

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN LARGE-SCALE ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY: DO THEY MATCH CORPORATE COMMUNICATION THEORY?

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to measure corporate communication practices of large-scale organizations in Turkey. A corporate communication scale was developed as a result of a detailed literature review and a Delphi study carried out with three academicians and three corporate communication practitioners. This scale was used to see whether corporate communication is organized strategically, the core areas of corporate communication are managed strategically, the corporate communication strategy is managed strategically, a working environment that enhances cooperation and coordination is created, awareness on the importance of corporate communication activities is created in the employees and corporate communication is integrated in these organizations. The scale was tested with a sample of 51 large-scale companies and 122 practitioners. The reliability of the resulting scale was calculated as $\alpha=.966$. The factor analysis also showed that the scale has six subscales with reliability coefficients ranging between .730 and .922. The descriptive statistics of the scale partially confirmed and disconfirmed the hypotheses of the study. The descriptive statistics of the sub-scales indicated that corporate communication practices at these corporations were more positively evaluated at three dimensions: organizing corporate communication, core activities of corporate communication and strategic management of corporate communication. The dimension with the lowest mean score was found to be the integration of corporate communication.

Keywords: *Corporate Communication, Scale, Integration, Strategic Management.*

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE'DEKİ BÜYÜK ÖLÇEKLİ KURUMLARDA KURUMSAL İLETİŞİM UYGULAMALARI: MEVCUT UYGULAMALAR KURUMSAL İLETİŞİM TEORİSİYLE EŞLEŞİYOR MU?

Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki büyük ölçekli şirketlerde kurumsal iletişim uygulamalarını ölçmeyi amaçlamıştır. Detaylı bir literatür çalışması ve üç akademisyen ile üç kurumsal iletişim uzmanından oluşan bir grupla yapılan Delfi çalışması sonucunda bir kurumsal iletişim ölçeği geliştirilmiştir. Bu ölçek, kurumlarda kurumsal iletişimin ne derece stratejik bir şekilde düzenlendiğini, temel kurumsal iletişim alanlarının ne derece stratejik bir şekilde yönetildiğini, kurumsal iletişim stratejisinin ne

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derece stratejik bir şekilde yönetildiğini, işbirliği ve koordinasyonu iyileştiren bir çalışma ortamının ne derece yaratıldığını, çalışanlarda kurumsal iletişim faaliyetlerinin önemi ile ilgili ne derece bir farkındalık yaratıldığını ve kurumsal iletişimin bu kurumlarda ne ölçekte bütünleştirildiğini ölçmek için kullanılmıştır. Ölçek 51 büyük ölçekli kurumdan ve bu kurumlardan toplam 122 uzmandan oluşan bir örneklem ile denenmiştir. Ölçeğin güvenilirliği $\alpha=.966$ olarak hesaplanmıştır. Yapılan faktör analizi, ölçeğin, güvenilirlik değeri .730 ile .922 arasında değişen altı alt ölçeği olduğunu göstermiştir. Ölçek üzerinde uygulanan tanımlayıcı istatistikler bu çalışmanın bazı hipotezlerini kısmen doğrulamış, bazılarının ise yanlış olduğunu göstermiştir. Alt ölçeklerin tanımlayıcı istatistikleri kurumsal iletişimin üç boyutunun daha olumlu değerlendirildiğini göstermiştir: bu boyutlar kurumsal iletişimin düzenlenmesi, kurumsal iletişimin temel alanları ve kurumsal iletişimin stratejik yönetimidir. En düşük ortalamayı alan boyutun kurumsal iletişimin bütünleştirilmesi olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurumsal İletişim, Ölçek, Bütünleştirme, Stratejik Yönetim.

1. Introduction

Corporate communication has struggled to develop an identity in both scholarship and practice since the early 1990s. Academic and practical knowledge in corporate communication has been expanding prudently. Communication is viewed as a valuable communication tool and, compared with a decade ago, communication managers are seen as fully fledged strategic advisers to senior management nowadays, not as ‘information conduits’. Another change has taken place in the territorial considerations of communication. Communication had been viewed as the exclusive territory of public relations and marketing until recently. These two departments, public relations and marketing, are still seen among the most important communication departments, however, the current era also gave birth to an understanding in which the roles of other functional departments in communication are valued and new forms of communication emerged. For instance, investor relations can be directed by financial management, environmental communication can be directed by production management, or labor market communication can be directed by personnel management in some organizations (Cees Van Riel, 1992: 1-3).

This variety of communication sources was a result of an emphasis on functional specialism and a corresponding trend towards dividing and splitting communication departments (Cornelissen, 2007: 127). ‘Department’, derived from the French word ‘departir’, means ‘to separate’. As organizations grew bigger and more geographically dispersed and as the number of departments within an organization increased, it became more difficult to manage communication.

Departments, separated from each other and having their specialized syntax, form, style, substance orientation, approach and processes, carried out communicative activities and strived to protect and enlarge their ‘turfs’ and ‘access to organizational resources’. This tendency, however, led to fragmented communication and sometimes contradictory external manifestations of the organizations. The need to organize these different communication efforts in a way that a consistent and effective presentation of the corporation to the target publics would be achieved led to the emergence of the notion ‘corporate communication’.

