to investigate the effect of organizational communication on the strategic implementation in ethio-telecom centers in SSWR.

3.3. Research Approach

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used; the quantitative approach was more objective, much more focused on gathering and analyzing statistics, and used to evaluate the evidence and clarify theories and hypotheses (Hunter & Leahey, 2008). In contrast, the qualitative method involved interpreting people's opinions, which, according to Creswell (2007), helps to reduce the risk of validity, reliability, and subjective issues. According to this perspective, there were a few reasons to use a mixed methods approach: first, it is

beneficial to look at the same phenomenon from different angles and also to allow for the emergence of new or deeper dimensions; second, the mixed method approach offered advantages that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative approaches could offer when used independently (Creswell, 2003). For these reasons, the study was conducted using a mixed method approach.

3.4. Target Population

In order to answer the research questions and achieve the study's goals, the target populations were management bodies and permanent employees who were directly involved in the implementation of strategic plans and communication. According to the Human Resource Management Department (2024) and the most recent data available, there are 2,500 permanent employees in the South-South West region of Ethiopian Telecom. There are twenty-eight operational service centers in this region, which is one of the country's twenty-three regions and zonal Ethiopian Telecom Offices.

3.5. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

3.5.1. Sampling Techniques

In this study probability sampling technique was employed. This method was chosen because it ensures the law of statistical regularity which states that if on average the sample chosen is a random one, the sample have the same composition and characteristics as the target population (Catherine, 2009). Moreover, it ensures the reliability; validity and statistically acceptable results rather than non-probabilistic techniques. Therefore, based on this view, cluster sampling technique was used. This is because, cluster sampling technique is a method in which each unit selected is a group of persons rather than an individual (Ali, 2014). Hence, each ethio-telecom center with its all permanent employees taken as a cluster. Moreover, cluster sampling technique is useful when sampling frame is not available or too expensive and cost of reaching an individual element is too high. Furthermore, as far as all the twenty eight ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR administered through similar procedures, the researcher believed that cluster sampling technique is suitable. Therefore, using cluster sampling technique ten ethio-telecom centers, namely, were chosen randomly.

3.5.2. Sample Size Determination

The sample size of the study from the target population, all permanent employees in the SSWR were determined using the simplified formula for proportion which was developed by Yamane (1967) cited in Ajay and Micah (2014). According to Yamane, with 95% confidence level and 0.05 sampling error, the sample size is determined by the formula: $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$

$$\text{Sample size: } n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = \frac{2500}{1 + 2500((0.05)^2)} = \frac{2500}{7.25} = 344.827586 \dots \cong 345$$

Where: N = is the population size, and e = is the level of precision or sampling error. However, the final sample size for the research was 362 with 5% added considering non – response rate.

As to the allocation of study sample was done using cluster sampling technique described in the above section. Accordingly, the chosen ethio-telecom centers along with their employees including management bodies are described in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Sample Size Distribution Resulted from Cluster Sampling Technique

No	Name of ethio-telecom center	Number of Employee	Percent
1.	Wolkite	28	7.7
2.	Woliso	25	6.9
3.	Werabe	23	6.4
4.	Butajira	27	7.5
5.	Hawassa	25	6.9
6.	Enseno	26	7.2
7.	Halaba	25	6.9
8.	Hosana	31	8.5
9.	Shashemene	24	6.6
10.	Jimma	26	7.2
11.	Durame	23	6.4
12.	Dilla	24	6.6
13.	Arbaminich	26	7.2
14.	Wolaita Sodo	29	8.0
Total		362	100

Source: South - South West Region Human Resource Report, January 2024

3.6. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments

3.6.1. Sources of Data

The sources of the data for this research were both primary and secondary. Primary source of data was collected through questionnaire from the employees and from management bodies using interview in each of the selected ethio-telecom center. Secondary source of data was collected using document review method of data collection from the organization data and information office documentations such as implementation reports, strategic plan implementation, correspondence letters, and the ways of communication with the view of identifying the strategic plan implementation.

3.6.2. Data Collection Instruments

3.6.2.1. Questionnaire

Self-administered questionnaire was developed and conducted on the selected employees. This data collection tool was chosen, because questionnaire is believed to be better to get large amount of data from respondents relatively in short period of time with least expenditure (Kothari, 2004). On the other hand, the choice of using questionnaire as method of data collection has considered the fact that ethio-telecom is a very busy working place and employees have a limited time. So, this method was chosen in order to avoid interference of employees' working hours.

The questionnaire was structured for efficient use of time and finance for large and dispersed branches. In the questionnaire, structured and closed – ended questions were included. The survey instrument contains three parts. The first part included demographic characteristics of the employees. The second part was about the independent variables – about internal and external communication strategies and the third for the dependent variable – strategic plan implementation. All items in the second and third parts of the questionnaire were developed based on the objectives of the study and literature review. The items in the questionnaire in the close-ended type, responses are measured by a 1 – 5 point Likert scale: 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for undecided, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree. Those questionnaires first construct in English language and then translate into Amharic language

with similar meanings for respondents' better understanding. Finally, before distributing the questionnaire for the selected employees, pilot test was carried out by selecting 25 (10% of the sample size) employees randomly from different centers out of the selected ethio-telecom centers. Thus, after conducting the pilot test necessary correction was made with the help of the advisors and then all the intended number of questionnaire were copied and disseminated to respondents by hand so that threat of getting low response rate was eliminated.

3.6.2.2. Interview

Since interviewing is fundamentally a qualitative research methodology (Creswell, 2006), it was chosen for this study in order to interview managements of the ten Ethiopian telecom service centers on issues related to the items raised in the questionnaire about the study variables. According to Creswell (2006), interviewing provides an opportunity to gather information on respondents' attitudes, perceptions, opinions, and experiences systematically and simultaneously for a specific purpose. This approach gives the interviewer more opportunity to go beyond the answer and to engage in conversation with the interviewee in order to obtain reliable information for cross-checking and supplementing quantitative data results.

3.6.2.3. Document review

In this research documents which were related to the effect of organization communication on strategic implementation were reviewed. Because, document review provide numerous types of data needed in a research to elicit preliminary information about the subject being investigated. Moreover, it is relevant to enhance the quality of findings through mixed methods. Therefore, relevant document related to demographic characteristics, implementation reports, strategic plan implementation, correspondence letters, and the ways of communication with the view of identifying the strategic plan implementation were reviewed.

3.7. Variables and Measurements

3.7.1. Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is strategic plan implementation. It was measured with respect to the strategy of ethio-telecom that was set for the past five years including this year as well as in terms of the three years strategic plan mentioned in the earlier section of this chapter. However, the items of the variable were operationalized by previously validated five point Likert scales, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

3.7.2. Independent Variables

In this study, based on the reviewed literature and empirical studies, two types of communication such as internal communication and external communication were taken as the independent variables and their respective items were measured using a five point Likert scales, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree based on. Furthermore, demographic characteristics such as sex, age, academic qualification, and work experience also taken as independent variables and were measured nominally and ordinally.

3.8. Data Collection Procedures

As aforementioned, to answer the basic research questions through a series of data gathering procedures, the expected relevant data was gathered by using questionnaire, interview and document analysis. These processes assisted the researcher to acquire accurate and meaningful data from the sample units. After having letters of authorization from Wolkite University and the selected ethio-telecom service centers for ethical clearance, the researcher directly took the pilot test on data collection instruments, because checking the validity and reliability of data collecting instruments before providing to the actual study subject is the core to assure the reliability and validity of the data.

To ensure reliability and assess appropriateness prior to administration, the questionnaires were piloted among 30 employees who were not involved in the actual data collection process. The pilot test was conducted to determine whether the investigator and respondents

were effectively communicating through the instrument and to add some value to the validity and reliability of the questionnaire's contents based on the feedback received. Some questions and things were changed based on the findings, taking into account the feedback from the respondents and being reviewed by the advisor. The researcher clarified the goal of the study for all questionnaire respondents and interviewees to prevent misunderstandings after reaching an agreement with the concerned participants. In addition to these, the respondents' requests for explanations were fulfilled.

Following receiving of all the corrected items, the questionnaires were distributed to the sample employees in the chosen Ethiopian telecom service centers and collected in accordance with the schedule; continuous follow-up was used to shorten the return time in order to improve the quality of the responses; and the questionnaires were then collected and prepared for data analysis.

The other data collection procedure for collecting Questionnaires was via Mail Service for distant areas for instance: Shashemane, Hawassa, Dilla, Walaita Sodo, Arbaminch, and Jimma.

In conducting research that necessitates data collection from populations residing in remote or rural areas, the implementation of effective mail-based questionnaire distribution procedures is imperative. Therefore, the researcher outlined a systematic approach for collecting questionnaires through postal services with the help of friends in those mentioned distant locations. Thus, the questionnaire was prepared and designed in a clear, concise, and pre-tested manner; appropriate mailing lists were also selected and accurate addresses were obtained; however, before mailing, packaging and information materials were also organized. Each questionnaire comes with an introductory letter that explains the goal of the study, guarantees confidentiality, and encourages participation. This letter helps to establish a relationship with the respondents and emphasizes the importance of their contribution to the research.

To avoid damage during transportation, the packaging needs to be tight. Additionally, follow-up and mailing protocols were satisfied. Once the questionnaires were prepared, they were dispatched via a reliable postal service. Finally, collection and data compilation was carried out and organized the responses systematically ensuring data integrity by cross-

referencing the collected information with the original questionnaires that enhanced the reliability of the findings. In general, the development of structured procedures for collecting questionnaires via mail service is a vital component of research in geographically challenging areas. By employing thoughtful design, strategic planning, and efficient follow-up, the researcher effectively gathered valuable data while fostering engagement within distant employees.

In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of managerial perspectives regarding operational challenges and employee motivations in the South-South West Region, semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data from service center managers in parallel with quantitative data collection. The interview guide included open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses regarding various internal and external communication practices as well as the implementation of strategic plans in their respective service centers. Before commencing the interviews with the ten selected managers, appropriate ethical considerations was addressed, including obtaining informed consent and ensuring confidentiality of responses. The interviews were conducted in a quiet and neutral setting to promote candid dialogue. Additionally, the interviews was recorded (with permission) to facilitate accurate transcription and analysis.

In general, a thorough data collection strategy for Ethiopian Telecom consists of manager interviews and staff questionnaires. The organization will be able to pinpoint areas for development and maximize service delivery in the South-South West Region thanks to the quantitative and qualitative insights this dual-method approach will provide. Implementing these data collection procedures greatly improved the researcher's ability to obtain important information from the managers and participant employees in an era where making well-informed decisions is essential for organizational success.

3.9. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

3.9.1. Validity

According to Ayre and Scally (2014), validity is a measure of how well a measurement tool fulfills its purpose and is concerned with whether it measures the desired behavior or quality. The relevant and suitable interpretation of the measurement tool's findings as a consequence

of the analysis is what establishes validity. The collection of relevant data for the measuring instrument's intended application is what Whiston (2012) refers to as validity. What the measurement tool is designed to measure and whether the items measure accurately in relation to the research goals are crucial in this situation.

A designed validity test was performed to ensure the quality of the data and ascertain the validity of the measuring instruments. The researcher has attempted to rely on pertinent literature kinds to modify the survey's items in order to guarantee the validity of the instruments. Furthermore, the instruments have been modified based on the opinions of leading specialists and managers of Ethiopian telecom centers in order to preserve their authenticity. Above all, the advisers discussed and reviewed the instruments' clarity. Both before and after the pre-test (pilot test) was carried out, this was completed.

3.9.2. Reliability Test

A sound interpretation of research findings requires the measurement instruments to be reliable. As a result, researchers ought to make sure the measurement instrument they're employing is trustworthy. Reliability relates to the stability of the measurement tool and its consistency over time. In other words, reliability is related to the fact that the measurement tool gives similar results when applied at different times (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020).

As per the aforementioned perspective, a researcher's findings are deemed dependable if they yield consistent outcomes under similar conditions but under different circumstances. The researcher employed a reliability test to verify the internal consistency of the questionnaire's items, and Cronbach alpha values were employed to gauge the reliability. Developed by and named after Cronbach (Cronbach, 1951), the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency value is the most widely used method for testing internal consistency. It's used for multi-item scales and questionnaires and provides a coefficient of inter-item correlations, which is a measure of the internal consistency among the items in the tool. It's the average correlation among all the items in question.

The reliability test was conducted using the rule described in (Baharin et al., 2015). That is, Cronbach's Alpha value that ranges from 0.9 – 1.0 taken as excellent, 0.8 - 0.89 as very good, 0.7 - 0.79 as acceptable, 0.6 - 0.69 questionable while 0.5 - 0.59 as a poor and the

value less than 0.5 as unacceptable, whereas the closer Cronbach’s alpha is to 1.00, the higher the internal consistency reliability will be.

The general goal of the study was to investigate the impact of organizational communication on the implementation of strategic plans in Ethiopian telecom in a subset of Ethiopian telecom service centers, as previously stated. To this end, a questionnaire was utilized, and both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were performed. However, the reliability and consistency of the measuring tool—each item—determines the validity of the conclusions derived from these statistical analyses.

Therefore, the reliability of the items in the questionnaire was checked using pilot test on 26 (10% of the sample size) employees randomly from different centers out of the selected ethio-telecom centers. The analysis was done using SPSS version 26. The results of the tests are summarized in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Reliability Test Results

N o	Variable	Description	Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
1	Independent	Internal Communication		
		- internal communication quality	.779	6
		- internal communication accessibility	.791	8
		- effective use of internal communication in the organization culture	.772	7
		- effective use of internal communication in HRM	.768	6
		External Communication	.781	6
2	Dependent	Strategic Plan Implementation	.771	9
		The overall items reliability	.772	42

Source: own construct from SPSS output, 2024

As it can be seen in the above Table 3.2, the least Cronbach alpha value is .768 which is in the acceptable range 0.7 - 0.79, this implies that the values are in the acceptable range and hence the research was conducted using the stated items.

3.10. Methods of Data Analysis

Since data analysis is the process of analyzing data to extract insights that support decision-making. The raw data collected through questionnaire were carefully sorted, coded and entered into computer for processing. However, the researcher used both qualitative and

quantitative methods of data analysis and interpretations. Accordingly, descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient, inferential statistics analysis and qualitative data analysis were employed. The quantitative data analysis was done using SPSS version 26 and MS Excel software.

3.10.1. Descriptive Statistics

In this section the data collected through questionnaire, on the effect of organization communication on strategic plan implementation were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to determine to what extent did the internal and external communications were carried out as well as strategic plan implementation using a 1 – 5 point likert scales. Moreover, the characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, age, and educational level and work experience, were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage.

3.10.2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is a widely used statistical method for obtaining an index of the relationships between two variables when the relationships between the variables is linear and when the two variables are continuous (Phyllis et al., 2007). Since the objectives of this study was to ascertain whether a statistically significant relationship exists between the two independent variables and the dependent variable or not, the analysis was carried using Taylor(1990) who was roughly categorized r values as, $r \leq 0.35$ (or $- 0.35$) are generally considered to represent low or weak correlation, $r = 0.36$ to $r = 0.67$ or $r = - 0.36$ to $r = - 0.67$ as moderate correlations, $r = 0.68$ to $r = 0.89$ or $r = - 0.68$ to $r = - 0.89$ as strong or high correlations, and as Beaumont(2012) indicated that r values very close to 1 as very high positive correlation.

3.10.3. Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics was used to infer from the sample data descriptive statistics results about the population parameters or to make judgments and generalization on the target population. Therefore, to carry out and to achieve one of the objectives, i.e., to examine the extent of the

effect of the organizational communication on the strategic plan implementation, multiple linear regression model was utilized.

