

TO CONNECT OR NOT TO CONNECT:  
EXPLORING COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS'  
PERCEPTIONS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL  
ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

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A large proportion of the studies on social media (SM) used by organisations, address how organisations use SM for external communication (e.g., for marketing purposes) to gain the attention and communication with external audiences. Compared with such studies, there are relatively few that address the use of SM for internal communication (IC).

The research reported in this thesis applied a general inductive approach to explore how communication professionals (i.e., communication practitioners and communication consultants) treat using SM for IC. To explore their attitudes toward using SM for IC and the experience upon which these are founded, I designed an online survey and recruited 40 professionals from a range of different organisations. The data gathered was coded according to whether it referred to strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) or threats (T), and then a theme frequency analysis was undertaken to discover the most prominent attitudes about using SM for IC. Data on personal and organisational factors were examined to establish if any of these factors appeared to be linked to the range of participant attitudes. The findings from the practitioners were then compared with those from consultants to identify the differences and similarities between the two groups.

The study produced five initial findings. Firstly, this study identified three key strengths, one fundamental weakness, three key opportunities, and five critical threats of using SM for IC. Secondly, most practitioners and consultants believed SM would play an essential role in the long term, and most of the participants in both groups thought positively about the benefits of building SM into the intranet (i.e., saw SM as having many strengths that could be harnessed for IC). Thirdly, most practitioners accepted there was value in applying SM to IC but did not advocate relying on using it. Fourthly, the age, gender, and personal connectivity were three factors that affected both practitioners and consultants' attitudes toward the proposition of using SM for IC. Lastly, the experience and the scale of the organisation were two factors that were

detected as affecting practitioners' attitudes.

This research used SWOT analysis and theme frequency analysis to identify the benefits and shortcomings of SM for IC from the perspective of communication professionals. In doing so, it contributes to the relatively scant literature on the use of SM for IC. While the findings align with existing general theories of SM's use, they provide some new insights that apply specifically to IC. The research is the first to compare the attitudes towards using SM for IC of communication practitioners with those of communication consultants, identifying the similarities and differences as well as exploring the factors that appeared to affect their attitudes/ or choices. The findings of this study fill a gap in the current literature on the use of SM within organisations and have practical implications for organisations contemplating incorporating SM in the IC.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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### **1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

Social media (SM) such as Facebook, Twitter, Snap Chat, and Instagram have introduced new ways for people to communicate. Most companies have applied one or more SM platforms to organisational communication (Bughin & Chui, 2010; Zheng, 2015) but mainly it is used for external communication. External SM applications have drawn a lot of research attention. Scholars suggest that the new SM technology has an enormous impact on the organisations due to its unique features (Grudin, 2006; McAfee, 2006; Steinhuser, Smolnik, & Hoppe, 2011). This means it is essential to know about SM and identify the positive impacts as well as avoid having negative impacts on the organisation.

The fact that there are many potential positive and negative impacts has meant that, in recent years, there have been a lot of academic studies discussing the concept of SM and exploring the various features of SM. Researchers have discovered some prominent advantages and disadvantages by studying the external use of SM by commercial enterprises with the result those companies are aware that a well-planned corporate communication strategy that includes SM can generate a competitive advantage over other companies (Balmer & Gray, 2000). Lots of organisations use SM to attract potential customers, facilitate customer relationships, gain customer loyalty, and improve customer engagement (Michaelidou, Siamagka, & Christodoulides, 2011; Alharbie, 2015). Not only can organisations obtain a competitive advantage, but SM can also help them to increase their brand awareness (Bija & Balaş, 2014). However, there is a potentially significant problem with using SM externally - it can introduce the risk of safety issues such as the disclosure of classified information belonging to the company (Softwarenews, 2010; Hensel & Deis, 2010).

## 1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

It is easy to find many cases of how companies use SM to inform marketing strategies. However, the author's online literature review suggested there are only a few cases that address how companies use SM to improve internal communication (IC). IBM is one of the first companies to realise that SM would benefit their IC. IBM has employed many kinds of SM platforms to give their staff global internal communications, such as the Dogear, a famous social bookmarking service used in the company (Millen & Feinberg, 2006). Many researchers have produced case studies of IBM and concluded it has been beneficial to the company to apply SM to IC (DiMicco et al., 2008; Farrell, Kellogg, & Thomas, 2008; Farzan et al., 2008; Kolari et al., 2007; Geyer et al., 2008).

The case of IBM spearheaded the use of SM for IC and with research revealing SM use for IC in other companies. Most of this research involved case studies on a solitary organisation. Barely any of the studies compared different opinions proposed by people from these companies, with the result that there is a gap in the literature that urgently needs to be addressed. We do not have a comprehensive understanding of how SM can be applied to IC or the choices that need to be made to ensure this communication is well-managed and aligned with the company's operating objectives.

There are a lot of articles explaining the nature of SM and proposing that participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness, and multi-platform use are the characteristics of SM use (Mayfield, 2008; McAfee, 2009; Hong, 2013); identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups are the functions (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010); broadcast, dialogue, collaboration, knowledge, and sociability are the use-types (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017). However, none of these analyses clarified what the positive and negative sides of SM for IC use.

Many studies of internal communication management highlighted the importance of

communication efficiency and staff satisfaction. Lots of factors were considered beneficial to communication efficiency and staff satisfaction and can improve IC. For example, a less-hierarchical and less formal relationship in communication (Zhao & Rosson, 2009), an open communication climate (Muchinsky, 1977; Qu, 2012), and employee accepted communication media (Welch, 2012; Dreher, 2014). The existing literature presented many features (i.e., characteristics, functions, and use-types) of SM when it is being used for communication; it is significant to know whether those features improve IC.

Some benefits and disadvantages have been studied from the perspective of the independent theory. The findings from these studies considered that improving employee productivity (Qualman, 2012; Musso, 2016), increasing knowledge sharing (Ford & Mason, 2013; Kosonen & Kianto, 2009), improving staff engagement (Musso, 2016), and creating less hierarchical communication are the benefits of using SM for IC (Kelly, 2013; Kulakofsky, 2016); the difficulties associated with monitoring, identifying anonymous communicators, having directional communication, and hard for identifying valid information are the disadvantages (Bradley & McDonald, 2011; Hong, 2012; Dreher, 2014). None of these studies applied a SWOT (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis and integrated the various isolated theories, nor did they discuss these theories in conjunction with the SM's characteristics, functions, or use-types. This means a systematic SWOT analysis of using SM for IC and exploring the results' consistency with previous SM's theories could offer valuable new insights into using SM for IC. Moreover, no comparative studies have been conducted to discover what common factors may affect people's attitudes toward applying SM to IC. This research responds to these shortfalls in the literature by examining the perspectives on SM use in IC of communication professionals from different organisations using SWOT and theme frequency analyses.

Specifically, this study sought to understand IC professionals' thoughts about using SM for IC and discuss the findings in terms of the extant literature. It explored professionals' perceptions of the strengths and shortcomings of using SM for IC using a SWOT Analysis in

the hope that the findings of this analysis will contribute new insights to the literature and practice. It mainly focusses on the pros and cons of using SM for IC in an organisation, and how different professionals approach the application of SM to IC. Three research questions guided the study. These are:

RQ1: What are the benefits and shortcomings of using SM for IC?

RQ2: What are the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?

RQ3: What factors will affect the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?

This chapter will now preview this study. It reviews the literature on the different uses of SM in companies and introduces the fundamental concepts addressed in this study, namely SM and IC. Then, the rationale for the research is introduced, followed by the three research questions. Next, it gives a summary of each chapter.

### **1.3 THESIS OVERVIEW**

This main part of this thesis consists of eight chapters. This introductory chapter explains the key topic, introduces the existing literature, and finds the literature gap. This chapter incorporates a rationale for the research, building towards research questions. Finally, this chapter outlines the content of each chapter.

Chapter Two reviews the existing knowledge in relevant literature to confirm the current understanding of SM's use and the connection between the themes that the researcher intends to examine. It highlighted that there are many questions yet to answer regarding the utility and management of SM for IC.

Chapter Three describes how an online survey was designed, distributed and analysed. Open-ended questions solicited the professionals' perceptions of SM use for IC which were then subjected to a SWOT analysis. This chapter explains how a SWOT analysis and an

associated theme frequency analysis were applied in order to identify the similarities and differences of professionals' attitudes toward using SM for IC, to identify the factors (i.e., age, gender, the scale of organisation, etc.) that influence professionals' choices of applying SM to IC, and to find out the factors that affect their attitude towards the long-term role of SM.

Three groups of communication professional were identified. Those who were working in organisations as communication managers and had experience using SM for IC, those who also worked in organisations as communication managers but did not have experience using SM for IC, and communication professionals who worked as consultants in their own consultancy firms or for a communication consultancy firm. The organisation of the following findings chapters reflects this.

Chapter Four presents the result of the SWOT analysis that used the data from practitioners with experience of using SM for IC, and the findings of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are discussed in terms of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Then, it presents some factors that would affect practitioners' attitudes toward using SM for IC. Chapter Five does the same for practitioners without the experience of using SM for IC.

Chapter Six presents the findings from the comparison of experienced practitioners and inexperienced practitioners. It identifies the similar and different results of SWOT analysis and presents some similar and different attitudes toward using SM for IC.

Chapter Seven presents the findings of the SWOT analysis that used the data from consultants and discusses these findings with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Then, it presents some factors that would affect consultants' attitudes toward using SM for IC. At last, this chapter compares the findings of practitioners with the findings of consultants, identifies the similarities and differences.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis. It answers the three research questions proposed in

Section 1.2. It highlighted the literature gap and what contributions this research could bring to theory. It points out that this research contributes to theory in two kinds of literature about using SM internally: the benefits and shortcomings of it and the professionals' different attitudes toward it. Then, this chapter explains some implications for practice. It gives some suggestions for future research in the end.

#### **1.4 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE**

This chapter has explained the rationale for this study which investigates professionals' perceptions and experience of using SM for IC. It then reveals the gap in the literature revealed by the literature review and the three research questions that emerged from this literature review. It then briefly summaries each chapter.

The next chapter reviews the literature on the SM's definition, functions, characteristics, and use-types; the external and internal use of SM; the pros and cons of using SM externally and internally.



## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Managers' work is inseparable from communication. The rise of SM has introduced new ways for them to communicate with each other and their staff. Scholars suggest that this new SM technology has a large impact on the organisations by generating new communication tools that differ from traditional computer-mediated communication (CMC) such as email and the intranet (Grudin, 2006; McAfee, 2006; Steinhuser, Smolnik, & Hoppe, 2011). Regardless of whether the impacts are positive or negative influences evidence is showing that the number of companies adopting SM for corporate communication is increasing rapidly. An investigation by the global consulting firm McKinsey found that 65% of enterprises had applied Web 2.0 technologies in their organisation (Bughin & Chui, 2010). In 2012, only 35% of the hundred companies listed on the Financial Times-Stock Exchange 100 Index (FTSE100) and 61% of the hundred companies listed on the Standard and Poor's 100 Index (S and P100) had linked the company's website to SM accounts for the purpose of corporate communication (Zheng, 2015). By 2016, the proportion had increased dramatically with 72% of the hundred companies listed on the FTSE100 and 89% of the hundred companies listed on the S and P100 using SM to communicate with the outside world (Zheng, 2015).

This Chapter reviews the literature on SM use in business. First, it will define the concept of SM; and will show the importance of SM by introducing its characteristics and functions. Then it will examine what is known about SM use for internal communication (IC). Some cases will then be introduced to show how companies apply SM to IC and then discuss what is known about the advantages and disadvantages of doing this.

## **2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **2.2.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?**

There are many definitions of SM. Some scholars think SM are new CMC patterns (Cao, Vogel, Guo, Liu, & Gu, 2012; Gibbs, Rozaidi & Eisenberg, 2013), some treat SM as a unique communication platform generated from Web 2.0 technologies (Herring, 2004; Thackeray, Neiger, Hanson, & Mckenzie, 2008). There are three definitions that have been widely accepted. Mayfield (2008) proposes that SM are online media that have a vast space that users can easily access to create and disseminate information. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) regard SM as an interactive platform created by mobile communication technology and the internet technology that allows users to share, discuss, create, and modify the user-generated content together. In contrast, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) claim that SM are a series of web applications created by the technology and ideological foundation of web 2.0 that enable users to generate content and communicate with others.

These definitions of SM, while similar, make their distinctive points. Even so, these definitions, promote the view that the most critical function of SM is communication; it gives the world a brand-new communication tool. Based on these definitions, I derived a working definition of SM as a platform, based on the Web 2.0 technologies, that allows users to create and disseminate content and achieve free online communication.

### **2.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR COMMUNICATING**

The different characteristics and various functions of SM have an impact on people's daily life in many ways. An understanding of these characteristics and functions can help with using SM for management purpose. Mayfield (2008) had made a complete summary of the technical characteristics of SM. These five characteristics are participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectedness. However, as new kinds of SM applications and websites have

appeared, it has become clear that multi-platform should be treated as another characteristic of SM (Hong, 2013).

Participation means that SM can motivate any interested users to contribute their feedback actively and put forward their own views, shortening the distance between audience and source (Mayfield, 2008). Openness refers to the public services and platforms provided by SM that ensure all users are free to participate. It enables everyone to obtain relevant, consistent information with fewer communication barriers so that it can effectively avoid information asymmetry (Wagner, 2004). Information asymmetry is the leading cause of misrepresenting. Without information asymmetry, people can have a successful communication process more simply (Christozov, Chukova, & Mateev, 2009).

Conversation is the most distinctive feature of SM compared with traditional media. SM support a two-way sharing of information and ideas. Users are able to have two-way communication directly and without limitation (i.e., they can converse). Community in SM refers to how people with the same interests can quickly set up a small group that permits them to have a better and more in-depth communication about the content of common interest (McAfee, 2009).

Connectedness refers to the fact that the majority of SM can be linked together through a variety of media and resources (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger, & Shapiro, 2012). Treem and Leonardi (2012) defined connectedness as an association. This characteristic of SM helps to create the ties of person-to-content, person-to-person, and content-to-content. SM thus allows networks to develop. The facility that created the unrestricted networks led to the diversification of SM platforms. Numerous applications take advantage of this facility to offer different services that make them distinctive, and this has given people more places to share multiple content forms (Panahi, Watson, & Partridge, 2012). Thus, multi-platform becomes a new characteristic of SM.

### 2.2.3 FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR COMMUNICATING

SM have plenty of functions which can be categorised into seven blocks. These are identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups (Kietzmann et al., 2011). These functions provide a foundation for explaining how SM work. Kietzmann et al. (2011) propose that these functions have two sides; they can bring both benefits and risks to the individual or organisations.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) believed that any expression of SM could disclose the user's identity even though the user has not intentionally disclosed his or her personal information (e.g., gender, personality, and preferences). Furthermore, many people use their real names on some SM platforms because the nature of these SM requires them to set up personal profiles (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn). An individual's reputation allows others to identify their social status and, in most situations, this can influence the establishment of trust (Kietzmann et al., 2011). When the functions of reputation and trust are considered together, managers can work out what kind of strategy their company can use to portray their corporate image and conduct self-branding or self-promotion in order to build a reputation. However, if organisation have not managed these two functions properly, it may cause private or sensitive information disclosure (Fire, Goldschmidt, & Elovici. 2014), and this will have adverse effects on the organisation (Xu, Dinev, Smith, & Hart, 2011; Appari & Johnson, 2010).

With regard to the block of functions categorised as relationships, scholars mainly focus on how SM can help two or more total strangers to establish a relationship. The structure is a significant concept in social network theory (Borgatti & Foster, 2003; Granovetter, 1973), which can explain the feature of two different types of relationships - Strong tie and weak tie. If the SM user is in the centre of their relationship structure, this user will have the most significant influence on their networks and have stronger ties than those who are on the periphery of the network. The strength of ties can be presented by the structure; the strong ties are always "long-lasting, and affect-laden" (Krackhardt, 1992, p. 218), while weak ties are

always “infrequent and distant” (Hansen, 1999, p. 84). It is easy to think of the weak ties through knowing the relationship function of some SM platforms (e.g., Twitter and Facebook). People can learn about a stranger or know about their friends’ friends at a distance by following their SM accounts instead of being friends with them. They may not have much impact on each other's life. Weak ties allow people to get more extensive information inadvertently or occasionally, providing more new opportunities (Granovetter, 1973). This weak tie relationship with friends and friends of friends can enable users to develop their new interpersonal circle effectively even though they are not as influential as those with strong ties.

The conversation and sharing functions are the most interactive and vital functions of SM. Not only can people have the ability to converse with an infinite pool of fellow SM users, but the content they share via SM can also be rapidly shared with others in any way by a large number of users. (Lee & Ma, 2012; Panahi, Watson, & Partridge, 2012). Some researchers insisted that such diverse conversations on SM can be monitored and guided by knowing the form of conversation and the preferred form of different users (Pace, Buzzanca, & Fratocchi, 2016) and can be used for the organisation’s benefit. For instance, if managed well, an organisation can use this function to assist their crisis management work (Romenti, Murtarelli, & Valentini, 2014; Canhoto et al., 2015).

Presence refers to the accessibility of users. With SM, accessibility always relates to the user’s virtual location or physical address and whether they are willing to interact. For instance, users will record their status as “offline”, “online”, “hidden” or “busy” in the virtual world (Kietzmann et al., 2011). In addition, some SM platforms like Facebook have a function for users to check-in activity, and this will expose their location in the real world. For organisations, it is essential to know what kind of interaction their audiences’ preference. This is because only high levels of SM presence will have an impact on an organisation’s communication (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). With low levels of presence, information transferred will not be extensive or immediately.

The meaning of “groups” function is straightforward and easy to understand. The community of SM has provided people with a way to group other users. To find a specific contact more conveniently, people can label their contacts rather than look through a long contact list (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Moreover, this function allows users to set up a group to discuss a certain topic (e.g., project members can set up a group to discuss their common project). In addition, groups in SM are not just a series of labels or discussion groups.

The information available on the SM is overwhelming, so users need to have a method that allows them to filter invalid information and search for just the relevant information they need. Many researchers have found out users’ behaviour of “tagging” helps people to filter the content and categorise the information (Smith, 2008; Guy, Zwerdling, Ronen, Carmel, & Uziel, 2010). The presence of content groups separated by different tags can promote knowledge classification and knowledge sharing (Majchrzak, Faraj, Kane, & Azad, 2013), and this generates another function of SM, which is knowledge management (Wan, Zeng, & Hu, 2010). Individuals in an organisation can use the “group” or “hash-tags” in SM to classify internal knowledge. In doing so, they can effectively exploit potential tacit knowledge, best practices, and related experience. This significantly improves the transfer efficiency of tacit knowledge and enables deeper knowledge sharing (Parise, 2009; Lee & Ge, 2010; Ravenscroft, Schmidt, Cook, & Bradley, 2012).

#### 2.2.4 TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR COMMUNICATING

A search using “SM type” on the University of Canterbury’s multi-platform library search function and Google Scholar, revealed that most of the articles have studied how people use one or two SM platforms (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) in a particular field. However, only a few researchers have focused on the overall concept of SM across a wide range of SM platforms and divided these platforms into different types.

Individuals have differentially shaped networks in their real world and virtual worlds. Hong

and Nadler (2011) insist that the overall shape of people’s virtual network will guide users to build a relationship with others on SM in varying ways. In 2009, Porter claimed that users could build two kinds of relationships with another user via SM: symmetrical and asymmetrical. Kim and Lee (2016) then divided SM into symmetrical type (e.g., add each other as a friend on Facebook) and asymmetrical type (e.g., follow an account on Twitter without following back) and explored how the SM motivation relates to preferences for SM type. Their results showed that “relationship motivation was more likely to be associated with a preference for the symmetrical type, whereas information motivation with a preference for the asymmetrical” (Kim & Lee, 2016, p.676).

Schlagwein and Hu (2017) examined organisations and synthesised five use-types of SM based on the distinct purpose for which SM was used. These types of use are broadcast, dialogue, collaboration, knowledge management, and sociability. These five SM use-types play an essential role both in the external and internal context. The first column of Table 2.1 shows the five use-types of SM and their definitions. The second and the third column of Table 2.1 explain the internal and external use of each SM use-types.

**Table 2.1 Use-types of SM in the organisation\***

<i>SM’s use-type</i>	<i>Internal use (example)</i>	<i>External use (example)</i>
<i>Broadcast:</i> use SM to broadcast information unidirectionally.	Deliver messages from executive-level managers to all employees; distribute information that is informal but emergent.	Make a statement to the customer; promote newly launched or updated products.
<i>Dialogue:</i> use SM for multidirectional dialogue and communication.	SM allows staff in the different departments to communicate with each other without any barriers.	The organisation can start communicating with a customer; customer also can initiate a conversation with the organisation.
<i>Collaboration:</i> facilitate work and strengthen	SM provides an edit-friendly place for staff to co-create content; offers	SM enables collaboration between an organisation and its customers;

cooperation by facilitating communication.	staff a place with an encouraging atmosphere to generate new ideas together.	collect opinions from customers and solve problems with products.
<i>Knowledge</i> : use SM to store, maintain and retrieve knowledge.	Knowledge can be stored on SM without capacity limitation; any articles, posts, or blogs can be searched by keyword in the organisation's knowledge management system.	For example, Cisco created the DocWiki platform, which used wiki technology to let their customers and partners improve the documentation of Cisco by revising the content (Cisco, 2012).
<i>Sociability</i> : use SM to generate fellowship, loyalty and social relations between users.	Create a feeling of cohesiveness and fellowship among organisational members by using SM.	Enhance relationships with or between customers and consumers via SM.

\*Adapted from “How and why organisations use social media: Five use types and their relation to absorptive capacity,” by D. Schlagwein and M. Hu, 2017, *Journal of Information Technology*, 32(2), 199-202. (Copyright 2017 by the Springer Nature)

### 2.2.5 SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this section explains six characteristics (i.e., participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness, and multi-platform) of SM, seven functions (i.e., identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups), and five use-types (i.e., broadcast, dialogue, collaboration, knowledge, and sociability) of SM in terms of their contribution to communication. The next section lists some uses of SM across five different sectors, that are prominent in the academic literature.