Literature Overview

Cees Van Riel (1992, 1997) asserts that there are three main types of communication that a corporation is involved in: organizational communication, marketing communication and management communication. Corporate communication theory requires that there is consistency and harmony between these three different communication types.

Organizational communication is a term that covers all types of communication that do not fall in the area of marketing. These types might be listed as public relations, public affairs, investor relations, corporate advertising, internal communication and so forth. Organizational communication, in many organizations, is fragmented to a great extent. Marketing communication is the umbrella term for all communication efforts undertaken to support sales of particular goods or services. Management communication is the communication used by all junior, middle or senior members of the management to achieve aims such as developing a shared vision of the organization, establishing and maintaining trust in the organizational leadership, initiating and managing the change process and empowering and motivating employees (Van Riel, 1992: 9-13). In our era of great competition, it gains great importance that these communication efforts are coordinated in a way that an image that differentiates the organization from their competitors is created. An organization’s different communication efforts should be consistent with and supportive of each other. The total sum of these efforts should deliver the desired image of the organization in an effective way.

Corporate communication provides a framework for all of the communication activities of organizations; whether it is under the umbrella of management, marketing, human resources or production. At its core, corporate communication utilizes terms such as ‘long-term’, ‘strategy’, ‘coordination’, ‘shared data base’, ‘common starting points, which show its link with the discipline

of management. Corporate communication did not emerge as a new discipline solely to serve organizations' different communication needs with new repertoire of communication activities; it is primarily a system for coordinating and harmonizing all of an organization's communication efforts.

A review of literature on corporate communication reveals that some points are highlighted by many scholars. What constitutes the core activities of corporate communication is one such point. Core activities of corporate communication that are emphasized in the literature could be listed as corporate identity, image, reputation, brand management, strategy and policy development, media relations, investor relations, government relations, employee relations, intranet communications, community relations, marketing communication, corporate advertising, corporate advocacy, financial communication, corporate social responsibility, organizational communication, management communication, stakeholder analysis, crisis communication and corporate philanthropy (Van Riel, 1992; Argenti, 1998; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007; Cornelissen, 2004; Belasen, 2008; Argenti, 2012; Cornelissen, 2014; Goodman & Hirsh, 2015). Corporate image and identity practices are among the core activities that are highlighted to a great extent.

Suggestions about how corporate communication strategy should be developed and implemented make up another common point. Cees Van Riel proposes a detailed model for organizing corporate communication (1992: 150-151). He argues that the organizational communication strategy, which is shaped according to the organizational strategy, should act as a framework for all communication efforts of organizations. Organizational strategy should be developed by taking the external environment, strategic business plan of the organization and the strategic plans of the five management fields (production, marketing, human resources, finance, organization and information) into consideration. These departments should prepare their communication plans and activities in a way that they will serve the organizational strategy and the organizational communication strategy that is developed to achieve the goals set in the organizational strategy. Consistency between the communication plans of the functional units is significant for the total sum of communication efforts to be greater than its constituent parts. To ensure this consistency, common starting points such as what messages will be highlighted by all departments should be determined beforehand in a process of which all departments will be a part. There should also be a coordination and supervision system which will help and guarantee that all functional departments are giving messages that serve the organization's communication strategy and that these messages are consistent with each other.

There is also emphasis on communication, interaction and coordination between different communication departments and many scholars offer different ideas about how this coordination can be enhanced. A strong corporate identity (Gronstedt, 1994), common starting points, goals and process rules (Cees Van Riel, 1992; Christensen, Firat & Torp, 2008), recruitment of employees with an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to communication, training on communication, job rotations between communication departments (Gronstedt, 1994; Cornelissen, 2007) are among those suggestions. Other suggestions include processes such as projects, team work, meetings and use of systems of electronic communication which increase and improve interaction among communication departments (Cornelissen, 2007). Another group of suggestions focus on the use of common operational systems, communication planning systems, shared data basis, and other information systems such as strategic information, management information, decision support systems (Gronstedt, 1994; Cees Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007; Simonsen, 2009), manuals, work flow charts, process maps, and checklists (Cornelissen, 2007). Coordination committees in which a representative from each communication department can be found are also highlighted as a potentially effective coordinating mechanism (Cees Van Riel, 1992).

One last point that is emphasized in the literature focuses on how the conflicts between competing communicative needs of the organization could be balanced and demands of different communication departments can be managed. Belasen (2008: 11) argues that corporate communication departments need to manage communication in a way that uniformity and coherence of internal communication practices and procedures will be achieved with the help of regulative systems; however, communication will still be flexible enough to be responsive and adaptive to external communication networks and important stakeholders. It is vital that the competing requirements of internal and external communication and the demands of different departments be balanced and managed efficiently.