Regression analysis was used to explain and estimate the effect of the independent variables on the outcome variable. It can assist in the understanding of how the value of a dependent variable changes when any one of the independent variables is changed, while the other is fixed (Shi, 2013). Generally, regression analysis is used for making statistical inferences and predictions based on sample data and descriptive statistics analysis results (Faraway, 2005). Therefore, the model description is described as follows.

Model specification:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \beta_5 x_5 + \epsilon$$

is the multiple linear regression model with 5 – independent variables. Where the parameters β_i , $i = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$ are called the regression coefficients and represents the expected change in the dependent variable Y (strategic plan implementation) per unit change in x_i when all of the remaining independent variables x_j were held constant. Where x_i , $i = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$ were the independent variables: x_1 = internal communication quality, x_2 = internal communication accessibility, x_3 = effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, x_4 = effective use of internal communication in HRM, and x_5 = external communication affecting strategic plan implementation. This model was formulated in order to test the hypotheses of the study.

Assumptions for Multiple Linear Regression Model

For the regression analysis to be valid and make use of inferences for the target population, it should pass the diagnostic test of the assumptions. The following are assumptions of a multiple linear regression model.

1. Linearity Assumption: Linearity in the parameters

The mean of the response variable is a linear combination of the parameters. If the relationship between the response variable and the parameters is not linear, the prediction of the dependent variable is likely to be seriously in error (Chatterjee & Hadi, 2012).

2. Normality Assumption: normal distribution of errors

The errors should follow a normal distribution with mean 0 and variance σ^2 , $\epsilon_i \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$ for any given value or combination of values, on the predictor variables.

3. Homogeneity of Variance Assumption: Homoscedasticity (equal variance) of errors

Different response variable have the same variance in their errors, regardless of the values of the predictor variables.

4. Multicollinearity: the presence of correlations between the predictors is termed collinearity (for a relationship between two predictor variables) or multicollinearity (for relationship between more than two predictors). In severe cases (such as a perfect correlation between two or more predictors), multicollinearity can mean that no unique least squares solution to a regression analysis can be computed.

As stated in Brooks (2008); these assumptions were tested before running the actual study's analysis, interpretations and discussions. The diagnostic test results are presented and interpreted in the next chapter.

3.10.4. Qualitative Data Analysis

The data gathered through interview from the selected ethio-telecom service centers were summarized accordingly and described qualitatively in the interpretation of the data. The content of the collected qualitative data was analyzed using inductive approach. Using this method, the researcher was able to organize the data, break them into manageable units, and then supplemented them for quantitative data analysis result and discussion.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

Research ethics is referred to as a system of moral values that is concerned with the degree to which research procedures adhere to professional, legal and sociological obligations to the study participants (Polit & Beck, 2004). Creswell (2012) asserts that data collection ought to be morally neutral and considerate of people and places. Obtaining permission before starting to collect data is not only a part of the informed consent process but it is also an ethical

practice. Ethics in a research consists of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, and plagiarism. All these issues should be taken in to account while conducting a research.

Consent: - is a process by which a study participant express his / her willingness to participate in particular study after having been informed of all aspects of the study that are relevant to the study participants decision to participate. Moreover, it is also a permission to do something, especially given by somebody or authority. In this regard, beginning from the task of topic selection up to the end of the study, it had confirmation from the Department of Management, Wolkite College of Business and Economics, School of Graduate Studies Wolkite University. Therefore, in this study, all information collected from the participants was based on the free will of those individuals and the researcher was full of confidential on those issues.

Anonymity and Confidentiality – the researcher need to know which type of information can or cannot be shared with third party with or without the study participants. Therefore, any types of information that have been obtained from the participants were kept confidentially and the researcher did not use the participants name directly.

Plagiarism – involves using someone else’s ideas or writings and passing them off as one’s own. While preparing the report of the study, the researcher has taken into account an ethical and legal responsibility to give credit to other for their ideas by providing appropriate reference citations.

In general, data collection to adhere the ethical research standards the entire concerned individual at all level included in the study were informed of the purpose of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the study deals with the results and discussions of the data gathered from sampled employees from ten ethio-telecom centers South-south west region in accordance with the objectives of the study. Results and analysis were made by making use of the data gathered by the questionnaires. 362 questionnaires were distributed, but only 347 were retrieved successfully with 95.8% response rate.

Therefore, based on the responses obtained from the respondents' descriptive statistics analysis; Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression analysis results are presented, interpreted and discussed accordingly.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

As it has been mentioned earlier in sections 3.4 and 3.5, the respondents were employees from the ten ethio-telecom centers in SSWR. The results of those respondents' demographic characteristics are presented and discussed below.

Table 4.3: Sex, age, educational qualification, and work experience of the respondents

No	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	Male	216	62.2
		Female	131	37.8
2.	Age category	23 – 30	102	29.4
		31 – 40	179	51.6
		41 – 50	46	13.2
		51 – 60	20	5.8
3.	Educational qualification	Diploma	58	16.7
		Bachelor Degree	241	69.5
		Master Degree	48	13.8
4.	Years of experience in ethio-telecom	Below 5 years	81	23.3
		5 – 10 years	108	31.1
		11 – 15 years	93	26.8
		16 – 20 years	47	13.6
		Above 20 years	18	5.2

Source: Own survey data, 2024

The survey data analysis results displayed in Table 4.3 above, majority of the respondents 216(62.2%) were male whereas only 131 (37.8%) were female. This data indicates that most of the ethio-telecom service centers are dominated by male employees this may lead to the effect of the implementation of strategic plan in females relative to their counterpart. It also suggested the need to hire more female employees to balance the number of female and male employees in the years to come.

With regard to the age category, more than half of the respondents 179(51.6%) were in the age category of 31 – 40 followed by 102(29.4%) who were in the age category of 23 - 30 and the remaining respondents 46 (13.2%) were in the age group of 41 – 50 and 20 (5.8%) were in the age group of 51 - 60. From this survey data since most of the respondents 245 (70.6%) were at least 31 years old, it can be said that they have experience and encountered with the strategic plan implementation of the ethio-telecom many times as the result they could respond the items in the questionnaire efficiently.

As to the educational qualification, more than two – third of the respondents 241 (69.5%) were Bachelor degree holders followed by 58 (16.7%) diploma holders and only 48 (13.8%) were Master degree holders.

Finally, in respect of work experience in ethio-telecom, one-third of the respondents 108 (31.1%) have 5 – 10 years experience in the ethio-telecom followed by 93 (26.8%) who have 11 – 15 years experience; 81 (23.3%) have below 5 years experience; 47 (13.6%) have 16 – 20 years work experiences and only 18 (5.2%) have more than 20 years experiences.

In general, from the above survey data result, it can be said that majority of the respondents were expected to have awareness on the organization communication strategies and strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom overall activities.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics on the Status of Organizational Communication

In this section the data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to describe respondents' responses on the items of internal communication such as: quality, accessibility, effective use of internal

communication on organization culture and HRM and external communications based on the following interpretation.

Interpretation of mean and standard deviation: The interpretation of the mean and grand mean of the items or statements in the five independent variables were carried out based on the 1 – 5 point Likert scales 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Undecided; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree. The mean indicates that to what level of agreement the responses of all respondents were approached. As adapted from Dane (2007) and Abanis et al. (2013), the mean score values which is less than or equal to 1.49 interpreted as strongly disagreed to the stated item; mean scores values from 1.50 to 2.60 interpreted as disagreed to the stated item; mean scores values ranges from 2.61 to 3.60 as agreed moderately to the stated item; mean scores values ranges from 3.61 to 4.60 as agreed to the stated item; and mean scores values greater or equal to 4.61 interpreted as strongly agreed to the stated item.

Regards to standard deviation, it measures variation of responses, for a given item, with respect to the mean of that item. It shows us the extent of each response deviation from the mean for that particular item. Statistically, the smaller the standard deviation, the smaller the variation of individuals' response from the mean of the whole responses will be.

4.2.1. Internal Communication

An effective internal communication strategy is essential for keeping employees informed and engaged within an organization. By implementing a systematic approach, organizations can ensure that all team members receive consistent information simultaneously, while also creating avenues for feedback and questions. Moreover, a well-developed internal communication strategy facilitates employees' understanding of organizational changes and their relevance to their positions.

A survey conducted by Manzano (2024) indicated that 21% of internal communicators do not utilize formal planning techniques, highlighting the competitive advantages that arise from establishing a clear communication strategy. This section presents the analyses of the responses of selected employees regarding various aspects of internal communication strategies, including the quality and accessibility of communication, its effective integration

into the organizational culture, and its significance in human resource management, particularly concerning the execution of strategic plans.

4.2.1.1. Internal Communication Quality

Table 4.4: Respondents view on Internal Communication Quality

No	Statement	M	SD
1	The organization ensures clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees during the strategic plan implementation.	3.59	.709
2	The amount of information being communicated is appropriate and credible for the strategic plan implementation.	3.61	.677
3	The organization uses different communication channels- communication mediums, messages and perceptions for the strategic plan implementation.	3.53	.878
4	The modes, speed of feedback in communication and flexibility of communication facilitate the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategic plan.	3.54	.894
5	The organization communication channels support collaboration among employees and matches with employees' preferences and needs.	3.58	.787
6	Often there are no messages or updates that are difficult to understand about the strategic plan implementation.	3.55	.771
Grand Mean		3.57	.272

Source: Own survey data, 2024

From Table 4.4 shown above, in the six statements of internal communication quality in the ethio-telecom service centers in relation to strategic plan implementation, it was intended to ask respondents to rate their agreements. According to the survey data analysis the following mean scores and standard deviations were found. Among the six statements, only “The amount of information being communicated is appropriate and credible for the strategic plan implementation.” was agreed by majority of the respondents to those statements with mean score and standard deviation of (M = 3.61; SD = .677) which is in the range of 3.61 – 4.60. This implies that in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers the amount of information to some extent was communicated appropriately and credibly for the strategic plan implementation.

The remaining five statements of internal communication quality were responded with moderately disagree as confirmed by mean scores ranges from 3.53 to 3.59 which are in the range 2.61 – 3.60 with standard deviations ranges from .709 to .894 indicating majority of

the respondents replied for those items with small variation with respect to their respective mean of the whole responses. This implies that the organization uses different communication channels-communication mediums, messages and perceptions for the strategic plan implementation moderately as confirmed by the responses of majority of the respondents who claimed moderately agreed with mean score and standard deviation ($M = 3.53$; $SD = .878$); besides, speed of feedback in communication and flexibility of communication facilitate the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategic plan moderately, since the mean score of the responses was 3.54 with standard deviation of .894. Moreover, sometimes there were messages or updates that were difficult to understand about the strategic plan implementation as confirmed by majority of respondents responses mean score and standard deviation ($M = 3.55$; $SD = .771$). On the other hand, the survey data analysis result also revealed, the organization communication channels supported collaboration among employees and matches with employees' preferences and needs moderately, because majority of the employees claimed moderate agreement with mean score and standard deviation ($M = 3.58$; $SD = .787$). Furthermore, the organization did not ensure clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees during the strategic plan implementation effectively, as confirmed by the responses mean score and standard deviation ($M = 3.59$; $SD = .709$).

In general, the overall items grand mean score and standard deviation was ($M = 3.57$; $SD = .272$) indicates agreed moderately to most of the stated items and implies moderate practice/implementation of most of the stated items while implementing the strategic plan in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

4.2.1.2. Internal communication accessibility

Table 4.5: Respondents view on Internal Communication Accessibility

No	Statement	M	SD
1	I usually receive updates from management about the strategic plan implementation.	3.66	.685
2	Information is easily accessible when I need it.	3.67	.682
3	Different information communication technologies are used to enhance communication within the organization.	3.69	.622
4	The current communication methods used by the organization meet your needs and expectations.	3.73	.788

5	There are some topics discussed through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate the strategic plan implementation.	3.61	.715
6	All employees are given an equal opportunity to contribute their ideas or opinions.	3.70	.681
7	The organization ensures efficient flow of information for strategic plan implementation.	3.71	.697
8	The organization makes use of emails and memos in communication during the strategic plan implementation.	3.72	.580
Grand Mean		3.68	.221

Source: Own survey data, 2024

From Table 4.5 shown above, in the eight statements of internal communication accessibility, the respondents were asked to rate their agreements or disagreement. According to the survey data analysis majority of the respondents responded with agreed as confirmed by the mean scores ranges from 3.61 to 3.73 which are in 3.61 – 4.60 with standard deviations ranges from .580 to .788 indicating majority of the respondents replied for those items with small variation with their respective mean of the whole responses.

This implies that to some extent some topics were discussed through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate the strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected service centers found in SSWR as confirmed by the responses of majority of the respondents with mean score and standard deviation of ($M = 3.61$; $SD = .715$). However, employees usually received updates from management about the strategic plan implementation appropriately, since the responses mean score and standard deviation is ($M = 3.66$; $SD = .685$). Besides, information also easily accessible when majority of the employees were in need of it as confirmed by the mean score and standard deviation of ($M = 3.67$; $SD = .682$). On the other hand, regards to technology usage, similarly, majority of the respondents also agreed that different information communication technologies were utilized to enhance communication within the organization, since the mean score of the responses was 3.69 with standard deviation of .622; equal opportunity also given for every employees to contribute their ideas and opinions for the strategic plan implementation of ethio-telecom in majority of the selected service centers found in SSWR as confirmed by the responses of majority of the respondents with mean score and standard deviation of ($M = 3.70$; $SD = .681$); moreover, in respect of efficient flow of information, majority of the participant employees responded with mean and standard deviation of ($M = 3.71$; $SD = .697$) indicating their agreement. This implies that efficient flow of information was carried out for strategic plan implementation

properly. Furthermore, the survey data analysis result also revealed, majority of the respondents were agreed to the statements: ‘The organization makes use of emails and memos in communication during the strategic plan implementation.’; ‘The current communication methods used by the organization meet your needs and expectations.’ since their responses mean scores with standard deviations were ($M = 3.72$; $SD = .580$); ($M = 3.73$; $SD = .788$) respectively. This result implies that high implementation of the stated items in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

In general, the overall items grand mean score and standard deviation was ($M = 3.68$; $SD = .221$) indicates majority of the respondents in the fourteen ethio-telecom service centers agreed to the stated items of internal communication accessibility. Therefore, from the overall respondents’ result it can be said that when the organization communication strategy is effectively communicated and accessed, employees can align their actions and decisions accordingly. They also indicated that communication fosters employee engagement by involving them in the strategy implementation process. According to Otieno (2023), regular updates, feedback channels, and open discussions create a sense of ownership and commitment among employees, motivating them to contribute to the strategy's success. Moreover, the strategic plan implementation often involves changes in processes, structures, and roles. Internal communication accessibility plays a vital role in managing these changes by explaining the reasons behind them, addressing concerns, and providing support for the strategic plan implementation.

As to conference of few topics through mathematical channels alternatively in-person intersections to speed the thought out strategy implementation, it is not by means of the verdict of Abdulwahab(2019) the one assessed on productive ideas in the organizations for progress, acting and ambition found out the influence of within communication was seen as very main to an organization’s success, what the use of favorite ideas mediums was definitely bury-related to direct ideas. These chosen communication atmospheres labeled in the findings were electronic mail, opposite ideas, and regular conferences. On the other hand, the judgment disclosed high practice of emails and notes in ideas during the thought out strategy exercise by most of the selected ethio-telecom centers, that is in contrast accompanying Mapetere and Manhiwa (2021) who discovered ideas radio including emails, notes, contact, notice boards, confronting oral performances and reports redistributed in conveying planning connected matters are mainly found expected useless. The study, further, revealed that

friendly news programs like Face book and Twitter can be second hand as an main form to mobilize groups to take few operation. But, the finding of the study is in accordance with Shami, Toor and Ashfaq (2020) the one referred Face book and Twitter can be secondhand as main tools to prepare groups to take few operation. The study also established that organizations used different communication channels during strategy implementation.