## 2.3 USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

Very little research has directly compared how different industry sectors vary in their use of SM even though there are many articles on how are organisations in tourism, education, and medicine use SM. The researcher searched using the two key phrases “use social media in” and “using social media in” using the University of Canterbury library’s multi-search function in an attempt to find out some different or similar usage of SM across various sectors. The first fifty search results from searching the key phrase “use social media in” plus the first fifty search results of using the key phrase “using social media in” produced 15 journal articles about the use of SM in the health care area; 12 articles about using SM in the educational field; three articles are about how NGOs use SM; three articles about how governments use SM and another two articles are about the SM’s used in the tourism/recreation industry.

### 2.3.1 HEALTH CARE

SM allows users to collect useful information and experience from other people online. This function can be applied to hospitals. Doctors and nurses can collect experiences from patients and their negative comments about the quality of their health care and integrate such information from patients into their practices to help improve the quality of health care such as the clinic environment, efficiency of care, respect to patients, etc. (Greaves, Ramirez-Cano, Millett, Darzi, & Donaldson, 2013; O’Connor, 2017)

Using SM helps the medical sector to create a virtual community, which is beneficial to improving the knowledge sharing among professionals in various healthcare disciplines; externally, medical experts can share important domain knowledge to make it easier for the public audience to access medical knowledge (Rolls, Hansen, Jackson, & Elliott, 2016; Henry, 2017). Moreover, Wong et al. (2015) found that hospitals cannot only use SM for marketing purpose but also can use them as channels to conduct medical education and engage with communities.

Benetoli, Chen, Schaefer, Chaar, and Aslani (2017) investigated how pharmacists provide services to customers and interact with patients through SM. They revealed that even though some pharmacies have official accounts on SM, especially Facebook, they were not offering customised online services to people via SM and have a lack of online interaction (Benetoli et al., 2017). Even so, SM have a great value for a pharmacy. Ideally, though, a pharmacist could be trained to use online SM platforms for delivering convenient and interactive services to patients.

The researchers studied SM's use in health care area, emphasising that before a health care organisation decides to use SM to communication with customers and patients, or to collect their information, medical experts should be well-trained to know how to protect patients' privacy on SM; rules are needed for guiding medical experts to avoid ethical problems in the online environment (Brown, Ryan, & Harris, 2014; Benetoli et al., 2017).

### 2.3.2 EDUCATION

In the educational area, besides the marketing use, it is well-known that SM are often used in all levels of an educational institution to improve teaching and learning (Cilliers, Chinyamurindi, & Viljoen, 2017).

The millennials prefer to use emerging technology (e.g., internet and SM) to obtain knowledge (Bahner et al., 2012). Thus, teachers can build a Twitter account and distribute reading materials by setting up a hashtag under the name of materials; then their students can submit their summary within 140 characters with a hashtag; Simplicio (2015) believes that in this way students can be helped to improve their ability to read and summarise. Some researchers discovered the "information push technology" of SM allows educators to supplement the traditional education methods (Motiwalla, 2007); educators can deliver course content to students' mobile devices at a certain time by using this technology (Amudavi, 2009;

Bahner et al., 2012). SM have also been widely used in clinical education as well. Medical educators can share educational pictures through SM platforms; it is convenient for those working in a large hospital that has multiple work sites (Jackson, 2017).

Although many researchers encourage educational institutions to permit students to use SM in learning, the actual use of it was at a low level (Sobaih, Moustafa, Ghandforoush, & Khan, 2016). One investigation reported that many business schools have negative views on using SM for teaching. They insist that “face-to-face” learning is more efficient and has higher quality than the e-learning (Thomas & Thomas, 2012). Even if students have a strong intention to use SM in learning when they start using SM, some students cannot help but use it for entertainment purposes (Fourie, 2016; Balakrishnan, 2017); only to formulate detailed regulation about using SM in learning can alter this situation.

### 2.3.3 GOVERNMENT

Governments have noticed the potential of SM as a new channel to interact and engage with citizens and have adopted it to transform government operations (Kim, 2013; Lev-On & Steinfeld, 2015; Mergel & Bretschneider, 2013; Mossberger, Wu, & Crawford, 2013; Reddick & Norris, 2013). Charalabidis, Loukis, Androutsopoulou, Karkaletsis, and Triantafillou (2014) proposed an e-participation model which is called “passive crowdsourcing”, it enables government to collect citizens’ suggestions, opinions, comments and problems continuously published on numerous SM platforms; use it to find out what our citizens’ needs and to improve government service and policies.

However, there are some adverse commentaries on using SM in some particular government agencies. Police use SM to monitor users’ comments and collect sensitive information. Punch (2015) criticised this method for focusing on crime prevention and proposed doing so could have a political motivation. Even though this method can improve evidence-based policing (Neyroud, Ferreira, & Vera, 2015), the public’s response has focused on whether this method

will harm people (Police Foundation, 2014).

#### 2.3.4 NON - GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION (NGO)

To capture resources for further development, NGOs have to negotiate with stakeholders, concern about the needs of stakeholders and solicit opinions from other organisations (Balsler & McClusky 2005; Rupp, Kern, & Helmig, 2014). SM have offered NGO an interaction-friendly, low-cost, and low IT skill opportunity to promote themselves, build a virtual community and share information with the public and other stakeholders (Waters & Jamal, 2011; Lovejoy, Waters & Saxton, 2012; Waters & Lo, 2012; Guo & Saxton, 2014). Using SM in this way is beneficial to improve stakeholder and public engagement (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). Zhou and Pan (2016) even suggested that NGO can use the broadcast function of SM to enhance their legitimacy.

#### 2.3.5 TOURISM/RECREATION

Wood, Guerry, Silver & Lacayo (2013) declared that “The recent emergence of SM creates exciting alternative possibilities to assess how people use and respond to nature and other cues for recreation and tourism”. Tourists are keen on using SM to post travel photos or videos, commenting and evaluating their trips. They intend to contribute their experience about a trip and make this trip better for the next tourist (Dasgupta, Granger, & McGarry, 2002; Hsu & Lin, 2008; Wang, Yu, & Fesenmaier, 2002).

In the 21st century, researchers started to focus on the customers’ desire to have a long-term relationship rather than having a mutually beneficial exchange (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2000). In this regard, many scholars have explored the many benefits that clients and tourist firms gain from their long-term relationships (e.g., Marzo-Navarro, Pedraja-Iglesias, & Rivera-Torres, 2004; Vázquez-Carrasco & Foxall, 2006; Yen & Gwinner, 2003). By understanding the other tourists' preferred places in a trip, and the interesting events they posted

on SM platforms, more and more tour advisers are able to customise a better trip for their clients (Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño, & Díaz-Armas, 2011; Wang, Yu, & Fesenmaier, 2002).

### 2.3.6 SUMMARY

The literature that was reviewed in this section revealed the range of ways SM are used in the healthcare, educational, government, NGO, and tourism fields. It reveals a strong bias toward using SM for engaging with external stakeholders. The exception is educational organisations which increasingly are using SM to engage students who, once enrolled, become internal stakeholders. The next section explores the external and internal uses of SM across all organisations, explaining the advantages and disadvantages in each case.

## 2.4 USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORK

Some studies show that the relationships that are characterised by weak ties are relatively important for a person's work and career compared to relationships characterised by strong tie (Granovetter, 1973; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Levin & Cross, 2004). SM's tendency to rely on the creation of weak ties with their low cost and high efficiency of information transmission has gained much favour with managers across many types of organisation. For instance, the majority of organisations now use SM for at least some marketing purpose, especially for contacting their customers and potential customers to build a good reputation, to create a brand image and to do brand promotion. Customers cannot only engage with other consumers but also can communicate with the organisation directly and more productively through SM than traditional means of communication (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). However, scholars are now proposing that SM do not only allow organisations to communicate with the customers, partners, suppliers and other external stakeholders but also offer benefits for IC in relation to knowledge sharing (Ford & Mason, 2013) and trust building (Cheng, Fu, & de Vreede, 2016). The following sections review the literature describing first the external uses of SM and then

secondly the much less common internal uses of SM across all types of contemporary organisations. The next two sections explore the advantages and disadvantages of first external use and then the internal use of SM at work.

#### 2.4.1 APPLY SOCIAL MEDIA TO EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

In recent years, most of the organisation have taken advantage of the ability of SM to communicate with external stakeholders to improve their marketing strategy. Mass media was the major role of conducting external communication (EC) before SM (Hazleton, Harrison-Rexrode, & Kennan, 2007). Unfortunately, this does not allow two-way communication between senders and recipients (Kent & Taylor, 2002). However, SM allows such communication to become more dialogical and differentiated from traditional broadcast media (Argyris & Monu, 2015).

SM as a tool based on Web 2.0 technology and the internet is beneficial to building relationships (Bauer, Grether, & Leach, 2002; Sharma, 2002). Lots of organisations use SM to attract potential customer, facilitate customer relationships and improve customer engagement (Michaelidou, Siamagka, & Christodoulides, 2011; Alharbie, 2015). In addition, organisations noticed that they could increase their brand awareness by posting on SM platform and communicating with clients, and to obtain competitive advantage (Michaelidou, Siamagka, & Christodoulides, 2011; Bîja & Balaş, 2014).

Constantinides (2014) proposed two different ways of adopting SM to assist organizational marketing strategy: the passive approach (e.g., collect stakeholders' voice and market intelligence on SM) and the active approach (e.g., use SM as public relations and marketing channel, as a tool of engaging and cooperate with customer to customize products and improve creativity). Communication and interaction are required when a company starts to implement the active approach. Yang, Zheng, Zhao, and Gupta (2015) found out there are two different tactics that can help a company to build brand loyalty and improve brand awareness by

intensifying customer brand experience. The “content tactics (include content diversity, content accuracy, and content timeliness)” and “style tactics (include impression enhancement style and interactivity enhancement style)” have a different effect on customer brand experience; style tactics is more influential (Yang, Zheng, Zhao, & Gupta, 2015, p580).

#### 2.4.2 ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Organisations are keen on using SM to communicate with customers in recent years, and many scholars have figured out some benefits of doing it. Firstly, applying SM to IC can enhance customer engagement. Customer engagement is “a psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experience with a focal agent/object within specific service relationships” (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Ilic, 2011, p. 258). Customer engagement is related to customer relationship, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, but it is also beyond of them (Sashi, 2012). Clark and Melancon’s (2013) research results showed that organisations which employed SM have a higher quality of customer relationship than the others; this capability of SM also has a positive impact on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and building customer engagement indirectly (Sashi, 2012; Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013).

SM provides an innovative way for all stakeholders to interact. It is also beneficial to develop customer relationship and create a personalised experience (Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014). The personalised communication and experience allow the organisation to engage with the customer more directly (Romero & Molina, 2011), gain customer loyalty (Alharbie, 2015), and build a long-term relationship (Ozgen & Baron, 2007) with customers more efficiently. Reynolds (2009) pointed out that personal things about engagements in SM make SM become a more attractive channel. People love to interact with the person but not the company. Building personal relationships with the customer is helpful to increase competitive advantages (Floreddu & Cabiddu, 2016). The real-time interaction offered by SM is beneficial to sellers; they can connect to customer instantly, capture updated information from market and customer, and provide information to stakeholders, such interaction can better satisfy customers’ needs

(Tikkanen, Hietanen, Henttonen & Rokka, 2009).

Secondly, use SM in EC can assist an organisation to do the branding and raise brand awareness (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). Branding is beyond brand awareness; it also required the marketer to focus on brand equity and brand attitude. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) found out the relationships between these three aspects of using SM. When organisation using SM to communicate with customers, they will face two types of content on SM platform: firm-created content and user-created content. Most of the customers reckon that the information generated from other users has higher reliability (Pornpitakpan, 2004). Thus, compared to firm-created content, user-created content has a more significant influence on customer brand awareness; but firm-created content will affect customer brand attitude. Brand attitude has a significant impact on brand equity, and both of them can stimulate the purchase intentions of potential buyers (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). De Vries, Genslera and Leeflanga (2012) recognised that “fan pages” are a useful way to increase customer brand loyalty and organisation commitment.

Low-cost is one of an important advantage of SM (Softwarenews, 2010) and a reason for accepting using SM externally. SM offered company with a channel to gather updated one-hand information (e.g., customers comments, opinions, and ideas) at a minimum cost (Dellarocas, 2003). Public SM platforms are free for every user, it is cheaper than do television or newspaper advertising, and it is convenient for the organisation to reach the potential customer as a large number of people are using it (Kirtiş & Karahan, 2011). SM helps to seek higher value by spending the only marketing budget after the funds are cut, making it become an essential part of destination marketing organisation (DMO) (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013). SM as a low-cost marketing tool does not need expensive advertising cost and a significant amount of time; when using it correctly; it can bring back high returns on investment (ROI) (Arca, 2012).



### 2.4.3 DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

When using SM for marketing purpose, a marketer needs to collect extensive information from SM platform; it includes customers' personal information. The biggest disadvantage will be the privacy and safety issue (Hensel & Deis, 2010). SM's openness characteristic makes everyone have a chance to access other users' information; it is hard for an organisation to protect customers' information from misuse. A blogger named Softwarenews (2009) also mentioned this disadvantage; some non-anonymous SM platform have the risk of disclosing personal information, and it may cause scams or harassment. In addition, the fast propagation speed of messages on SM threaten the company's reputation. If there is single negative information about an organisation, every user has the possibility to access it and can easily spread it to numerous people around the world (Argenti & Barnes, 2009).

Using SM to communicate with external audiences needs the organisation to post content on the platforms, "post barriers" attracted many scholars to study in it. It has two main obstacles, "post content" and "post frequency", that may threaten marketing strategies, but may also help the customer relationship development (Steijn & Schouten, 2013). Hensel and Deis (2010) believed that what you post affects the benefits or harm it brings to you. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) found out that consumer attitudes toward brands will be seized with post content; thus, the content posted by the organisation should aim to increase brand awareness and brand attitudes. Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016) tested the connection between a number of interactions and organisation's reputation and revealed frequent interaction would improve customer relations and increase brand awareness. Hensel and Deis (2010) also indicated that if an organisation rarely uses SM or even stopped using SM, they will gradually lose the advantages of using SM in EC. Therefore, a company should use SM and post content to the public more frequently in order to maintain customer engagement and brand awareness.

#### 2.4.4 APPLY SOCIAL MEDIA TO INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Although few journal articles have talked about how to apply SM to IC, some organisations have already done some practices. The emergence and the fast-paced spread of the internet have changed people's work style at the end of the twentieth century. Nowadays, with the development of instant message (IM) and SM, work mode and the communication mode in the workplace have made another progress. Using IM technology or the SM platform, journalists in remote areas can send new information and images to their editors online; doctors from different countries can share medical technology through the internet; people can have distance learning by entering a virtual room online (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004).

IBM is one of the first companies that realised that SM would benefit their IC. IBM has employed many kinds of SM platform for communication purpose and created their own SM for their employees around the world to communicate and get information. Lots of researchers examined the application of various SM platform in organisation using IBM as a case study and found out some advantages of applying SM to communication (DiMicco et al., 2008; Farrell, Kellogg, & Thomas, 2008; Farzan et al., 2008; Kolari et al., 2007; Geyer et al., 2008). Employees at IBM can set up an interest group and add colleagues who have common interests. For instance, they have an application called Dogear; Dogear allows employees to post a blog on it and employee can even tag others or share an interesting blog to others (Thom-Santelli, Muller, & Millen, 2008; Millen & Feinberg, 2006). Employees started posting suggestions for their company on the intranet. Some other companies also followed the trend. Cisco has put SM into their intranet as well. They developed an application called Show and Share; it is their own YouTube (Gillis, 2011). Every employee can video staff training or meetings and post on this application for those absent people to look at.

Some organisations in the educational field such as the libraries also adopt SM tools to innovate a new reference desk for staff communication and knowledge management. Rodriguez (2010) defined that "the reference desk is an academic library's face-to-face portal

for knowledge sharing and information dissemination.” (p. 112). Many libraries choose SM tools such as blogs to enhance knowledge sharing and to have better use of each staff’s expertise (Rodriguez, 2010). Farkas (2007) said, “If the reference desk staff shared the resources they use to help patrons with certain assignments, it would be like having your colleagues beside you whenever you answer a question.” (p. 30). He claimed that taking advantages of SM tools cannot only help libraries meet those goals but more.

Verheyden and Goeman (2013) revealed that large companies and small companies have different choices in terms of adopting SM. They believed that large companies are more likely to employ SM in IC than small companies. Young and Hinesly (2014) considered that large organisations might use different SM platforms from small organisations. Small companies are more inclined to use publicly available SM applications like Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn to improve IC; most large companies, with capital and technological support, prefer creating their own corporate SM system or SM platform for IC to protect their companies’ confidential documents and to maintain property security (Young & Hinesly, 2014). When an organisation decided to use SM for a better IC, they need to create a policy or principles about how to use it. Large companies will have a number of people active on SM because of a large number of employees. Research shows that there are 55% large companies have the SM policies to take advantages of SM (Carim & Warwick, 2013).

#### 2.4.5 ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Whether in large companies or small companies, use SM in IC will have some shared benefits. First of all, it can improve work efficiency. Most SM platforms provide Cloud Storage Service when people want to store or transmit a document; it will make these jobs much more comfortable than using traditional media (Qualman, 2012). In addition, the internet can almost store unlimited information. Moreover, SM enables people to spend less time searching for useful information; it can improve access and speed of information’s delivery (Holtz, 2007). Hence, it saves a lot of time for them to do other jobs (Musso, 2016).

Secondly, SM can increase knowledge sharing (Ford & Mason, 2013; Kosonen & Kianto, 2009) and improve information quality (Treem & Leonardi, 2012) because of its openness. Community - one of SM's characteristics, and groups - one of SM's functions, can enhance cross-distance and cross-domain communication effectively, especially in large corporations (Bradley & McDonald, 2011). Because employees in an organisation are dispersed in different departments or even regions, the two-way communication in traditional media is not efficient. It makes the staff's knowledge, and experience cannot be fully utilised. The use of SM can partially solve this internal problem at a lower cost. Treem and Leonardi (2012) have reviewed several case studies on SM; they found out the employees have been provided with a chance to negotiate, refine and edit the existing content due to the editability offered by SM, which is beneficial to enhance the quality of information gradually. Danis and Singer (2008) recognised the importance of editability and accessibility of content; it gives people an opportunity to cooperate and create a more precious work.

The third is, SM offers a place for staff to share their exciting moments and celebrate their success with peers; this becomes a source of mutual encouragement among employees and can improve employees' work engagement (Musso, 2016). Employees can also set up a group chat to discuss their issues or concerns about their company (Gottfried, De Lancey, & Hardin, 2015). This helps employees collaborate and inspire themselves (Holtz, 2007).

Fourthly, use SM for IC can flatten hierarchies inside of a company (Pathiraja & Little, 2015; Liu & Moskvina, 2016). This effect is particularly evident in large companies. The bigger the business, the more difficult it is for the general staff to contact senior management. Most enterprises will use the top-down, one-way communication, which may lead to unclear instructions and guidelines, and hinder the success. The internal SM allows all employees to have bottom-up communication more efficiently and is able to cross the entire reporting line (Kulakofsky, 2016). Last but not least, internal SM are beneficial to build better relationships with all staff (Kelly, 2013).

#### 2.4.6 DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USED FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Although SM can give the enterprises a lot of help and opportunities, if misused it will cause serious adverse effects on the enterprises. The first thing needs to mention is that SM are hard to control. SM are public places and could be anywhere. It cannot be fully supervised (Dreher, 2014). People can express not only their happiness but also depressions via SM. Even can post harmful and unreal information on it (Dreher, 2014). Therefore, the establishment of a SM-based IC mechanism needs a relative management capability and maintenance costs. If a company has not used it and managed it improperly, it may cause unnecessary losses.

The second, it is difficult to identify each communicator. Most of the SM are not forced to use a real name to create an account, so the user's ID makes it difficult to distinguish their real identity. For managers, anonymity brings some difficulties and challenges to their work (Bloom & Hautaluoma, 1987). In addition, if a company implemented the real-name system on their own SM platform, it may lead to employee dissatisfaction (Rains & Scott, 2007), and this non-anonymous SM usage rates will be challenging to achieve expectations.

Thirdly, Hong (2012) considered that SM have a lower signal-to-noise ratio. The signal here means the original information and the valid information. The noise in here means the user's comments or the edited information. Since every user can modify existing information and post it or repost it, the validity and authenticity of information are difficult to guarantee. It makes such information can hardly be considered as useful information for the enterprises and researchers (Hong, 2012).

In general, it is hard for enterprises to control a network community developed from SM. Because it needs a company to create a relevant new corporate regulation to constrain employee's behaviour (Gallivan, 2008; Thompson, 2005). Some researchers said such network

community are often self-governed and will automatically develop some norms from itself (Kirsch, Ko, & Haney, 2010); even some researchers argue that this is more conducive to the management of the network community and can also improve employees' participation (Gonzales, 2013). If the companies did not take a strategic move to cultivate their SM IC, it would be hard to produce a return on investment (Bradley & McDonald, 2011).

#### 2.4.7 SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this section explains some purpose of using SM are used for in IC and shares some cases of how companies apply SM to IC. This section summarises the literature on the advantages and disadvantages of applying SM to EC. It finds that applying SM to EC can enhance customer engagement, raise brand awareness, and save cost for an organisation. However, the use of SM will cause information safety issues. This section also summarises the literature on the advantages and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. It finds that applying SM to IC can improve work efficiency, increase knowledge sharing, enhance staff engagement, and flatten organisational hierarchies. However, it is hard to monitor the use of SM at work and to identify each communicator. Moreover, SM have a lower signal-to-noise ratio. The next section briefly introduces how to improve IC and how SM can help. It also concludes some suggestions about using SM in IC and tells the manager what should take into consideration in the process of communication innovation.

## **2.5 SUGGESTIONS ABOUT USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

### 2.5.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND HOW TO IMPROVE IT

In an organisation, to complete tasks and to achieve business goals needs managers to coordinate each work of employees, and IC is significant in this coordination process (Fritz,

Narasimhan, & Rhee, 1998). IC refers to the communications among all employees in an enterprise. There are two main types of IC in an organisation, which is horizontal communication (communication between peers), and vertical communication (communication across the entire reporting line). Vertical communication is composed of top-down communication (communication between superiors and subordinates initiated by superiors) and bottom-up communication (communication between subordinates and superiors initiated by subordinates). The hierarchical relationship between superior and subordinates is considered natural in the organisation. Moreover, in people's work and daily life, almost all of the corporate system and social system is established based on a structure of hierarchical relationship (Diefenbach & Sillince, 2011; Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar, & Levin, 2004; Laumann, Siegel, & Hodge, 1970). Nevertheless, being too hierarchical may lead to inefficiencies of IC in a company. Effective IC is the prerequisite for business success because it can facilitate the internal positive relationship between senior managers and staff. However, ineffective IC may contribute to the adverse effect and treats organisational relationships. Effective IC enables employees to coordinate their work with efficiency; can improve employee engagement at work; helpful to leaders to motivate and encourage employees; even can make a company's big and small decisions more scientific and reasonable (Macleod & Clarke, 2009).

