



## **An assessment of corporate digital communication in enhancing organization performance: A case study of COSTECH headquarters, Dar ES Salaam**

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### **Abstract**

This study sought to assess the digital corporate communication of an organization in enhancing organization performance with specific focus on COSTECH. The study was carried out in Kijitonyama wards, Kinondoni District in Dar es Salaam where the HQ of COSTECH resides. The whole study was guided by three key research questions namely (i) what are the digital corporate communications established at COSTECH? (ii) What is the extent to which COSTECH uses digital communication channel established at COSTECH? (iii) What is the impact of digital corporate communication in the provision service at COSTECH?

A mixed research design/approach was employed with both randomly and purposively sampling technique. A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 32 questionnaires were filled in and returned making a 64% as the unit of the analysis from the entire population size of the study. Both structured and semi - structured questionnaire were used. The researcher made some in-depth interviews five (5) Directorates, four (4) Units and COSTECH's staff from the list of 32 who filled in the questionnaires. The observation method was also employed.

The overall findings revealed that there is strong relationship between impact of digital communication practices, demographics trends and shifting behavior of online consumer of services rendered at COSTECH. In a nutshell, the study concluded that the findings had useful to speed up decisions making process on the digitization of all communication system available at government institutions. This study recommends that a further study should conduct a comparative study on other organizations or government corporate communication practices to study the impact of new emerging technologies and implications for their daily life and normal working routine.

**Keywords:** Digital, corporate communication, and organizational performance

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### **1. Introduction**

In order to address economic slowdowns and recover from World violence II and the balance of payments challenge, government changed its national policy of science and technology in 1990. The revision was affected by the Oil problem, the interstate violence at the Kagera Border, the collapse of the East African Community, and other events. Tanzania implemented international free-market policies, such as the program for structural adjustment program (SAP), to increase investment and increase access to social programs and services. The National Industrial Strategy (NIS) was launched as well to close the industrial gap. The goal of the 1996-adopted Sustainable Industrial Development Policy (SIDP) is to achieve a semi-industrialized, self-sufficient economy by 2025. The policy of NSTP (R.E. 2014).

Act No. 51, commonly referred to as "UTAFITI," established the National Scientific Research Council in 1968–1972; that was replaced by Act No. 7 of 1986 by the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), the government's principal advisor. COSTECH's duties include coordinating research activities, developing new technologies, and disseminating research findings to the public and policymakers to support evidence-based decision-making (COSTECH S.P 2021).

Act No. 7 was amended by the government in July 2022 to be in line to innovation overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST). COSTECH is now in charge of amending laws and regulations and Science and Technology policy revised 2014 E.D.

### **Historical Background of Digital Communication and Experiences based on Tanzania experiences.**

Tanzania's Public Relations and Corporate Communication practices began in the colonial era, dominated by monoparty system and government-owned media after the introduction of new political ideology replaced the colonial regime during the independence 1961's media reporting based on national unity and peace, influencing diverse audiences. (Machumu, 2023) <sup>[15]</sup>. In 2003, the former president the late, Benjamin W. Mkapa promoted seminar on improving public communication policies and enhancing media relations to promote transparency, In 2013, Tanzania's former 4<sup>th</sup> President, Hon. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete emphasized the usage of PR professionals in public offices and establishment of professional organs such as PRST, TAGCO, and other 5 PR associations registered and overseen by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Tanzania was the first country pioneered the switch-off analogy (ASO) in East Africa, despite of existing ICT infrastructure like geographical terrestrial broadcast were only coverage by 24% compared to others Africa's early adopters country, Mason & Schumann (2012) In Tanzania the industry began 1990s up to 2000s early with an emergence of internet services accessibility from 1999 up to 2011 promoted the smart mobile phone technology and ICT infrastructure investments, more than 32 online million users attracted and telecommunication industry increased a competition on internet bundle packaging, Tanzania's citizens have embraced digital communication practices since social media as the only way to facilitate easily communication between citizens and decision-makers as witnessed from 2010 elections.

Since Public Relations and digital corporate communication its new field, scholar like Mazigo validated the role played and professionalism practices when he employed Public relation techniques and skills to regain the public trust on reporting government strategic projects where Geita town - GTC used as a case study, Mazigo (2021). Furthermore, Machumu (2023) <sup>[15]</sup> acknowledged the role played by digital corporate communication on brand equity and increasing organizational performance. Tanzania promoted good governance and transparency to afford rapidly changing global market, and cost-efficiently through corporate digital communication as it witnessed on the National Population and Housing Census (2022); however, the practices in Tanzania impacted in three areas such as media convergence, coverage, and accessibility of internet services, and number of internet services providers has increased proportional to number of internet user from 29,071,817 up to 34,469,022 (15.7%) in the financial year FY 2022–23.

East Africa Digital Practices Experiences, Nyabera & Lando (2022) <sup>[19]</sup>. The public relations practice and social media utilization at a few Kenyan private universities. Internet use helped the PR department give better services. The study also showed how social media improved knowledge quality, made it simple for the public to interact with the corporation, brought up public awareness of both the organization's

operations and achievements, increased information accessibility, and bolstered the organization's capacity to advocate for public support of its positions. As a result, companies stand to gain by fully using social media platforms to increase their PR initiatives. As a result, parties must have open channels of communication and understanding. Media alters people with the content they interact with. Investigated digital business communication. For Marshall McLuhan (1980), Maura and Kissy (2019).