4.2.1.3. Effective use of Internal Communication in the organization culture

Table 4.6: Respondents view on Effective use of Internal Communication in the organization culture

No	Statement	M	SD
1	Internal communication reflects employees' values and strong organization culture.	3.73	.824
2	Employees are able to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication.	3.35	.807
3	Internal communication function is oriented with the organization's strategic plan implementation.	3.46	.860
4	Employee's voice is heard and taken into consideration when decisions are made.	3.49	.791
5	Verbal, non – verbal and written communications are used in engaging the staff in the strategic plan implementation.	3.61	.924
6	Information sharing and transparency is a major component of the strategic plan implementation.	3.50	.844
7	In the organization, a two-way communication, ensure the flow of information enriches and empowers the strategic plan implementation.	3.54	.840
Grand Mean		3.52	.284

Source: Own survey data, 2024

From Table 4.6 shown above, in the seven statements of effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, it was intended to ask respondents to rate their agreements or disagreements. According to the survey data analysis and among the stated statements, only “Internal communication reflects employees' values and strong organization culture.” and “Verbal, non – verbal and written communications are used in engaging the staff in the strategic plan implementation.” were agreed by majority of the respondents to these statements with mean scores and standard deviations of (M = 3.73; SD = .824) and (M = 3.61; SD = .924) respectively which are in the range of 3.61 – 4.60. These imply that the in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom centers the indicated items were implemented highly.

Regards to the remaining five statements in decreasing order of their agreements, the responses of the respondents mean scores and the standard deviations on “In the organization, a two-way communication, ensure the flow of information enriches and empowers the strategic plan implementation.”; “Information sharing and transparency is a major component of the strategic plan implementation.”; “Employee’s voice is heard and taken into consideration when decisions are made.”; “Internal communication function is oriented with the organization’s strategic plan implementation”, and “Employees are able to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication.” were (M = 3.54; SD = .840); (M = 3.50; SD = .844); (M = 3.49; SD = .791); (M = 3.46; SD = .860) and (M = 3.35; SD = .807) respectively indicating moderate agreement towards these items. Therefore, these results imply moderate implementation of those items in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

In general, the overall items grand mean score and standard deviation was (M = 3.52; SD = .284) indicates majority of the respondents were agreed moderately to the majority of the stated seven items of effective use of internal communication strategies in the organization culture in the ten selected ethio-telecom service centers in the study area.

Regards to engagement of employees with one another in meaningful way through internal communication, the finding of this study is not supported by Muhaba’s (2022) whose finding demonstrated that employee communication played a beneficial and statistically significant impact in implementing strategy and information about the implementation of a strategy that was frequently sent through the vertical (Upward and Downward) communication flow. Moreover, in case of verbal, non – verbal and written communications usage, communication was supported by promoting and developing formal external communication means - verbal, non-verbal, and technology-based that strengthens vertical communication. However, it is concurred with Ngunju and Kihara (2022) findings who pointed out that communication ensures effective employee engagement during strategy implementation. Moreover, it is also supported by the finding of Ayusa (2016) who investigated communication and strategy implementation in telecommunication firms in Kenya and established that verbal communication, non-verbal communication and written communication were the main forms of communication in use.

As to ensuring the flow of information by a two-way communication to enrich and empower strategic plan implementation, the finding of this study is supported by Blazenaite (2011) who found out that the flow of strategic information through internal communication elicits vertical communication feedback, facilitates effective managerial communication while implementing the strategic plan.

4.2.1.4. Effective use of Internal Communication in HRM

Table 4.7: Respondents view on Effective use of Internal Communication in HRM

No	Statement	M	SD
1	The organization ensures that employees have access to the information they need efficiently.	3.51	.727
2	HR is adequately supporting internal communications initiatives for the implementation of the strategic plan.	3.57	.665
3	There is a system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback on internal communications	3.50	.942
4	HR is using internal communications data or feedback effectively.	3.56	.836
5	There are opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees.	3.53	.929
6	The organization created and used motivational visuals that summarize key points of the strategic plan implementation.	3.54	.880
Grand Mean		3.54	.286

Source: Own survey data, 2024

As it is depicted in Table 4.7, the perception of the employees towards effective use of internal communication on HRM were assessed by six items, the employees were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement and the following mean and standard deviation scores were found. The mean and standard deviation of the responses of the respondents on “HR is adequately supporting internal communications initiatives for the implementation of the strategic plan.” was (M = 3.57; SD = .665) which is the highest mean indicating moderate agreement by majority of the respondents and implying its moderate implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers, similarly the responses for “There is a system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback on internal communications.” has mean and standard deviation of (M = 3.50; SD = .942) which is the smallest mean indicating moderately agreed and implying moderate implementation by the selected ethio-telecom centers.

Regards to the other statements in decreasing order of their agreements, the four items, “HR is using internal communications data or feedback effectively.”; “The organization created and used motivational visuals that summarize key points of the strategic plan implementation.”; “There are opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees.”; “The organization ensures that employees have access to the information they need efficiently.” According to the responses of the respondents their mean score with the standard deviations were (M = 3.56; SD = .836); (M = 3.54; SD = .880); (M = 3.53; SD = .929); and (M = 3.51; SD = .727) respectively indicating moderate agreement towards those items and implies their moderate implementation by the majority of the selected ethio-telecom HRM departments in the study area.

In general, for the above six items the grand mean score and standard deviation was (M = 3.54; SD = .286) which is in the range of 2.61 – 3.60 indicating moderate agreement of the majority of the respondents and implying that in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers; adequate support of internal communications initiatives by HR for the implementation of the strategic plan, employees have access to the information they need efficiently, effective use of internal communications by HR, and creation and usage of motivational visuals that summarize key points of the strategic plan implementation were implemented moderately in the majority of the study area ethio-telecom centers.

4.2.2. External Communication

External organizational communication serves a dual purpose within a business context. Firstly, it acts as a means, through which an organization cultivates a favorable image, promotes its activities and products, fulfills client orders, and facilitates the exchange of information with partners. It also allows the organization to position itself relative to competitors, interact with customers and suppliers, report results to stakeholders, and engage with legal and governmental entities. Secondly, feedback from external representatives reflects the organization’s operations and plays a crucial role in assessing the quality of its products or services (Blazenaite, 2011). In this section, the selected employees’ responses on the items of external communication strategy in relation to strategic plan implementation is presented and discussed accordingly.

Table 4.8: Respondents view on External Communication

No	Item	M	SD
1.	The organization promote the three years strategy as a key part of the organization’s overall marketing strategy	3.67	.685
2.	Develop promotional graphics that highlight the core tenets of the organization’s strategy.	3.72	.631
3.	The organization share updates to the strategic plan implementation via press releases, blog posts and other key channels.	3.69	.763
4.	The organization promotes strategic plan implementation updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site.	3.65	.719
5.	The organization responds to customer comments with information that furthers the public’s knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan.	3.56	.625
6.	The organization designed all marketing communications to implement a style and voice in line with the organization’s strategic plan.	3.66	.677
Grand Mean		3.66	.231

Source: Own survey data, 2024

As depicted in Table 4.8 the six statements of external communication strategies of ethio-telecom in relation to strategic plan implementation were aimed at assessing respondents to rate their agreements or disagreements. According to the survey data analysis the following mean scores and standard deviations were found. Among the stated statements, only “The organization responds to customer comments with information that furthers the public’s knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan.” was agreed moderately by majority of the respondents to the stated item with mean score value and standard deviation of (M = 3.56; SD = .625) which is in the range of 2.61 – 3.60. This result implies moderate practice of the stated item in the majority of the ten ethio-telecom service centers in the study area.

Regards to the remaining five statements in decreasing order of their agreements, the responses of the respondents mean scores and the standard deviations on “Develop promotional graphics that highlight the core tenets of the organization’s strategy.”; “The organization share updates to the strategic plan implementation via press releases, blog posts and other key channels.”; “The organization promote the three years strategy as a key part of the organization’s overall marketing strategy”; “The organization designed all marketing communications to implement a style and voice in line with the organization’s strategic plan.”; and “The organization promotes strategic plan implementation updates on Social

media platforms like Face book and official web-site.” were ($M = 3.72$; $SD = .631$); ($M = 3.69$; $SD = .763$); ($M = 3.67$; $SD = .685$); ($M = 3.66$; $SD = .677$) and ($M = 3.65$; $SD = .719$) respectively indicating moderate agreement towards these items. Therefore, these results imply moderate implementation of those items in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in the study area.

In general, the overall items grand mean score and standard deviation was ($M = 3.66$; $SD = .231$) indicates agreed highly to the most of the stated six items of external communication strategies by majority of the respondents in the ten selected ethio-telecom service centers.

In respect to promotion of the strategic plan implementation updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site, **the verdict concerning this study is supported by Ayusa (2016) the one examined ideas and strategy exercise in telecommunication firms in Kenya and discovered that the telecommunication firms used various channels of ideas to transport or send information at the institution to excellent extent. These channels contain, confronting, photoelectric, mobile, broadcast radio and composed channels of ideas. The researcher further learned that confronting communication and composed ideas were ultimate preferred channels, confronting was more common because it allows interplays therefore improving the process of design exercise as it admits ambiguity expected purified and me is in a position to determine if the hearing taken and assumed the intended idea.**

4.3. Status of Strategic Plan Implementation

Similar to the above section, in this section the data collected for strategic plan implementation through the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation based on the following interpretation.

Interpretation of Mean and Standard Deviation: Mean score values ranging from 1.00 to 1.80 interpreted as strongly disagreed to the stated item and imply very low implementation; mean scores values from 1.81 to 2.60 interpreted as disagreed to the stated item and imply low implementation; mean score values ranges from 2.61 to 3.60 as agreed moderately to the stated item and imply moderate implementation; mean score values ranges from 3.61 to 4.60 as agreed to the stated item and imply high implementation; and mean scores values greater

or equal to 4.61 interpreted as strongly agreed to the stated item and imply very high implementation.

Table 4.9: Respondents view on the status of Strategic Plan Implementation

No	Item	M	SD
1.	The strategic plan implementation has been effectively communicated.	3.61	.881
2.	The strategic plan implementations are always completed within the specified time.	3.59	.713
3.	Some strategic plan implementations take more time than required.	3.57	.777
4.	The strategic plan implementations are completed within the specified budget.	3.62	.705
5.	Implementation of some strategic plan leads to cost overrun	3.60	.724
6.	The strategic plan implementations achieve the intended objectives in line with the three years lead growth strategy.	3.54	.829
7.	The strategic plan implementation always achieve its targets	3.56	.728
8.	The organization provided training programs that emphasize actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan.	3.51	.780
9.	The organization implements the strategic plan appropriately.	3.55	.783
Grand Mean		3.57	.202

Source: Own survey data, 2024

From Table 4.9 shown above, in the nine statements of strategic plan implementation in the ethio-telecom service centers, it was intended to ask respondents to rate their agreements. According to the survey data analysis the following mean scores and standard deviations were found. Among the eight statements, only “The strategic plan implementations are always completed within the specified time.” And “The strategic plan implementation has been effectively communicated.” were agreed by majority of the respondents to these statements with mean scores and standard deviations of (M = 3.62; SD = .738) and (M = 3.61; SD = .881) which are in the range of 3.61 – 4.60. This implies that in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers the strategic plan implementation was completed within the specified time and also the strategic plan implementation has been effectively communicated.

The remaining seven statements of strategic plan implementation were responded with moderately agree as confirmed by their mean scores ranges from 3.51 to 3.60 which are in the range 2.61 – 3.60 with standard deviations ranges from .705 to .881 indicating majority of the respondents replied for those items with small variation with respect to their respective

mean of the whole responses. This implies that The organization provided training programs that emphasize actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan moderately with mean score and standard deviation of (M = 3.51; SD = .780); on the other hand, the achievement of the intended objectives in line with the three years lead growth strategy (2022 – 2024), since the mean score of the responses was 3.54 with standard deviation of .829. Moreover, the appropriateness of the organization in implementing the strategic plan was moderate as confirmed by majority of respondents responses mean score and standard deviation (M = 3.55; SD = .783). Besides, strategic plan implementation always achieved its targets moderately with mean score 3.56 and standard deviation .728. Furthermore, the survey data analysis result also revealed, some strategic plan implementations take more time than required and leads to cost overrun with mean scores and standard deviations of (M = 3.57; SD = .777) and (M = 3.60; SD = .724) respectively. As the result, The strategic plan implementations are always completed within the specified time with mean scores and standard deviations of (M = 3.59; SD = .713).

In general, the overall items grand mean score and standard deviation was (M = 3.57; SD = .202) indicates agreed moderately to most of the stated items and implies moderate practice/implementation of most of the stated items in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in the study area.

4.4. Relationship between Organization Communication and Strategic Plan Implementation

In this section, as aforementioned earlier, one of the objectives of the study was to investigate the extent of the relationship between the five organization communication strategies and strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom service centers found in Central Ethiopia Region. To carry out this, Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was utilized. The analysis results are presented and discussed accordingly.

Table 4.10: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

		Correlations					
		STP	INCOMQ	INCOMA	EUINCOC	EUINCHRM	EXCOM
STP	Pearson Corr.	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						

INCOMQ	Pearson Corr.	.716**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
INCOMA	Pearson Corr.	.741**	.554**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
EUINCOC	Pearson Corr.	.692**	.580**	.539**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
EUINCHRM	Pearson Corr.	.705**	.606**	.538**	.574**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
EXCOM	Pearson Corr.	.730**	.526**	.646**	.542**	.535**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	347	347	347	347	347	347

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Own construct from SPSS output, 2024

As depicted in Table 4.10, the results of the correlation matrix analysis indicated significant and positive relationship between the five independent variables and the dependent variable, because the sig. p – value of each is less than .01, level of precision and the Pearson correlation coefficient of each is positive. As to the extent of the strength of their relationship, the Pearson correlation coefficient between internal communication quality (INCOMQ), internal communication accessibility (INCOMA), effective use of internal communication in organization culture (EUINCOR), effective use of internal communication in HRM (EUINCHRM) and external communication (EXCOM) with strategic plan implementation (SPI) are $(r(\text{INCOMQ}) = .716^{**})$, $(r(\text{INCOMA}) = .741^{**})$, $(r(\text{EUINCOR}) = .692^{**})$, $(r(\text{EUINCHRM}) = .705^{**})$ and $(r(\text{EXCOM}) = .730^{**})$ respectively indicates very high correlation. Therefore, from these results it can be inferred that internal communication and external communication are significantly and positively related with the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom centers in the SSWR. Therefore, from this result it can be recognized that the existence of significant and direct association of the five types of communications with the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers found in SSWR. In this regard, the judgment concerning this study is supported by Abdulwahab (2019) the one transported welcome study on assessing productive ideas in the arranging's for success, depiction and inspiration and registered that the effectiveness of within ideas is perceived as very main to an organization's fame, and the use of preferred ideas means is definitely interrelated to persuasive ideas

4.5. Effect of Organization Communication on Strategic Plan Implementation

Before testing the extent of the effect of internal and external communication strategies on the strategic plan implementation using multiple regression model analysis, the diagnostic test was carried out and presented below.