How to increase the efficiency of communication is a question that all communication managers want to solve. The hierarchy plays a vital role in IC in the enterprises. If a company made the relationships among their employees too hierarchical, the employees would be unwilling to talk, and it will affect the efficiency of information transmission. Although there must have a hierarchy in an organisation, the actual communication structure tends to be different (Marschan, Welch, & Welch, 1996). The staff is more inclined to establish informal and less-hierarchical relationships to communicate (Zhao & Rosson, 2009). Particularly, with the development of information technology, it provided people with a new way to communication and interaction, such as communication via SM. In an organisation, use SM in IC makes information open and democratic. At the same time, in 2015, Riemer, Stieglitz and Meske's research results shows that "With the maturing of the ESN (Enterprise Social Network)

community over time, formal hierarchy loses its influence and communication structures become broader and more inclusive” (p. 209). IC and information acquisition can be more efficient. Effective IC also depends on employees' preferences for communication, and they prefer to receive appropriate information in a valid and acceptable format (Welch, 2012). Thus, the organisation needs to understand in what way their staff like to communicate and how to improve staff satisfaction. Downs and Hazen created a communication satisfaction questionnaire and proposed that communication satisfaction is mainly related to eight aspects: corporate perspective, personal feedback, and organisational integration, communication with superiors, communication with subordinates, informal communication, media quality, and communication climate (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Then, Muchinsky conducted a further study of their results and claimed that the openness of communication is primarily in direct proportion to job satisfaction (Muchinsky, 1977).

The communication climate is a continuum from defensive and closed communication to an encouraging and open communication (Qu, 2012). In a closed atmosphere, employees will become cautious and unwilling to talk; in an open atmosphere, employees are able to communicate freely and extensively. Nevertheless, the communication climate cannot be completely closed or open. Managers must keep it under control and maintain a relatively balanced communication atmosphere.

Media quality requires that organisations pay attention to employee's preference for communication media. Improper media format may have negative influences on the companies because of employee dissatisfaction. Staff's anger and irritation produced by inappropriate media may cause staff to transfer their negative feelings intentionally or unconsciously to information they have received or posted (Welch, 2012; Dreher, 2014). Thus, it may form a possible obstacle to IC. In order to achieve effective IC, the enterprises need to provide a proper media for staff, which means the media should be readily accepted, valid and usable for most of the employees (Welch, 2012).



The above paragraphs addressed three crucial things that can increase staff satisfaction in communication. A less hierarchical and less formal way to communicate, an open communication atmosphere, and using employee preferred communication media could make the employee more willing to talk. Using SM in IC can help to achieve this purpose as explained in earlier sections. SM have an openness characteristic that can have an impact on the IC climate (Mayfield, 2008; Wagner, 2004). Applying SM to IC can flatten hierarchies inside of a company (Pathiraja & Little, 2015; Liu & Moskvina, 2016) and can deliver the message in an informal way (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017). SM are becoming one of the most popular ways of communication, and most people will use SM more or less for a certain purpose.

Entrepreneurs and managers have begun to think of applying SM to IC and focus on how to manage this work. There are also some studies that begin to examine how companies can better apply SM to IC and give some suggestions.

### 2.5.2 SUGGESTIONS

Although there is no framework for guiding the use of SM in IC, scholars have given some brief suggestions to managers who want to apply SM to IC in their companies.

Using SM for IC must have a lot of hindrances, and the manager needs to find a way to conduct it successfully. Scholars have given some recommendations about it. At the very beginning of having innovation in IC, managers should make sure who would be leading this innovation (Rodriguez, 2010). Then, the manager should know about communication climate inside of their company; find out employees' preference of communication (Dreher, 2014); understand employees' needs and create a communication system that employees want (Rodriguez, 2010). Third, know well about the companies' abilities limitation such as technological supports and management skills. Following the trend of SM blindly may lead to failure. The last thing is, the organisations do not have to change their existing communication system into an entirely new one. Old habit cannot be changed easily. Costello and Del Bosque

(2010) suggests that new technologies should be “integrated into the workflow of the organisation.” (p. 155) Innovative communication mode can integrate into the old communication mode of a company first, and then gradually changes to a new communication system.

### 2.5.3 SUMMARY

This literature reviewed in this section briefly introduces the meaning of IC and highlights three important aspects of improved IC (i.e., flattened hierarchy, open communication atmosphere, and communication media that employee preferred). Then connects to the advantages of applying SM to IC in the last section, explains how SM can help and why the use of SM are important to IC. This section also contains simple suggestions for using and managing SM-based IC and emphasises four aspects that should be taken into account. These are making sure who is leading this communication innovation, understanding the companies’ communication climate and knowing what communication media is staff-wanted, being aware of company’s abilities limitation, and an alternative is integrating the new technologies into the old communication system. The review suggests there is a need for further research. Specifically, it suggests there is a need to determine guidelines for use.

## 2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the literature on SM and how it is used by organisations for engaging with both external and internal stakeholders. It shows that while there is extensive research on how SM are used by organisations for engaging with external stakeholders. The literature on the use of SM for IC is more limited. In particular, it highlights the scarcity of guidelines for managing SM when used for communicating internally. While the advantages are well known, the exploration of the literature addressing disadvantages revealed a severe problem with using this new communication mode; specifically, how to manage SM in IC. It highlighted that there are many questions yet to answer regarding the utility and management of SM for IC. This

Masters research project sought to address the research questions. The next chapter will explain the methodology utilised in this research.

## **3 METHODOLOGY**

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter intends to introduce the research methodology adopted to answer the research questions proposed in Chapter One. When seeking answers in an emerging area of study, an inductive approach is indicated as this allows the researcher to be exploratory and unhindered by pre-emptive conceptual frameworks. When the research seeks to tap into the subject's experiences in order to understand a particular issue or phenomenon from their perspective, then the interpretive paradigm offers an ideal philosophical framework to guide the researcher's inductive process (Antwi & Hamza, 2015; Gray, 2018). This Masters study sought to explore communication practitioners' experience and perspectives with regard to SM use in IC, a largely unexplored field of study, so an exploratory qualitative study informed by the interpretive research paradigm and involving an inductive process was considered ideal.

This chapter first describes the inductive approach and how was applied in this study. The next section discusses the data collection process, introduces why chose these participants and how the researcher recruited them. The following section interprets the data analysing process. In the end, this chapter proposes some possible limitations and challenges of this methodology.

### **3.2 INDUCTIVE APPROACH**

#### **3.2.1 WHAT IS INDUCTIVE APPROACH?**

Qualitative research and its ability to reveal the qualities of phenomena and individuals' idiosyncratic as well as a shared understanding of these phenomena have become increasingly valued by researchers (Bansal & Corley, 2011). Most qualitative research has taken an inductive approach to generate new concepts or theory (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). This has meant that the inductive approach is commonly seen as the approach to take when undertaking qualitative research (Huy, 2012) and so is associated with many qualitative research methods (e.g., Grounded Theory Approach, phenomenology, discourse analysis, and narrative research (Thomas, 2006).

In contrast to the deductive approach, the inductive approach does not begin with hypotheses based on existing theory. The researchers who are using the inductive approach start with an observation or question and seek to generate theories from raw data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Eisenhardt, 2016). The key point in collecting such data is to ensure the data allow researchers to gather rich, relevant information about a phenomenon in a way that ensures they can explain their observation or answer their research questions (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016).

### 3.2.2 WHY CHOOSE INDUCTIVE APPROACH?

Five differences between inductive and deductive approach explain why an inductive approach was chosen for this master's study. The most important one is that the study was designed to explore a relatively under-researched area without pre-existing theories or hypotheses (Yom, 2015; Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016) and so there was not a basis from which to construct hypotheses.

Secondly, as the aim was to understand communication professionals' experiences and interpretations an approach was needed that could accommodate unexpected and idiosyncratic data. An inductive process is, by definition, suited to work with such particulars towards the creation of a new framework from these (Edmondson & McManus, 2007).

Thirdly, inductive research uses theoretical samples rather than random samples, so researchers can choose their participants according to their suitability to elucidate a particular aspect of the topic being studied (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). In this research project, participants in the same position (i.e., communication professional) from various companies were recruited. This feature of the inductive approach is particularly suitable for this research as it is able to reduce the variance and add focus to the data - two dimensions that may affect research findings (Davis & Eisenhardt, 2011).

Fourth, inductive research does not require large samples. Even a small sample can allow researchers to conduct an in-depth study (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016). Finally, when combined with the process of constant comparison, the inductive approach allows the

researcher to be flexible and adjust their emerging conceptual framework in response to unexpected information, something that is prohibited when using deductive approach (Yom, 2015). The researcher has the latitude to be flexible and continually propose new questions and follow new insights if they judge that doing so will lead to a better understanding of the phenomena they are studying (Robinson, 1951).

Constant comparison is a technique that is an integral part of the Grounded Theory Approach (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It involves continuously comparing new data with the findings emerging from previous analyses and then adjusting the emerging conceptual framework to accommodate any inconsistencies or anomalies. The researcher does not wait until the end of the data collection process to undertake their analysis. This means the findings that eventually emerge to embrace all the data.

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION**

This research involved asking communication professionals about their experience of using (or not) SM for internal organisational communication. When scoping the study, it became clear that it was going to be necessary to recruit participants from both Australia and New Zealand in order to get a satisfactory range of professional experience (i.e., time in the role, types of organisational experience, etc.). To achieve such a sample, the researcher through her supervisor, approached a highly experienced and well-networked communication professional who agreed to approach members of his professional Australasian network. In order to ensure participation, anonymity had to be assured. This meant that an anonymous online survey was appropriate.

#### **3.3.1 THE ANONYMOUS ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

This research project used an online questionnaire to gather general demographic, employment data and descriptions of participants' experiences and views on the value of using SM for IC. Online questionnaires containing closed questions, including ones with Likert Scales, are a widely used data collection method in quantitative research. However, when using this method in qualitative research, the researcher asks participants a set of open-ended questions and avoids asking leading questions (Ayres, 2012). An open-ended question format gives

participants more freedom when responding than the closed questions. They have the latitude to describe a phenomenon from their own perspectives and in their own words (Roulston, 2012). Thus, the open-ended question can help a researcher to collect participants' observations, opinions or even some complicated feelings and problems (Barribal & While, 1994; Astedt-Kurki & Heikkinen, 1994).

Although the questionnaires do not require people to have face-to-face communication like interviews, it should not be regarded as an utterly non-interactive method (Galasinski & Kozłowska, 2013). When the participants are answering the questions or choices on the questionnaires, they will treat themselves as a speaker sharing their views or experiences with the recipients (Galasinski & Kozłowska, 2013). The major constraint with an anonymous questionnaire is that the researcher needs a comprehensive view of the phenomenon as they cannot ask follow-up questions in the way they might do in a semi-structured interview. The researcher needs to ensure that each question on the questionnaire will guide the speaker like a signpost to share the type of information the researcher needs. Before conducting the data collecting processes, the researcher reviewed relevant literature to obtain a sufficient understanding of SM and how it can be used in and around organisations. This understanding helped me to build a topic framework and a question map according to previous knowledge (Kallio, Pietila, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016).

To assist with this research, the majority of questions in my online questionnaires were related to the following core topics:

1. Participants' attitudes and perceptions of the personal use of SM.
2. Participants' attitudes and perceptions of the professional use of SM at work.
3. Participants' attitudes toward managing the use of SM in the organisation.
4. Participants' attitudes toward using SM for IC.

In this online questionnaire, most of the questions are open-ended questions. There are also some closed questions about gender, age and organisations' information etc. were presented, it helps to categorise and compare the raw data.

The online questionnaire was constructed using Qualtrics, which is a software that allows people to design and distribute an online questionnaire. It has a lot of functions that enable the user to customise the questionnaires for various purpose and sub-group within their target

pool of participants. The online questionnaire for this research was trialled and refined several times based on the results of the trials.

The questionnaire has two parts: part one addresses individuals' personal use of SM and part two addresses their professional experience of using or observing the use of SM (see the whole questionnaire in Appendix 1). The second part was divided into two blocks to accommodate different experiences. Questions in block one were presented to participants from consultancy firms and contained questions mainly focusing on how the respondent in their role as a communication consultant guides other organisations on using SM (or not) to undertake IC functions. Questions in block two are only displayed to participants working in the private and public sectors and NGOs. These questions focus on how these respondents use SM for IC in their organisation or why they are not willing to incorporate SM into IC in their organisation.

Because of the various scenarios that exist in different organisations and different experience of every participant, the questionnaire contains a lot of logic jumps and display logic to tailor it to each participant's situation. For example, the start question in block two of part two - organisation's professional use, asks, "Does your organisation allow employees to use SM at work for IC?" This question has three different answers for them to choose, "Yes", "Yes, but does not rely on SM for IC." and "No". These three choices then will lead to a different series of questions. All participants, however, are asked 20-35 questions regardless of the options they have chosen.

### 3.3.2 PROTECTING SOURCES OF DATA

All data from the online survey respondents are anonymous. The researcher cannot know who has responded or the names of the 23 organisations or 17 consultancy firms respondents work for. The researcher only knows that data are from four kinds of organisation: consultancy firms, the private sectors, public sectors, and NGOs. This level of anonymity was achieved by a facilitator of this project, whose professional network was being used, sending all communication professionals who were invited to participate in a link to an online questionnaire. He, the facilitator, subsequently had no other involvement in the project. Only the researcher and her supervisor saw the completed questionnaires.



### 3.3.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

This research aimed to explore communication professionals' experience of using SM (or not) for ICs and their conclusions about its value and how to manage it. Thus, all the participants sent the link were communication professionals in various organisations.

Questions were asked about participants' positions in their organisation. To ensure they were working as a communication manager or communication consultant. Why were communication professionals but not SM professionals have chosen? The main reason was that this research focused on the perceived value of SM as a tool for satisfying IC management objectives. As SM are being heralded increasingly as "the" new internal organisational communication tools, it is essential to understand how it is experienced by communication experts rather than those that develop and maintain the functionality of the tool. Some other demographic questions were asked about participants' gender, age, seniority, etc., as well as some organisational questions, were asked about the company's type and scale. To explore what personal and organisational factors will affect professionals' attitudes toward using SM for IC.

There are several subgroups in each group. For example, in the age group, the four subgroups are formed by people aged in "20-30", "31-40", "41-50", and "51-60"; the gender group is formed by only two subgroups – "male" and "female"; the seniority group is formed by six subgroups – "less than 1 year", "1-5 years", "6-10 years", "11-15 years", "16-20 years", and "unknown". More detailed demographic information and professional attitudes of seven experienced practitioners, 16 inexperienced practitioners, and 17 consultants can be seen in Appendix 10.4, Appendix 10.7, and Appendix 10.10 respectively.

### 3.3.4 INFORMED CONSENT

Firstly, to ensure my participants understood the nature of the research project and their involvement in it. The researcher prepared an information sheet that the facilitator circulated to prospective participants attached to the email inviting them to participate. This information sheet told participants what the project intended to explore and what kind of responses were

being sought from them. Participants were also told anonymity would be ensured and clarified how they could get withdrawal. Only up until the responses were submitted – after they submit because it is anonymous, there is no way of identifying the participants' responses to withdrawal them. Moreover, the benefits of participating in this project were listed to intensify people's willingness to participate, and a link was their identity could be protected even after the project is completed. Prospective participants were told that by completing the questionnaire, they agreed to participate.

### **3.4 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS**

In the stage of preliminary analysis, this study seeks to answer the research question one and research question two presented in Chapter One: What are the benefits and shortcomings of using SM for IC? And What are the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?

#### **3.4.1 SOFTWARE USED IN THE ANALYSIS**

Because the online questionnaire not only collected the quantitative data but also quantitative data, the researcher used to consider using NVivo to analyse the raw data because this software helps the researcher store and input the unprocessed rich data, then edit these data, and link it to what have written before as well (Bazeley & Richards, 2000). However, this software was found as not user-friendly for analysing quantitative data and producing statistics. Instead, the researcher decided to use Excel, a software that allows both text data and digital data to be uploaded and which also helps to do statistical analyses.

In this study, Excel was used to integrate all the text data from the questionnaire and do some statistical tasks that included making tables. Some figures and tables were presented in Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Seven to illustrate concepts that were coded for and how data from different participants were connected. During the preliminary analysis process, the researcher also used Excel to create the node tables when moving to the next step - the comparative analysis. It enabled one code to be related to another easily and ensured it was possible to look back to some relevant files and then find out their relationships.

### 3.4.2 CODING

Coding involves giving a label to a section of data and providing a note to indicate what this data represents and why it is relevant to the study. Coding can be complicated as a section of data can be coded in more than one category, and categories can be at different levels. At the first stage of coding, Bazeley and Richards (2000) have suggested that “It may be useful to code (name) these topics/ themes/ issues simply as a first pass. This will bring some level of organisation, particularly important if the volume is increasing.” (p. 55).

The respondents’ perceptions of using SM for IC (e.g., “What aspects of social media do you see will have negative impacts on an organisation's internal communication?” and “What benefits/opportunities do you see social media could offer an organisation’s internal communication?”, etc.) were examined and sections relating to these questions were coded. Similar perceptions were regarded as the same theme and were given a code name. Their attitudes toward applying SM to IC were coded as well. Such as, if a professional has a positive mind about using SM internally, then the attitudes will be coded as “positive (P)”. Then, each piece of data was numbered in a way that allowed age and gender and other demographics to be identified; this process is to facilitate the comparative analysis.

### 3.4.3 CATEGORISING

There were many levels of coding across the data, and some sections of data were coded into multiple categories, this meant that it was necessary to take advantage of the child node function to do categorising (Bazeley & Richards, 2000), but this fragmented the data made it hard to work with. To address this issue, Word files were also created for each level of coding and filled with all the relevant data, so it could be all viewed at the same time.

A SWOT analysis is a strategic tool to enhance organisation development by specifying the business goal and identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which may affect achieving this business goal (Jackson & Erhardt, 2003; Panagiotou, 2003). A SWOT analysis was used to guide data analysis of this study, classifying data addressing various emergent themes into secondary codes (i.e., “strengths”, “weaknesses”, “opportunities”, and “threats”). Respondents’ perceptions about strengths and opportunities were coded as positives,

perceptions about weaknesses and threats were coded as negatives. Each theme that was coded is a tertiary code. These three levels of coding can form the node tables. In the end, Excel was used to create the node tables that showed what had been coded and the kind of themes have been found to use to describe the experience of using SM in IC. By viewing these node tables, the concept can be easily chosen and analysed. Excel ensured it was easy to link to the files containing all the relevant data for each theme or category.

#### 3.4.4 THEME FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

In a text, words that occur more frequently than others may be the focal point (Baker, Hardie, & McEnery, 2006). This theory was applied to the theme frequency analysis of this study. The Excel software was employed to do a theme frequency check. All information was classified by Excel columns according to their code name; the researcher can easily choose a column and pick out the themes to compare. A high-frequency reference line is needed for a frequency analysis to determine which are the high-frequency themes. Due to the small database in this research, the high-frequency reference line was set to three. If a theme was mentioned three or more than three times (i.e., frequency $\geq$ 3), this theme could be regarded as a high-frequency theme.

For example, in the column of “threats”- “What aspects of social media do you see will have negative impacts on an organisation's internal communication?”, the theme “misuse” appeared three times in the practitioners’ node table, and it appeared four times in the consultants’ node table. Therefore, the “misuse” is a crucial perception, and the practitioners and consultants share this same perception.

By finding the difference in frequency of the same word or synonym being mentioned, the most important factor will be identified. Using the theme frequency check to assist the preliminary analysis helps the researcher to dig deeper and to explore more concepts and build a potential framework.

#### 3.5 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In the stage of comparative analysis, this study seeks to answer the research question three

presented in Chapter One: What factors will affect the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC? This analysis also sought to find out different perceptions of using SM for IC between practitioners and consultants as well as the similar perceptions.

Since this is comparative research, the process of comparative analysis is indispensable. After the coding, categorising and the theme frequency analysis process has been done, the researcher has started to compare the nodes one by one according to the node tables while looking back at the original content in word files that the researcher had collected and coded.

### 3.5.1 DIFFERENCES IDENTIFICATION

Differences were identified by looking for those codes that some communication professionals have, but other communication professionals do not have and explore the same primary code to search for the same node with different child nodes among all participants. For example, the node “weaknesses” from practitioners’ node table was examined and found out there were two child nodes of it, which are “insecure channel” and “not tailored to the organisation’s needs”. Then the same node from consultants’ node table was examined and found out there were four weaknesses have been proposed, which are “insecure channel”, “limit messaging”, “mixed message” and “not tailored to the organisation’s needs”. Therefore, consultants have two different perceptions to weaknesses of using SM for IC.

### 3.5.2 SIMILARITIES IDENTIFICATION

Similarities were identified by looking through one category and searching for those nodes not only have been presented in the practitioners’ node tables but also in the consultants’ node tables. All participants were mainly divided into two categories - practitioners and consultants, under these categories, their demographic information was divided into various groups/nodes and gave a code name. Such as in the gender group, similar attitudes towards the long-term role of SM were discovered by comparing the female group of practitioners with the female group of consultants. This study found out that most female consultants and female practitioners have a positive attitude towards the long-term role of SM.

One primary node has many child nodes, but some child nodes were deleted in the findings-

producing stage. This is because of the insufficient data; some nodes under one category could not be compared. Moreover, some remaining child nodes were only treated as the similarities or the differences but not the primary nodes (i.e., influencing factor). For example, participants' personal attitudes were divided into three groups and were coded as "P", "Nt", and "N", which represented the positive, neutral, and negative attitudes. By analysing whether the different personal attitudes will affect the practitioners and consultants' attitudes toward building SM into the intranet, a similar finding was discovered in the "Nt" group. The finding is that most practitioners and consultants with a neutral attitude are willing to build SM into the intranet. However, the researcher could not confirm whether these professionals with other personal attitudes have a same or different response to building SM into the intranet due to insufficient data. Thus, the personal attitude cannot be treated as an influencing factor. This kind of situation will be pointed out and explained in detail in the next few chapters.