These suggestions do not always find their reflections in research, however. Although there are many books and articles on corporate communication, research on corporate communication is limited and it is not possible to find many scales or tools that can be used to measure corporate communication. This study focused on developing a corporate communication scale to test the following hypotheses:

- H1. Corporate communication is organized strategically to achieve consistency in large-scale organizations in Turkey.
- H2: Core areas of corporate communication are managed strategically.

- H3. Corporate communication strategy is managed strategically.
- H4. A working environment that enhances cooperation and coordination is created in these organizations.
- H5. An awareness on the importance of corporate communication activities is created in the employees.
- H6. Corporate communication is integrated in these organizations.

2. Method

2.1. Data Collection Procedure

The largest and most reputable organizations were selected as sample organizations for the study as these organizations had a large number of departments involved in communication and thus had the potential of supplying in depth data. This selection was done by taking three lists as the basis: members of Corporate Communication Association, Leaders of Sustainable Reputation List by The Capital Magazine, and The Fortune 500 Turkey List. Leaders of Sustainable Development were calculated by taking companies' scores in "The Most Admired Company" research carried out every year by The Capital.

The companies chosen were invited to be a part of the research. The practitioners in corporate communication departments were contacted. In companies where there was no corporate communication department, marketing departments or human resources departments were contacted. The aim, importance, and scope of the research were explained over the phone. Following initial contact, an e-mail message which again outlined the aim, significance and scope of the research was sent. Guidance about how the scale could be distributed and the points that should be taken into consideration when answering the questions on the scale was also provided in the e-mail with the scale itself attached. Reminder e-mails were sent and the questions received from the practitioners were answered. Approximately 40% of all companies contacted (51 companies) returned the questionnaire. Some of these companies are BASF, Bosh-Siemens Group, Coca-Cola, Eczacıbaşı, McDonald's, Microsoft, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, Sabancı, Turkish Airlines, Turkcell, Unilever, and Ülker.

2.2. Participants

The sample consisted of a total of 122 practitioners. Table 1 summarizes the demographic classification of the sample.

Table 1. Gender, Age and Education of Participants

Variable	Group	f	%
Gender	Women	59	48.4
	Men	56	45.9
	Not indicated	7	5.7
Age	18-25	6	4.9
	26-33	56	45.9
	34-41	39	32.0
	42-49	12	9.8
	50-57	1	0.8
	Not indicated	8	6.6
Education	Associate Degree	2	1.6
	Bachelor's Degree	68	55.7
	Master's Degree	43	35.2
	Not indicated	9	7.4

Approximately half of the sample (48.4%) were women and the other half (45.9%) were men. Most of the sample were aged between 26 and 41 and had a BA degree. It should also be noted that the sample comprised practitioners working in different departments ranging from business development and analysis to media and communication departments. The most frequent departments represented in the sample were corporate communication (43.1%) and marketing (7.3%).

2.3. Data Collection Instrument-Corporate Communication Scale

For the purposes of this study, a multiple-item, multiple-dimension corporate communication scale that can be used to measure corporate communication was developed. Items were first generated by taking the corporate communication literature as the basis. Six dimensions were created: core activities of corporate communication, strategic management of corporate communication, coordination of corporate communication, communication and negotiation between different communication departments, awareness and education on communication and organizing corporate communication. These dimensions derived from the work of several scholars such as Goodman (1994, 2000, 2001, 2009), Argenti (1996, 1998, 2004, 2012), Belasen (2008), Van Riel (1992, 1997), Cornelissen (2004, 2007), Van Riel and Balmer (1997) and Van Riel and Fombrun (2007). As previously noted, overlapping points in theory were included in the scale. At least four items were created for each dimension as using fewer items would lead to statistical

inconsistencies. All items consisted of simple, short sentences without ambiguous phrasing. The resulting scale consisted of 55 statements.

In order to check construct validity and make sure that the scale is comprehensive enough and reflects corporate communication in practice, not just in theory, a Delphi study was carried out accordingly. The Delphi study was carried out with three academicians and three corporate communication practitioners. Prof. Dr. Serra Görpe and Ass. Prof. Seda Mengü from İstanbul University, Department of Public Relations and Publicity and Dr. Özge Uğurlu from Maltepe University, Department of Public Relations and Publicity took part in the Delphi study. In the practice dimension, Suat Özyaprak, Chief Communication Officer of Sabancı Holding, one of the largest conglomerates in Turkey, and the Chairman of the Board of Turkey's Corporate Communication Association, Burcun İmir, Corporate Communication Manager of Turkcell, the largest and oldest GSM company in Turkey, contributed a great deal to the finalization of the scale. Göktuğ Yücekul, who was the Manager of Corporate Communications at Sütaş, one of the largest companies in the Turkish dairy industry, also contributed to the development of the scale .

The Delphi study was carried out between January and June 2012. The academicians and practitioners were asked open-ended questions based on the literature review and the dimensions of the corporate communication scale as the basis. Sample questions were as follows:

- What is corporate communication?
- What are the core activities of corporate communication?
- How should corporate communication strategy be developed?
- What indicates that there is harmony between different communication departments of an organization?
- How can the conflicts between the needs and wants of different communication departments be solved?
- How can the conflicts between the requirements of internal and external communication be solved?
- How can coordination among different communication departments be improved?