4.5.1. Diagnostic Test: Evaluation of Regression Model Assumptions

Since significant assumption violations can lead to biased estimates of relationships, over or under confident estimates of the precision of regression coefficients (i.e., biased standard errors), unreliable confidence intervals, and significance tests, testing assumptions is crucial for researchers using multiple linear regression models (Chatterjee & Hadi, 2012). In other words, the inference process will be untrustworthy. Therefore, since carefully considering the reasonableness of the assumptions of multiple regression in the context of a particular data set and analysis is an important prerequisite to the drawing of trustworthy conclusions from sample data, the assumptions were checked before running the regression analysis using SPSS version 26 software. Using the SPSS outputs, the diagnostic test for the entire regression model, the assessment of the multiple linear regression model's assumptions, and the model fitness test analyses are shown and described.

Linearity Assumption Test: Linearity in the parameter

The model that relates the response variable – Strategic plan implementation to the predictors: internal communication quality, internal communication accessibility, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, effective use of internal communication in HRM, and external communication affecting strategic plan implementation are assumed to be linear in the parameter (Chatterjee & Hadi, 2012). This means that the response variable is assumed to be a linear function of the regression coefficients ($\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5$), but not necessarily a linear function of the predictor variables X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5 .

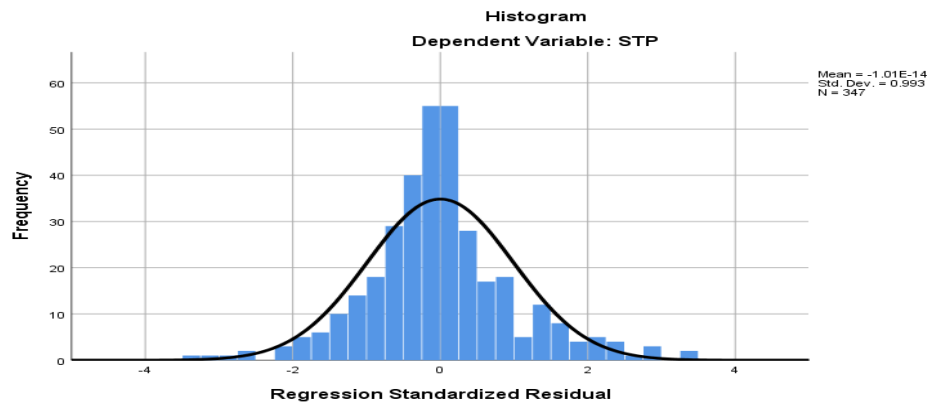
To detect the linearity assumption in multiple linear regression model, there are different methods, for instance, correlation matrix, where significant correlation indicates the linearity between the response variable and the predictor variables; scatter plot, where straight line pattern of the plots shows linearity. Therefore, in this study the researcher has chosen the first

test. In this method one has to identify the significant relationship between each of the five independent variables: internal communication quality (INCOMQ), internal communication accessibility (INCOMA), effective use of internal communication in organization culture (EUINCOR), effective use of internal communication in HRM (EUINCHRM) and external communication (EXCOM) and strategic plan implementation (SPI) which has been already displayed in Table 4.10. Hence, the results of the analysis show the true relationship (Williams et al., 2013).

Normality assumption Test: The errors should follow a normal distribution with mean 0 and variance σ^2 , $\epsilon_i \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$ for any given value or combination of values, on the predictor variables.

There are several methods of assessing whether data are normally distributed or not. They fall in to two categories: statistical and graphical. In this study, to test the normality assumption regression standard residual histogram was implemented, because it is easily accessible in the SPSS analysis. The test and its interpretation are presented in Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Regression Standard Residual Histogram



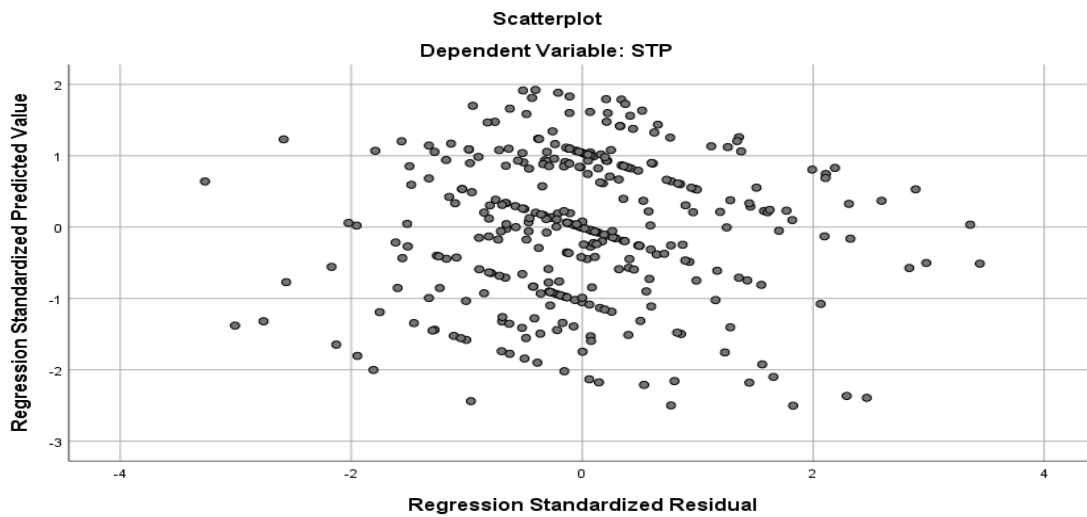
Source: SPSS output, 2024

The result of the analysis in Figure 4.2 shows the standard residuals (errors) are normally distributed as it has been described in (Williams et al., 2013).

Homoscedasticity (equal variance) of errors assumption Test

For every value of the independent variable (X), the distribution of the dependent variables (Scores) must have approximately equal variability. When using a linear regression model for inference, it is generally assumed that the errors are distributed equally for all predictor variables (This is known as ‘homoscedasticity’. Coefficient estimators and predictions are known to be reasonably robust to departures from this assumption but inference (e.g. confidence intervals) less so. If homoscedasticity is satisfied, then a scatter plot of the residuals versus the fitted values should not indicate any pattern. To test this assumption regression standardized residuals and regression standardized predicted value plots were used, because, they detect model lack of fitness and unequal variances. As indicated in Kieth (2019: p.215), any trends or patterns in the plots indicates lack of fitness and unequal variances which lead to a potential problem in the model. The scatter plot for strategic plan implementation is given below in Figure 4.3.

Figure4.3: Scatter plot for homogeneity of variance for SPI



Source: SPSS output, 2024

As can be seen from the above scatter plot, Figure 4.3, even though some plots are dispersed from the central parts, many plots are concentrated towards the central part, and they do not form a certain pattern. This dispersion can show the homogeneity of the variances. Meaning, nearly it satisfied the equal variance assumption.

Non - Multicollinearity Assumption Test

Multicollinearity: it is the problem of high correlation between or among two or more independent variables. Multicollinearity is a problem because the presence of multicollinearity can cause distortions in the standard error and may lead to problems with significance testing of individual coefficients. Multicollinearity occurs when several independent variables correlate at high levels with one another, or when one independent variable is nearly the linear combinations of the other independent variables (Hair et al., 2019). If there is multicollinearity, we are more likely to conclude a variable is not important. Therefore, the independent variables should not be very strongly correlated which is called non – multicollinearity assumption. However, multicollinearity is likely present to some degree in most economic models. Perfect multicollinearity would prohibit us from estimating the regression parameters (plot, 2011).

Table 4.11: Non – Multicollinearity test of the Independent Variables

No	Independent Variables	Tolerance	VIF
1	Internal communication quality (INCOMQ)	.512	1.954
2	Internal communication accessibility(INCOMA)	.492	2.032
3	Effective use of internal communication in organization culture (EUINCOR)	.534	1.872
4	Effective use of internal communication in HRM (EUINCHRM)	.519	1.926
5	External communication (EXCOM)	.503	1.988

Source: SPSS output, 2024

To test this assumption the researcher used the more precise approach, assessing the tolerance and its reciprocal values (VIF, variance inflation factor) in the output results of the regression analysis for model fitness. The tolerance value is the indication of the percent of variance in the predictor that can't be accounted for by the other predictors, very small value indicated that a predictor is redundant. If the tolerance value of each predictor is greater than 0.10, then it indicates non – multicollinearity of each predictor if not it shows the existence of multicollinearity. As Kieth (2019) showed that, if the VIF value of each predictor is less than 10, then it indicates the non – multicollinearity of the predictors if not it suggested a problem. When such situation, tolerance is less than 0.10 and VIF is greater than 10, is happened the regression model estimates of coefficients became unstable and the standard errors for the coefficients could get inflated. In other words the model loses its statistical validity. As it can

be seen in the above Table 4.11, there was no multicollinearity between the independent variables: internal communication quality (INCOMQ), internal communication accessibility (INCOMA), effective use of internal communication in organization culture (EUINCOR), effective use of internal communication in HRM (EUINCHRM) and external communication (EXCOM). Therefore, the non – multicollinearity assumption was met.

Hence, as the four model assumptions test indicated in the above output results of the SPSS and discussion, all assumptions were met and hence the multiple regression model for the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers in South-South West Region with the five independent variables was ready to be tested for model fitness test.

4.5.2. Model Fitness Test: Statistical Significance of the Independent Variables as a Whole

Statistical significance of the model (Model utility) was tested to check whether the independent variables are useful for the regression model or not. i.e., it was intended to check whether the five independent variables are statistically significant for strategic plan implementation or not. To test the model usefulness, F – ratio – test analysis of variance [ANOVA] with 5 % level of significance was used. Analysis of variance table (ANOVA Table) is a summary of the usefulness of the independent variables for the dependent variable.

Table4.12: ANOVA output part I: SPI with the five organization communication

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.763	5	1.753	257.678	.000^b
Residual	2.319	341	.007		
Total	11.082	346			
a. Dependent Variable: STP					
b. Predictors: (Constant), EXCOM, INCOMQ, HRINC, ORCINC, INCOMA					

Source: Own construct from SPSS output, 2024

The ANOVA Table 4.12 indicated that the multiple regression model itself is statistically significant or not. Because R^2 is not a test of statistical significance (it is only measures explained variation in Y by the predictor Xs). Therefore, the F-ratio is used to test whether or not R^2 could have occurred by chance alone. In short, the F-ratio found in the ANOVA table

measures the probability of chance departure from a straight line. In the results of the output found in the ANOVA table, the model is statistically significant when the five organization communications were included in the model, since $F(5,341) = 257.678$, $p(.000) < 0.001$. Therefore, the five independent variables are useful for the strategic plan implementation and the regression model can predict the effect of the five independent variables on the dependent variable in the ethio-telecom service centers.

4.5.3. Model Summary: The Explaining Capacity of the Independent Variables

Table 4.13: Model summary

Model	Model Summary ^b			Std. Error of the Estimate
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	
1	.889 ^a	.791	.788	.08247

a. Predictors: (Constant), EXCOM, INCOMQ, EUINCOC, EUINCHRM, INCOMA

b. Dependent Variable: STP

Source: Own construct from SPSS output, 2024

According to the model summary of multiple linear regression analysis, the R-value of the model was 0.889 which shows the high degree of relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The R Square value of the regression model was 0.791, indicating that 80.3% of the variance in strategic plan implementation was accounted by the five organization communication strategies in combination. The remaining 20.9% of variance in the strategic plan implementation was accounted by other variables not included in this study.

The Adjusted R square, ultimate beneficial calculation of the happiness of a model, that is better than the R square advantage. Because R square profit does to pretty over – estimate the benefit of the model when used to the here and now, and likewise the Adjusted R square advantage deceives to report the number of variables in the model and the number of remarks, shareholders – all representatives in the picked ten ethio-telecom centers in the direction of SSWR, upon that the model was established (Diem & Puente, 2012). Therefore, Therefore, the adjusted R square value for SPI model was .788. So, it can be said that SPI

model was accounted for 78.8% of the variance in strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers.

The standard error (in this output .08247) of a model fit is a measure of the precision of the model. It is the standard deviation of the residuals. The standard error is wished to be as small as possible. As R^2 increases the standard error will decrease. As the result of the regression analysis output indicates, the value of the standard error is very small. Therefore, the model looks good in its precision.

4.5.4. Predictor Model Interpretation and Contribution of each Predictor Variable

Table 4.14: Results of multiple linear regression analysis

Model		Coefficients ^a					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations Zero-order
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.042	.103		.411	.681	
	INCOMQ	.215	.034	.221	6.384	.000	.716
	INCOMA	.240	.033	.257	7.288	.000	.741
	EUINCOC	.163	.031	.178	5.251	.000	.692
	EUINCHRM	.173	.030	.200	5.825	.000	.705
	EXCOM	.202	.029	.243	6.964	.000	.730

a. Dependent Variable: SPI

Source: Own construct from SPSS output, 2024

4.5.4.1. Predictor Model and its interpretation

The regression equation is interpreted as follows. Five independent variables were included in the model. According to the results obtained from the SPSS output, in Table 4.14 above, under the Sig. column, the p – values of INCOMQ, INCOMA, EUINCOR, EUINCHRM and EXCOM are less than .05, level of significance. Meaning, these five independent variables have significant effect on strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers found in SSWR. Therefore, the regression model stated in chapter three becomes the predictor model (forecast model) with equation:

Predictor model using unstandardized Beta coefficients:

$$\hat{Y}(\text{SPI}) = -0.042 + 0.215\text{INCOMQ} + 0.240\text{INCOMA} + 0.163\text{EUINCOC} + 0.173\text{EUINCHRM} + 0.202\text{EXCOM} \quad (1)$$

Predictor model using standardized Beta coefficients:

$$\hat{Y}(\text{SPI}) = 0.221\text{INCOMQ} + 0.257\text{INCOMA} + 0.178\text{EUINCOC} + 0.200\text{EUINCHRM} + 0.243\text{EXCOM} \quad (2)$$

Where, Y = Strategic Plan Implementation (dependent variable), whereas INCOMQ = internal communication quality, INCOMA = internal communication accessibility, EUINCOR = effective use of internal communication in organization culture, EUINCHRM = effective use of internal communication in HRM and EXCOM = external communication are the independent variables.

Forecasting the effect is making predictions about the dependent variable based on the relationships observed in the estimated regression. Therefore, the above predictor model is interpreted in terms of unstandardized and standardized beta coefficients.

Predictor Model Interpretation

In the multiple regression forecasting model (equation), the intention is that which independent variable—internal communication or external communication—has the greater effect in predicting the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR. Independent variable with larger regression coefficients, the other independent variables kept constant would make a greater contribution to the predicted value. Insights into the relationship between independent and dependent variables are gained by examining the relative contributions of each independent variable.

In the predictor model (1), β_i 's, the unstandardized beta coefficients tell us about the direction of the effect relationships between the outcome variable, SPI and the five independent variables. i.e., Unstandardized B coefficients show absolute change of the dependent variable if the independent variable size changes by one unit. This indicated that a unit increase in any of these variables resulted into a corresponding increase in the strategic plan implementation. Since the B coefficients are positive, so are their relationships with the dependent variable.

That is, as the average of each independent variable increases, the mean score of the SPI also increases. For example, if all the other independent variables are kept constant, a unit increase in the internal communication quality (INCOMQ), will increase the SPI by 0.215. Similarly, the same argument works for the other four independent variables. Therefore, from this result it can be said that as each one of the five organization communication strategies in the selected ten ethio-telecom centers show progress, strategic plan implementation of the ethio-telecom service provider centers will be improved.

In the predictor model (2), $Beta_i$'s, the standardized beta coefficients tell us about the contribution of each organization communication strategies to the outcome, the strategic plan implementation. In other words, the Beta weight is the average amount the dependent variable – the SPI increases when the independent variable increases by one standard deviation where the other independent variables held constant. Therefore, the highest contributor for the SPI was the INCOMA, since its standardized beta coefficient was (0.257), while the contribution by EUINCOR was the lowest with its standardized beta coefficient (.178). For example, if the independent variable – internal communication accessibility increases by one standard deviation, the strategic plan implementation will increase by 25.7%. The standardized beta coefficients are also useful to calculate the percent of each independent variable in the R^2 and presented in the next sub-section below.