### 3.5.3 OVERALL COMPARISON

The last step of comparison is most significant to report the findings. As the findings are not just some statements of all differences and similarities that were found in the raw data, it is needed to synthesise all the information has been processed before and then can generate a constructive theory. This means the researcher must validate if all codes are meaningful to this comparison. To achieve this purpose, the researcher checked the theme frequency of each code through Excel software and the adequacy of the demographic data. For example, as can be seen in Appendix 10.2 and Appendix 10.3, "insecure channel" and "not tailored to the organisation's needs" are the two similar theme codes proposed by both practitioners and consultants. However, the theme frequency of "not tailored to the organisation's needs" is very low (frequency=1) in both practitioners and consultants' node tables. According to the high-frequency reference line, if one node is with high-frequency (frequency $\geq$ 3), then it is a valid node. Thus, it is not the central theme and the main similarity.

At last, this study checked the sufficiency of demographic data, to verify whether the personal factors and organisational factors will affect professionals' attitudes toward using SM to IC. To explore the main influencing factors, a large number of tables of various factors and attitudes were generated in Chapter Ten - Appendices. Appendix 10.2, Appendix 10.3, Appendix 10.4, Appendix 10.7, and Appendix 10.10 have the perceptions of using SM for IC

of practitioners and consultants, as well as their demographic details and attitudes. These appendices only provide readers with an outline of all information; the detailed explanation can be seen in the findings and discussion chapters.

### **3.6 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS**

Doing this research study involved overcoming challenges. The following challenges had to be navigated and were identified as influencing data collection and data analysis.

The first challenge was in the questionnaire designing stage. Each organisation has their own decision-making processes, and these are embedded in their unique situations. To design a questionnaire that can be applied to everyone, an introducer was asked to do the trial two times for this questionnaire trying to find out more situations that may exist. The two trials helped to improve the questionnaire. More choices were added for participants, and different questions were presented to the organisation using the logic jump function. However, even the researcher thought this questionnaire is perfect for everyone; there were still some participants who answered “N/A” in some questions that were displayed to them.

The second challenge was encountered in the data collection stage. At the very beginning, the researcher found out that it is nearly impossible to recruit enough volunteer communication participants by herself. Then the researcher contacted one communication professional she knew and asked him for help. This communication professional introduced most of the participants to the survey website. The researcher found out one facilitator has limited networks, and he cannot ensure everyone is willing to participate. To collect enough valid responses, the researcher has also encouraged participants to introduce this project to other communication professionals they know. Finally, sufficient data were obtained for this study to analyse.

The first limitation happened when the researcher was going to analyse the raw data. Qualtrics, a tool for creating the online survey, was used to make the online questionnaire because it is convenient to set up all the display logic and logic jumps. However, the researcher over-trusted this tool and caused some problems. Because of an unknown Qualtrics’ system error, some questions should have been displayed to participants have not been displayed. A small amount of data was lost due to the missing questions. Even more disappointing is that

nothing could be done about it but to code such data as invalid data or abandon the data.

Participants lack the motivation to answer the questions lead to the second limitation. People are used to answering closed questions in a questionnaire. When people come across considerable open-ended questions in a questionnaire, they may feel stressful and gradually lose their enthusiasm to answer the questions. Lots of participants filled “not sure”, “unsure” or “N/A” to some key questions. The researcher coded such data as “unsure”. Many important views from the participants were lost.

### **3.7 HUMAN ETHICS**

This study was approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee as low risk. All identities of participants were obtained by email communication undertaken by a communication professional who invited members of his professional networks to go online and answer an anonymous questionnaire. Neither the researcher nor this facilitator knew who actually responded to the online survey as the names of participants and their employers or businesses were not recorded. See also section 3.3.4 Informed Consent. Raw data were securely stored, and no access was given to third parties.

### **3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter had four main sections. The first section, the type of research project that was conducted and explains why and how this study adopted the methods it did. The second and third sections focused on the process of data collection and data analysing tools. These two sections explained why and how the researcher recruited participants and how the data they provided was interpreted and the data analysis process used to do this. Then in the third section, there is an explanation of how the node tables were created using Excel and how various categories of tables and the word frequency lists were made. In the fourth section, the limitations and challenges are discussed.

The next chapter gives a brief introduction to the participants involved in this project and explains the situation they explain with regard to applying SM to IC in their organisation and their perceptions to using SM for IC, which are the focuses of this research project. The next



chapter also lists some essential concepts which can be coded.

## **4 THE VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS WITH EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

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### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Fifty communication professionals were approached, and forty-four agreed to participate. These respondents provided 40 valid responses from 17 consultants and 23 practitioners. The next four chapters present and discuss the findings from the analysis of these responses, including the similarities and differences in the professionals' views on applying SM to IC.

In this chapter, the strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) identified by the seven practitioners with experience applying SM to IC are presented, as well as their views about the opportunities (O) and threats (T) they considered the use of SM in IC brought to an organisation (SWOT analysis). The number of times each of these SWOT dimensions was mentioned is given in the tables at the start of each SWOT section. Then the findings with regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are discussed in terms of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Based on the results of a theme frequency analysis, codes with high-frequency were marked as strong themes at the end of the SWOT analysis. The next part of this chapter in section 4.7 analyses the factors that the data suggested may have influenced professionals' views on using SM for IC. The key findings and a summary were presented at the end of this chapter.

### **4.2 THE STRENGTHS**

*Table 4.1 References made by professionals with experience to strengths of SM for IC*

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#### *Strengths*

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Codes	Access anywhere	IM	Less formal mode
Frequencies	2	1	1

*Note. IM=instant message*

For the purpose of this study of SM use for IC, strength (of SM) was defined as an inherently advantageous attribute that allows SM to be considered a better form of communication than other communication platforms. The data from professionals with experience of SM in IC (N=7) were examined to see what strengths they attributed to SM when it is used for IC. Only three professionals mentioned any strengths. Two pointed out the first strength which was coded as “access anywhere”. This referred to how employees can use SM in different workplaces and how the field staff and the staff in an office can access the same information at the same time. One of these two participants observed that SM technology could ignore geographical boundaries and is user-friendly to staff who are not desk-based. The code “instant message” (IM) was used to code data that referred to how SM can help people to engage in immediate communication. The third strength code, “less formal mode” and was used to code data that addressed how SM provides a less formal mode of communication for staff. Overall, the professionals who had actually used SM for IC in an organisation did not volunteer a great many strengths.

As explained in Chapter Two, according to the literature, easily accessible is one of SM’s recognised features (Mayfield,2008; Holtz, 2007). Thus, not surprisingly, “access anywhere” was the first strength of SM identified by respondents. IM technology, like SM, is created by the technical foundation of Web 2.0 and is mentioned often in the literature. The literature suggests that IM technology is providing another avenue for using SM for IC (Grudin, 2006; McAfee, 2006; Steinhuser, Smolnik, & Hoppe, 2011). The instant nature of IM can contribute to “access anywhere”, and is seen as an advantage in IC (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). The “less formal mode” aligns with the observation in the literature that increasingly staff are choosing to talk less formally with each other (Marschan, Welch, & Welch, 1996) and prefer to build a less hierarchical relationship with others in the workplace (Zhao & Rosson, 2009;

Qu, 2012). The “less formal mode” of SM, the third strength, is consistent with these findings in the literature.

### 4.3 THE WEAKNESSES

*Table 4.2 References made by professionals with experience to weaknesses of SM for IC*

<i>Weaknesses</i>		
Codes	Insecure channel	Not tailored to the organisation’s needs
Frequencies	1	1

A weakness (of SM) was defined as an inherently disadvantageous attribute of SM that may bring some difficulties or risks when using SM for IC. The data from the experienced professionals (N=7) were examined to see what weaknesses may prevent an organisation from applying SM to IC. Only two professionals mentioned any weaknesses. One senior communication advisor regarded SM as an “insecure channel” according to her previous experience of using SM for IC. She insisted that an organisation need a secure channel to share sensitive information. Another professional pointed out that public social media (PSM) have limited use in the workplace because they are “not tailored to the organisation’s needs”. This is captured in the following data excerpt:

I think it is really important to remember off the shelf platforms (Twitter, Facebook etc.) are extremely limited for internal use, but the principles at work from platforms can be applied (usually through custom solutions, such as integrating Yammer into a “Sharepoint” type environment).

His company does not rely on using SM for IC because of this, but he is optimistic about the functions of SM, and he is championing a project to incorporate SM’s functions into the company’s intranet in a way that fits their work environment. However, he acknowledged that this would need time and resources.

The literature suggests openness is one of SM’s most prominent affordances (Hong, 2013; Wagner, 2004). This characteristic raises a safety issue for an organisation according to one experienced practitioner. In this regard, the literature suggests that using SM for IC has the potential to cause some problems because of its openness (Hensel & Deis, 2010; Argenti & Barnes, 2009). One problem is reflected in the code “insecure channel” which was chosen to accommodate the first weakness of SM identified by the experienced practitioners - the risk it introduces due to the lack of security it offers with regard to company information. Practitioners’ comments suggested they were very cognisant of this and other security risks that accompany SM use. The final code that addressed a negative feature of SM in IC was “not tailored to the organisation’s needs”. The literature review did not identify any studies that referred to this theme.

#### 4.4 THE OPPORTUNITIES

*Table 4.3 References made by professionals with experience to opportunities of SM for IC*

<i>Opportunities</i>			
Codes	Collaboration	Staff engagement	Efficiency
Frequencies	1	2	1

An opportunity (of using SM for IC) was defined as a circumstance that, if exploited, could allow a company to apply SM to IC in a way that brings it benefits. The data from the experienced professionals (N=7) were examined to see what opportunities SM may bring to an organisation. Only three professionals mentioned any opportunities.

Opportunities for using SM for IC were acknowledged but so too were the risks SM use could introduce. Some organisations reportedly took these risks so severely that one forbade its staff from using SM for IC. However, these companies’ communication advisor considered employing SM in IC could bring two opportunities – increased engagement and collaboration.

These opportunities are addressed in the following data excerpt:

People are generally positive about social media. Allowing access to internal communication could open up new dialogue and engagement, encourage collaboration and cross-departmental ideation.

Another respondent believes SM are great engagement platforms for staff as well. A third respondent considers that applying SM to IC could deliver improved work efficiencies because SM can be accessed anywhere at any time. This is captured in the following data excerpt:

It transcends physical barriers and can deliver greater effectiveness and efficiencies around everyone being on the same page.

This data excerpt was coded to the strength code “access anywhere”. Here it is linked to the opportunity for achieving greater efficiency, highlighting that codes were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

As noted in Chapter Two, there are different types of uses for SM. Collaboration is one type of use SM are put to. Scholars have found that SM can be used to collaborate in organisations (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017; Wagner, 2004; McAfee, 2006). The practitioners’ views align with this suggestion. In Chapter Two, the advantages of SM use for IC were addressed, some scholars gave uses that were coded as “staff engagement”. This category is mirrored in the literature. The literature also suggests that SM use for IC can increase employee productivity (Qualman, 2012; Parise, 2009; Greaves et al., 2013). Thus, the “improved efficiency” into which some of the experienced practitioners’ comments were coded becomes the third opportunity code.

## 4.5 THE THREATS

*Table 4.4 References made by professionals with experience to threats of SM for IC*

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<i>Threats</i>					
Codes	Misuse	Small- scale	Waste time	Costs	Lack of resources

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Frequencies	1	2	1	1	2
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Organisations perceive that using SM for IC will introduce some difficulties and risks. The data from the experienced professionals (N=7) were examined to see exactly what threats they thought were associated with using SM for IC. Six professionals mentioned threats, which were coded into five different dimensions: “misuse”, “small-scale”, “waste time”, “costs”, and “lack of resources”.

One senior professional proposed that there is a risk of misuse when using SM for IC because staff tend to overuse Facebook. This high usage, in their view, could result in the company cancelling employees' access to the SM at work. Not everyone can control the frequency of using SM at work nor can they guarantee that the purpose SM are put to will be all work-related. Two of communication experts said the scale of their organisation was too small for them to bother using SM for IC as this only requires a weekly face-to-face meeting plus some traditional communication tools such as email. In their view, if SM was used as another channel for IC in their company, this will become another burden for employees. Another communication manager believes that if they choose to employ SM in IC, it will cause employees wasting a lot of time. Time will also be lost as they will have to train employees to use it. They consider the costs of implementation and the lack of resources in the organisation were two threats to the company’s operations if SM were introduced for IC. Because of these two threats, three of the seven organisations reported having stepped away from using SM for IC.

Some articles reviewed in Chapter Two pointed out that the actual professional use of SM was at a low level, even though people cannot help but use it for recreation purpose (Fourie, 2016; Balakrishnan, 2017). This theme is in line with the experienced practitioners’ worry of misuse. The risk of “misuse” was chosen as another threat code to allow such worries about SM use for IC to be coded. Four other threats were given the codes “small-scale”, “waste time”, “costs”, and “lack of resources”. These codes were not mirrored in the findings of the studies

that mentioned threats in the literature. Only practitioners in this study mentioned these.

#### **4.6 STRONGEST THEMES**

The response rate in this study produced a small database that made identifying high-frequency themes impossible as frequencies were unavoidably low. As a rule, mentioned in the previous chapter, a code with three items or more than three items can be the code with a high frequency. With just one or two fewer coded items, all codes mentioned in the previous sections were deemed to have low frequencies. All the themes proposed by experienced practitioners, therefore, could not be considered to be strong themes. This was why it was decided to use higher-level codes like positive and negative views were used; these allowed these low-frequency codes to be aggregated and produced clear results.

If all positive views (i.e., strengths and opportunities) were added together separately, then positive codes were mentioned eight times. Similarly, when all the negative codes were aggregated, then negative codes were mentioned nine times which is almost the same frequency as the positive codes. This finding suggests that experienced communications experts have a relatively balanced attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. The low-frequency of the code “lack of resources” in Table 4.4 suggest it is not considered a major threat to the quality of IC. However, as can be seen in the column of “reason for acceptance” present in Appendix 10.4, the code “lack of resources” appears three times. It suggests that a lack of resources could be the main reason why the organisation stop purchasing the opportunities of using SM for IC.

#### **4.7 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS**

The personal effects and organisational effects were defined as patterns, if people or the organisations were in a specific situation, could have certain attitudes and choices. Appendix



10.4 shows the key personal profiles, the organisational profiles, and various views on the usage of SM. In Section 4.7.1 and Section 4.7.2, some personal and organisational factors that may have influenced those communication experts' choices and attitudes are discussed. Then, the researcher will find out which factor could affect the way the professionals responded.

#### 4.7.1 PERSONAL EFFECTS

For personal factors, including the factor of with experience or without experience, the factors of age, gender, personal connectivity, personal attitude, and seniority were considered (as established in Appendices 10.5.1-10.5.5).

The analysis revealed that the experienced professionals all have positive views on the role of SM in the long term. Clearly, the experienced professionals think SM could bring benefits to an organisation someday, even though some of them work in or for organisations that do not currently use SM very much. Most of the companies (71%) choose to accept using SM at work but not rely on using it. Only one of the seven (14%) people have a neutral attitude towards building SM into intranet for IC, three of seven (43%) experts have a positive attitude (e.g., “Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC (DH)”, “Have SM at present (H)”, and “It is worth to have one (suggested)”), and another three of seven (43%) have a negative attitude (e.g., “Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet (DN)”).

There are four age groups and three personal connectivity groups as can be seen in Appendix 10.5.1 and Appendix 10.5.3. With too many groups and a small amount data, these factors cannot be considered to having an evident influence on the professionals' choices of “acceptance (i.e., an acceptable level of SM use when using it for work-related IC)”, building SM into the intranet, and the attitude towards the role of SM in the long term. In spite of that, the researcher still finds out the three practitioners with experience in age group “31-40” all decided to apply SM to IC in their organisation but not rely on using it, and the only one

practitioner had built SM into their organisational intranet is from this age group as well.

As shown in gender groups table (see Appendix 10.5.2), only two responses are from the male participant, and these two males all answered “Yes, but not rely on” to the question about “acceptance”. With only two pieces of data, it is very little suggested that all male communication managers have the same choice. What can be strongly suggested is that no matter what gender they are, participants with experience all agree the SM will have an important role in the future. Most of the professionals with experience have a positive personal attitude (see Appendix 10.5.4). Few of them have seen both good and bad sides of SM, and no one treats SM as just a dangerous tool. People hold differing views on building SM into the intranet. This meant no patterns were found, but all seven professionals with experience using SM for IC think SM will play a significant role in the future. Moreover, only two experienced practitioners who have a positive personal attitude have rejected to apply SM to IC.

As shown in Appendix 10.5.5, the data are mainly concentrated on the seniority group of “1-5 years”. In this group, there are three of five males hold “DN” attitude towards building SM into intranet for IC. It means the experienced people who worked as a communication professional for one to five years are most unlikely to build SM into the intranet.

#### 4.7.2 ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS

Two organisational factors possibly influenced the views of the professions in this study in relation to SM used for IC. These are the scale of the organisation and the type of organisation. Among the 23 practitioners, nearly half of them were from a large company. Among four experienced practitioners from a large organisation (as established in Appendix 10.6.1), only one of them is in a business that refuses to use SM for IC. With few people from other scales of organisations, it is hard to say with any certainty that the scale of an organisation affects people’s opinions. What can be suggested here is that experienced professionals from a large company may have less latitude to refuse to use SM for IC. This would align with the finding

that the two experienced SM users from small companies (one from a small organisation and one from a micro organisation) both said they saw no need to use SM for IC in small organisations (see Appendix 10.4). This finding slightly suggests that the small and micro company should be considered to have different, perhaps simpler, IC needs than larger companies. They may find face-to-face communication suffices, which is consistent with what was mentioned by one professional in Section 4.5.

As for the professionals' views about building SM into the intranet, no matter which sector they are from or the size of their organisation, half hold positive views, and the other half hold negative views (see Appendix 10.6.1 and Appendix 10.6.2). Only one people from the public sector who has no view either way with regard to the desirability of building SM into the intranet. Most experienced practitioners from the public sector choose to use SM for IC but do not rely on using it, but two stated they refused to use SM for IC. It is fair to say from these findings that there is not a consensus across the professionals with experience using SM in IC with regard to the desirability of doing so.

#### **4.8 KEY FINDINGS**

After applying a SWOT analysis to the data from the experienced communication professionals, no strong response patterns were detected. Only when the analysis categorised the themes as positives (strengths and opportunities) and negatives (weaknesses and threats) were patterns identified. The data did not suggest any personal factors (e.g., gender) that affected the way the professionals responded. There was a weak indication that the size of the organisation did influence attitudes. Table 4.5 lists the key findings.

***Table 4.5 Key findings of communication professionals with experience of SM use in IC***

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<b><i>Key findings</i></b>		
SWOT findings	The experienced	Most of the experienced

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Chapter 4 – THE VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS WITH EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

	practitioners have a relatively balanced attitude toward the positives and negatives of applying SM to IC.	practitioners believe that lack of resources is the main reason why organisations stop purchasing the opportunities of using SM for IC.	
Experience effects	There is a high level of consensus among inexperienced practitioners with regard to the use of SM in IC in the long-term. All of them have a positive view of it.	Few experienced practitioners will refuse to apply SM to IC, but most of them will choose to not rely on using it.	43% of the experienced practitioners agreed with building SM into the intranet; another 43% do not advocate building SM into the intranet; only 14% have a neutral attitude.
Personal effects	Very few experienced practitioners personally think that SM are just harmful tools.	The experienced practitioners in the age group "31-40" prefer to choose to apply SM to IC in their organisations but do not rely on using it.	Most experienced practitioners with 1-5 years of seniority are unlikely to build SM into the intranet, but most of them prefer to apply SM to IC but do not rely on using it.
Organisational effects	The experienced practitioners from the large company consider having less latitude to refuse to use SM for IC.	The small and micro company have little interest in applying SM to IC because of their small-scale.	Most experienced practitioners from the public sector choose to use SM for IC but do not rely on using it, yet still, some of them will refuse to apply SM to IC.

*Note. SWOT=Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SM=Social Media. IC=Internal Communication.*

#### **4.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter presents the findings from an analysis of the views and experiences of the practitioners' (N=7) in this study who had experience using SM for IC in organisations. Those themes in their responses that addressed SM use for IC were coded according to whether they suggested a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat was associated with SM use. This analysis did not produce any strong patterns, in part due to the small number of professionals in this sub-sample. Then this chapter reported any data that linked personal and corporate factors to the decision to use SM at work. The findings did not suggest any personal factors affected the way the professionals responded. However, there was a weak indication that the size of the organisation did influence attitudes. Across the sub-sample of experienced practitioners, a clear consensus was not evident. There was an evenly mixed attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. Those in small organisations saw much less need for using SM, but all seven professionals reported being optimistic about the role of SM in organisations in the future.

## 5 THE VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS WITHOUT EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the strengths and weaknesses perceived by the 16 practitioners without experience applying SM to IC are presented, as well as their views on the opportunities and threats they perceived the use of SM in IC could bring to an organisation. The number of times each of these SWOT dimensions was mentioned is given in the tables at the start of each SWOT section. The findings of SWOT analysis are discussed regarding the literature reviewed Chapter Two. Based on the results of a theme frequency analysis, codes with high-frequency were marked as strong themes at the end of the SWOT analysis. Then this chapter analyses some factors that the data suggested may influence the inexperienced practitioners' views on using SM for IC. Finally, the key findings and a summary were presented.

### 5.2 THE PERCEIVED STRENGTHS

*Table 5.1 References made by professionals without experience to strengths of SM for IC*

<i>Strengths</i>					
Codes	IM	Two-way communication	Easy to use	Cheap	Access anywhere
Frequencies	5	2	1	2	2

*Note. IM=Instant Message.*

The data from the professionals without experience of SM in IC (N=16) were examined to see

what strengths they attributed to SM when used for IC. Only ten of them have perceived any strengths. Five pointed out the first strength which was coded as “IM”. It is considered to be the most typical technical advantage of SM. Due to this technology, field staff can see the information quicker, and all employees can get fast answers around work-related issues. Moreover, two respondents in big organisation support the theme of “access anywhere” by saying SM are easily accessible for staff and people across the country can keep in touch with using it.