The Delphi study was carried out online so that the academicians and practitioners would be able to take their time, answer the questions in detail, or add a comment at their own discretion. The points that were highlighted by the Delphi

group but not already included in the scale were added. At the end of this process, the number of questions in the scale increased to 71.

The following step in the development of the Corporate Communication Scale (CCS) was asking the Delphi group to decide how well each item included in the scale can measure corporate communication on a five-point likert scale. Only three items were scored under 3 (neutral) and therefore eliminated from the scale. Therefore, the final version of the scale consisted of 68 items in total.

This scale was translated into English. To translate CCS into English, Back Translation technique was applied. Firstly, the scale was translated into English by the researcher who has a BA and MA degree in English Language Teaching. Then, the scale was translated back to Turkish by an expert in the field of Translation and Interpreting Studies. Obtained translations were compared and similar items were determined. Subsequently, Turkish version of the scale was translated into English again by another expert in the field of Translation and Interpreting Studies. Comparing the original version with the version translated into English again, the researcher took the most representative items.

Following the translation process, the scale was sent to Prof. Dr. Joep Cornelissen, Head of Corporate Communications at Leeds University and Dr. Alan Belasen, Empire State College. These academicians are among those who have made considerable contributions to the field of corporate communication and whose work was used as the basis in this study. Prof. Dr. Joep Cornelissen and Dr. Alan Belasen stated that the scale was comprehensive and had items that were clearly stated. The resulting scale can be seen in Appendix A.

In order to see if data gathered by CCS would be appropriate for factor analysis, a Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) test and a Barlett Sphericity test were conducted. The KMO value shows if the scale is perceived as having more than one dimension. The KMO value must be above 0.6 for conducting factor analysis. The Barlett Sphericity test shows if the variables in the scale are significantly related to each other and if the data is statistically appropriate for use in factor analysis. The KMO value was calculated as 0.652 and the result of Barlett Sphericity test was significant. Therefore, it was concluded that the data was fit to be used in factor analysis (Leech, 2005). The responses to the 68 items were factor analyzed using principal component analysis, followed by Varimax Rotation.

The first factor analysis revealed that the scale had 12 dimensions and these

dimensions explained 69.4% of the total variance. In these analyses, the Eigen value was determined as 1 and when deciding which dimension an item belongs to, the minimum factor loading was determined to be 0.30. The first factor analysis showed that some items did not have factor loadings above 0.30 and some others were related to more than one dimension. As a result, 13 items (items 4, 12, 19, 21, 27, 29, 37, 44, 45, 54, 57, 58, 64) were eliminated from the scale and factor analysis was repeated with the 55 items left. The results showed that these items fell under eight dimensions and these dimensions explain 71.58% of the variance. However, the factor loadings of the items in each dimension revealed that 6 items (items 7, 11, 20, 31, 63, 67) had factor loadings below 0.30 and thus, these items were excluded from the scale. The third and final factor analysis demonstrated that the remaining 49 items grouped in six dimensions, explained 77.97% of the total variance. All 49 items have a factor loading of at least 0.30. Table 2 displays the dimensions and items related to each dimension.

Table 2. Factors and Related Items

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
8	0.855					
6	0.798					
34	0.634					
9	0.619					
22	0.562					
23	0.513					
3	0.502					
16	0.491					
18	0.447					
17	0.445					
5	0.414					
13	0.373					
15	0.368					
10	0.366					
26	0.341					
25	0.335					
1		0.819				
30		0.786				
42		0.666				
48		0.657				
2		0.636				
14		0.601				
65		0.481				
66		0.472				
55						
56		0.361				

68	0.340				
40		0.864			
43		0.845			
50		0.699			
51		0.676			
33		0.619			
49		0.603			
46		0.495			
28			0.818		
60			0.777		
61			0.599		
24			0.501		
59			0.479		
47			0.443		
36				0.701	
32				0.608	
35				0.591	
39				0.518	
62				0.457	
38				0.441	
52					0.508
41					0.436
53					0.408

As seen in Table 2, 16 items fell under the first dimension. Items 8, 6, 34, 9, 22, 23, 34, 16, 18, 17, 5, 13, 15, 10, 26, and 25 made up the first dimension or factor. This dimension was defined as ‘the core activities of corporate communication’ as planned in the preparation stage. The second dimension consisted of 11 items (items 1, 30, 42, 48, 2, 14, 65, 66, 55, 56, 68) and was defined as ‘strategic management of corporate communication’. The third dimension was composed of 7 items (items 40, 43, 50, 51, 33, 49, and 46) and all items focused on communication and negotiation between different communication departments. The fourth and fifth dimensions had six items each; items 28, 60, 61, 24, 59 and 47 belonged to the fourth dimension and items 36, 32, 35, 39, 62, and 38 belonged to the fifth dimension. The name of the fourth dimension was designated as the ‘coordination of corporate communication’ and the name of the fifth dimension was designated as ‘awareness and education on communication’. The sixth and final dimension was comprised of three items (items 52, 41, and 53) and was defined as ‘organizing corporate communication’. The names of the dimensions were given by the researcher according to the topic that each of the items measured and what topic they all gathered around.