4.5.4.2. Contribution of each independent variable

Since in multiple regression analysis results one of the advantages of standardized beta coefficient is that it helps to identify the relative effect of each independent variable has in the R^2 value (the explaining capacity of the independent variables on the outcome variable)

In order to identify and compare the extent of the effect/contribution of each of the five predictor variables on strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers, standardized coefficients, Beta values were used (Table 4.14), because, it gives measure of the contribution of each independent variable along with zero order correlation. The percent of the contribution or effect of each of the two independent variables, INCOM, and ECOM

was obtained by the equation that relates $R^2 = 0.791$ as indicated in Hair et al.(2019) analysis:

$$R^2_{0(\text{INCOMQ})(\text{INCOMA})(\text{EUINCOC})(\text{EUIINCHRM})(\text{EXCOM})} = \text{Beta}_{\text{INCOMQ}}r_{0\text{INCOMQ}} + \text{Beta}_{\text{INCOMA}}r_{0\text{INCOMA}} + \text{Beta}_{\text{EUINCOC}}r_{0\text{EUINCOC}} + \text{Beta}_{\text{EUIINCHRM}}r_{0\text{EUIINCHRM}} + \text{Beta}_{\text{EXCOM}}r_{0\text{EXCOM}}$$

Where, $Beta_s$ are the standardized beta coefficients of the independent variables, r_s are the zero order correlations which has been taken from the output of the coefficients' Table 4.14, Zero order is the Pearson correlation between each predictor and dependent variable (Dhakal, 2019).The value of R^2 could be expressed as the sum of the product of each of the independent variables standardized Beta coefficient by their respective zero order correlation coefficient values as:

$$.791 \times 100\% = (.221 \times .716 + .257 \times .741 + .178 \times .692 + .200 \times .705 + .243 \times .730) \times 100\%$$

$$79.1\% \approx 15.8\% + 19.1\% + 12.3\% + 14.1\% + 17.8\%$$

Therefore, the contribution or the effect of INCOMA on the strategic plan implementation in the selected ten ethio-telecom service centers in the study area was 19.1% which has the highest effect, whereas EXCOM, INCOMQ, EUIINCHRM and EUINCOC in the indicated order increases SPI by 17.8%, 15.8%, 14.1% and 12.3% respectively. From these percentages one can infer that internal communication accessibility is the most decisive organization communication strategy for the strategic plan implementation. Thus the model was at best fit to predict the strategic plan implementation.

4.5.5. Hypothesis Test Results: Significance Effect of each Independent Variable

One of the objectives of this study was to investigate the effect of organizational communication strategies on the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio telecom service centers found in South-South West Region which was stated as hypotheses. That is, to test whether statistically, the five organizational communication strategies have significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in Central Ethiopia Region or not. Therefore, to test the stated five hypotheses, the researcher used the regression analysis SPSS outputs displayed in Table 4.14.

4.5.5.1. Effect of internal communication quality

H_{o1}: Statistically, internal communication quality has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

H_{a1}: Statistically, internal communication quality has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

This was the first proposed directional null and alternative hypothesis in this study that was tested. As per the regression analysis results described in Table 4.14 internal communication quality has statistically significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation with ($\beta = .215$, $t - \text{value} = 6.384 > 2$ with sig. value = $.000 < 0.0001$). Since the positive magnitude sign and t-value more than two indicates a strong effect relationship between the internal communication quality and the outcome variable – SPI (Hair et al., 1998). This result led to reject the stated directional null hypothesis on this variable. Therefore, it can be inferred that internal communication quality has significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR. In this regard, the finding of this study is concurred with the finding of Chirwa and Boikanyo (2022) who found out a significant positive relationship between the three independent factors such as credibility of communication, speed of feedback in communication and flexibility of formal communication and the dependent variable - strategy implementation, with credibility of communication as the most significant factor.

4.5.5.2. Effect of internal communication accessibility

H_{o2}: Statistically, internal communication accessibility has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

H_{a2}: Statistically, internal communication accessibility has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

According to the result obtained from the regression analysis SPSS output, in Table 4.14 above, the unstandardized beta coefficient, t - value and p – value of INCOMA are $\beta = .240$, $t = 7.288 > 2$ and $.000 < 0.0001$ indicating that internal communication accessibility has significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation. This result led to reject the stated directional null hypothesis on this variable. Therefore, it can be inferred that internal communication accessibility has significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR.

4.5.5.3. Effect of effective use of internal communication in organization culture

H_{o3}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

H_{a3}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

The regression analysis result described in Table 4.14 revealed that the unstandardized beta coefficient, t - value and p – value of EUINCOC are $\beta = .163$, $t = 5.251 > 2$ and $.000 < .0001$ indicates a positive, strong and significant effect of effective use of internal communication in organization culture on SPI. This result led to reject the stated directional null hypothesis on this variable. Therefore, from this result it can be inferred that EUINCOC has significant and positive effects on the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR. In respect of this variable, the finding of this study is supported by the finding of Ayusa (2016) who investigated communication and strategy implementation in telecommunication firms in Kenya and found out that the three forms of communication: verbal, non-verbal and written communication used in the telecommunication firms were very significant in strategy implementation. It is also in line with Barret (2002) who stated that the three forms of communication are a crucial aspect of human interactions as well as a prerequisite for any organization or business success.

4.5.5.4. Effect of effective use of internal communication in HRM

H_{o4}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in HRM has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

H_{a4}: Statistically, effective use of internal communication in HRM has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

As it can be seen in Table 4.14, the regression analysis result revealed that the unstandardized beta coefficient, t - value and p - value of EUINCHRM are $\beta = .173$, $t = 5.825 > 2$ and $.000 < .0001$ indicating a positive, strong and significant effect of effective use of internal communication in HRM on SPI. This result led to reject the stated directional null hypothesis on this variable. Therefore, from this result it can be inferred that EUINCHRM has significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation in most of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR.

In general, from the above four components of internal communication effects on the strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers it can be said that they are statistically significant and essential determinant factors. Moreover, improvement in communication would lead to an improvement in the strategic plan implementation. The finding of this study is supported by the finding of Otieno (2023) who conducted on factors affecting strategy implementation in a remote based culture for Global IT firms based in Kenya and found out communication has a positive and significant effect on strategy implementation in a remote based culture for global IT firms based in Kenya.

4.5.5.5. Effect of external communication

H_{o5}: Statistically, external communication has no significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

H_{a5}: Statistically, external communication has significant and positive effect on strategic plan implementation in ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region.

The fifth hypothesis test result depicted in Table 4.14 revealed significant and positive effect of EXCOM on SPI, since its beta coefficient, t - value and p-value are $\beta = 0.202$, $t = 6.964 > 2$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ indicates its statistical significant for SPI model. This implies that the stated directional null hypothesis should be rejected. Therefore, it can be inferred that external communication strategy has significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation in the selected ethio-telecom centers in SSWR.

The study indicated a noteworthy and positive impact of both internal and external communication strategies on the implementation of strategic plans in most of the ethio-telecom service centers located in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SSWR). These results align with the findings of Chirwa and Boikanyo (2022), which emphasize the importance of communication in facilitating successful strategy execution. Similarly, Muhaba (2022) observed that effective employee communication plays a statistically significant role in strategy implementation. The results are also consistent with the findings of Mapetere and Manhiwa (2021), who noted that communication techniques significantly affect strategy execution. Furthermore, the study corroborates the conclusions of Albright, Navarro, and Jarad (2022), asserting that communication tactics influence the implementation of strategies. This is echoed by Ayusa (2016), highlighting the significance of communication in strategy execution within Kenyan telecommunications firms. Additionally, the observations of Lekisima, Ogolla, and Nzili (2022) reinforce this notion, establishing that communication significantly impacts strategy implementation among energy-generating companies in Kenya. Overall, the collective evidence emphasizes the critical role of communication in the effective implementation of strategic initiatives across various sectors.

4.6. Results and Discussions on Interviews

Based on the objectives of the study, the responses gathered from the selected ten managers of ethio-telecom service centers found in South-South West Region are presented and discussed as follows.

The first question that the managers were asked was to give their responses on “In your opinion, how do you describe the implementation of internal communication quality in your

office in terms of ensuring clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees; appropriateness and credibility of amount of information being communicated; using different communication channels; the modes, speed of feedback and flexibility of communication in facilitating the effectiveness SPI?

The responses gathered from their interviews showed that majority of the interviewees claimed that despite the consistency, their offices attempted to ensure clear, accurate, and timely communication with majority of the employees so as to make SPI effective. As to the appropriateness and credibility of amount of information being communicated, all of the interviewees believed that credibility and appropriateness of any information related to SPI are important not only for their organization but also to their ability to perform tasks that contributed to the overall strategic plan implementation of ethio-telecom. However, even though, appropriateness and credibility also helps employees to pass on relevant information to their fellow colleagues, this in turn ensures that the entire department or subdivision receives the correct information that helps them to accomplish the strategic plan, in their offices the appropriateness and credibility of information were not fully implemented, especially, appropriateness. Regards to the usage of different communication channels; the modes, speed of feedback and flexibility of communication in facilitating the effectiveness SPI, majority of the interviewees replied the indicated communication channels were used to facilitate the effectiveness of SPI especially from service center to head office and with customers who used ethio-telecom service intensively, for instance investors, but not effectively. This result to some extent proves that when employees receive credible information through the organization's communication, they are more likely to act accordingly to accomplish the right tasks (Tenhiälä & Salvador, 2018).

The second question raised to the branches and line managers was “How do you describe the implementation of internal communication accessibility in your office in terms of updates from management about the SPI for employees; easily accessibility of information when employees are in need; discussing topics through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate SPI; and making use of emails and memos in communication during the SPI?”

Most of the managers participated in the interview responded that the implementation of internal communication accessibility in their offices in terms of updates from management about the SPI for employees; easily accessibility of information when employees are in need; discussing topics through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate SPI; and making use of emails and memos in communication during the SPI were carried out moderately as claimed by majority of the interviewees.

The third question was “How do you elaborate effective use of internal communication in the organization culture in your office in terms of making employees to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication; orienting internal communication with your organization’s SPI; and using verbal, non – verbal and written communications in engaging the staff in the SPI and the extent to which these forms of communication affect the success of strategy implementation?”

The results from all the participant interviewees indicated that the three forms of communication were significant in strategic plan implementation. It was found out that face to face applied to strategy implementation to a very great extent, confirming that people were more comfortable in explaining strategy implementation face to face and clarifying issues so that everyone feels part of the process. In contrast to this, as majority of them confirmed, written communication was not as effective as compared to the other channels of communication employed by their offices. As far as success in strategic plan implementation is concerned, the above forms of communication are very important. In this regard, the study is in line with the findings of Barret (2002) who stated that the three forms of communication are a crucial aspect of human interactions as well as a prerequisite for any organization or business success. Firms with effective use of the communication forms were found to be in a position to successfully implement their strategies compared to the ones that did not effectively employ the use of the three forms of communication.

The respondents further noted that non-verbal communication affected strategic plan implementation depending on the non-verbal cues expressed, as one of the interviewee stated that:

“When negative non-verbal cue are expressed, it brought out about the conflict and negatively affected strategic plan implementation. However, positive and

non-verbal cues are carried out between employees and management, increased morale and hence have a positive impact on the success of strategy implementation. It's through this meeting that our respective firms communicated to other service centers which is an essential part of the business environment."

Written communication on the other hand was also found to affect the success of strategic plan implementation in the sense that, as one of the interviewee pointed out:

"If information is not clearly communicated, the strategy implementers will have difficulties understanding the strategy and therefore implementation will fail. From experience, it can be deducted that too much written communication is ineffective for instance, if it has the same information over and over again. Employers could end up ignoring it and hence some important elements included in the written communication in strategy implementation may be left out, hence leading to strategy implementation failure even when good communication strategy is put in place to monitor the implementation."

However, as majority of the interviewees noted: if written communication is effectively communicated and what need to be done is stated clearly besides implementers having a good understanding of what to implement and the implementation monitor system is in place, then the strategic plan implementation will be very successful. Thus, from the this it can be noticed that written communication conveyed information that was full of facts rather than feelings and the best used to state strategy plans and objectives in a clear and precise manner thus creating trust among stakeholders and themselves. Moreover, written communication could also be used to persuade especially during a launch of a firms products and services, this maybe in the form of the customer value proposition and hence successful strategy implementation.

The fourth question was "How do you elaborate effective use of internal communication in HRM in your office in terms of ensuring employees to have access to the information they need efficiently; supporting adequately internal communications initiatives for SPI; system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback; and using internal communication data and feedback effectively?"

Similar to the above questions responses, majority of the interviewees responded that majority of the employees in their respective service centers, their HRM did not ensure employees to have access to the information they need efficiently; did not support adequately internal communications initiatives for SPI; even though, system was in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback, it was not working efficiently; and also internal communication data and feedback were not effectively used.

The fifth question raised for the managers was that “How do you see the implementation of external communication in your office in terms of promoting the three years strategy as a key part of the organization’s overall marketing strategy; promoting SPI updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site; and responding to customer comments with information that further the public’s knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan?”

The finding from the interviewees revealed that majority of the them responded that external communication strategy was implemented in their office to promote the three years strategy (2022 – 2024) of ethio-telecom as a key part of the organization’s overall marketing strategy; and responded to customer comments with information that further the public’s knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan, but not fully. In this regard, one of the interviewees pointed out that:

“As a result of highly competitive industry and change in technological advancements and customer preference within the communication service provides mainly by ethio-telecom service centers, it is difficult to retain market share and high value market share and ensure customer satisfaction without effectively implementing external communication strategy.”

Moreover, another interviewee also stressed that:

“To survive, to ensure business sustainability and growth, and gain competitive position, external communication implementation also plays crucial role in optimizing core competencies and capabilities of the organizations by implementing business priority that will give to a competitive advantage over rivals.”

As to promoting SPI updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site of ethio-telecom, they were majorly used channels when the firms needed to address a large audience for example during a launch of a new product or service as this channels allows

visual enhancements hence appealing to the audiences and leading to success in product marketing which is a clear indication of successful strategic plan implementation. In this regard, one of the interviewee stated that:

“Sometimes, written communication maybe conflicting if used together with non-verbal communication that is inconsistent. This means if written information is different from what is expressed through non-verbal cues, the receiver will be confused and might ignore the whole message and this will negatively impact the success of strategy implementation.”

Therefore, in line with Jain (2011), when communication is passed and received through the correct channels, it has the capability to influence the success of strategic plan implementation and hence its success.

Finally, the interviewees were asked to respond on “Do you believe that SPI is carried out as designed? If so how do you describe the status of the implementation?”

The results obtained from all interviewees indicated that they were not in a position to carry out strategic plan implementation of ethio-telecom as designed and expected. Especially, in communicating strategic plan implementation effectively, in providing training **by** emphasizing actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan, in accomplishing some strategic plan within the required time as well as in implementing strategic plan appropriately. Based on these, one of the interviewees pointed out that:

In the competitive world and in technological advancements and customer preference within the communication service industry, for ethio-telecom service centers, it is difficult to cope-up and to ensure business sustainability and growth, and gain competitive position, without effectively implementing its strategic plan by updating employees by providing sufficient training. Moreover, for ethio-telecom in order to ensure business sustainability and growth, and gain competitive position, strategic plan implementation plays crucial role in meeting its three years strategic plan objectives.