The “two-way communication”, “easy to use” and the strength “cheap” are three strength codes that haven’t been presented by the professionals with experience. The code “two-way communication” was referred to how employees can use SM to have the bottom-up and horizontal communication rather than just having a top-down communication. Then two inexperienced professionals observed that SM are good tools for two-way communication. The code “cheap” was used to code data that referred to how SM can help the organisation to save costs. One communication manager from a small company agreed on SM do have some cost benefits, his company choose to refuse to use SM internally only because of the small organisation scale. The code “easy to use” was used to code data that referred to how people can easily master various SM platforms. One manager in a small company think SM are cheap and easy to use for everyone, and these two strengths are the dominant reason why his company applied SM to IC.

The first two codes “IM” and “access anywhere” are consistent with what experienced practitioners have mentioned in Chapter Four, and these two strengths are consistent with the literature review Chapter Two as well. As explained in Chapter Two, one of SM’s characteristics and functions is the conversation, and it especially supports two-way communication (Hong, 2013; McAfee, 2009; Kietzmann et al., 2011). Scholars also treat it as an advantage of SM use for IC (Argyris & Monu, 2015; Kulakofsky, 2016). Thus, “two-way communication” was the third strength of SM perceived by respondents. Some researchers found out that the organisations will use the interaction-friendly and low-cost nature of SM to

develop themselves (Balser & McClusky 2005; Rupp, Kern, & Helmig, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). The “cheap” and “easy to use” of SM, the last two codes, are consistent with what scholars have observed in the literature.

### 5.3 THE PERCEIVED WEAKNESSES

*Table 5.2 References made by professionals without experience to weaknesses of SM for IC*

<i>Weaknesses</i>	
Codes	Insecure channel
Frequencies	2

The data from the professionals without experience (N=16) were examined to see what weaknesses may prevent an organisation from applying SM to IC. Only two professionals mentioned any weaknesses, and the code “insecure channel” is the only weakness mentioned by them. One participant said their organisation refuse to employ SM in IC because it is too public, and they prefer to use the intranet. Another manager of an organisation noticed this weakness of SM as well, and he made some rules for using SM at work to avoid the private information safety issues. The weakness “insecure channel” was pointed out by the experienced practitioners in the former chapter, and it is consistent with what has been discussed in the literature.

### 5.4 THE PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES

*Table 5.3 References made by professionals without experience to opportunities of SM for IC*

<i>Opportunities</i>					
Codes	Knowledge	Staff	Culture	Collaboration	Improved
	sharing	engagement	building		efficiency



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Frequencies	1	4	1	1	2
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The data from the experienced professionals (N=16) were examined to see what opportunities SM may bring to an organisation. Only seven inexperienced professionals mentioned any opportunities, and referred five opportunities, including the three same opportunities as mentioned by the experienced practitioners. Two more different opportunities were mentioned by one inexperienced practitioner, which are knowledge sharing and culture building. This practitioner has not explained for these two opportunities in detail.

The three same themes are “collaboration”, “staff engagement”, and “improved efficiency”. The most frequent one is “staff engagement” which appeared four times. These respondents consider that SM can help staff to connect easily and keep people more engaged at work, and “It is a fun way to engage with other employees” said by one senior communication advisor. Two inexperienced practitioners believe that SM can improve work efficiency because it can enhance responsiveness. One respondent noticed this opportunity because they saved a lot of time using Skype for meetings. Another communication manager suggests that using SM for IC can improve collaboration, even though her company rejects to use SM internally because of its small-scale. This is captured in the following data excerpt:

Use SM for IC in a large organisation with several work locations could be beneficial for bringing people to work together.

In Chapter Four, the experienced practitioners recognised three opportunities which are consistent with what noted in the literature review chapter. These three opportunities also were perceived by the inexperienced practitioners, which are “staff engagement”, “collaboration”, and “improved efficiency”. As address in Chapter Two, SM can be used to manage knowledge in an organisation, and knowledge sharing is one advantage of using SM for IC (Wan, Zeng, & Hu, 2010; Ford & Mason, 2013; Rodriguez, 2010; Kosonen & Kianto, 2009). The practitioners’ views align with this statement. Another unique opportunity that has been noticed by one inexperienced practitioner is “culture building”. However, researchers have not made

statements on this point of view.

## 5.5 THE PERCEIVED THREATS

*Table 5.4 References made by professionals without experience to threats of SM for IC*

<i>Threats</i>							
Codes	Misuse	Small- scale	Waste time	Weak interest	Costs	Offensive information	Low proficiency
Frequencies	2	4	5	3	1	3	1

Data from the practitioners without experience (N=16) were examined to see what threats they thought were associated with using SM for IC. 12 respondents mentioned any threats, which were coded into seven different dimensions: “misuse”, “small-scale”, “waste time”, “costs”, “weak interest”, “offensive information”, and “low proficiency”.

The first four threats are the same as the experienced practitioners mentioned. In these four threats, “waste time” and “small-scale” are the major threats those participants mainly focus on, they have shown for five and four times respectively. The application of SM to IC requires time in all aspects. As mentioned by these experts, it is time-consuming to post information on different platforms, and it needs the organisation to invest time to run these SM platforms. One senior communication advisor from a big company is worrying about using SM for IC could be a time sink. This is addressed in the following data excerpt:

Monitoring is difficult as it comes down to me, so I need to be watching the feed 24/7 and mitigating messages where necessary.

In general, these respondents consider that employ SM in IC need the organisation to invest a lot of time but can gain a low return on investment.

Four professionals from three small organisations and one micro organisation share the same

view which was coded as “small-scale”. They reckon the small company have sufficient communication channels if applied one more channel it may occupy other resources. One professional explained his theme as captured in the following data excerpt:

There is no real need for social media as other communication channels are sufficient. e.g., Fortnightly all staff get-togethers, an intranet, email, team meetings, water cooler meetings, posters etc. We focus on getting people to interact physically, not just from their computers and too much emailing from person to person is discouraged.

The theme of “misuse” was mentioned twice, and the “costs” was mentioned once. Two participants have admitted that SM are a useful tool if it was used in the right way. However, overuse of SM can be widely seen. As one of the participants who is also a general manager from a small firm said:

It is easy to imagine situations where it could be used inappropriately. e.g., In the same ways as it can in any situation, bullying, profanity, taking people away from work to have too great a focus on social.

Only one communication advisor without experience thinks the costs will be one of the threats of applying SM to IC. This professional is from a big company, and the costs are the only reason why their company does not rely on using SM for IC. She said to run the SM platforms in a big company will need many resources and become pricy.

The “weak interest”, “offensive information”, and “low proficiency”, the last three themes, are different from what was noticed by the experienced practitioners. Three respondents proposed that people’s weak interest will set obstacles to the implementation of using SM as an IC channel. The circumstance of staff has no enthusiasm to use SM for IC was coded as “weak interest”. There is an advisor from a big firm which accepted the SM as a new communication channel but chose to not rely on using it. The reason why his company stops purchasing the benefits of it was addressed in the following data excerpt:

People have to want to use it. We ditched Yammer because people lost interest in using

it.

The code “offensive information” was mentioned three times. As we all know, most of the SM can create an anonymous account. It gives a place for people to attack everything recklessly through SM without being identified. In this circumstance, lots of people may become complainers exactly as one communication manager worried about. The other two respondents are afraid of everyone can easily post some inappropriate and harmful information via SM. The last different theme is coded as “low proficiency”, and only one professional without experience from a small firm has noticed it. He said his organisation choose to not rely on using SM for IC because not all users are proficient in using it. He suggests user proficiency is one of the factors that decide whether using SM internally can bring benefits to a company.

The “misuse”, “small-scale”, “waste time”, and “costs” are the same four threats that experienced practitioners have mentioned in the previous chapter, and only the threat of “misuse” is aligned with the content in the literature. One disadvantage of SM use for IC has been mentioned in Chapter Two, which is people can spread harmful information via SM (Dreher, 2014; Argenti & Barnes, 2009; Fire, Goldschmidt, & Elovici, 2014). The inexperienced practitioners proposed a similar theme which has been coded as “offensive information”. Therefore, the “offensive information” becomes a threat of applying SM to IC that consistent with the views in the literature. There are two circumstances were noticed by some inexperienced practitioners, which are employees’ weak interest in using SM for IC and users’ low proficiency of using SM are stopping a company to purchase the benefits of using SM. These two threats were coded as “weak interest” and “low proficiency”, and these codes were not mirrored in the findings of the studies that mentioned threats in the literature.

## **5.6 STRONGEST THEMES**

The database of professionals without experience is more extensive than the database of experienced professionals. With sufficient data, the high-frequency themes can be easily

identified. A code with three or more than three items becomes a code with the high-frequency. Therefore, the strongest themes proposed by inexperienced practitioners are gathered in the strengths (i.e., IM), the opportunities (i.e., staff engagement), and the threats (i.e., small-scale, waste time, weak interest, and offensive information).

Then, all the codes were aggregated, and the higher-level codes (i.e., positives and negatives) were discussed to produce another result. As shown in previous Table 5.1 and Table 5.3, the theme frequency of all the positive codes added together is 21. As shown in previous Table 5.2 and Table 5.4, the theme frequency of all the negative codes added together is 21 as well. This finding suggests that experienced communications experts have a balanced attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. Moreover, the perceived threats are the key part of all negative viewpoints.

In Appendix 10.7, each participants reason for their organisation's acceptable level of applying SM to IC was concluded in the column of "reason for acceptance". There are two main reasons can be found, which are "Have multiple channels" and "No need for a small organisation". The first main reason was mentioned six times. The second main reason was mentioned three times, which is aligns with the main threat.

## **5.7 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS**

Appendix 10.7 shows the key personal profiles, the organisational profiles, and various views on the usage of SM. Section 5.7.1 and Section 5.7.2 explored some personal and organisational factor that may affect those communication experts' choices of applying SM to IC, building SM into the intranet, and attitudes toward the role of SM in the long term. Then, the researcher will find out which factor could affect the way the professionals responded.

### 5.7.1 PERSONAL EFFECTS

For personal factors, including the factor of with experience or without experience, the factors of age, gender, personal connectivity, personal attitude, and seniority were considered (see Appendices 10.8.1-10.8.5).

The analysis revealed that the inexperienced practitioners had not achieved any consensus on using SM for IC, building SM into the intranet, and the attitudes toward the role of SM in the long term. There are five of sixteen (31.25%) professionals without experience refused to use SM for IC; four of sixteen (25%) people totally agreed with using SM at work; seven of sixteen (43.75%) people accepted applying SM to IC but do not rely on using it. As is shown in the tables, half of the professionals without experience have a positive attitude towards building SM into the intranet, including five (31.25%) people from the organisation already have the intranet in the form of SM. Five of sixteen (31.25%) professionals do not want to build SM into the intranet; only one (6.25%) of them is unaligned, and there are two participants have not given a certain answer of it. The inexperienced professionals have differing attitudes towards the role of SM in the long-term. Six of sixteen (37.5%) people think positively about this, and another six (37.5%) people have a neutral attitude towards this. Only two (12.5%) professionals think SM will have a negative role in the long-term, and there are two (12.5%) people said they are not sure about it.

As shown in Appendix 10.8.1, most of the inexperienced participants are from age groups “31-40” and “41-50”. Comparing these two age groups, it is clear that in the attitude of neutrality towards the long-term role of SM, the proportion of people in the age group “41-50” (62.5%) is much higher than the proportion of people in the age group “31-40” (16.7%). For the acceptable level of applying SM to IC, the probability of opposing the use of SM among people aged 41-50 (37.5%) is slightly higher than that of people aged 31-40 (16.7%), and half of the inexperienced professionals aged 31-40 prefer to choose to employ SM in IC in their organisations but do not rely on using it. These findings suggest that the age did influence the

professionals' attitudes.

Since the majority of inexperienced participants are female (see Appendix 10.8.2), it is hard to tell if gender has an impact on the choices of applying SM to IC. What can be presented by the table is that females have a high possibility (50%) to accept employing SM in IC but not rely on using it, and half of the females think positively towards building SM into the intranet. Moreover, as can be seen in this table, most of the female (41.7%) hold a positive attitude, but most of the male (75%) hold a neutral attitude. These findings little suggest that the gender factor may affect people's attitude towards the role of SM in the long term.

Most of the inexperienced professionals use SM in a monitoring and functional way when they use it personally (see Appendix 10.8.3), and there are no sufficient data from people with reluctant connectivity and avid connectivity. The data reveal that the professionals with monitoring connectivity are more willing to accept building SM into the intranet as four of them are already built such intranet in their organisation, and one of them suggested the organisation to have such intranet. In addition, the majority of (62.5%) professionals with monitoring connectivity prefer to accept using SM for IC but do not rely on it, and this ratio is much higher than the ratio (20%) in “functional” group. These findings suggest that the personal connectivity factor did affect the professionals' preferences.

Unlike most of the professionals with experience have a positive personal attitude toward SM, most of the professionals without experience have a neutral attitude. No apparent patterns can be found in the negative personal attitude group because of its insufficient data. No apparent patterns can be found in the positive personal attitude group due to its mixed choices and attitudes. The Appendix 10.8.4 shows that there are six of nine (67%) people with neutral attitude are willing to build SM into the intranet, and among these people there are four (44%) already have an SM-based intranet. Moreover, people with neutral personal attitude have a great possibility to accept employing SM in IC but not dependent on it, most of them have a neutral attitude towards the role of SM in the long term as well. No findings indicate that the

personal attitude factor could influence the professionals' attitudes toward using SM for IC.

Same as the participants with experience, most of the professionals without experience (62.5%) are with 1-5 years of seniority. As shown in Appendix 10.8.5, most (60%) of people in this group accept applying SM to IC but do not rely on using it. Moreover, most (60%) of professionals with 1-5 years of seniority have a positive answer to building SM into the intranet, and few (20%) of them have a negative attitude towards the role of SM in the long term. It means, they are most likely to build SM into the intranet, which is contrary to the findings of experienced professionals.

### 5.7.2 ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS

Two organisational factors are considered that may affect people's attitudes and choices, which are the scale of organisation and the type of organisation. As can be seen in Appendix 10.9.1, most of the experts without experience are from small and large companies. No apparent preference can be found in the group of people from the small company. It was evident that people from large company prefer to accept applying SM to IC but do not rely on it. In addition, in deciding whether to build SM into the intranet, people (62.5%) from the large company are more likely to build an SM-based intranet than people (40%) from small companies. These findings suggest that the scale factor did influence people's choice of building SM into the intranet.

Since there are few professionals come from the private sector or NGO (as established in Appendix 10.9.2), no valid patterns can be found in these two groups. In the group of "public sector", the researcher finds out that half of the professionals (50%) choose to use SM for IC but do not rely on it, and there are still quite a few people (33%) refuse to use SM for IC. Moreover, 67% professionals from the public sector are willing to build SM into the intranet, and few (17%) of them have a negative attitude towards the role of SM in the long term. No findings indicate that the type factor could influence the professionals' attitudes.



## **5.8 KEY FINDINGS**

After conducting a SWOT analysis on the inexperienced communication professionals, the researcher finds out one strong theme in strengths, one strong theme in opportunities, and four strong themes in threats. Based on the extra data in Appendix 10.7, the researcher finds out two main reasons why an organisation stops purchasing the opportunities of using SM for IC. When the analysis categorised the themes as positives and negatives, one more pattern was found. With sufficient data, the researcher concludes some patterns of inexperienced professionals' attitudes and choices and found out which factors could influence the professionals' attitudes (i.e., age, gender, personal connectivity, and scale of organisation). Table 5.5 lists the key findings.

**Table 5.5 Key findings of communication professionals without experience of SM use in IC**

		<b>Key findings</b>		
SWOT findings		The main strength of SM is “IM”; the main opportunity of applying SM to IC is “staff engagement”; the main threats are “waste time”, “small-scale”, “weak interest” and “offensive information”.	The inexperienced practitioners have a balanced attitude toward the positives and negatives of applying SM to IC.	“Have multiple channels” and “No need for a small organisation” are two main reasons why organisations do not rely on using SM for IC or refusing to use SM for IC.
Experience effects		There is not a high level of consensus among inexperienced practitioners with regard to the use of SM in IC in the long-term. Only 37.5% think positively about this, while 37.5% have a neutral attitude towards this. Only 12.5% of professionals think SM will have a negative role in the long-term.	31.25% professionals without experience refuse to use SM for IC; 25% enjoy using SM for IC; 43.75% accept applying SM to IC, but they do not rely on using it.	50% of professionals have a positive attitude towards building SM into the intranet; 31.25% professionals do not advocate building SM into the intranet; only 6.25% hold a neutral attitude.
Personal effects	Age (influencing factor)	In regard to the acceptable level of using SM for IC, the probability of opposing the use of SM among people aged 41-50 (37.5%) is slightly higher than that of people aged 31-40 (16.7%).	People aged 41-50 are much more likely to have a neutral attitude towards the long-term role of SM than people age 31-	50% of people without experience aged 31-40 prefer to choose to apply SM to IC in their organisations but do not rely on using it.

40.			
Gender (influencing factor)	Most females hold a positive attitude towards the role of SM in the long term, but most of the male holds a neutral attitude.	Female are more likely to accept employing SM in IC in principle, but few rely on using it in practice.	Half of the females think positively towards building SM into the intranet.
Personal connectivity (influencing factor)	Professionals with monitoring connectivity are more likely to choose "applying SM to IC but do not rely on it" than those with functional personal connectivity.	People with monitoring connectivity are more willing to accept building SM into the intranet.	
Personal attitude	People with neutral personal attitude are more likely to accept employing SM in IC but do not rely on using it.	Most people with a neutral attitude are willing to build SM into the intranet.	Most people with a neutral attitude have a neutral attitude towards the role of SM in the long term as well.
Seniority	Most professionals with 1-5 years of seniority have a positive choice for building SM into the intranet.	Most people with 1-5 years of seniority prefer to apply SM to IC but do not rely on using it.	Few professionals with 1-5 years of seniority have a negative attitude towards the role of SM in the long term.
Organisational effects	Scale (influencing factor) People from a large company are more likely to build an SM-based intranet than people from small companies.	Practitioners from a large company prefer to accept applying SM to IC but not rely on	

Type	it.
In the public sector, most professionals choose to use SM for IC but do not rely on it. Nevertheless, there are still quite a few people refuse to use SM for IC.	Most professionals from the public sector are willing to build SM into the intranet. Only a few people from the public sector have a negative attitude towards the role of SM in the long term.

*Note. SWOT=Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SM=Social Media. IC=Internal Communication. IM=Instant Message.*

## 5.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presents the findings from an analysis of the views and experience of the practitioners (N=16) in this study who do not have experience using SM for IC in organisations. The themes in their responses that addressed SM use for IC are based on whether they suggested a strength, weakness, opportunity or threat associated with SM's use. This analysis produced some strongest themes, which are related to "IM", "staff engagement", "small-scale", "waste time", "weak interest", and "offensive information". Moreover, there was an evenly mixed attitude toward the positives and negatives of applying SM to IC. Then this chapter reported any data that linked personal and corporate factors to the decision to use SM at work and discovered four influencing factors which are age, gender, personal connectivity, and scale of organisation. There was not a high level of consensus among inexperienced practitioners with regard to the use of SM in IC in the long-term, the acceptable level of using SM for IC, and attitudes toward building SM into the intranet.

## **6 COMPARING THE INFLUENCE OF EXPERIENCE ON VIEWS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

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### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

At first, this chapter compares the views from experienced practitioners with those from inexperienced practitioners, exploring the similar and different views on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of applying SM to IC (as presented in Table 6.1, Table 6.2, and Table 6.3). Based on the key findings of the previous two chapters (see Table 4.5 and Table 5.5), whether the experienced and inexperienced experts would have the same choices of using SM internally was explored. Then, this chapter compares the impact of personal and organisational factors on these two-different group of professionals. Finally, patterns of similarities and differences between experienced and inexperienced practitioners were summarised.

**Table 6.1 Themes mentioned by both experienced professionals and professionals without experience**

		<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Weakness</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>		<b>Threats</b>				
Codes		IM	Access anywhere	Insecure channel	Collaboration	Staff engagement	Improved efficiency	Misuse	Waste time	Small- scale	Costs
Frequencies	mentioned by	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
experienced professionals											
Frequencies	mentioned by	5	2	2	1	4	2	2	5	4	1
inexperienced professionals											
Total frequencies		6	4	3	2	6	3	3	6	6	2

Note. IM=Instant Message.

**Table 6.2 Themes that only mentioned by inexperienced professionals**

		<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Opportunities</b>		<b>Threats</b>			
Codes		Two-way communication	Cheap	Easy to use	Knowledge sharing	Culture building	Weak interest	Offensive information	Low proficiency
Frequencies		2	2	1	1	1	3	3	1

**Table 6.3 Themes that only mentioned by experienced professionals**

	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Threats</i>
Codes	Less formal mode	Not tailored to the organisation's needs	Lack of resources
Frequencies	1	1	2

## 6.2 STRENGTHS

As shown in Table 6.1, professionals with or without experience all noticed that the “IM” and “access anywhere” are two strengths of SM, and the total frequencies indicate that these two strengths can be regarded as the main strengths mentioned by practitioners. Apart from these two main strengths, the inexperienced professionals have mentioned three more strengths of SM, and the experienced professionals found one more. When considering what other strengths of SM could improve IC, the inexperienced professionals mentioned the two-way communication platform offered by SM. However, the experienced professionals mentioned a different one - SM provides a way of a way of communicating less formally. Some inexperienced professionals also considered other aspects of strengths, includes SM are user-friendly for employees, and it is conducive to control organisational costs since most PSM platforms are cheap.

## 6.3 WEAKNESSES

There is only one common weakness of SM was noticed, which is “insecure channel”, and this weakness was only mentioned once and two times by the experienced practitioners and inexperienced practitioners respectively. The total frequencies of this theme mentioned by practitioners achieved the requirement to become a high-frequency code. Therefore, the “insecure channel” was SM’s main weaknesses that recognised by practitioners. Unlike the inexperienced experts only found out one weakness of SM, one experienced people have



discovered another weakness, which is PSM was not tailored to the organisation's needs.

#### **6.4 OPPORTUNITIES**

See the total frequencies in Table 6.1, the opportunities for improving staff engagement and efficiency are the two strong themes mentioned by all practitioners. One experienced practitioner and one inexperienced practitioner both mentioned applying SM to IC could improve collaboration, but with its low frequency, it cannot be treated as a strong theme. There are two more opportunities that the inexperienced professionals think using SM for IC will bring to a company, which are encouraging knowledge sharing and facilitating culture building. However, these are not strong themes due to only very few people have noticed these two aspects.