Another step in the analysis was the calculation of the coefficient alpha of the scale. The coefficient alpha for the corporate communication scale was

calculated as .966. The coefficient alpha of the six dimensions are as follows.

Table 3. The Coefficient Alpha of Each Dimension

As Table 3 clearly shows, reliability coefficients of the scale's dimensions

Dimension/Scale	\bar{X}	ss
Organizing Corporate Communication	4.24	0.87
Core Activities of Corporate Communication	4.16	0.71
Strategic Management of Corporate Communication	4.13	0.68
Communication and Negotiation between Different Communication Departments	3.97	0.74
Awareness and Education on Communication	3.56	0.75
Integration of Corporate Communication	3.51	0.87
CCS	3.86	0.73

ranged between .730 and .922. Item analysis of each dimension showed that items in each dimension should be used together so that the reliability of that dimension would not decrease. A t-test was also conducted to see if the items in each dimension had led to variance in the answers of the participants. The result was that all 49 items were found to have significantly contributed to variance (33 items at a $p < .001$ level and 16 at a $p < .05$ level). One final analysis aimed to see if the dimensions were related positively and significantly to each other and to the whole scale itself to ascertain whether the scale made up a meaningful whole. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis was run on the scale and on all its dimensions. The results showed that the relationship between all dimensions and the scale itself was positive and meaningful. Correlation coefficients ranged between $r = .453$ and $r = .935$ and all relationships were significant at a $p < .01$ level.

2.4. Results

Descriptive statistics of CCS were calculated by taking questionnaires from each corporation as the basis. In other words, for corporations from which more than one communications professional filled in the questionnaire, the average score was calculated and then this corporation was represented in the sample with this average and descriptive statistics were run accordingly. The results showed that the dimensions of corporate communication related to organization of corporate communication, core activities of corporate communication and strategic management of corporate communication received higher mean scores whereas dimensions that focus on communication and negotiation between different

communication departments, awareness and education on communication, and integration of corporate communication had lower mean scores. Table 4 summarizes the mean scores calculated for each dimension and the scale as a whole. As can be seen, integration of corporate communication had the lowest mean score.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for CCS

Dimension	Coefficient Alpha
Core Activities of Corporate Communication	.922
Strategic Management of Corporate Communication	.908
Communication and Negotiation between Different Communication Departments	.858
Integration of Corporate Communication	.802
Awareness and Education on Communication	.807
Organizing Corporate Communication	.730

Descriptive statistics for each dimension were also calculated. Results showed that with regard to the organization of corporate communication, the item that reflected standardization in terms of design; namely, format of messages, typology and how colors will be used had the highest mean score whereas the item that questioned the extent to which responsibilities and authorities of practitioners in communication departments were clearly defined had the lowest mean score in this dimension. The statistics of this sub-scale showed that “H1: Corporate communication is organized strategically to achieve consistency.” was partially confirmed. Descriptive statistics of the sub-scale showed that corporate communication was organized strategically; however, this attempt focused on design issues and revealed that there was still room for improvement in terms of organizing responsibilities and authorities of employees in communication departments. Table 5 shows the statistics for this dimension.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Organizing Corporate Communication

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
53	There are guidelines about the format of messages, typology and how colors will be used; a standardization is achieved in this respect.	4.38
52	Rules and regulations about communication exist in this corporation and they are in effect.	4.19
41	Responsibilities and authorities of employees in communication departments are clearly defined.	4.15

As to “H2. Core areas of corporate communication are managed strategically in large-scale organizations in Turkey”, descriptive statistics for core activities of

corporate communication showed that corporate image and identity received the highest mean scores. This finding overlaps with corporate communication theory as corporate image and identity were the most often emphasized core activities of corporate communication. Corporate vision and mission, brand values and media relations followed image and identity as core activities with high mean scores. Another interesting finding related to core activities was that some items received respectively low mean scores in a consistent way. To be more specific, three items that focused on the extent to which corporate employees internalize the corporate identity, philosophy and mission of the corporation had lower mean scores as compared to the items that question these issues in a more general way ($\bar{X} = 3.85$ vs.4.49, 3.71 vs. 4.17, 3.77vs. 4.22). Although, the items were eliminated from the scale during factor analysis, this difference indicated that practitioners were not satisfied with the degree to which corporate identity, philosophy and mission could get transferred to all employees and an awareness about them were created. Table 6 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the core activities of corporate communication.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics for Core Activities of Corporate Communication