### **2. Literature Review**

corporate communication in the digital age from the reflection of Tanzania's media landscape and diffusion of innovation techniques and skills that are employed by contemporary government Corporate Communicators about promoting advancements of Science, Technology and Innovation in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar. Nylon and Holmström (2014). Grover & Kohli *et al.* (2012) discussed the rise of companies striving to achieve their business objectives in the digital era and challenged evaluating the value generated by digital technology investments. Lee & Berente, (2012) in the 1990s, ICT applications streamlined internal operations while providing opportunities for process innovation Moreover, Yoo, Boland, Lyytinen, & Majchrzak, (2012) DT The impact of digital transformation extends beyond internal dimensions, influencing firms' product and service offerings and playing a pivotal role in the radical restructuring of various industries. Evans, Hagi, & Schmalensee, (2006) proposed a framework to support and monitor businesses' digital innovation efforts, recognizing the unique characteristics of digital technology that enable quick and challenging processes. Henfridsson (2014) Yoo, 2012, Yoo, (2010). Firms need dynamic tools to support them in managing their digital innovation efforts. Framework identifies five key areas to be measured and evaluated in seeking to manage digital product and service innovation:

### **3. Methodology**

The study applied a mixed research design/approach was employed with both randomly and purposively sampling technique. A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 32 questionnaires were filled in and returned making a 64% as the unit of the analysis from the entire population size of the study. Both structured and semi-structured questionnaire were used. The study used took a case study research design were the researcher took an in-depth observation on the impact of established digital channels from all digital platform of the commission, researcher made some in-depth interviews five (5) Directorates, four (4) Units and COSTECH's staff from the list of 32 who filled in the questionnaires. The observation method was also employed.

### **4. Findings and Discussion**

#### **Digital Corporate Communication Established at COSTECH**

Evans, Hagi, and Schmalensee (2006); Henfridsson (2014) Boland, Lyytinen, Majchrzak, and Yoo (2012). Businesses' product and service offerings are impacted by digital transformation, which also changes industries. A framework that acknowledges distinctive technological features helps companies with their digital innovation initiatives. For monitoring and assessing digital innovation in products and

services, a framework establishes five essential categories. With 96.8% of stakeholders in agreement, findings demonstrate the extent to which COSTECH's digital communication programs engaged stakeholders. Websites, WhatsApp groups, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms are examples of successful attempts. Regular interaction and satisfaction (31.3%) with the clear, helpful, readily available info is expressed by the respondents. Employees at COSTECH favor using several digital platforms for receiving news and updates. Nonetheless, the findings show that COSTECH is dedicated to innovation, keeping up with advances in digital technology, funding research projects and overseeing them to ensure consistency.

#### **4.1 The extent to which COSTECH uses digital communication channel established at COSTECH**

Respondents expressed satisfaction with the digital communications team's initiatives to disseminate STI knowledge, which helps to solve the study's question concerning measuring the rate of message consumption and dissemination effort. The survey shows 90.62% of COSTECH's active audiences are unaware of their digital message usage, despite 6.25% finding it useful because of its informative, consistent, and accessible nature. COSTECH effectively engages stakeholders through various digital channels, with 96.8% of them in agreement, including virtual video sites, audio sites, meetings, conferences, and exhibitions. According to the report, COSTECH improves audience comprehension across a range of digital channels, including websites, email, and virtual video, social media, exhibitions, and public relations strategies. The organization uses techniques like interactive websites, social media presence, online consultations, email newsletters, platforms for cooperation, and open.

#### **4.2. The impacts of digital corporate communication in the provision of services at COSTECH**

The impact of digital corporate communication on COSTECH's services is examined in this study. It concludes that using strategies like email, virtual video, social media, exhibitions, PR campaigns, and website usage increases audience understanding and satisfaction. Customer behavior is influenced by digital media; in the poll, all respondents (100%) expressed satisfaction with COSTECH's efforts to consume and distribute its messaging. Consumers appreciated this tool's proactive approach to involve stakeholders and providing effective avenues of communication. The study looks at the methods and competences used by the COSTECH corporate communication teams to guarantee that a particular audience is divided into groups based on their demands. The study finds that when communicating STI information, COSTECH's internal stakeholders value plain language. Of those surveyed, 31.3% stated.

### **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the evidence gained for this study, it is possible to draw the following conclusions: the theory of diffusion of innovation (DIO), which is being presented here from the case study above, will assist private and public entities in enhancing their services and disseminating information about one specific organization to expedite decision-making

regarding the digitization of all communication systems available to government entities. As instructed by COSTECH Act No. 7 of 1986, this aids in the adoption phase including the transformative journey of science, technology, and innovation advancement while supporting the establishment of a national digital communications system for the future generation under Sect. 5 (2) paragraph.

#### **5.1. Recommendation for Further study;**

The results recommend that a further study should conduct a comparative study on other organizations or government corporate communication practices to study the impact of new emerging technologies and implications for their daily life and normal working routine. This might assess the benefits of effectiveness and efficiency of utilization of STI information versus strategies employed to executives digital long-term and short-term planning for communication.

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