#### **6.5 THREATS**

There are five codes are with three or more than three items (see Table 6.1 and Table 6.2), which are “misuse”, “waste time”, “weak interest”, “small-scale”, and “offensive information”. These five themes become the main threats of applying SM to IC mentioned by the practitioners. Among these five themes, there are two strong themes are only mentioned by inexperienced people; three strong themes were mentioned by both experienced practitioners and inexperienced practitioners. Most experienced experts and inexperienced experts all concerned about their organisation are too small to use SM for IC, the staff's misuse of SM and they are afraid of using SM at work will become a time sink. The inexperienced professionals notice that employees' weak interest in using SM will make SM cannot be fully utilized, and the offensive information online will be harmful to an organisation. One inexperienced professional mentioned a unique theme that the low proficiency of users would also become a threat. There is one more threat was mentioned twice only by the experienced professionals, which is lacking resources in an organisation.

## 6.6 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS

Comparing Table 4.5 with Table 5.5, the researcher explores whether the experience factor has an influence on the practitioner's choices and attitudes towards using SM for IC. In terms of "acceptance", the results of these two groups of people are consistent. Most experienced professionals and most inexperienced professionals both choose to apply SM to IC but not rely on using it. In regard to building SM into the intranet and the long-term role of SM, the experience factor affects professionals' choices. The experienced experts all have a positive attitude towards the long-term role of SM, but the inexperienced experts have various attitudes towards this. Most inexperienced professionals think positively in building SM into the intranet. On the contrary, among the experienced group, the positive attitudes and negative attitudes are mixed in equal amounts.

There are only three critical personal effects of the experienced practitioners can be found and can be compared with the personal effects of inexperienced practitioners. These three patterns are about their personal attitude towards SM, how "age" and "seniority" affects professional's choices (see Table 4.5). No one holds negative personal attitude among professionals with experience, and there are only two inexperienced professionals hold negative personal attitude (see Appendix 10.7). The data suggest that few practitioners think SM are just harmful tools, and the experience factor does not affect personal attitudes. Another two same personal effects of experienced and inexperienced practitioners are people aged 31-40 and people with 1-5 years of seniority both prefer to choose to apply SM to IC in their organisations but do not rely on using it. As mentioned in the last paragraph, the experience factor will affect people's choices of building SM into the intranet, and this difference mainly concentrated in the seniority effects. The vital personal effects of experienced professionals indicate that people who are with 1-5 years of seniority are most unlikely to build SM into the intranet. However, most inexperienced professionals with 1-5 years of seniority have a positive choice for building SM into the intranet.

Comparing the key organisational effects of inexperienced professionals with three vital organisational effects of experienced professionals (see Table 4.5 and Table 5.5), some similarities can be easily found. No matter with or without experience, practitioners from a large company prefer to accept applying SM to IC but not rely on using it. Moreover, most practitioners from the public sector prefer to choose to use SM for IC but do not rely on it. Nevertheless, there are still quite a few people refuse to use SM for IC. Because there are not many experienced participants, the data are not enough for the researcher to identify an absolute difference of organisational effects.

## **6.7 SUMMARY**

After compared the experienced practitioners' views with inexperienced practitioners' views on the SWOT of using SM at work, the findings suggested that experience is not a factor that affects the views of SM use in IC. The experienced people had similar views as those inexperienced people, most strongest themes of practitioners were from the common views of them, such as the "IM" and "access anywhere" of strengths; the "insecure channel" of weakness; the "staff engagement" and "improved efficiency" of opportunities; and the "misuse", "waste time", "small-scale" of threats. However, there were still a few main views that have only been proposed by the inexperienced practitioners, which are the "weak interest" and "offensive information" of threats.

Ten strongest themes of practitioners have been discussed with the arguments in the literature. The strongest themes of strengths, weakness, and opportunities are all consistent with those presented in the literature. There are three of five threats mentioned by practitioners cannot be found in the literature, which is "waste time", "small-scale", and "weak interest". It is considered that the practitioners may notice more risks through real-world experience than scholars. As can be found in the literature, "two-way communication", "knowledge sharing", "collaboration", "easy to use", and "cheap" were treated as the strengths and opportunities of

using SM for IC. However, very few practitioners have mentioned these themes. It is suggested that scholars may recognise more positives of using SM for IC than the practitioners.

After compared the personal effects and organisational effects of two different groups of practitioners, some similarities and differences were listed (see Table 6.4). The similarities were also formed the key patterns of both experienced practitioners and inexperienced practitioners.

**Table 6.4 Key findings of the comparison between two groups of practitioners**

	<i>Similarities</i>	<i>Differences</i>
Experience & Personal effects	Experience (EXP): Most experienced professionals and most inexperienced professionals both prefer to choose to apply SM to IC but not rely on using it.	EXP: Professionals with experience all think positively in the long-term role of SM, but less than half of those without experience think in the same way. Half of the inexperienced experts have a positive answer to building SM into the intranet, but less than half of the experienced experts have the same answer.
Personal attitude:	Very few practitioners only think that SM are negative.	
Age & Seniority:	The practitioners aged 31-40 and practitioners with 1-5 years of seniority both prefer to choose to apply SM to IC in their organisations but do not rely on using it.	Seniority: Most experienced practitioners with 1-5 years of seniority are unlikely to build SM into the intranet. However, most inexperienced practitioners with 1-5 years of seniority have a positive choice for building SM into the intranet.
Organisational effects	Scale and Type: Most practitioners from a large company and most practitioners from the public sector both prefer to accept applying SM to IC but not rely	

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on using it.

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*Note. EXP=Experience.*

## 7 THE VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Seventeen of 40 respondents are from the consultancy firms. They have been asked some questions that are slightly different from practitioners. In this chapter, the strengths and weaknesses of SM perceived by the 17 consultants are presented, as well as the opportunities and threats they perceived the use of SM in IC could bring to an organisation. The number of times each of these SWOT dimensions was mentioned is given in the tables at the start of each SWOT section. Then the findings with regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are discussed in terms of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. This chapter analyses some factors that the data suggested may have an influence on the consultant's views on using SM for IC. In addition, this chapter presents some similar and different patterns between practitioners and consultants. Finally, the key findings and a summary were presented.

### 7.2 THE PERCEIVED STRENGTHS

*Table 7.1 References made by consultants to strengths of SM for IC*

<i>Strengths</i>						
Codes	Access anywhere	Two-way communication	Cheap	IM	Good visual	Accuracy
Frequencies	4	3	1	6	1	2

*Note. IM=Instant Message.*

The data from the consultants (N=17) were examined to see what strengths they perceived when SM used for IC. 12 of them had mentioned any strengths. Six different strengths of SM

that are beneficial to improving IC have been discussed. Six recognised the first strength, which was coded as “IM”. This advantage of real-time text transmission has been widely admitted; it helps the staff can obtain corporate updates faster and can reach other workers quickly.

Another two themes that mentioned repeatedly are “access anywhere” and “two-way communication”. Four respondents support the theme of “access anywhere” by saying SM allows the field staff and staff who are not located in their office have an easy way to access and share corporate information. It is beneficial to communicating widely as well; there is no one-to-one communication restriction. The “two-way communication” was referred to how employees can use SM to have two-way communication with people from a different organisational hierarchy. One communication consultant from a large consultancy firm noticed a circumstance as captured in the following data excerpt:

SM are two-way communication channels. You can send an email to the entire office, but people do not generally reply to all.

As she said, email usually is a one-way communication channel, and in most cases, people will not reply to the email with corporate news. Moreover, the email intercept system sometimes may block the wrong emails due to network issues or mail box’s functional bugs. If using SM to post corporate news, technical bugs can be avoided and every staff can see comments from employees.

The last three strengths were only mentioned one or two times, which were coded as “accuracy”, “cheap”, and “good visual”. The theme code “accuracy” represented two different meanings, one is “recipient accuracy”, and another is “information accuracy”. One communication consultant regards SM as a good platform to approach the target audiences as everyone uses it at some level. Through knowing the online personal profile, it helps people to contact the specific people or to know whom they should contact. Another consultant pointed out a strength relates to “information accuracy”, she noticed that using SM to share information can reach the consistency of message and avoidance of errors during the information spreading process. The theme code “good visual” was mentioned only once; it has a similar meaning to

the “easy to use” mentioned by one professional without experience (see Table 5.1). One consultant considers that some PSM platforms can become an effective and cheap channel for IC in the organisation.

The themes code “IM”, “access anywhere”, “two-way communication”, and “cheap” have appeared in Chapter Four and Chapter Five as well. Moreover, these four strengths are consistent with the relevant content mentioned in the literature review chapter. According to the explanation in Chapter Five and this section, the theme code “good visual” is similar to “easy to use” mentioned by a practitioner. These two themes both can be connected to the interaction-friendly strength referred in Chapter Two. Thus, “good visual” becomes a strength of applying SM to IC that aligns with the literature.

The last theme code “accuracy” is composed of “recipient accuracy” and “information accuracy” as explained before. These two themes of “accuracy” are contrary to what has been proposed in the literature. In Chapter Two, scholars found out that it is hard to identify each communicator because of the anonymity of SM account, and this brings challenges and difficulties to managers’ work (Bloom & Hautaluoma, 1987; Rains & Scott, 2007) unless all employees are required to use an SM account with a real name registered in their organisation. The literature indicates that it is difficult to distinguish the valid information from the extensive information on SM (Hong, 2012). This argument denies the theme of “information accuracy” proposed by the consultants. Thus, the theme of “accuracy” is not consistent with the findings in the literature.

### 7.3 THE PERCEIVED WEAKNESSES

*Table 7.2 References made by consultants to weaknesses of SM for IC*

<i>Weaknesses</i>						
Codes	Insecure	Limit messaging	Mixed message	Not	tailored	to the



	channel			organisation's needs
Frequencies	3	2	1	1

The data from the consultants (N=17) were examined to see what weaknesses may prevent an organisation from applying SM to IC. Only seven of them mentioned any weaknesses. The first weakness was coded as “insecure channel”, which is the only main weakness noticed by practitioners as well. Three consultants consider the openness of SM may bring negative influences on the company, as it is hard to switch off, and all internal information can easily become external. The second weakness is “limit messaging”, it is referred to the SM’s word limit of each post may have a bad effect on the content of information. The consultants consider this limitation may lead to losing key messages and reducing the effectiveness of information. The theme code “mixed message” is a new theme mentioned by one female consultant. She noticed that because everyone can access SM and post on it, so many messages are mixed together. She considers it may have a bad influence on identifying valid information. The last theme code is “not tailored to the organisation’s needs”, which has been mentioned once in Chapter Four. One consultant reckons the PSM platforms are lack of personalised ability to apply to the various companies’ situation.

The theme of “insecure channel” has been proposed by both practitioners and consultants; relevant content also can be found in many journal articles. Thus, “insecure channel” becomes a typical weakness of applying SM to IC that is consistent with the literature. A circumstance has been noticed by one practitioner and one consultant, which is PSM platforms are not tailored to the organisation’s needs. However, the literature review did not identify any studies that referred to this theme. According to the consultants, the word limit of each post on SM could become a limitation and weakness of using SM for IC, but relevant statements in this regard could not be found in the literature.

The last theme code “mixed message” can be linked to the “low signal-to-noise ratio” mentioned in Chapter Two. Mixing much information generates a lot of noise outside of

important information (Hong, 2012), therefore, “mixed message” is a weakness that consistent with the findings in the literature. Moreover, the code “mixed message” can be related to an earlier code “accuracy”, but an opposite relationship between these two codes was discovered.

#### 7.4 THE PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES

*Table 7.3 References made by consultants to opportunities of SM for IC*

<i>Opportunities</i>				
Codes	Knowledge sharing	Staff engagement	Culture building	Collaboration
Frequencies	3	2	2	2

The data from the consultants (N=17) were examined to see what opportunities SM may bring to an organisation. Only six have mentioned any opportunities. There are four opportunities for using SM for IC can be captured, and all these four opportunities have been perceived by practitioners as well. The first important one was coded as “knowledge sharing”. There are three different ways of sharing knowledge have been presented by the consultants, which are sharing experiences, sharing company achievements, and sharing ideas. One consultant gave an example of how SM can improve knowledge sharing as captured in the following data excerpt:

In large organisations, it can help share ideas across different divisions within the organisation and access different offices.

The consultants consider that use SM for IC can also provide the organisation with opportunities for enhancing team collaboration and improving staff engagement; these were coded as “collaboration” and “staff engagement”. Active conversation offered by SM allows people to connect across organisational boundaries and foster much faster collaboration and decision making. Moreover, it may boost staff engagement.

The last opportunity was coded as “culture building”. Applying SM to IC will expose the

existing culture, it can help to build the team culture in a good way. However, it can also lead to failure because of a negative culture, which will be explained in the next section. A consultant gave an alert based on his years of work experience. This is captured in the following data excerpt:

I look very, very carefully at the existing culture and leadership style, including organisational silos. Social media as an internal communication tool will expose and exacerbate the existing culture, for better or worse. If organisational leaders are not good, active communicators, or if the organisation is tending towards siloed turf fights, smart tactics are needed.

The four opportunities have been proposed by practitioners as well. As discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, the themes of “knowledge sharing”, “staff engagement”, and “collaboration” are aligned with the findings in the literature. However, the relevant argument in regard to “culture building” could not be found in the literature.

## 7.5 THE PERCEIVED THREATS

*Table 7.4 References made by consultants to threats of SM for IC*

<i>Treats</i>						
Codes	Misuse	Offensive information	Leaking sensitive information	Waste time	Reputation management issues	Spread negative culture
Frequencies	4	2	2	3	1	2

The data from the consultants (N=17) were examined to see what threats they thought were associated with using SM for IC. Eight respondents mentioned any threats, which were coded into six different dimensions: “misuse”, “waste time”, “offensive information”, “leaking sensitive information”, “reputation management issues” and “spread negative culture”. Only

three threats are the same as those mentioned by practitioners, which are “misuse”, “waste time”, and “offensive information”. One consultant is worried about over-engaged with SM may have negative influences on the organisations. Another three consultants have the same concerning. People may not use SM as a two-way communication device to have a work-related conversation. The consultants suggest that SM could be too much distracting, and it is quite hard for the manager to monitor and control the overuse of SM.

A consultant gave a fascinating answer to what negative impact that using SM for IC will have on an organisation. This is captured in the following data excerpt:

It depends if the channel is private or open and if the organisation is concerned about the potential sharing of internal information. If it is, social media might allow very easy sharing of information the organisation considers sensitive. Also, if the organisation wishes to manage the internal channel as a closed group, managing access could be quite time-consuming, especially in a large organisation.

This leads to two themes of threat which were coded as “waste time” and “leaking sensitive information”. To train the staff to use SM for work properly and to manage SM platform could be a time waster, and whether the organisation can get a return on investment is uncertain. Some new staff in an enterprise or employees in a company just started to use SM for IC; they may do not know how to curate their posts to keep themselves and their organisation safe. Thus, some inappropriate and sensitive information could be leaked through an insecure channel. This can also be linked to the theme code “insecure channel” mentioned earlier.

The theme “spread negative culture” is another threat of using SM at work. One consultant claimed that the openness feature of SM makes it can be used for everyone, so SM communication may contribute to spreading negative culture. Another consultant gave a detailed explanation of this according to her observation. She said when morale is low, or negativity exists then workers may express this via social rather than going to the source to find out the problems. It is difficult to control all the posts on SM as mentioned before. Thus, it is hard to limit the negative culture spread through SM.

The last two threats were coded as “offensive information” and “reputation management issues”. In some cases, SM can erode inter-personal communication, like cyber-bullying. As one consultant’s consideration captured in the following data excerpt:

Social media tends towards flame wars and online mobs; it is crucial to defuse these and reinforce a basic expectation of civilised communication.

In regard to why applying SM to IC may threaten reputation management, it is because not all internal users can accurately identify the blurred boundary between internal and external. This makes it harder to mitigate risk to reputation when they speak their mind as it might become externally.

Three themes “misuse”, “offensive information”, and “waste time” have been mentioned by practitioners in previous chapters as well. Only the “misuse” and “offensive information” are in line with the findings in the literature. No discussions related to “waste time” can be found in the literature. The “leaking sensitive information”, “reputation management issues, and “spread negative culture” are three new codes proposed by the consultants. The theme of “reputation management issues” was only mentioned once, and it was not mirrored in the findings of the studies that mentioned threats in the literature. As noted in Chapter Two, if the functions of SM have not been used properly, it may cause confidential or sensitive information disclosure (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Fire, Goldschmidt, & Elovici, 2014). This argument is in line with the consultants' worry of leaking sensitive information. People can express not only happiness but also depression via SM, and staff in a bad mood may transfer their negative feelings intentionally or unconsciously to the information they posted (Welch, 2012; Dreher, 2014). This finding in the literature is consistent with the theme of “spread negative culture” mentioned by the consultants.

## **7.6 STRONGEST THEMES**

With sufficient data, clear results can be produced. Seven codes that with three or more than

three items were marked as the high-frequency theme codes. These seven strongest themes are from four SWOT dimensions, which are “IM”, “access anywhere”, and “two-way communication” from strengths; “insecure channel” from weaknesses; “knowledge sharing” from opportunities; “misuse” and “waste time” from treats.

Then, the higher-level codes like positive and negative views were used, these allowed all codes to be aggregated and produced another result. If all positive views (see Table 7.1 and Table 7.3) were added together separately, then positive codes were mentioned 26 times. Similarly, when all the negative codes (see Table 7.2 and Table 7.4) were aggregated, then negative codes were mentioned 21 times. The frequency of positive code is higher than the frequency of negative code. This finding suggests that consultants have a relatively biased attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. They perceived more benefits than disadvantages.

## **7.7 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS**

Appendix 10.10 shows the consultants’ key personal profiles, the organisational profiles, and various views on the usage of SM. Section 7.7.1 and Section 7.7.2 explored some personal and organisational factor that may affect communication consultants’ attitudes toward building SM into the intranet and the role of SM in the long term. Then, the researcher will find out which factor could affect the way the professionals responded. A series of data for statistic has been established in Appendices 10.11 and Appendix 10.12. As shown in Appendix 10.12, nearly all consultants are from the micro-consultancy firm. These consultants believe SM plays an essential role in the long term, and they suggest the organisations to build SM into the intranet. No consultant does not recommend the companies to establish an SM-based intranet.

See from the age group table, most of the consultants are from three different age groups which are “31-40”, “41-50”, and “51-60”. Consultants aged 31-50 are more likely to recommend the organisation to build an SM-based intranet than those aged 51-60. Most

consultants aged 41-60 think SM plays a significant role in the long term, but people of other ages may have different opinions. Female consultants are the main participants as shown in Appendix 10.11.2. Most female consultants have a positive attitude towards the long-term role of SM, and they suggest the organisation to build SM into the intranet. Most male consultants suggest the organisation to have an SM-based intranet, just one of four is optimistic about the long-term role of SM.

As can be seen in Appendix 10.11.3, most consultants have monitoring connectivity, and no one is reluctant to use SM for his or her personal life. Most consultants with monitoring and avid connectivity prefer to suggest a company to build an SM-based intranet, but only one consultant with functional connectivity agrees on this. In addition, the table shows that consultants with functional and avid connectivity are more likely to have a positive view on the long-term role of SM than those with monitoring connectivity.

See from Appendix 10.11.4, only one of 17 consultants personally think SM are just bad tools. There are six consultants think SM are great, and another ten can see both the right side and the wrong side of SM. In the positive attitude group, three answers to the role of SM in the long term are unsure, and three consultants have never considered whether an organisation should build an SM-based intranet or not. Thus, no patterns can be found from consultants with positive attitudes. In the neutral attitude group, it is evident that most consultants recommend the firms to build SM into the intranet, and most of them think SM plays a vital role in the long term.

Most consultants are with 16-20 years of seniority, which is generally longer than the seniority of practitioners. As presented in Appendix 10.11.5, most of the consultants are with 16-20 years of seniority, and only a few of them worked as a communication expert for less than six years. Ten consultants are with more than ten years of seniority, and seven of them recommend the organisations build SM into the intranet. There are still quite a few people with 16-20 years of seniority have a neutral attitude towards building an SM-based intranet.

Moreover, in separate seniority groups, consultants have a differing attitude toward the role of SM in the long term.

**Table 7.5 Key personal and organisational effects of consultants**

<b>Key findings</b>			
Personal effects	Age (influencing factor)	Consultants aged 31-40 and aged 41-50 are more likely to recommend the organisation to build an SM-based intranet than those aged 51-60.	Most consultants aged 41-50 and aged 51-60 think SM plays a significant role in the long term.
	Gender (influencing factor)	Most female consultants have a positive attitude towards the long-term role of SM while males have a differing attitude.	Most female and male consultants suggest the organisation to have an SM-based intranet.
	Personal connectivity (influencing factor)	Consultants with monitoring and avid connectivity are more likely to suggest a company to build an SM-based intranet than those with functional connectivity.	Consultants with functional and avid connectivity are more likely to have a positive view on the long-term role of SM than those with monitoring connectivity.
	Personal attitude	Very few consultants personally think SM are just bad tools.	Most consultants with a neutral attitude recommend the firms to build SM into the intranet, and most of them think SM plays a vital role in the long term.
	Seniority	Most consultants with more than 10 years of seniority (70%) recommend the organisations build SM into the intranet.	Most consultants are with 16-20 years of seniority, which is generally longer than the seniority of practitioners.
Organisational		Consultants from micro company	



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effects	consider SM plays an essential role in  the long term, and they suggest the  organisations to build SM into the  intranet.
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## 7.8 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS AND CONSULTANTS

### 7.8.1 SWOT

In Appendix 10.2, all the theme frequencies of practitioners were presented. The theme frequency of all positive codes is very close to the theme frequency of all negative codes, which are 29 and 30 respectively. This finding suggests that practitioners have a relatively balanced attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. Moreover, the threats perceived by practitioners are the critical part of all negative viewpoints since the code frequency of weaknesses is four and the code frequency of threats is 26. In contrast, as discussed in an earlier section, communication consultants have a relatively biased attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. They are more inclined to observe the benefits of SM and have a more optimistic attitude in applying SM to IC. Moreover, the perceived strengths are the key part of all positive viewpoints.

Appendix 10.2 and Appendix 10.3 recorded all theme codes that proposed by practitioners and consultants respectively. According to the data in these two appendices, Table 7.6 lists the strongest themes of SWOT that practitioners and consultants both mentioned, as well as the different strongest themes.