In general, the interview results supports the results obtained from descriptive, moderate implementation of both internal and external communications as well as the strategic plan in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom centers.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is the final section that presents summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. It reports summary of the main findings of the study based on the results and discussions section. Then conclusion and recommendations were made based on the findings. Thus, as a result of scope and limitation of the study, the researcher provided suggestion for future/further study.

5.1. Summary of Major Findings

This study was conducted aimed at to examine the effect of organizational communication on the strategic plan implementation in ethio telecom the case of SSWR. Accordingly, summary of major findings from the results of descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression analyses are presented.

The descriptive statistics analysis result on the four internal communication strategy and external communication strategy revealed:

On internal communication quality: majority of the respondents agreed moderately on organization ensures clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees and on non-existence of messages or updates that are difficult to understand about the strategic plan implementation, but majority of the employees agreed moderately on the appropriateness and credibility of the amount of information being communicated; the usage of different communication channels; on the facilitation of the modes, speed of feedback in communication; and on communication channels in supporting collaboration among

employees and matches with employees' preferences and needs. In general, the overall results imply internal communication quality was practiced moderately in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

On internal communication accessibility: majority of the respondents were agreed highly in all of the stated eight items where employees usually receive updates from management about the strategic plan implementation and on easily accessibility of information when employee's was in need of it, they were also agreed on the usage of different ICTs to enhance communication within the organization; on the current communication methods used by the organization to meet employee's needs and expectations; in using discussion through digital channels rather than in-person meetings; on providing equal opportunity for all employees to contribute their ideas or opinions; on ensuring efficient flow of information; and in making use of emails and memos in communication. In general, such practices imply internal communication accessibility was carried out efficiently in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

As to the effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, the results shown that majority of the respondents were agreed on internal communication reflects employees' values and strong organization culture and on the usage of verbal, non – verbal and written communications, but agreed moderately on employees are able to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication; on internal communication function was oriented with the organization's strategic plan implementation; on employee's voice was heard and taken into consideration when decisions were made; on information sharing and transparency; and in ensuring a two-way communication. In general, these results imply effective use of internal communication in the organization culture was carried out moderately in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

On effective use of internal communication in HRM: similar to the above variable, majority of the respondents were agreed only on the provision of opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees, but majority of the respondents were agreed moderately on ensuring access to the information for employees they need efficiently; on the existence of a system in place for receiving and responding feedback to employee; on the usage of internal communications data or feedback effectively by HR; and

on creation and usage of motivational visuals that summarize key points of the strategic plan implementation. In general, the overall results imply effective use of internal communication in HRM was carried out moderately in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

On external communication: majority of the respondents were agreed on the development of promotional graphics that highlight the core tenets of the organization's strategy and on the organization designed all marketing communications, however, majority of the respondents were agreed moderately on the promotion of the three years strategy; in sharing updates to the strategic plan implementation via press releases, blog posts and other key channels; in promoting updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site; and in responding to customer comments with information that furthers the public's knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan. In general, these results imply external communication was carried out highly in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

On strategic plan implementation: majority of the respondents were agreed only on the strategic plan implementations are always completed within the specified time, whereas agreed moderately on effective communication has been carried out on the strategic plan implementation; on some strategic plan implementations take more time than required and leads to cost overrun; on the completion of strategic plan implementation within the specified budget; achieved the intended objectives and its targets; on the provision of training programs that emphasize actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan; and on the implementation of the strategic plan appropriately by the organization. In general, the overall results imply moderate status of the strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

The regression analysis unveiled that the four internal communication variables – internal communication quality, internal communication accessibility, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, and effective use of internal communication in HRM and the external communication have significant and positive effect on the strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers in Central Ethiopia Region. Moreover, 79.1% of the variations in the strategic plan implementation

were jointly accounted by the five variables at 5% level of precision. However, the remaining percentage of the variation 20.9% was unexplained by the five independent variables. Furthermore, among the five predictor variables, internal communication accessibility accounted for 19.1% and the least contribution was by effective use of internal communication in the organization culture which was 12.3% for the strategic plan implementation in the majority of the selected ethio-telecom centers in the study area.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings the following conclusions are drawn.

According to the findings of the study all the five organizational communication strategies such as internal communication quality, internal communication accessibility, effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, and effective use of internal communication in HRM and the external communication as well as strategic plan implementation were practiced at moderate status. Moreover, those organizational communication strategies have positive and significant effect on strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers. Therefore, based on the findings the following conclusions are drawn:

On internal communication quality: it can be inferred that the quality of internal communication on the appropriateness and credibility of the amount of information being communicated; on the usage of different communication channels; on the facilitation of the modes, speed of feedback in communication; and on communication channels in supporting collaboration among employees and matches with employees' preferences and needs are not sufficiently deserved in the majority of ethio-telecom service centers in SSWR.

On internal communication accessibility: it can be inferred that accessibility of internal communication was found to be an essential component of internal communication since it determined the success of strategy plan implementation. Additionally, the accessibility of channels of communication too is an integral part of the organization, while they can be effective in information delivery; the significance of what needs to be communicated determines the channel of transmission. Since change is inevitable, there is a need for firms

to decide which forms or channels of communication they should adapt to communicate change strategies in the most effective way.

On effective use of internal communication in the organization culture: it can be inferred that majority of ethio-telecom service centers in the study area have some drawbacks in making employees to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication; orienting IC with your organization's SPI; using verbal, non – verbal and written communications in engaging the staff in the SPI; and making information sharing and transparency as major component for SPI.

On effective use of internal communication in HRM: similar to the other internal communication strategy, it can be inferred that majority of ethio-telecom service centers in the study area did not ensure employees to have access to the information they need efficiently; HRM did not support adequately internal communications initiatives for SPI; the existence of system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback did not fully practiced; HRM did not use internal communication data and feedback effectively; and opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employee was not carried out sufficiently.

On external communication: it can be concluded that in the majority of ethio-telecom service centers in the study area undertake external communication strategy to facilitate exchange of communication between the organization and its surroundings for establishing a good relationship with customers, suppliers, or stakeholders interested in the organization's activities. Moreover, most of them implemented external communication strategy for the promotion of the three years strategy; for sharing updates to the strategic plan implementation via press releases, blog posts and other key channels; for promoting updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site; and for responding to customer comments.

On strategic plan implementation: from the results obtained from quantitative and qualitative analysis, it can be inferred that majority of ethio-telecom service centers are doing better on strategic plan implementation, but not efficiently indicating that effective communication has not been carried out on the strategic plan implementation as required; some strategic plan

implementations took more time than required and led to cost overrun; some SPI also not completed within the specified budget; and as the result, SPI did not achieve the intended objectives and its targets; on the other hand, provision of training programs that emphasize actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan was not provided as scheduled. In general, the overall results imply moderate status of the strategic plan implementation in majority of the selected ethio-telecom service centers.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the following recommendations are forwarded.

Since internal communication in terms of quality was implemented at moderate status, it is recommended that each ethio-telecom service center better to take practical steps to improve the clarity, accuracy and timely communication with all employees during the strategic plan implementation and also the appropriateness and credibility of the amount of information being communicated. In addition, on how quickly feedback is provided to facilitate the effectiveness SPI. One of the ways, for instance for feedback, can be achieved is to make feedback continuous and a part of day-to-day tasks; this enables managers and employees to ensure that they are constantly performing the right tasks that are in line with the overarching strategy and goal.

The study concluded that internal communication accessibility has greatest, positive and significant influence on strategic plan implementation among the ethio-telecom service centers in South-South West Region. Therefore, the study recommended that it is better to improve and set more flexible communication structures to enable an exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge among the employees in each of ethio-telecom service centers. Besides, the study recommended increased communication about the vision the company is taking as well as goals and inclusion of all the employees by telling them which areas to tackle in the strategic plan execution.

In respect of effective use of internal communication in the organization culture, it is recommended that the ethio-telecom service centers have to ensure that they have to send positive non-verbal cues that could motivate and increase employee performance especially

during the process of strategy implementation. This will increase productivity and achievement of desired goals by the telecommunication firms. In addition, through face to face communication, the firms should engage their employees emotionally in regard to the firms' vision so that they can believe and invest in it. Further, holding constant meeting and training where strategy can be communicated by use of the various channels of communication.

On the other hand, the management bodies of the ethio-telecom service centers better to give more attention for the importance of transparency, openness, and two-way dialogue between management and employees. In addition, they better also develop the use of innovative communication technologies to increase employee engagement and facilitate the establishment of a collaborative and supportive work community in their offices.

On the other hand, as confirmed from descriptive statistics, inferential statistics as well as from interview results effective use of internal communication in HRM has played vital role for the effective implementation of strategic plan. Therefore, it is recommended that each ethio-telecom service center better to work hard in order to ensure employees to have access to the information they need efficiently; support adequately internal communications initiatives for SPI; to receive and respond to employee feedback promptly; use internal communication data and feedback effectively; provide opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees.

As to external communication implementation for the accomplishment of strategic plan of ethio-telecom in the majority of the selected service centers, the study established significant and positive effect on SPI. Therefore, it is recommended that ethio-telecom service centers better to use networks and ICT in external communications efficiently, because they help the information provided through these channels gather feedback and coordinate with collaborators and customers. Additionally, it contributes to enhancing the flexibility of external relationships in exchanging information through these collaborative means, enabling the organization to establish direct interaction with external groups. Moreover, the implementation of strategies and the execution of technological applications in organizational communication delineate a set of skills that facilitate the dissemination of the message among the members within the entity, as well as with the external environment. Such actions

will lead the organization plans to make multifaceted efforts to ensure quality of service that increase customer satisfaction and improve experience, especially through network and system capacity enhancement and improvement projects.

Finally, since the finding of this study indicates that the extent to which strategic plan implementation in majority of ethio-telecom service centers were at moderate status, where the items in this dimension have medium score. Thus, the researcher recommends each ethio-telecom service center in the study area thoroughly work on strategic plan implementation to ensure plan integration both horizontally and vertically to streamline business operations and help the organization enhance company planning culture which will eventually lead to improve its overall performance and corporate objective, most importantly, to ensure provision of services beyond connectivity, enabling inclusive growth by providing digital and financial services and in order to simplify the daily activities of businesses and individuals all over the country.

5.4. Suggestion for Further Study

The study confined itself to ethio-telecom service centers operating in South-South West Region in Ethiopia and the findings may not be applicable in other ethio-telecom service centers as well as in other sectors as a result of uniqueness of the telecommunications industry. It is therefore recommended that the study is replicated in other sectors such as in the Ethio-electric service centers to establish how communication used in an organization affect strategic plan implementation.

In addition, since the study did not take an intervening variable, as intervening variables often help to explain the relationship between independent variable and the dependent variable in greater detail, the researcher recommends further research on the effect relationship between organizational communication and strategic plan implementation considering mediator variable.

6. REFERENCES

- Abdullah, Z., & Antony, C. A. (2012). Perception of employees on internal communication of a leading five star hotel in Malaysia, *Asian Social Science*, 8(2), 17–26. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v8n2p17>
- Adams, S. J., Roch, S. G., & Ayman, R. (2005). Communication medium and member familiarity: The effects on decision time, accuracy, and satisfaction. *Small Group Research*, 36(3), 321–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496405275232>
- Adebayo, O., Akintayo, D., & Okeke, C. (2023). Adaptive Communication Strategies in African Telecommunication Firms, *African Journal of Business Management*
- Adonias Negash Demie.(2020). The Effect of Strategic Management Practices on Organizational Performance at Awash Insurance Company, Unpublished MBA Thesis, Jimma University
- Advisory Works (2019), poor communication we're often called in to assess why a company's particular
- African Union. (2023). Digital Transformation in Africa: Regional Report
- Akaranga, S., & Muga, Z. (2021). The Role of External Communication in Strategic Implementation in Telecommunications, *Journal of Business Communication*, 58(2), 145-162
- Alemayehu, G. (2022). Organizational Communication in Dynamic Markets: The Case of Ethiopian Telecommunications, *Ethiopian Journal of Business Management*, 12(1), 23-42
- Andersson, H. & Jansson, G.(2020). 'Evaluating a corporate strategy – A case study of Länsförsäkringar', Unpublished Master's thesis, Swedish University of Agricultural

Sciences, viewed 13 May 2020, from https://stud.epsilon.slu.se/4453/1/Andersson_et_al_120703.pdf

Ansoff, H. I. (2020). *Corporate Strategy: An Analytic Approach to Business Policy for Growth and Expansion*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Assefa, A. (2021). Communication Barriers in Ethiopia: Implications for Development, *Ethiopian Journal of Communication Studies*, 12(3), 45-67

Atambo, W., & Momanyi, D. (2016). Effects of Internal Communication on Employee Performance: A Case Study of Kenya Power and Lighting Company, South Nyanza Region, Kenya. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary ...*, 2(5), 328–340. Retrieved from <http://www.imperialjournals.com/index.php/IJIR/article/view/476>

Ayre, C., & Scally, A. J. (2014). Critical values for Lawshe's content validity ratio: Revisiting the original methods of calculation. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 47(1), 79-86

Ayusa, E. (2016). *Communication and Strategy Implementation in Telecommunication Firms in Kenya*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi

Badea, M. (2014). Social Media and Organizational Communication, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 149, 70–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.08.192>

Baker, C. (2023). Bridging Internal and External Communications in Fast-Paced Sectors, *International Journal of Management*, 76(1), 102-117

Bakir, A.(2016).Solving customer-driven heterogeneity in organizations: dealing with internal tensions to reach solutions for customer inquiries

Baxter, G. (2015). Social Media in Organizations, *The International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society*, (April). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118767771.wbiedcs025>

Berger, B. K. (2011). Employee Communication: Let's Move from Knowing to Doing. In *Employee Communication: Let's Move from Knowing to Doing*

Berhe, A. (2022). The evolution of telecommunications in Ethiopia: Challenges and opportunities, *Journal of African Business*, 23(1), 65-80

- Bland, D. (1980). *The Communication Gap in Organizations*, Business Communication Quarterly
- Blazenaite, A.(2011).Effective Organizational Communication: in Search of a System, ISSN 1392 – 0758 SOCIALINIAI MOKSLAI. 2011. Nr. 4 (74)
- Brahm, T., & Kleiner, B. H. (2022). The Role of Strategy in Organizational Communication: Internal and External Perspectives, *Journal of Communication Management*
- Braun, S., Peus, C., Weisweiler, S. & Frey, D.(2013). ‘Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and team performance: A multilevel mediation model of trust’, *The Leadership Quarterly* 24(1), 270–283, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.11.00>
- Brewster, C., Chung, C., & Sparrow, P. (2016). *Globalizing Human Resource Management*, Routledge
- Bryson, J. M. (2021). *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, John Wiley & Sons
- Calin, A.(2019). The surprising importance of formal communication at work, <https://www.hubgets.com/blog/surprisingimportance-formal-communication-atwork/>
- Cepiku, D., Giordano, F., & Savignon, I. (2023). Planning in times of crisis: Resource allocation strategies among Italian cities, *Strategic Management Journal*
- Chatterjee, S., & Hadi, A. S. (2012). *Regression analysis by example* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Chidiebere, S. N., Ngozi, N. P., & Ifeoma, O. R. (2015). The Role of Effective Communication on Organizational Performance: a Study of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 4(8), 131–148
- Chirwa, M. & Boikanyo, D.H.(2022). ‘The role of effective communication in successful strategy implementation’, *Acta Commercii* 22(1), a1020. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v22i1.1020>
- Chitraoa, P. (2014). Internal Communication Satisfaction as an Employee Motivation Tool In the Retail Sector in Pune. *The European Journal of Social & Behavioural ...* <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.15405/ejsbs.137>