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
6	Corporate image is an emphasized issue.	4.53
5	Corporate identity activities are given importance in this corporation.	4.49
10	Corporate vision is clear.	4.45
16	Media relations are carried out successfully.	4.45
9	Corporate mission is defined clearly.	4.42
25	Brand values of the corporation are defined clearly.	4.33
17	Investor relations are carried out successfully.	4.25
8	Corporate philosophy is defined clearly.	4.17
3	If your communication departments were asked to name the characteristics that differentiate your corporation from others, they would give overlapping answers.	4.15
22	Marketing activities are carried out successfully.	4.13
23	Management communication is carried out successfully.	4.1
15	Corporate advertising is carried out successfully.	4.08
18	Internal communication is carried out successfully.	4.06
26	These brand values are adopted by employees.	4.02
34	The corporation embodies the value it gives to its employees through activities it organizes for them.	4.00
13	Corporate employees try to achieve the objectives defined in the corporate vision.	3.94

As to the strategic management of corporate communication, the mean scores of the items in this dimension showed that the items that indicate strategic

management of corporate communication in a more general sense received higher mean scores as compared to the items that describe more specific strategic management tools (see Table 7). “H3. Corporate communication strategy is managed strategically” was also partially confirmed as some specific suggestions in theory received lower mean scores in practice. Another finding was that common starting points that all communication departments should take as the basis when planning a communication activity were defined in the organizations, but during this process not all communication departments were active participants. One final point to be mentioned here is that the use of systems such as decision support systems, management information systems or strategic information systems, which is highly recommended in literature, received the lowest mean score from the practitioners.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Management of Corporate Communication

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
1	Corporate communication strategy is developed in accordance with corporate strategy.	4.64
68	Corporate communication reports to top management.	4.54
14	Strategic planning is carried out in this corporation.	4.33
30	Qualified and competent people work in communication departments.	4.27
2	All communication departments act in line with common goals.	4.23
66	The management of this corporation has adopted a transparent and clear approach.	4.16
55	Common starting points (e.g. emphasizing innovation), which all communication departments should take as the basis when starting a communication activity, have been defined beforehand in the frame of corporate communication strategy.	4.13
42	Communication is carried out by balancing the requirements of internal communication (stability, guides and regulations that aim to strengthen corporate identity) and external communication (image activities that need to be shaped according to the expectations of external stakeholders and the need for flexibility).	4.06
48	Communication problems are solved by taking feedback into consideration and generating solutions.	4.06
56	These common starting points are determined with the participation of all communication departments.	3.9
65	In this corporation, systems such as decision support systems, management information systems or strategic information systems are used actively.	3.52

“H4. A working environment that enhances cooperation and coordination is created in these organizations” was disconfirmed since the mean scores of the items in the dimension measuring communication and negotiation between different communication departments were found to be respectively low as can be seen in

Table 8. Considering corporate objectives and interests as superior to departmental objectives and interests had the highest mean score. This is an important issue as this approach is one of the keys to avoid turf wars between departments and to guarantee that communication departments will carry out activities consistent with each other. Informing other communication departments about projects received the second highest mean score. An interesting finding related to this dimension was that communication departments were not located close to each other very often as indicated by the low mean score it had. This finding contrasts with corporate communication theory as making it possible for communication practitioners to have chances for face to face communication is suggested as a valuable practice to enhance cooperation and coordination.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics for Communication and Negotiation between Different Communication Departments

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
40	The employees who work in the communication departments care more about the corporate objectives and interests rather than departmental objectives and interests.	4.33
49	Information about who is responsible for which project is clear among communication departments.	4.16
33	Specialists who work in different communication departments have the chance to engage in face to face communication with each other during the day.	4.1
51	Employees in communication departments have a clear idea of who they should get into contact with and about what.	4.1
43	Contradictions between the expectations of different communication departments are eliminated by communication and negotiation.	4.02
50	Employees in communication departments know the priorities of other communication departments.	3.8
46	Communication departments are located close to each other.	3.59

“H5. An awareness on the importance of corporate communication activities is created in the employees” was not supported as awareness and education on corporate communication was another area which was not evaluated very positively. It is clear that although awareness about representing the corporate brand in the best possible way and the potential effects of one’s communication activities are reported to be respectively high, items that focus on the extent to which managers and

employees who do not work in communication departments are knowledgeable about communication had a low mean score. This is not a surprising finding considering the fact that the items that question in-service trainings for employees in communication and other departments were among the items that received the lowest mean scores in this dimension. Table 9 manifests the descriptive statistics for awareness and education on corporate communication.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Awareness and Education on Corporate Communication

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
32	Corporate employees are sensitive about representing the corporate brand in the best light.	4.04
39		3.81
35	All employees who interact with target audiences are aware of the potential effects of their communicative activities on the corporation.	3.69
62	The managers who do not work in communication departments are also knowledgeable about communication.	3.50
36	In-service trainings are carried out continuously for employees in communication departments.	3.39
38	The employees who do not work in communication departments are also knowledgeable about communication.	3.19
	Communication departments provide communication trainings for employees.	

The dimension with the lowest mean scores was the integration of communication. This finding disconfirmed “H6. Corporate communication is integrated in these organizations.” The items focusing on the flow of information between different communication departments, namely, informing each other about activities and projects, received respectively higher mean scores as compared to the ones questioning the existence of a coordination committee. The suggestion that all communication departments should be represented in this committee had an even lower mean score. The lowest mean score in this dimension was calculated for job rotation in this dimension. It appeared that job rotation was not carried out in these corporations.