***Table 7.6 Strongest themes of SWOT from practitioners and consultants***

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<i>Practitioners</i>	<i>Consultants</i>
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Strengths	IM	IM
	Access anywhere	Access anywhere
		Two-way communication
Weaknesses	Insecure channel	Insecure channel
Opportunities	Staff engagement	Knowledge sharing
	Improved efficiency	
Threats	Misuse	Misuse
	Waste time	Waste time
	Weak interest	
	Small-scale	
	Offensive information	

As presented above, two core views on strengths were recognised by both practitioners and consultants, which are “IM” and “access anywhere”. The findings of weaknesses suggest that the practitioners and consultants both consider “insecure channel” is the only main weakness of using SM for IC. The last two strongest themes they all put forwarded are from the threats, which are “misuse” and “waste time”.

The strength theme “two-way communication” and the threat theme “offensive information” are also mentioned by both of them, but only the consultants suggest “two-way communication” is a key strength, and only the practitioners regard “offensive information” as the main threat. With respect to the views on opportunities, an interesting difference between Appendix 10.2 and Appendix 10.3 was found. All the four opportunities noticed by consultants are exactly the same as practitioners have noticed. However, the researcher could not find one same strongest theme in these opportunities, the consultants pay more attention to knowledge sharing, and the practitioners prefer to seize the opportunity of improving staff engagement.

## 7.8.2 KEY PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS

To find out if there are any similar or different personal and organisational effects between practitioners and consultant, the Table 4.5, Table 5.5, and Table 7.5, along with the Appendix 10.10, Appendix 10.4, and Appendix 10.7 were used to produce the findings. These appendices present some similarities between the practitioners and consultants' attitudes toward using SM for IC. Most (56.5%) practitioners think positively in the long-term role of SM and most (47.1%) consultants think in the same way. Most (47.8%) practitioners suggest their organisation to have an SM-based intranet, and some of them already have one. The same is that the most (58.8%) consultants recommend the organisation to build SM into the intranet. As mentioned in an earlier section, most consultants are with more than ten years of seniority; however, most practitioners are with 1-5 years of seniority. Therefore, there is no same seniority group can be effectively compared. In addition, most practitioners are from a large company, but most consultants are from a micro-consultancy firm, there are no findings can be compared. Thus, the scale groups cannot be compared either.

Eight of the 17 consultants are aged 41-50, which is the major part. Ten of the 23 practitioners are aged 41-50, which is also the major part. In this same age group 41-50, both practitioners and consultants prefer to suggest the organisations to build an SM-based intranet. However, they have different views on the role of SM in the long term. Most consultants think SM plays a significant role in the long term; half of the practitioners remain neutral, and the other half remain positive about SM's long-term role. In addition, the findings in Table 5.5 and Table 7.5 suggest that the age factor did affect the professionals' attitudes.

Most of the participants are female, only six of the 23 practitioners are male, and four of the 17 consultants are male. Most male practitioners and male consultants both suggest building an SM-based intranet. In regard to the role of SM in the long term, half male practitioners think positively about it, another half remains neutral, and no one thinks negatively. However, half male consultants think SM are not useful in the long term. Most female practitioners and most

female consultants' views on building SM-based intranet and the long-term role of SM are consistent. They suggest building SM into the intranet is beneficial to a company, and SM plays an important role in the long term. In addition, the findings in Table 5.5 and Table 7.5 suggest that the gender factor did affect the professionals' attitudes.

According to the data in the three appendices, there are three different connectivity groups can be compared, which are the avid group, functional group, and monitoring group. The majority of practitioners and consultants with avid connectivity think SM plays an important role in the long term. All avid consultants recommend the organisation to build SM into the intranet, while only two of five avid practitioners agreed on this and another two avid practitioners are reluctant to do so. There are seven functional practitioners and five functional consultants, and most of them think positively in the long-term role of SM. The data in Appendix 10.4 and Appendix 10.7 suggest that functional practitioners and functional consultants both have differing attitudes toward building SM into the intranet. Most practitioners and consultants are with monitoring connectivity as can be seen in the appendices. Ten of 23 practitioners and eight of 17 consultants are with monitoring connectivity. Most monitoring practitioners and most monitoring consultants both have a positive decision on building SM into the intranet. Monitoring professionals have various attitudes toward the long-term role of SM. In addition, the findings in Table 5.5 and Table 7.5 suggest that personal connectivity factor did affect the professionals' attitudes.

Few practitioners and consultants only have negative personal attitudes. Ten practitioners and six consultants only have a positive personal attitude. Four of the ten practitioners have a positive judgement on building an SM-based intranet, and another four of ten practitioners refuse to build an SM-based intranet. Unlike practitioners, half of the consultants with positive attitude suggest the organisations build an SM-based intranet. This finding suggests that consultants with a positive attitude are more likely to build an SM-base intranet than those practitioners. Eleven practitioners and ten consultants can see both the right sides and wrong sides of SM; they hold a neutral personal attitude. Most practitioners (64%) and most

consultants (60%) both with a neutral attitude have a positive choice of building an SM-based intranet. There still quite a few consultants (40%) with neutral personal attitude also think neutrally in building SM into the intranet. In terms of the long-term role of SM, most people with a positive and neutral personal attitude, no matter practitioner or consultant, all think positively. However, some practitioners with neutral personal attitude also think neutrally in the long-term role of SM, and the number of these people is more than those from consultants.

## **7.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter first presented the findings from an analysis of the views and suggestions of the consultants (N=17) in this study. The themes in their responses that addressed SM use for IC are based on whether they suggested a strength, weakness, opportunity or threat associated with SM's usage. This analysis produced the seven strongest themes. Five were the same as those mentioned by practitioners, which are "IM", "access anywhere", "insecure channel", "misuse", and "waste time". Another two strongest themes were "two-way communication" and "knowledge sharing". Practitioners suggested SM can bring two different opportunities, which were "staff engagement" and "improved efficiency". Moreover, the practitioners sensed three more threats, which were "weak interest", "small-scale", and "offensive information". Moreover, consultants have a relatively biased attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC, but practitioners have a relatively balanced attitude.

This chapter then reported on those data that linked personal and corporate factors to the decision to use SM at work and discovered three influencing factors: age, gender, and personal connectivity (see Table 7.5). These were the same influencing factors as discovered in Chapter Five. There was a high level of consensus between practitioners and consultants with regard to the long-term role of SM and the attitudes toward building SM into the intranet. At last, this chapter reported on the similarities and differences of the comparison between practitioners and consultants. These key findings were listed in Table 7.7.

**Table 7.7 Key findings of the personal and organisational effects comparison between two practitioners and consultants**

	Similarities	Differences
Attitudes	<p>Most practitioners (56.5%) and most consultants (47.1%) both think positively in the long-term role of SM.</p> <p>Most practitioners (47.8%) and most consultants (58.8%) have a positive choice or suggestion of building an SM-based intranet.</p>	
Personal effects	<p>Age (influencing factor): In the age group 31-40 and 41-50, both practitioners and consultants prefer to suggest the organisations to build an SM-based intranet.</p> <p>Gender (influencing factor): Most female consultants and female practitioners have a positive attitude towards the long-term role of SM.</p> <p>Most female consultants and female practitioners suggest the organisation to have an SM-based intranet.</p> <p>Personal connectivity (influencing factor): People with monitoring connectivity are more likely to have a positive choice of building SM into the intranet.</p> <p>The majority of practitioners and consultants</p>	<p>Age: In the age group 41-50, most consultants suggest SM plays a significant role in the long term. However, the practitioners hold a differing attitude.</p> <p>Gender: In regard to the role of SM in the long term, no male practitioner thinks negatively about it. However, half male consultants think SM are not useful in the long term.</p> <p>Personal connectivity: All avid consultants recommend the organisation to build SM into the intranet, while avid practitioners have differing choices.</p>

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with avid connectivity think SM plays an important role in the long term.

Personal attitude: Very few practitioners and consultants only think SM negatively.

Most people with a neutral attitude are willing to build SM into the intranet.

Personal attitude: Consultants with a positive attitude are more likely to build an SM-base intranet than those practitioners.

Practitioners with a neutral personal attitude are more likely to think neutrally in the long-term role of SM than those consultants.

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Organisational effects No patterns can be found due to there are no scale or type groups can be compared.

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## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

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This final chapter will address how the findings answer the three questions driving this research project. These research questions were:

RQ1: What are the benefits and shortcomings of using SM for IC?

RQ2: What are the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?

RQ3: What factors will affect the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?

Then, it will reflect on how it reduces the gap identified in the literature before appraising the contributions it makes to theory and implications for practice. In the end, this chapter will give some suggestions for future research.

### **8.1 ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

#### **RQ1: What are the benefits and shortcomings of using SM for IC?**

This research investigated the positive and negative sides of using SM for IC and identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from communication professionals' perspectives. There were three key strengths that allow SM to be considered a better form of communication than traditional communication channels. These strengths are "IM", "access anywhere", and "two-way communication". There was only one major inherent weakness of SM that the professionals felt had implications for using SM for IC. It may bring some risks in terms of the company's control over its information and communication flows as it is an "insecure channel".

On the other hand, applying SM to IC could bring three key opportunities to a company. The communication professionals saw these opportunities as being greater "staff engagement", facilitating "knowledge sharing", and "improved efficiency". The professionals considered



applying SM to IC could introduce five key operational threats to an organisation. These threats were “misuse”, “wasted time”, “weak interest”, “small-scale”, and “offensive information”.

**RQ2: What are the communication professional’s attitudes toward using SM for IC?**

For communication practitioners, this study explored their attitudes to three aspects of using SM for IC. The first attitude was with regard to the acceptable level of using SM for IC in their organisation. Most practitioners preferred to accept applying SM to IC, but they did not suggest an organisation should rely on using it. Some findings were suggesting that “lack of resources”, “have multiple channels”, and “no need for a small organisation” could be the main reasons why organisations stop purchasing the opportunities of using SM for IC.

The second attitude was their attitudes toward the long-term role of SM. Most practitioners had a positive view of the role of SM in the long term; some had a neutral view of it; nearly none of them hold a negative attitude. The last one was their attitudes toward building SM into the intranet. Nearly half practitioners had a positive response towards building SM into the intranet.

In regard to communication consultants, this study explored their suggestions of using SM for IC from two aspects. First was their attitude toward the long-term role of SM. Like the practitioners, most consultants had a positive view on the role of SM in the long term. The second was their suggestions for building SM into the intranet. Most consultants considered it is worthwhile for an organisation to have an SM-based intranet.

**RQ3: What factors will affect the communication professional's attitudes toward using SM for IC?**

The professionals’ responses suggested there were three personal factors that affect the communication experts’ attitudes. These three factors were age, gender, and personal

connectivity. The age factor affected the practitioner's acceptable level of SM use for IC and their attitudes toward the long-term role of SM. This factor appeared to affect consultants' suggestions on building SM into the intranet. Gender was a factor that appeared to affect both practitioner and consultants' attitude towards the long-term role of SM. The personal connectivity factor appeared to affect practitioners' perception of the acceptable level of SM use for IC and their attitudes toward building SM into the intranet. The personal connectivity factor seemed to affect consultants' suggestions on building SM-based intranet and their attitudes toward the long-term role of SM.

This research found out another two factors that will affect communication practitioner's attitudes, which are experience factor and scale factor. Practitioners with experience and practitioners without experience have different attitudes toward the long-term role of SM, and they have different attitudes toward building SM into the intranet. The scale of the organisation affected practitioner's attitudes toward building SM into the intranet and their acceptable level of SM use for IC.

## **8.2 THE LITERATURE GAP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY**

Chapter Two reviewed the literature that explored the characteristics, functions, and the use-types of SM in an organisation. The findings from the studies reviewed suggested that participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness, and multi-platform are the characteristics (Mayfield, 2008; McAfee, 2009; Hong, 2013); identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups are the functions (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010); broadcast, dialogue, collaboration, knowledge, and sociability are the use-types (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017) of SM. Moreover, Chapter Two discussed previous studies that related to the SM's use in different organisations. Most studies focused on external use (e.g., marketing, branding, communicating with the customer, etc.) of SM in a company and explored the advantages and disadvantages of it. Not many studies paid attention to the internal use of SM in a company, and only a small number of benefits and disadvantages were

mentioned repeatedly. The findings from these studies considered that improving employee productivity (Qualman, 2012; Musso, 2016), increasing knowledge sharing (Ford & Mason, 2013; Kosonen & Kianto, 2009), improving staff engagement (Musso, 2016), and creating less hierarchical communication are the benefits of using SM for IC (Kelly, 2013; Kulakofsky, 2016); considered that hard to monitor, challenging to identify anonymous communicator, hard to have a directional communication, and hard to identify valid information are the disadvantages (Bradley & McDonald, 2011; Hong, 2012; Dreher, 2014).

Few previous studies have investigated the positive and negative sides of using SM for IC, and this generated a gap in the literature. This Masters study explored communication professionals' views about using SM for IC based on a SWOT analysis and a theme frequency analysis, and the findings provided 12 strong themes. There were nine themes that are consistent with what has been mentioned in previous studies. Relevant information about three threats themes, "waste time", "weak interest", and "small-scale", could not be found in previous research. These new themes were valuable supplements to the knowledge about the negative sides of using SM for IC, and are a potential contribution to theory.

Moreover, the findings of the theme frequency analysis highlighted that communication practitioners have a relatively balanced attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. However, in contrast, communication consultants have a relatively biased attitude toward the benefits and disadvantages of applying SM to IC. They were more inclined to observe the positive sides of SM.

The literature review failed to find studies that addressed communication professionals' attitudes toward using SM for IC. This suggests a gap in the literature. This study explored the reactions of three groups of communication professionals from three aspects with regard to using SM for IC and highlighted three patterns. First, most practitioners preferred to apply SM to IC in an organisation but do not support relying on using it. Second, most communication professionals had a positive view of the role of SM in the long term. The last is, only a few

communication professionals had a negative attitude toward building SM into the intranet. In addition, this study conducted a constant comparison to discover what personal or organisational factor may affect their attitudes. The findings suggested that there are four personal factors (i.e., age, gender, personal connectivity, and experience) and one organisational factor (i.e., the scale of organisation) that could lead to different choices across the sample of communication experts. These results answered the research questions, offering insights that addressed the gap in the literature mentioned above, and new ideas for future research.

### **8.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

The findings provide organisations with communication experts' views on using SM for IC. It revealed the majority of professionals' decisions about applying SM to IC and the factors that affect their attitudes. It provided professionals with valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of SM and indicated the opportunities and threats of using SM for IC. This study also highlighted the need to take into account the differences between the traditional IC channels and SM-based IC channels and emphasised the importance of these new communication channels for the organisations.

### **8.4 FUTURE RESEARCH**

There were only 40 communication professionals in this research project. This led to insufficient data to establish robust patterns. Thus, the first suggestion for future research will be to replicate this study and recruit more communication professionals. With more participants, there will be more robust findings of experienced practitioners' thoughts on using SM for IC and allow organisations to have more confidence that the findings can apply to their organisation.

This research was built around communication professionals. The questionnaire designed

for this study is also from the perspective of management roles. The second suggestion for future research will be to explore the general staff's views on using SM for IC. This suggestion, examining the opinions of SM users' in the organisations and comparing the findings with communication professionals' views, could be a potential research project.

According to the strength theme "accuracy", it is possible that SM are good platforms to approach target audiences and can reach the consistency of message. However, this theme was a low-frequency theme, and this finding was the opposite of what was mentioned in the literature (Rains & Scott, 2007; Hong, 2012) so it would be interesting to explore this further to establish whether using SM can achieve both recipients (i.e., target) accuracy and information accuracy.

Last but not least, this study suggests there is an opportunity to expand research on how to manage the use of SM in IC in a company. It would be useful to undertake a series of case studies in companies that are utilising SM to IC to establish how they take advantages of SM while avoiding the weaknesses and threats of using SM for IC. This is a pioneering idea and would be an avenue for future research that would have high practical value.

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## 10 APPENDICES

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### 10.1 ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGNED FOR THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

# Usage of Social Media in Internal Communication

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#### Start of Block: PERSONAL USE

*The following questions will ask you about your personal experiences of using social media and your opinions towards using social media (or not) for internal communications in an organisation.*

---

#### Block 1 Personal Use

---

Q1 Age

- under 20
  - 20-30
  - 31-40
  - 41-50
  - 51-60
  - 61-70
  - over 70
-

Q2 Gender

- Male
  - Female
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q3 Which social media do you use for personal communication? (Tick as many options as you wish.)

- Twitter
  - Instagram
  - Facebook
  - LinkedIn
  - Snapchat
  - Blogs
  - Others \_\_\_\_\_
-

APPENDICES

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Q4 How regularly do you use each type of social media?

	Never	Very occasionally	Once or twice a week	Daily	Always connected
Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instagram	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snapchat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

---

Q5 What purposes do you personally use these social media for? (Please answer what you have selected in Q3)

- Twitter \_\_\_\_\_
  - Instagram \_\_\_\_\_
  - Facebook \_\_\_\_\_
  - LinkedIn \_\_\_\_\_
  - Snapchat \_\_\_\_\_
  - Blogs \_\_\_\_\_
  - Others \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q6 What kind of social media user would you call yourself?

- Reluctant (You rarely use social media except to occasionally check up on what people you know are posting.)
  - Monitoring (You do not post a lot on your social media, but you do check in regularly and like your contacts' content or comment on it.)
  - Functional (You are not a big fan of social media; you only use it for a few functions like sharing photos when you are travelling.)
  - Avid (You are very fond of social media and particularly good at using it and so use it for many purposes.)
- 

Q7 How has your social media changed over time? Please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q8 What is your personal attitude towards social media?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q9 Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organisations with their communications solutions)?

Yes

No

*Skip To: Q15 If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ... = Yes*

---

Q10 What's your position in your organisation?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q11 What sort of job you do in your organisation and how long you have been in this job?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q12 How many people report to you in your organisation? (Please be as exact as you can.)

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q13 What sector is your organisation in? Please specify industry/field/focus in the blank behind.

Private sector \_\_\_\_\_

Public sector \_\_\_\_\_

NGO \_\_\_\_\_

Q14 How many employees does your organisation have? (Please be as exact as you can.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Q15 Where is your organisation located?

- New Zealand
- Australia
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: PERSONAL USE

---

Start of Block: PROFESSIONAL USE- CONSULTANCY FIRM/CONTRACTOR

Display This Question:

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

**Block 2 Professional Use - Consultancy Firm/Contractor**

*Please answer these questions based on your work experiences and your organisation's real situation.*

*On some questions, answers can be your own thoughts.*

*Please answer truthfully.*

Display This Question:

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q16 Do you work for a consultancy firm/contractor as an employee?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q18 If Do you work for a consultancy firm/contractor as an employee? = No

---



Display This Question:

If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes

Q17 How many others work with you? (Please be as exact as you can.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If Do you work for a consultancy firm/contractor as an employee? = No

Q18 Are you a sole owner/operator?

Yes

No

Display This Question:

If Are you a sole owner/operator? = No

Q19 How many staff do you employ? (Please be as exact as you can.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes

Q20 What do you specialise in?

\_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes

Q21 How long have you been working as a communication consultant?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q22 What experiences have you had as a communication professional when assisting other organisations with their communication solutions that have shaped your view of social media use in organisations?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q23 What are the principles that guide you when advising organisations about internal communications?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q24 How does this differ the social media is used to engage with prospective or actual customers and other external stakeholders?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q25 What benefits/opportunities do you see social media could offer an organisation's internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q26 What aspects of social media do you see will have negative impacts on an organisation's internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q27 Which/What kind of social media platform would you suggest an organisation could use effectively for internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q28 Would you suggest an organisation should have its own social media for internal communication built into its intranet? Please explain why.

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q29 What considerations guide you when advising an organisation about the use of a social media platform for internal communication purposes? Please explain your reasoning.

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you a communication consultant at a consultancy firm/contractor (i.e., you assist other organ...  
= Yes*

Q30 In long term, what role do you think social media will have in internal communication?

---

*Skip To: End of Survey If In long term, what role do you think social media will have in internal communication? Is Displayed*

**End of Block: PROFESSIONAL USE- CONSULTANCY FIRM/CONTRACTOR**

**Start of Block: PROFESSIONAL USE - ORGANISATION**

**Block 2 Professional Use - Organisation**

*Please answer these questions based on your work experiences and your organisation's real situation.*

*On some questions, answers can be your own thoughts.*

*Please answer truthfully.*

---

Q31 Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?

- Yes
- Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.
- No

*Skip To: Q48 If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication? = Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Skip To: Q32 If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication? = Yes*

*Skip To: Q48 If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication? = No*



Q38 Does your organisation have its own social media built into the organisation's intranet?

Yes

No

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation have its own social media built into the organisation's intranet? = Yes*

Q39 What social media are on your organisation's intranet? How do you use it?

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation have its own social media built into the organisation's intranet? = Yes*

Q40 Why did your organisation decide to have social media on its intranet?

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation have its own social media built into the organisation's intranet? = No*

Q41 Does your organisation plan to have its own social media in the future? Please explain.

---

Q42 What advantages or benefits result from the way your organisation uses social media internally?

---

Q43 What disadvantages or costs does it incur as a result of the way it uses social media internally?

---

-----  
Q44 What observations have you made about social media use within your organisation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Q45 Do you have experiences of using social media in internal communication in other organisations?

Yes

No

-----  
*Display This Question:*

*If Do you have experiences of using social media in internal communication in other organisations?  
= Yes*

Q46 What experience have you had? How does this experience shape your thinking about social media in your current organisation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Q47 What advice would you give other organisations about using social media for internal communication?  
\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q48 Why has your organisation chosen not to employ social media for internal communication?  
(or "Why your organisation does not rely on social media for internal communication?")

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

Q49 When did your organisation decided to use social media for internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

Q50 Which/What kind of social media platform are you using for internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q51 What benefits/opportunities do you see social media could offer your organisation's internal communication?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*



Q52 What is stopping it from pursuing these benefits/opportunities?

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q53 Under what circumstances would you consider using social media for internal communication in the future?

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q54 Which social media platforms do you think could have a place in internal communication in the future? Explain your choices.

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q55 Would your organisation considers having its own social media built into its intranet? Please explain why.

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q56 What sort of guideline would you introduce (or you have introduced) to ensure social media is used appropriately?

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q57 Do you personally agree with using social media for internal communication? Please explain.

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

Q58 Do you have experiences of using social media in internal communication in other organisations?