- Chmielecki, M. (2015). *The Role of Internal Communication in Enhancing Employee Engagement, Journal of Organizational Communication*
- Chmielecki, M.(2015). Factors Influencing Effectiveness of Internal Communication, *Management and Business Administration, Central Europe*, 23(2), 24–38. <https://doi.org/10.7206/mba.ce.2084-3356.139>
- Clampitt, P. G. (2018). *Communicating for Managerial Effectiveness*, Sage Publications
- Clark, W.(2017). *Why strategy implementation often is considered the most difficult stage in strategic management?* Viewed 11 June 2020, from <https://bizfluent.com/info-7966755-strategy-difficult-stage-strategic-management.html>
- Clutterbuck, D., & James, D. (1997). Internal communication: beliefs and practice in the organization. *Journal of Communication Management*, 1(3), 249–255. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb023427>
- Clutterbuck, D., & James, K. (1997). The Importance of Internal Communication, *The Journal of Business Strategy*
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests, *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297-334
- D’Ortenzio, C. (2012). Understanding Change and Change Management Processes : A Case Study. Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Canberra, (August), 1–332
- Dalum, G.(2018). *The 5 biggest challenges to strategy implementation*, viewed 11 June 2020, from <https://acadal.com/the-5-biggest-challenges-to-strategy-implementation/>
- Dăneci-Pătrău, D. (2011). Formal Communication in Organization, *Economics, Management & Financial Markets*, 6(1), p487-497
- De Mello, T., & Riquelme, J. (2023). The Impact of Communication on Strategic Change in Telecommunications, *Journal of Business Communication*, 45(2), 100-117
- Dobre, O. (2013). Employee motivation and organizational performance, *Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research*, 5(1), 53–60
- Doh, J. P., & Guay, T. R. (2006). Global Stakeholder Management: Balancing Content and Process, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 68(1), 33-46

- Dyer, J. H., Godfrey, P. C., Jensen, R. J., & Bryce, D. J. (2020). *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases* (3rd ed.). Wiley
- Ean, L. C. (2010). Face-to-Face versus Computer-Mediated Communication : Exploring Employees' Preference of Effective Employee Communication Channel. *International Journal for the Advancement of Science & Arts*, 1(2), 38–48
- Ekeowa, L., & Iloafu, k. (2016). The Role of Effective Communication in Strategic Management of Organizations. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 6 (12) pp. 93-99
- Eliadis, A.(2020).The Five Elements Of Effective Organizational Communication, Forbes Coaches Council
- Engert, S. & Baumgartner, R.J.(2016). 'Corporate sustainability strategy – Bridging the gap between formulation and implementation', *Journal of Cleaner Production* 113, 822–834. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2015.11.094>
- Ethiopian Communication Authority (ECA). (2020). *Annual Report on Telecommunications Performance*, Addis Ababa: ECA
- Falkheimer, J., Heide, M., Nothhaft, H., Platen, S. Von, Simonsson, C., & Andersson, R. (2017). Public Relations Review Is Strategic Communication too important to be left to Communication Professionals? Managers 'and coworkers' attitudes towards strategic communication and communication professionals, *Public Relations Review*, 43(1), 91–101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.10.011>
- Fombrun, C. J., & Van Riel, C. B. M. (2004). *Fame and Fortune: How Successful Companies Build Winning Reputations*, *Financial Times Prentice Hall*
- Gabriel, S., & Koh, C. H. (2016). Social Media Use by Public Relations Practitioners In Malaysia: An Exploratory Study. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 50(5), 469–479
- Gartenstein, D.(2018). *Why is strategic planning important to organizations?*, viewed 09 March 2020, from <https://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/strategicplanning-important-organisation-4103.html>
- Gatzweiler, R., Lusardi, W., & Chibunda, A. (2021). *Mobile connectivity and the growth of digital economies in sub-Saharan Africa*, *Telecommunications Policy*, 45(3), 102092
- George, A., Smith, B., & Johnson, L. (2022). Information processing styles and strategic planning: The moderating role of demographics, *Journal of Business Research*

- Gomez, L. & Dailey, S.(2017). Formal communication, <https://researchgate.net/publication/314712165>
- Gonzales, D. P. (2011). Dennis Paul Gonzales Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology. The University of New Mexico
- Gordon, M. E., & Stewart, L. P. (2009). Performance Appraisal Interview, *Management Communication Quarterly*, 22(3), 473–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318908327159>
- Gorse, C., & Emmitt, S. (1999). Problem Solving and Appropriate Communication Medium, In ARCOM 15th Conference (pp. 511–518)
- Great Place to Work. (2023). *Employee Engagement in Telecommunications*, Retrieved from GreatPlaceToWork.com
- Grunig, J. E., Grunig, L. A., & Dozier, D. M. (2019). *Guide to excellent institutional communication*, International Association for Business and Society
- Gulam, K.M.(2010).Formal and informal networks of communications, <https://www.uj.edu.sa/Files/1001210/Subjects/>
- Harrison, J. S., & John, C. H. (2022). *Foundations in Strategic Management*, Cengage Learning
- Harlow, T. (2020). The Impact of Communication on Strategy Execution: Insights from the Telecommunications Industry. *Corporate Governance Review*, 18(4), 67-80
- Hauer, G., Harte, P. & Kacemi, J.(2018). ‘An exploration of the impact of Industry 4.0 approach on corporate communication in the German manufacturing industry’, *International Journal of Supply Chain Management* 7(4), 2051–3771
- Herman, R. E., & Gioia, J. L. (2001). Helping Your Organization Become an Employer of Choice. *Employment Relations Today*, (Summer 2001), 63–78
- Hola, J. (2012). Internal Communication in the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. *Ekonomie a Management*, 3, 32–45. <https://doi.org/1081460911>
- Horne, S. (2023). *Market Liberalization and Its Impact on Ethiopian Telecommunications*, Ethiopian Business Review

- Hrebiniak, L.(2008). *Making strategy work: Overcoming the obstacles to effective execution*, viewed 11 June 2020, from <https://iveybusinessjournal.com/publication/making-strategy-work-overcoming-the-obstacles-to-effective-execution/>
- Husain, Z. (2013). Effective Communication brings successful organizational change. Department of Business Administration, 3(2), 1–9. Retrieved from http://www.abrnr.com/myfile/conference_proceedings/Con_Pro_12315/7-dubai13.pdf
- Hussein, M.E., Hirst, S., Salyers, V. & Osuji, J.(2014). ‘Using grounded theory as a method of inquiry: Advantages and disadvantages’, *Qualitative Report* 19(13), 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2014.1209>
- Institute for Public Relations (IPR). (2022). *The State of Internal Communication Trends*. Retrieved from <https://instituteforpr.org/internal-communication-trends>
- International Telecommunication Union. (2022). *The State of Mobile Communications in Africa*. ITU
- Johnsen, A. (2021). Understanding effectiveness in strategic planning: A contextual approach, *International Journal of Management Reviews*
- JSTOR .(2017). The organization and both internal and external sub-groups who possess shared
- Kabeyi, M.(2019). ‘Organizational strategic planning, implementation and evaluation with analysis of challenges and benefits’, *International Journal of Applied Research and Studies* 5(6), 27–32, <https://doi.org/10.22271/allresearch.2019.v5.i6a.5870>
- Kaplana, R.(2014).Communication within an organization: Formal and informal communication, <https://www.businessmanagementideas.com/communication/communication-within-an-organisation-formalandinformal-communication/2382>
- Karakostas, B., Kardaras, D., & Papathanassiou, E. (2005). The state of CRM adoption by the financial services in the UK: an empirical investigation. *Information & Management*, 42(6), 853-863. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2004.08.006>
- Kearins, K. (2023). Stakeholder Engagement and Strategic Planning: A Comparative Study in Telecommunications, *Journal of Business Strategy*, 44(2), 101-114

- Keith, Z.T.(2019).*Multiple Regression and Beyond: An Introduction to Multiple Regression and Structural Equation Modeling* Third Edition, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, New York and London
- Kelleher, T. (2001). Public Relations Roles and Media Choice, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 13(4), 303–320. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1304_02
- Kevin, J. (2017). The Management Toolbox: Internal Communication for Success, *Leadership Journal*
- Kevin, R. (2017). Exploring Internal Communication toward Informed Employee Voice (3rd Editio). New York: Routledge
- Kim, H. S. (2005). Organizational Structure and Internal Communication As Antecedents of Employee- Organization Relationships in the Context of Organizational Justice: a Multilevel Analysis, 314. Retrieved from <http://drum.lib.umd.edu/handle/1903/2734%5Cnhttp://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/1903/2734/1/umi-umd-2303.pdf>
- Kim, W. (2005). *Exploring Organizational Communication: The Strategies for Organizational Learning*, Communication Research
- Kingston, T. (2007). Organizational communication in a strategic change project
- Kiraso, A., Ahmed, T., & Desta, A. (2022). Navigating External Communication in Ethiopian Telecommunications: Cultural Nuances and Market Dynamics, *Ethiopian Journal of Communication Studies*, 15(2), 45-67
- Köseoglu, M. A., Altin, M., Chan, E., & Aladag, O. F. (2020). What are the key success factors for strategy formulation and implementation? Perspectives of managers in the hotel industry, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 89, 102574, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102574>
- Kupritz, V. W., & Cowell, E. (2011). Productive management communication: Online and face-to-face. *Journal of Business Communication*, 48(1), 54–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021943610385656>
- Lee, C., McGuire, K., & Kim, S. (2023). The interplay of strategic planning processes and design: Contextual implications for performance, *Long Range Planning*

- Lekisima, J., Ogolla, D., Nzili, M. B. (2022). Effect of organizational communication on strategy implementation among energy generating firms in Kenya, *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 4(1), 184-195
- Leonardi, P. M. (2014). Social media, knowledge sharing, and innovation: Toward a theory of communication visibility. *Information Systems Research*, 25(4), 796–816. <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.2014.0536>
- Leykun Arega.(2023). Assessment of Strategic Management Practices: The case of Ethio Telecom, Unpublished MBA Thesis, Addis Ababa University
- Lunenburg, F.C. & Ornstein, A.O.(2008). *Educational administration: Concepts and practices*, Cengage Learning, Belmont, CA
- Lunenburg, F.C.(2010). ‘Formal communication channels: Upward, downward, horizontal, and external’, *Focus on Colleges, Universities, and Schools* 4(1), 1–7
- Mapetere, D. & Manhiwa, T.E. (2021). The Impact of Communication Design on Strategy Implementation Success: A Study of Commercialized State Owned Enterprises in the Communication Technology and Courier Services Sector of Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 11(5), 45-59
- Mekonnen, A. (2023). *Communication Dynamics in Ethiopian Telecommunication Sector: Opportunities and Challenges*, *Journal of African Business*
- Men, L. R. (2014). The Effects of Employee Communication on Employee Engagement: A Path Analysis, *International Journal of Business Communication*, 51(3), 232-250
- Men,L.R.(2014).Strategic Internal Communication: Transformational Leadership, Communication Channels, and Employee Satisfaction . *Management Communication Quarterly*, 28(2), 264–284. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318914524536>
- Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (2022). *Institutionalized Organizational Communication in Global Corporations: Insights from Global Case Studies*, *Organizational Studies*
- Miller, V. D., Poole, M. S., Seibold, D. R., Myers, K. K., Park, H. S., Monge, P., ... Shumate, M. (2011). Advancing Research in Organizational Communication through Quantitative Methodology, *Management Communication Quarterly*, 25(1), 4–58
- Mishra, D., & Mishra, A. (2009). Effective communication, collaboration, and coordination in extreme programming: Human-centric perspective in a small organization. *Human*

Factors and Ergonomics in Manufacturing, 19(5), 438–456.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/hfm.20164>

Muhaba Hussien (2022) Effect of Communication On Strategic Plan Implementation: The Case of Ethio Telecom. MBA thesis:Adiss Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Mumby, D., & Stohl, C. (1996). Disciplining organizational communication studies, *Scholar*

Muriu, J. (2023). Cultural Dimensions of Internal Communication in African Organizations, *African Journal of Management Research*

Neufeld, D. J., Wan, Z., & Fang, Y. (2010). Remote Leadership, Communication Effectiveness and Leader Performance, *Business Media*, 19(2), 227–246.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10726-008-9142-x>

Ngulube, P. (2019). Organizational Culture and Communication in Africa's Telecommunications Sector, *African Journal of Information Systems*, 11(3), 45-60

Nwanzu, C.L. & Babalola, S.S.(2019). ‘Impact of organization ownership and strategy on organizational sustainable practices’, *Academy of Strategic Management Journal* 18(5), 1–10

Obeidat,B.Y.,Al-Hadidi,A.,Tarhini,A.,& Masa’deh, R.(2017). Factors affecting strategy implementation, *Review of International Business and Strategy*, 27(3), 386–408.<https://doi.org/10.1108/ribs-10-2016-0065>

Orlikowski, W. J. (2017). Genres of Organizational Communication: A Structural Approach to Studying Communication and Media Author (s): Joanne Yates and Wanda J Orlikowski Source : The Academy of Management Review , Vol . 17, No. 2 (Apr., 1992), pp. 299-326 Publish. Academy of Management Review, 17(2), 299–326

Otieno, M.(2023).Factors Affecting Strategy Implementation in a Remote Based Culture for Global IT Firms Based In Kenya

Payne, A., & Frow, P. (2005). A strategic framework for customer relationship management, *Journal of Marketing*, 69(4), 167-176. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.2005.69.4.167>

Ramokgadi, H.S., Moreme, D.P. & Boikanyo, D.H.(2019). *Exploring the barriers to effective strategy implementation in a petrochemical organization*, viewed 11 June 2020, from [file:///C:/Users/hermanb/Downloads/14242 Manuscript%20CE%202019.pdf%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/hermanb/Downloads/14242%20Manuscript%20CE%202019.pdf%20(1).pdf)

- Rana, R. (2013). Effective Communication in a Diverse Workplace, *International Journal of Enhanced Research in Management & Computer Applications*, 2(1), 1–5. Retrieved from http://www.erpublications.com/uploadedfiles/download/download_06_03_2013_18_34_46.pdf
- Robbins, S.P., & Judge, T.A. (2012). *Organizational Behavior (15th ed.)*, Pearson College Div.
- Rogala, A., & Bialowas, S. (2016). Communication in the Organizational Environments
- Rooke, J.A., Hamblett, K., Sapountzis, S., Yates, K., Kagioglou, M. & Lima, J.B. (2010). ‘Developing and implementing strategy for benefits realisation’, *HaCIRIC 10: Better health care through better Infrastructure, 3rd Annual Conference of the Health and Care Infrastructure Research and Innovation Centre*, 22nd–24th September, Balmoral Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland, Imperial College Business School, London, pp. 119–130
- Ruck, K., & Welch, M. (2012). Public Relations Review Valuing internal communication ; management and employee perspectives. *Public Relations Review*, 38(2), 294–302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.12.016>
- Ruck, K., & Welch, M. (2012). Valuing Internal Communication: Managing Effective Organizational Communication, *International Journal of Business Communication*, 49(2), 181-195
- Schiller, S. Z., & Cui, J. (2010). Communication openness in the workplace: The effects of medium (F2F and IM) and culture (U.S. and china). *Journal of Global Information Technology Management*, 13(2), 37–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1097198X.2010.10856514>
- Schoeneborn, D., & Sandhu, S. (2013). When Birds of Different Feather Flock Together: The Emerging Debate on —Organization as Communication in the German-Speaking Countries. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 27(2), 303–313. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318912470079>
- Schwarz, G. M., Watson, B. M., & Callan, V. J. (2011). Talking up failure: How discourse can signal failure to change, *Management Communication Quarterly (Vol. 25)*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318910389433>
- Schweiger, S.A., Stettler, T.R., Baldauf, A. & Zamudio, C. (2019). ‘The complementarity of strategic orientations: A meta-analytic synthesis and theory extension’, *The Strategic Management Journal* 40(11), 1822–1851
- Shami, S., Toor, S. & Ashfaq, A. (2020). Social Media and Strategic Communication: Uses and Preferences of the Politicians of Pakistan. *Global Political Review*, 5, 80-89