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics for Integration of Communication

Item No.	Item	\bar{X}
28		
	A communication activity is guided by the related department, but the other communication departments are informed about this activity.	4.08
24	Activities carried out by different communication departments are consistent with each other.	3.98
47		
	Employees in communication departments are informed about which projects employees in other communication departments are working on.	3.86
59		3.29
	There is a coordination committee that aims to organize corporate communication.	3.08
60		
	All communication departments are represented in this coordination committee.	3.08
61		
	Job rotation is carried out among communication departments.	2.96

3. Discussion

The current investigation focused on developing a corporate communication scale to measure corporate communication practices of large-scale organizations in Turkey. To be more specific, this study attempted to find out whether corporate communication is organized strategically, the core areas of corporate communication are managed strategically, the corporate communication strategy is managed strategically, a working environment that enhances cooperation and coordination is created, an awareness on the importance of corporate communication activities is created in the employees and whether corporate communication is integrated in large-scale organizations in Turkey.

The results gathered from the research partially confirmed and disconfirmed the hypotheses of the study that were developed on the basis of the conceptualization efforts of academicians. The results of the research showed that the six dimensions suggested theoretically prove to be important factors in explaining variance in corporate communication. This does not mean that corporate communication is a concept that is made up of only those six dimensions. In other studies, other dimensions could be explored. However, the results of this study revealed that organizing, core activities, and strategic management of corporate communication, communication and negotiation between different communication departments, awareness and education on communication and integration of corporate

communication are among the dimensions of corporate communication.

The fact that organizing corporate communication was the dimension with the highest mean score was not surprising as corporate communication efforts started with a focus on design in 1930s with the aim of creating a positive and consistent corporate image. It is no surprise that, since then, design issues have already been settled in many organizations. In addition, organizing corporate communication in terms of design could be considered as more feasible as design is easier to agree on and apply as compared to other dimensions.

Another finding that confirms corporate communication theory is that image and identity were among the core activities that had the highest mean scores. Mission and vision, which indicate the bond between strategic management and corporate communication, followed image and identity in this respect. However, the results also showed that practitioners were not satisfied with the extent to which corporate identity, philosophy and mission could get transferred to all employees and an awareness about them were created. This finding suggests that action should be taken in these corporations in this respect as employees have a high potential of contributing to or impairing corporate identity, philosophy and mission and achieving the desired image and vision.

As to the strategic management of corporate communication, two issues raised. One pointed to the fact that common starting points that different communication departments should take as a basis when planning communication activities were defined in many corporations but the degree to which all communication departments were included in this process was evaluated as low. It should be noted that all communication departments should be included in this decision-making process so that the common starting points would reflect the best strategic interests of the corporation and all departments would internalize them. If all departments contribute to the common starting points, the ones defined at the end of the process might possibly be 'real common points'. Another point to be mentioned is that the use of information technology systems such as decision support systems, management information systems and strategic information systems had very low mean scores. In today's chaotic world of rapid change, these systems have the potential of meeting the practitioners' needs. Therefore, corporations might include them in their operational systems.

With regards to communication and negotiation between different communication departments, informing each other was found to be the practice with

the highest mean score. This appears to be questionable as just informing each other does not indicate that different departments appreciate and support each other and serve the interests of the organization in a consistent way. This dimension had low mean scores which indicate a need for improvement.

Awareness and education on communication was also found to be an area for improvement. In the current sample, in-service trainings for practitioners in communication departments were not evaluated with high mean scores and the scores related to the knowledge of managers and employees in other departments were even lower. As each communicative activity of every employee is a part of corporate behavior and communication, it is highly important that corporations support their employees in this respect.

The dimension with the lowest mean scores focused on integration of communication. The results showed that Van Riel's coordination committee model was not used in the current sample. This is not surprising as this is a specific model and it is possible that corporations have devised other integration models specific to themselves. Items that focused on informing each other had respectively high mean scores assuring that informing each other is a common practice once again. Another interesting finding was that job rotation was the item with the lowest mean score among all items in the scale. One possible reason is that specialization has been given importance for years in the corporate life. Every practitioner specializes in one area and is expected to master all skills related to that area. This point of view has many justifications. However, it cannot be denied that job rotation is a practice which can create awareness and empathy in practitioners for their colleagues in other departments. They can appreciate the importance and difficulties of each other's work and develop a more holistic and cooperative approach if involved in other departments' activities.

One important suggestion for all companies would be a thorough examination of these dimensions, namely, organizing corporate communication, core activities of corporate communication, strategic management of corporate communication, communication and negotiation between different communication departments, awareness and education on communication, and coordination of corporate communication. In this study, data was gathered from the largest and most reputable companies of Turkey and these dimensions acted as factors that would affect corporate communications. Therefore, it would be advantageous for companies that would like to enhance their corporate communication efforts to review dimensions of CCS presented here and adapt their approach for more

successful results.