Yes

No

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= Yes, but does not rely on social media for internal communication.*

*And Do you have experiences of using social media in internal communication in other organisations?  
= Yes*

*Or Does your organisation allow employees to use social media at work for internal communication?  
= No*

*And Do you have experiences of using social media in internal communication in other organisations?  
= Yes*

Q59 What experience have you had with social media use for internal communication? Do you think your organisation can use social media in the same way?

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

Q60 What restrictions would (has) your organisation put on the use of social media to ensure it is only used in ways beneficial to the organisation? Please explain why you think these restrictions are necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

-----

Q61 In long term, what role do you think social media will have in internal communication?

\_\_\_\_\_

**End of Block: PROFESSIONAL USE - ORGANISATION**

---

## 10.2 ALL THE THEME CODES MENTIONED BY THE 23 PRACTITIONERS

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Consistency with the literature</i>	<i>Definitions of the strongest themes/main codes</i>
<b>Strengths</b> <b>(16)</b>	Instant message (IM)	Consistent	This code appeared six times. This code refers to how SM can help people to engage in immediate communication.
	Access anywhere	Consistent	The code appeared four times. This code refers to how SM's instant nature makes it easily accessible for people across the country can keep in touch with using it.
	Two-way communication	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Cheap	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Easy to use	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Less formal	Consistent	Not the main code.
<b>Weaknesses</b> <b>(4)</b>	Insecure channel	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how SM's openness nature makes it too public to transfer sensitive information.
	Not tailored to the organisation's needs	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.

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<b>Opportunities (13)</b>	Staff engagement	Consistent	This code appeared six times. This code refers to how SM can help to boost staff engagement via its active conversation.
	Efficiency	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how SM's instant nature can help to improve work efficiency.
	Collaboration	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Knowledge sharing	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Culture building	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.
<b>Treats (26)</b>	Waste time	Not mentioned in the literature.	This code appeared six times. This code refers to how training and guiding employee to use SM for IC will waste a lot of time.
	Small-scale	Not mentioned in the literature.	This code appeared six times. This code refers to that in a small-scale company using other traditional communication methods, using SM may become a burden for staff.
	Misuse	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how employee overuses the SM and use it for a non-work purpose.
	Weak interest	Not mentioned in the literature.	This code appeared three times. This code refers to that staff's weak interest in using SM will set obstacles to the implementation of using SM as an IC channel.
	Offensive information	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how the anonymity of SM gives the users a chance to post inappropriate comments or do cyber-bully.

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	Costs	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.
	Lack of resources	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.
	Low proficiency	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.

*Note. SM=Social Media. The numbers in brackets below strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are the total word frequency of all the codes belonging to them.*

**10.3 ALL THE THEME CODES MENTIONED BY THE 17 CONSULTANTS**

	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Consistency with the literature</i>	<i>Definitions of the strongest themes/main codes</i>
<b>Strengths</b> <b>(17)</b>	IM	Consistent	This code appeared six times. This code refers to how SM can help people to engage in immediate communication.
	Access anywhere	Consistent	This code appeared four times. This code refers to how SM's instant nature makes it easily accessible for people across the country can keep in touch with using it.
	Two-way communication	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how employees can use SM to have two-way communication with people from a different organisational hierarchy.
	Accuracy	Inconsistent	Not the main code.
	Good visual	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Cheap	Consistent	Not the main code.
<b>Weaknesses</b> <b>(7)</b>	Insecure channel	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how SM's openness nature makes it too public to transfer sensitive information.
	Limit messaging	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code. This code refers to how SM's word limit causes losing key information.
	Mixed message	Consistent	Not the main code.

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	Not tailored to the organisation's needs	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.
<b>Opportunities</b> <b>(9)</b>	Knowledge sharing	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how SM's sharing function helps to improve knowledge sharing.
	Staff engagement	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Collaboration	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Culture building	Not mentioned in the literature.	Not the main code.
<b>Treats</b> <b>(14)</b>	Waste time	Not mentioned in the literature.	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how training and guiding employee to use SM for IC will waste a lot of time.
	Leaking sensitive information	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how SM's openness nature will cause the leakage of sensitive information in the process of information transfer.
	Misuse	Consistent	This code appeared three times. This code refers to how employee overuses the SM and use it for a non-work purpose.
	Offensive information	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Reputation management issues	Consistent	Not the main code.
	Spread negative culture	Consistent	Not the main code.

Note. SM=Social Media. IM=Instant Message. The numbers in brackets below indicate the frequency of mentions of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and all



*the codes belonging to them.*

## 10.4 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PROFILES OF PRACTITIONERS WITH EXPERIENCE

<i>No.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Personal connectivity</i>	<i>Personal attitude</i>	<i>Seniority</i>	<i>Type of organisation</i>	<i>Scale of organisation</i>	<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Build SM into the intranet</i>	<i>Role of SM in the long term</i>	<i>Reason for the acceptance</i>
1	41-50	Female	Avid	P	1-5 years	Public	Small	No	DN	P	No need for a small organisation.
2	51-60	Female	Avid	P	1-5 years	Public	Large	No	Nt	P	Overuse.
3	41-50	Female	Functional	P	1-5 years	Public	Medium	Yes, but not rely on	Suggested	P	Lack of resources; Costs; Not suitable for organisational culture.
4	31-40	Female	Monitoring	Nt	Less than 1 year	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	H	P	Have multiple channels.
5	31-40	Male	Monitoring	Nt	1-5 years	Private	Micro	Yes, but not rely on	DN	P	Time; No need for a small organisation.
6	20-30	Male	Functional	P	unknown	Private	Large	Yes, but not rely on	Suggested	P	Lack of resources; Not suitable for the

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											workplace environment.
7	31-40	Female	Avid	P	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	DN	P	Have multiple channels; Lack of resources.

*Note. P=Positive. Nt=Neutral. SM=Social Media. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. H.=Have SM at present.*

**10.5 STATISTICS OF EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL FACTORS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ACCEPTANCE, ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

**10.5.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND ATTITUDES**

		<i>Age</i>					<i>Total</i>
		<i>20-30</i>	<i>31-40</i>	<i>41-50</i>	<i>51-60</i>	<i>61-70</i>	
<b>Number of people</b>							
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	1	/	1	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	1	/	<b>1</b>
	DN	/	2	1	/	/	<b>3</b>
	DH	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	H	/	1	/	/	/	<b>1</b>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Yes, but not rely on	1	3	1	/	/	<b>5</b>
	No	/	/	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	1	3	2	1	/	<b>7</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	N	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.5.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND ATTITUDES

<b>Number of people</b>		<i>Gender</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested		1	1	2
	Not suggested		/	/	0
	Nt		1	/	1
	DN		2	1	3
	DH		/	/	0
	H		1	/	1
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes		/	/	0
	Yes, but not rely on		3	2	5
	No		2	/	2
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P		5	2	7
	Nt		/	/	0
	N		/	/	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.5.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL CONNECTIVITY AND ATTITUDES

		<i>Connectivity</i>	<i>Reluctant</i>	<i>Monitoring</i>	<i>Functional</i>	<i>Avid</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<b>Number of people</b>					
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	/	2	/	<b>2</b>	
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
	Nt	/	/	/	1	<b>1</b>	
	DN	/	1	/	2	<b>3</b>	
	DH	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
	H	/	1	/	/	<b>1</b>	
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
	Yes, but not rely on	/	2	2	1	<b>5</b>	
	No	/	/	/	2	<b>2</b>	
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	/	2	2	3	<b>7</b>	
	Nt	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
	N	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total</b>		/	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	

*Note.* SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.

## 10.5.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDES

<i>Attitude</i>		<i>P</i>	<i>Nt</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>					
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	2	/	/	2
	Not suggested	/	/	/	0
	Nt	1	/	/	1
	DN	2	1	/	3
	DH	/	/	/	0
	H	/	1	/	1
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	/	/	0
	Yes, but not rely on	3	2	/	5
	No	2	/	/	2
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	5	2	/	7
	Nt	/	/	/	0
	N	/	/	/	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

*Note.* SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.

## 10.5.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENIORITY AND ATTITUDES

<i>Seniority</i>		<i>Less than 1 year</i>	<i>1-5 years</i>	<i>6-10 years</i>	<i>11-15 years</i>	<i>16-20 years</i>	<i>unknown</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	1	/	/	/	1	2
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
	Nt	/	1	/	/	/	/	1
	DN	/	3	/	/	/	/	3
	DH	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
	H	1	/	/	/	/	/	1
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
	Yes, but not rely on	/	3	/	/	/	2	5
	No	/	2	/	/	/	/	2
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	1	5	/	/	/	1	7
	Nt	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
	N	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*



**10.6 STATISTICS OF EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ACCEPTANCE, ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

**10.6.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCALE OF ORGANISATION AND ATTITUDES**

<i>Scale</i>		<i>Micro</i>	<i>Small</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<i>(Less than 20)</i>	<i>(21-100)</i>	<i>(101-500)</i>	<i>(over 500)</i>	
<b>Number of people</b>						
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Yes, but not rely on	1	/	1	3	<b>5</b>
	No	/	1	/	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	/	1	1	<b>2</b>
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	1	<b>1</b>
	DN	1	1	/	1	<b>3</b>
	DH	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	H	/	/	/	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	1	1	1	4	<b>7</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	N	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.6.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TYPE OF ORGANISATION AND ATTITUDES

<b>Number of people</b>		<i>Type</i>		<i>Private Sector</i>	<i>Public Sector</i>	<i>NGO</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes		/	/	/		<b>0</b>
	Yes, but not rely on		2	3	/		<b>5</b>
	No		/	2	/		<b>2</b>
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested		1	1	/		<b>2</b>
	Not suggested		/	/	/		<b>0</b>
	Nt		/	1	/		<b>1</b>
	DN		1	2	/		<b>3</b>
	DH		/	/	/		<b>0</b>
	H		/	1	/		<b>1</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P		2	5	/		<b>7</b>
	Nt		/	/	/		<b>0</b>
	N		/	/	/		<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>7</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

### 10.7 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PROFILES OF PRACTITIONERS WITHOUT EXPERIENCE

<i>No.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Personal connectivity</i>	<i>Personal attitude</i>	<i>Seniority</i>	<i>Type of organisation</i>	<i>Scale of organisation</i>	<i>Acceptance</i>	<i>Build SM into the intranet</i>	<i>Role of SM in the long term</i>	<i>Reason for the acceptance</i>
1	41-50	Female	Reluctant	Nt	Less than 1 year	Public	Large	No	DN	P	People's weak interests; Insecure channel.
2	41-50	Male	Monitoring	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	H	Nt	Have multiple channels.
3	41-50	Female	Functional	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Small	No	Nt	Nt	No need for a small organisation. Have multiple channels.
4	31-40	Male	Monitoring	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Small	No	Suggested	P	No need for a small organisation.
5	41-50	Female	Avid	P	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	Suggested	P	Not suitable for the slow nature of work.
6	31-40	Female	Avid	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes	H	Nt	Have a 'digital first'

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											mandate for communications.
7	41-50	Female	Functional	Nt	unknown	Public	Large	Yes	DH	Nt	It is fit for organizational purpose.
8	51-60	Female	Monitoring	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	DN	N	Have multiple channels.
9	41-50	Female	Monitoring	Nt	1-5 years	Public	Small	Yes, but not rely on	H	P	Have multiple channels.
10	41-50	Male	Monitoring	N	1-5 years	Private	Micro	No	unsure	Nt	No need for a small organisation.
11	31-40	Female	Monitoring	P	1-5 years	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	H	N	Have multiple channels.
12	20-30	Female	Functional	P	unknown	Public	Medium	No	unsure	unsure	Not suitable to the internal audience.
13	31-40	Female	Monitoring	Nt	Less than 1 year	Public	Large	Yes, but not rely on	H	unsure	Have multiple channels.
14	41-50	Male	Monitoring	P	11-15 years	Private	Medium	Yes	DN	Nt	Cheap and easy to

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											use.
15	31-40	Female	Functional	N	1-5 years	Private	Large	Yes, but not rely on	DN	P	Logistics
16	31-40	Female	Functional	P	unknown	NGO	Small	Yes	DN	P	Unsure

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

**10.8 STATISTICS OF INEXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL FACTORS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ACCEPTANCE, ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

**10.8.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND ATTITUDES**

		<i>Age</i>	<i>20-30</i>	<i>31-40</i>	<i>41-50</i>	<i>51-60</i>	<i>61-70</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>								
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	1	1	/	/		<b>2</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	/	/		<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	1	/	/		<b>1</b>
	DN	/	2	2	1	/		<b>5</b>
	DH	/	/	1	/	/		<b>1</b>
	H	/	3	2	/	/		<b>5</b>
	Unsure	1	/	1	/	/		<b>2</b>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	2	2	/	/		<b>4</b>
	Yes, but not rely on	/	3	3	1	/		<b>7</b>
	No	1	1	3	/	/		<b>5</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	/	3	3	/	/		<b>6</b>
	Nt	/	1	5	/	/		<b>6</b>
	N	/	1	/	1	/		<b>2</b>
	Unsure	1	1	/	/	/		<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.8.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND ATTITUDES

<i>Gender</i>		<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>				
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	1	1	2
	Not Suggested	/	/	0
	Nt	1	/	1
	DN	4	1	5
	DH	1	/	1
	H	4	1	5
	Unsure	1	1	2
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	3	1	4
	Yes, but not rely on	6	1	7
	No	3	2	5
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	5	1	6
	Nt	3	3	6
	N	2	/	2
	Unsure	2	/	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.8.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL CONNECTIVITY AND ATTITUDES

<i>Connectivity</i>		<i>Reluctant</i>	<i>Monitoring</i>	<i>Functional</i>	<i>Avid</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>						
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	1	/	1	<b>2</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	1	/	<b>1</b>
	DN	1	2	2	/	<b>5</b>
	DH	/	/	1	/	<b>1</b>
	H	/	4	/	1	<b>5</b>
	Unsure	/	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	1	2	1	<b>4</b>
	Yes, but not rely on	/	5	1	1	<b>7</b>
	No	1	2	2	/	<b>5</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	1	2	2	1	<b>6</b>
	Nt	/	3	2	1	<b>6</b>
	N	/	2	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	/	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*



## 10.8.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDES

<i>Attitude</i>		<i>P</i>	<i>Nt</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>					
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	1	/	<b>1</b>
	DN	2	2	1	<b>5</b>
	DH	/	1	/	<b>1</b>
	H	1	4	/	<b>5</b>
	Unsure	1	/	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	2	2	/	<b>4</b>
	Yes, but not rely on	2	4	1	<b>7</b>
	No	1	3	1	<b>5</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	2	3	1	<b>6</b>
	Nt	1	4	1	<b>6</b>
	N	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note.* SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.

## 10.8.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENIORITY AND ATTITUDES

		<i>Seniority</i>						<i>Total</i>
		<i>Less than 1 year</i>	<i>1-5 years</i>	<i>6-10 years</i>	<i>11-15 years</i>	<i>16-20 years</i>	<i>unknown</i>	
<b>Number of people</b>								
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	2	/	/	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	1	/	/	/	/	<b>1</b>
	DN	1	2	/	1	/	1	<b>5</b>
	DH	/	/	/	/	/	1	<b>1</b>
	H	1	4	/	/	/	/	<b>5</b>
	Unsure	/	1	/	/	/	1	<b>2</b>
	<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes	/	1	/	1	/	2
	Yes, but not rely on	1	6	/	/	/	/	<b>7</b>
	No	1	3	/	/	/	1	<b>5</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	1	4	/	/	/	1	<b>6</b>
	Nt	/	4	/	1	/	1	<b>6</b>
	N	/	2	/	/	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	1	/	/	/	/	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

**10.9 STATISTICS OF INEXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ACCEPTANCE, ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

**10.9.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCALE OF ORGANISATION AND ATTITUDES**

		<i>Scale</i>	<i>Micro</i> <i>(Less than 20)</i>	<i>Small</i> <i>(21-100)</i>	<i>Medium</i> <i>(101-500)</i>	<i>Large</i> <i>(over 500)</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<b>Number of people</b>					
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes		/	2	/	2	<b>4</b>
	Yes, but not rely on		/	1	1	5	<b>7</b>
	No		1	2	1	1	<b>5</b>
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested		/	1	/	1	<b>2</b>
	Not suggested		/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt		/	1	/	/	<b>1</b>
	DN		/	2	/	3	<b>5</b>
	DH		/	/	/	1	<b>1</b>
	H		/	1	1	3	<b>5</b>
	Unsure		1	/	1	/	<b>2</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P		/	3	/	3	<b>6</b>
	Nt		1	2	1	2	<b>6</b>
	N		/	/	/	2	<b>2</b>
	Unsure		/	/	1	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive.*

*N=Negative.*

## 10.9.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TYPE OF ORGANISATION AND ATTITUDES

<b>Number of people</b>		<i>Type</i>	<i>Private Sector</i>	<i>Public Sector</i>	<i>NGO</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Acceptance</b>	Yes		1	2	1	4
	Yes, but not rely on		1	6	/	7
	No		1	4	/	5
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested		/	2	/	2
	Not suggested		/	/	/	0
	Nt		/	1	/	1
	DN		2	2	1	5
	DH		/	1	/	1
	H		/	5	/	5
	Unsure		1	1	/	2
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P		1	4	1	6
	Nt		2	4	/	6
	N		/	2	/	2
	Unsure		/	2	/	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>

Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. DN=Do not have one and not intending to incorporate SM into their intranet. DH=Do not have one but intending to incorporate SM into their IC. H.=Have SM at present. P=Positive. N=Negative.

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**10.10 PERSONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PROFILES OF CONSULTANTS**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Personal connectivity</i>	<i>Personal attitude</i>	<i>Seniority</i>	<i>Scale of organisation</i>	<i>Build SM into the intranet</i>	<i>Role of SM in the long term</i>
1	41-50	Male	Monitoring	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Suggested	unsure
2	51-60	Female	Avid	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Suggested	P
3	41-50	Female	Monitoring	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Suggested	P
4	51-60	Female	Avid	P	1-5 years	Micro	Suggested	P
5	31-40	Male	Monitoring	N	11-15 years	Micro	Suggested	P
6	41-50	Male	Monitoring	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Nt	N
7	41-50	Female	Functional	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Nt	P
8	41-50	Female	Functional	P	6-10 years	Micro	Suggested	P
9	31-40	Female	Functional	P	1-5 years	Medium	unsure	unsure
10	41-50	Female	Avid	Nt	1-5 years	Micro	Suggested	P
11	61-70	Female	Functional	P	6-10 years	Small	unsure	unsure
12	51-60	Female	Functional	Nt	unknown	Micro	Nt	P
13	41-50	Female	Monitoring	P	1-5 years	Micro	unsure	unsure
14	41-50	Female	Avid	Nt	11-15 years	Micro	Suggested	Nt

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15	31-40	Female	Monitoring	P	16-20 years	Medium	Suggested	Nt
16	51-60	Female	Monitoring	Nt	16-20 years	Micro	Nt	Nt
17	31-40	Male	Monitoring	Nt	11-15 years	Micro	Suggested	N

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

**10.11 STATISTICS OF CONSULTANTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL FACTORS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

**10.11.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND ATTITUDES**

		<i>Age</i>	<i>20-30</i>	<i>31-40</i>	<i>41-50</i>	<i>51-60</i>	<i>61-70</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<b>Number of people</b>						
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	3	5	2	/		<b>10</b>
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	2	2	/	/	<b>4</b>
	Unsure	/	1	1	/	1	/	<b>3</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	/	1	4	3	/	/	<b>8</b>
	Nt	/	1	1	1	/	/	<b>3</b>
	N	/	1	1	/	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	/	1	2	/	1	/	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*



## 10.11.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND ATTITUDES

<i>Gender</i>		<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>				
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	7	3	<b>10</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	3	1	<b>4</b>
	Unsure	3	/	<b>3</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	7	1	<b>8</b>
	Nt	3	/	<b>3</b>
	N	/	2	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	3	1	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.11.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL CONNECTIVITY AND ATTITUDES

<i>Connectivity</i>		<i>Reluctant</i>	<i>Monitoring</i>	<i>Functional</i>	<i>Avid</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>						
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	5	1	4	<b>10</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	2	2	/	<b>4</b>
	Unsure	/	1	2	/	<b>3</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	/	2	3	3	<b>8</b>
	Nt	/	2	/	1	<b>3</b>
	N	/	2	/	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	/	2	2	/	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.11.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDES

<i>Attitude</i>		<i>P</i>	<i>Nt</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Number of people</b>					
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	3	6	1	<b>10</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt		4	/	<b>4</b>
	Unsure	3	/	/	<b>3</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	2	5	1	<b>8</b>
	Nt	1	2	/	<b>3</b>
	N		2	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	3	1	/	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

## 10.11.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENIORITY AND ATTITUDES

<i>Seniority</i>		<i>Less than</i>	<i>1-5</i>	<i>6-10</i>	<i>11-15</i>	<i>16-20</i>	<i>unknown</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<i>1 year</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>years</i>	<i>years</i>		
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	/	2	1	3	4	/	<b>10</b>
	Not Suggested	/	/	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	/	3	1	<b>4</b>
	Unsure	/	2	1	/	/	/	<b>3</b>
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	/	2	1	1	3	1	<b>8</b>
	Nt	/	/	/	1	2	/	<b>3</b>
	N	/	/	/	1	1	/	<b>2</b>
	Unsure	/	2	1	/	1	/	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*

**10.12 STATISTICS OF CONSULTANTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCALE OF ORGANISATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (I.E., ATTITUDES TOWARD BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA INTO THE INTRANET AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE LONG TERM)**

		<i>Scale</i>	<i>Micro</i>	<i>Small</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Total</i>
			<i>(Less than 20)</i>	<i>(21-100)</i>	<i>(101-500)</i>	<i>(over 500)</i>	
<b>Number of people</b>							
<b>Build SM into the intranet</b>	Suggested	9	/	1	/	<b>10</b>	
	Not suggested	/	/	/	/	<b>0</b>	
	Nt	4	/	/	/	<b>4</b>	
	Unsure	1	1	1	/	<b>3</b>	
<b>Role of SM in the long term</b>	P	8	/	/	/	<b>8</b>	
	Nt	2	/	1	/	<b>3</b>	
	N	2	/	/	/	<b>2</b>	
	Unsure	2	1	1	/	<b>4</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	

*Note. SM=Social Media. Nt=Neutral. P=Positive. N=Negative.*