- Sharma, P. R. (2015). Organizational Communication : Perceptions of Staff Members 'Level of Communication Satisfaction and Job Satisfaction' <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3042>
- Shonubi, A.O. & Akintaro, A.A.(2016). 'The impact of effective communication on organizational performance', *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention* 3(3), 1904–1914
- Sigvardsson, S., & Marthouret, E. (2016). The effect of quick feedback on employee motivation and performance, Retrieved from isrn-number: LIU-IEI-FIL-G--16/01496—SE
- Smircich, L., & Morgan, G. (2022). Strategic Communication: Facilitating Change in Telecommunication Firms, *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 16(4), 333-349
- Solomon, H. (2017) Assessment of Strategy Implementation and Organizational Performance: The case of Bank of Abyssinia. MBA thesis: St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies
- Surbhi, S.(2018).Difference between formal and informal communication, <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-formal-andinformal-communication.html>
- Sürücü, L., & Maslakçı, A. (2020). Validity and reliability in quantitative research, *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 8(3), 2694-2726
- Tadesse, B., & Fanta, T. (2021). Communication Strategies in the Ethiopian Telecommunications Sector: Challenges and Opportunities, *Journal of Business Communication*, 58(2), 123-139
- Tama, J. (2024). Contextual influences on strategic reviews in federal agencies: A qualitative analysis, *Public Administration Review*
- Tawse, A., Patrick, V.M. & Vera, D.(2018). 'Crossing the chasm: Leadership nudges to help transition from strategy formulation to strategy implementation', *Business Horizons* 62(2), 249–257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.09.005>
- Tenhiälä, A. & Salvador, F.(2018). When communication should be formal, viewed 17 May 2020, from <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/when-communicationshould-be-formal/>
- Tesfaye, F. (2021). Regulatory Challenges and Communication in the Ethiopian Telecommunications Sector, *Journal of African Business Management*, 12(3), 130-145

- Tessema, A., & Abebe, A. (2023). Challenges and Opportunities in the Ethiopian Telecommunications Market, *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*
- Thao, T. L. T., & Hwang, C. J. (2010). Factors Affecting Employee Performance – Evidence From Petrovietnam Engineering. *Journal of Management Research*, 21(3), 21–33
- Tripathi, P. (2017). IRC‘S IJRSMS (ISSN : 2320-8236) Vol. 1, Issue. In IJRSMS (Vol. 1, pp. 80–83)
- Turkalj, Z. & Fosic, I.(2009). ‘Organizational communication as an important factor of organizational behaviour’, *Interdisciplinary Management Research* 5, 33–42, viewed 10 March 2020, from <https://ideas.repec.org/a/osi/journal/v5y2009p33-42.html>.
- Tyagi, C.L. & Kumar, A.(2004). Advertising management, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi
- Vegiayan, K. D., Baghestan, A. G., & Asfaranjan, Y. S. (2013). Exploring employees’ preference of communication channel, *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, 18(4), 504–511. <https://doi.org/10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2013.18.4.11710>
- Vigfússon, K., Jóhannsdóttir, L., & Ólafsson, S. (2021). Obstacles to strategy implementation
- Wang, Z., & Rahman, A. (2022). Strategic External Communication as a Tool for Competitive Advantage in Telecommunications, *Journal of Marketing Research*
- Weisberg, S. (2005). Applied linear regression, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons
- Welch, M. & Jackson, P. R. (2020). The importance of communication in organizational change: A systematic literature review, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 33(2), 153-174
- Welch, M. (2012). Appropriateness and acceptability: Employee perspectives of internal communication. *Public Relations Review*, 38(2), 246–254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.12.017>
- Westerman, C. Y. K., Heuett, K. B., Reno, K. M., & Curry, R. (2014). What Makes Performance Feedback Seem Just? Synchronicity, Channel, and Valence Effects on Perceptions of Organizational Justice in Feedback Delivery, *Management*

- Wheelen and Hunger (2012), implementing a strategy involve staking ideas, decisions, plans, policies, *Organ. Behav*, 2017.4:501-526. Downloaded from www.annualreviews.org
- Whiston, S. C. (2012). *Principles and applications of assessment in counseling*, Cengage Learning.
- White, C., Vanc, A., & Stafford, G. (2010). Internal communication, information satisfaction, and sense of community: The effect of personal influence. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 22(1), 65–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10627260903170985>
- Williams, M.N., Grajales, C.A.G. & Kurkiewicz, D.(2013).Assumptions of Multiple Regression: Correcting Two Misconceptions, *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, A peer-reviewed electronic journal, Volume 18, Number 11, September 2013 ISSN 1531-7714
- Winter, S.(2018).Informal communication as a source of organizational agility, viewed 17 May 2020, from <https://internationaldirector.com/the-c-suite/informal-communication-as-a-source-of-organizational-agility/>
- World Bank. (2022). Ethiopia: Enhancing Public Service Delivery Through Better Communication. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications
- Wright, K. B., Abendschein, B., Wombacher, K., O’Connor, M., Hoffman, M., Dempsey, M., Shelton, A. (2014). Work-Related Communication Technology Use Outside of Regular Work Hours and Work Life Conflict: The Influence of Communication Technologies on Perceived Work Life Conflict, Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intentions. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 28(4), 507–530
- Xu, Q. & Li, V.(2013). ‘The connotation of informal communication and its application in long distance vocational education’, 2nd International Conference on Science and Social Research, 13–14 July 2013, Beijing, China, viewed 30 September 2020, from <https://download.atlantis-press.com/article/7655.pdf>
- Yildirim, O. (2014). The Impact of Organizational Communication on Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Research Findings. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 150, 1095–1100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.124>
- Yusof, R., & Waller, L. (2021). The Importance of Communication in Strategic Planning: Insights from Telecommunications, *International Journal of Business Communication*, 58(3), 341-360

Zagan, Z. (2008). Organizational Communication – a Premise for Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness, Retrieved from <http://www.lib.utexas.edu>

Zambas, J.(2019). The importance of effective communication in the workplace, viewed 17 August 2020, from <https://www.careeraddict.com/the-importance-of-effective-communication-in-the-workplace>

Zheng, X., Yang, S., & McLean, G. N. (2015). The Impact of Internal Communication on Employee Engagement in the Workplace, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(12), 1609-1628



Appendix – A: Questionnaire

Wolkite University

School of Post Graduate Studies College of Business and Economics

Department of Management

Questionnaire to be filled by permanent employees in the selected Ethio –telecom service centers in Central Ethiopia Region

Dear Respondent,

I am MBA student at Wolkite University, School of Post Graduate Studies College of Business and Economics Department of Management. As part of the requirements in completion of the MBA program, I am undertaking a research under the title “**Effect of Organization Communication on Strategic Plan Implementation: The case of Ethio-telecom**”. To this end, I am collecting data from permanent employees working in the selected **Ethio-telecom** centers in South South West Region and you have been selected as a valuable participant for this research. In order for the research to yield valid results, it is important that you answer all questions as honestly and truthfully as possible. It is solely for an academic purpose and all responses will remain anonymous and confidential. For more information, you can contact at any time needed through my address;

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study!!!

Yemane Birhan Muche

Mobile No: +251913234982

General Direction:

- No need of writing your name
- Use the “√” mark to give your response accordingly in the box[bracket]

Section I: Demographic profile

Instruction: This Part of the questionnaire inquires about your personal and job related information. Please answer each item/question accordingly.

1. Sex: Male [____] Female [____]

2. In which age group are you in?

23 to 30 [____] 41 to 50 [____]

31 to 40 [____] 51 to 60 [____]

3. What is your highest educational qualification?

Diploma [____] Bachelor Degree [____]

Master Degree [____] other (specify)_____

4. How long have you been working in Ethio - telecom?

Below 5 years [____] 11 to 15 years [____]

5 to 10 years [____] 16 to 20 years [____] above 20 years [____]

Section II: Effect of Organizational Communication

This section of the questionnaire prepared to collect data about the two components of organizational communication – internal and external that can affect the implementation of strategic plan of Ethio – telecom in your centre. Try to recall guidelines or elements for effectively communicating your organization business strategy internally and externally as possible in ranking statements in each of the variable’s items.

2.1. Internal Communication and its components

This section of the questionnaire prepared to collect data about the three components of internal communication strategies that can affect the strategic plan implementation of Ethio – telecom in your centre. Try to recall guidelines or elements for effectively communicating your organization strategy internally as much as possible in ranking statements in each of the variable’s items. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by putting (√) in one of the appropriate scale option provided in the box such as Strongly disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (DA) = 2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, strongly agree (SA) = 5

2.1.1. Internal communication quality [INCOMQ]

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The organization ensures clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees during the strategic plan implementation.					
2	The amount of information being communicated is appropriate and credible for the strategic plan implementation.					
3	The organization uses different communication channels-communication mediums, messages and perceptions for the strategic plan implementation.					
4	The modes, speed of feedback in communication and flexibility of communication facilitate the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategic plan.					
5	The organization communication channels support collaboration among employees and matches with employees’ preferences and needs.					
6	Often there are no messages or updates that are difficult to understand about the strategic plan implementation.					

2.1.2. Internal Communication Accessibility [INCOMA]

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I usually receive updates from management about the strategic plan implementation.					
2	Information is easily accessible when I need it.					
3	Different information communication technologies are used to enhance communication within the organization.					
4	The current communication methods used by the organization meet your needs and expectations.					
5	There are some topics discussed through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate the strategic plan implementation.					
6	All employees are given an equal opportunity to contribute their ideas or opinions.					

7	The organization ensures efficient flow of information for strategic plan implementation.					
8	The organization makes use of emails and memos in communication during the strategic plan implementation.					

2.1.3. Effective use of Internal Communication in the organization culture [EUINCOR]

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Internal communication reflects employees' values and strong organization culture.					
2	Employees are able to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication.					
3	Internal communication function is oriented with the organization's strategic plan implementation.					
4	Employee's voice is heard and taken into consideration when decisions are made.					
5	Verbal, non – verbal and written communications are used in engaging the staff in the strategic plan implementation.					
6	Information sharing and transparency is a major component of the strategic plan implementation.					
7	Organization's internal communication influence how employees think about their work and the strategic plan implementation.					

2.1.4. Effective use of internal communication in HRM[EUINCHRM]

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The organization ensures that employees have access to the information they need efficiently.					
2	HR is adequately supporting internal communications initiatives for the implementation the strategic plan.					
3	There a system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback on internal communications					
4	HR is using internal communications data or feedback effectively.					
5	There are opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees.					
6	The organization created and used motivational visuals that summarize key points of the strategic plan implementation.					

2.2. External Communication strategy

This section of the questionnaire prepared to collect data about the external communication strategies that can affect the strategic plan implementation of Ethio – telecom in your centre. Try to recall guidelines or elements for effectively communicating your organization strategy externally as much as possible in ranking statements in each of the variable’s items. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by putting (√) in one of the appropriate scale option provided in the box such as Strongly disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (DA) = 2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, strongly agree (SA) = 5

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The organization promote the three years strategy as a key part of the organization’s overall marketing strategy					
2	Develop promotional graphics that highlight the core tenets of the company’s strategy.					
3	The organization share updates to the strategic plan implementation via press releases, blog posts and other key channels.					
4	The organization promotes strategic plan implementation updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site.					
5	The organization responds to customer comments with information that furthers the public’s knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan.					
6	The organization designed all marketing communications to implement a style and voice in line with the organization’s strategic plan.					

Section III: Strategic Plan Implementation

This section of the questionnaire prepared to collect data about the strategic plan implementation of Ethio – telecom in your centre. Try to recall as many strategic plan of Ethio – telecom as possible in ranking statements in each of the variable’s items. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by putting (√) in one of the appropriate scale option provided in the box such as strongly agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (U) = 3, Disagree (DA) = 2, Strongly disagree (SD) = 1

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The strategic plan implementation has been effectively					

	communicated.					
2	The strategic plan implementations are always completed within the specified time.					
3	Some strategic plan implementations take more time that required.					
4	The strategic plan implementations are completed within the specified budget.					
5	Implementation of some strategic plan leads to cost overrun					
6	The strategic plan implementations achieve the intended objectives in line with the three years (2022 – 2024) lead growth strategy					
7	The strategic plan implementation always achieve its targets					
8	The organization provided training programs that emphasize actionable ways before implementing the strategic plan.					
9	The organization implements the strategic plan appropriately.					

**Appendix – B: Interview
Wolkite University**

College of Business and Economics School of Graduate Studies

Department of Management

Interview guide for the selected managers of ethio-telecom service centers found in South-South West Region

Dear respected respondents,

This interview guide is prepared to gather information about “*Effect of Organization Communication on Strategic Plan Implementation: The case of Ethio-telecom*”. The study will be carried out for the partial fulfillment of Masters of Business Administration and it is for academic purpose only. Your genuine responses will have great value for the success of the study. Therefore, I kindly request you to respond each question honestly and kindly.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!!!

With regards,

Yemane Birhan Muche

Mobile No: +251913234982

Part One: Personal Information

Sex _____

Interview date _____

Town_____

Part Two: Interview

The following are interview guide questions expected to be replied by managers of ten ethio-telecom centers selected from South-South West Region

1. How do you describe the implementation of internal communication quality in your office in terms of

- ensuring clear, accurate, and timely communication with all employees during the SPI?
 - Appropriateness and credibility amount of information being communicated?
 - using different communication channels?
 - The modes, speed of feedback and flexibility of communication in facilitating the effectiveness SPI?
 - No messages or updates that are difficult to understand about the SPI?
2. How do you describe the implementation of internal communication accessibility in your office in terms of
- Updates from management about the SPI for employees?
 - Easily accessibility of information when employees are in need?
 - Usage of different ICT to enhance communication?
 - discussing topics through digital channels rather than in-person meetings to facilitate SPI?
 - providing equal opportunity for employees to contribute their ideas or opinions?
 - making use of emails and memos in communication during the SPI?
3. How do you elaborate effective use of internal communication in the organization culture in your office in terms of
- Reflecting employees' values and strong organization culture?
 - making employees to engage with one another in meaningful way through internal communication?
 - Orienting IC with your organization's SPI?
 - Using verbal, non – verbal and written communications in engaging the staff in the SPI?
 - Making information sharing and transparency as major component for SPI?
4. How do you elaborate effective use of internal communication in HRM in your office in terms of
- Ensuring employees to have access to the information they need efficiently?
 - HR in supporting adequately internal communications initiatives for SPI?
 - The existence of system in place for receiving and responding to employee feedback?
 - HRM in using internal communication data and feedback effectively?
 - Opportunities to improve the way that HR communicates with employees?

5. How do you see the implementation of external communication in your office in terms of
 - promoting the three years strategy as a key part of the organization's overall marketing strategy?
 - Developing promotional graphics that highlight the core tenets of the company's strategy?
 - sharing updates to the SPI via press releases, blog posts and other key channels?
 - promoting SPI updates on Social media platforms like Face book and official web-site?
 - responding to customer comments with information that further the public's knowledge of ethio-telecom three years strategic plan?
6. Do you believe that SPI is carried out as designed? If so how do you describe the status of the implementation?
7. In general, how do you see the overall activities of your office in using internal and external communications for the success of SPI of ethio-telecom?

Thank You!!!