Another important finding of the investigation was that it is possible to measure corporate communication quantitatively. The scale and all its dimensions or sub-scales proved to be reliable in measuring corporate communication. Development of this scale was important to make it more feasible for academicians to conduct studies that focus on corporate communication practices as this is an area where there is not much data. CCS can be used and tested with different samples and in different research designs in the future. Factors are sample specific and thus, different studies with different samples can contribute to our understanding of corporate communication and its dimensions.

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APPENDIX

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Corporate communication strategy is developed in accordance with corporate strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
2. All communication departments act in line with common goals.	1	2	3	4	5
3. If your communication departments were asked to name the characteristics that differentiate your corporation from others, they would give overlapping answers.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Corporate employees would also give similar answers to this question.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Corporate identity activities are given importance in this corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Corporate image is an emphasized issue.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Corporate reputation activities are carried out as planned.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Corporate philosophy is defined clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Corporate mission is defined clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Corporate vision is clear.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Corporate philosophy is internalized by corporate employees.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Corporate mission is adopted by corporate employees.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Corporate employees try to achieve the objectives defined in the corporate vision.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Strategic planning is carried out in this corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Corporate advertising is carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Media relations are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Investor relations are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Internal communication is carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Government affairs are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Public affairs are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Crisis management activities are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Marketing activities are carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Management communication is carried out successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Activities carried out by different communication departments are consistent with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Brand values of the corporation are defined clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
26. These brand values are adopted by employees.	1	2	3	4	5

27. A culture of communication and negotiation, not turf wars over power and budget, prevails in this corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
28. A communication activity is guided by the related department, but the other communication departments are informed about this activity.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Importance is given to stakeholder analysis in this corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Qualified and competent people work in communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
31. This corporation has developed a coordination model for itself.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Corporate employees are sensitive about representing the corporate brand in the best light.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Specialists who work in different communication departments have the chance to engage in face to face communication with each other during the day.	1	2	3	4	5
34. The corporation embodies the value it gives to its employees through activities it organizes for them.	1	2	3	4	5
35. The managers who do not work in communication departments are also knowledgeable about communication.	1	2	3	4	5
36. The employees who do not work in communication departments are also knowledgeable about communication.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Communication departments provide communication trainings for managers.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Communication departments provide communication trainings for employees.	1	2	3	4	5
39. All employees who interact with target audiences are aware of the potential effects of their communicative activities on the corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
40. The employees who work in the communication departments care more about the corporate objectives and interests rather than the departmental objectives and interests.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Responsibilities and authorities of employees in communication departments are clearly defined.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Communication is carried out by balancing the requirements of internal communication (stability, guides and regulations that aim to strengthen corporate identity) and external communication (image activities that need to be shaped according to the expectations of external stakeholders and the need for flexibility).	1	2	3	4	5
43. Contradictions between the expectations of different communication departments are eliminated by communication and negotiation.	1	2	3	4	5
44. Managers of different communication departments can come together for projects or teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5
45. Employees of different communication departments can come together for projects or teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5
46. Communication departments are located close to each other.	1	2	3	4	5
47. Employees in communication departments are informed about on which projects employees in other communication departments are working on.	1	2	3	4	5

48. Communication problems are solved by taking feedback into consideration and generating solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
49. Information about who is responsible for which project is clear among communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
50. Employees in communication departments know the priorities of other communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Employees in communication departments have a clear idea of who they should get into contact with and about what.	1	2	3	4	5
52. Rules and regulations about communication exist in this corporation and they are in effect.	1	2	3	4	5
53. There are guidelines about the format of messages, typology and how colors will be used; a standardization is achieved in this respect.	1	2	3	4	5
54. Flowcharts, process maps and checklists that organize communication processes exist in this corporation and they are in effect.	1	2	3	4	5
55. Common starting points (e.g. emphasizing innovation), which all communication departments should take as the basis when starting a communication activity, have been defined beforehand in the frame of corporate communication strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
56. These common starting points are determined with the participation of all communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
57. All communication departments prepare their communication plans in a way that they will be consistent with these common starting points.	1	2	3	4	5
58. There is a mechanism that checks whether the plans and activities of communication departments are consistent with the corporate communication strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
59. There is a coordination committee that aims to organize corporate communication.	1	2	3	4	5
60. All communication departments are represented in this coordination committee.	1	2	3	4	5
61. Job rotation is carried out among communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
62. In-service trainings are carried out continuously for employees in communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
63. There is a database in which communication activities are pooled together.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Employees who work in different communication departments can access information about the communication or research activities that are and were carried out by other communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
65. In this corporation, systems such as decision support systems, management information systems or strategic information systems are used actively.	1	2	3	4	5

66. The management of this corporation has adopted a transparent and clear approach.	1	2	3	4	5
67. Employees in communication departments are aware of the activities, difficulties, requirements and usefulness of other communication departments.	1	2	3	4	5
68. Corporate communication director reports to top management.	1	2	3	4	5