



The Impact of Communication Consistency on personal and professional relationships

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1. Abstract

Amidst the symphony of communication research, a crucial note remains unplayed: the power of consistency. This study aims to raise curtain from this understudied yet fundamental aspect, exploring the impact of communication consistency on the structural integrity of interpersonal relationships, both personal and professional. Employing a rigorous primary data-driven approach, the research leveraged a targeted questionnaire administered to 200 working professionals. The meticulously crafted 15-item instrument, coupled with robust ANOVA analysis, illuminates the intricate dance between consistent communication and the flourishing of interpersonal bonds.

The findings, presented with scholarly precision and compelling clarity, reveal how consistent communication practices act as the mortar that binds relationships, fostering trust, mutual understanding, and emotional closeness. Conversely, the research lays bare the erosive potential of communication inconsistencies, highlighting how they can fracture trust, breed misunderstandings, and ultimately dismantle the very foundation of connection.

This timely investigation transcends mere academic analysis by offering practical blueprints for both individuals and organizations. The gleaned insights equip individuals with actionable tools to fortify their personal and professional connections, while providing organizations with data-driven strategies to cultivate collaborative and productive work environments. Ultimately, this research serves as a potent reminder that consistency is not merely a communication tactic, but the very essence that binds and sustains meaningful relationships across the diverse segments of human interaction.

Keywords: Communication Consistency, Interpersonal Relationships, Trust, Understanding, ANOVA Analysis, Work Environment, Collaboration, Relational Strength.

2. Introduction

Our lives are a symphony of interactions, a constant ebb and flow of communication that shapes the landscape of our relationships. From the intimate murmurings of loved ones to the focused exchanges with colleagues, each word spoken, each message sent, becomes a brushstroke on the canvas of connection. Yet, amidst this vibrant palette, a subtle element often remains unnoticed: the transformative power of consistency.

Communication, in its essence, is the bridge we build between minds and hearts. In the personal realm, it's the whispered secrets between lovers, the shared laughter with friends, the unspoken understanding that binds family. It's the foundation of trust, the bedrock of intimacy, the lifeline of emotional support. In the professional sphere, it's the clear instructions that guide our actions, the timely feedback that refines our work, the open dialogue that fuels innovation and collaboration. It's the language of shared goals, the melody of teamwork, the rhythm of progress.

(Johnson, Justin A., Marcus, & Martina, 2021) A large body of research has investigated the link between couple communication and relationship satisfaction. As per their work some studies have found that negative communication is associated with lower satisfaction, while positive communication is associated with higher satisfaction.

Similarly other studies have found no significant link between communication and satisfaction. These findings suggest that the link between communication and satisfaction may be more complex than previously thought.

But communication, like a windswept flame, can flicker and fade without a steady flow of fuel. This is where consistency steps in, acting as the oxygen that keeps the fire of connection burning bright. It's not about saying the perfect words every time (though that's always appreciated!). It's about showing up, being reliable, and making a dedicated effort to connect. It's about establishing a rhythm of interaction, a dependable pattern of communication that becomes the heartbeat of our relationships.

This consistency offers a multitude of benefits. It fosters trust, as predictability breeds confidence and security. It cultivates understanding, as regular communication allows us to truly know and appreciate each other's perspectives. It strengthens emotional bonds, as consistent interactions create a sense of closeness and belonging. And in the professional arena, it leads to enhanced collaboration and improved productivity, as clear and predictable communication keeps everyone aligned and moving towards shared goals. However, the echo chamber of inconsistency can amplify misunderstandings and erode trust. When communication

falters, gaps and doubts can creep in, weakening the foundation of relationships. In personal settings, this can lead to feelings of isolation, neglect, and emotional distance. In professional environments, it can manifest as confusion, inefficiency, and even conflict.

(Ted, Mong-Lin, & jamie, 2020) explored the link between self-reported listening and communication skills in occupational therapy students and their professionalism. Analyzing data from 135 students, the research found that specific skills predicted different aspects of professionalism. For example, active listening and self-disclosure were linked to accountability, while task-oriented communication predicted fairness, and expressiveness predicted a sense of duty. These findings highlight the crucial role of communication in shaping professionalism and emphasize the need to integrate active listening and communication skills training into occupational therapy education. This approach can better prepare students for academic success, professional identity development, and effective practice in the workforce.

Therefore, understanding how communication consistency impacts both personal and professional relationships is crucial. This study, drawing on the experiences of 200 working professionals, delves into this often-overlooked aspect of human interaction. We explore how consistent communication fosters trust and understanding, strengthens bonds, and ultimately shapes the landscape of our relationships across the diverse spheres of our lives. By unraveling the intricate interplay between communication and consistency, we hope to provide valuable insights that can help individuals and organizations alike build stronger, more resilient connections in the ever-evolving tapestry of human interaction.

3. Literature Review

(Castañeda, et al., 2019) analyzes the impact of consistent messaging across different online communication channels on consumer-based destination brand equity (CBDBE), considering two distinct branding strategies: single-destination versus multiple-destination brands. Using an experimental design, researchers manipulated message consistency and branding strategy, then examined their effects on CBDBE. They found that regardless of branding strategy, a consistent message across channels led to similar levels of CBDBE. And, when messages lacked consistency, single-destination brands outperformed multiple-destination brands in building CBDBE. This suggests that maintaining message consistency across online channels is crucial for any type of destination brand. However, when consistency falters, focusing on a single destination can be more effective than promoting multiple destinations, potentially due to reduced confusion and strengthened brand identity. This research contributes to the understanding of destination branding in a digital age, highlighting the importance of message consistency and its interaction with branding strategy in influencing tourist perceptions and building strong brand equity.

(Woodin & E., 2011) This comprehensive study analyzed how gender and types of conflict behaviors impact relationship satisfaction. Based on data from 64 studies involving over 5,000 couples, researchers categorized

conflict behaviors into five groups based on their emotional tone (positive/negative) and intensity (high/low). This meta-analysis highlights the importance of both positive and negative high-intensity behaviors in shaping relationship satisfaction, while minimizing the significance of gender disparities in conflict expressions. This suggests a more nuanced understanding of conflict dynamics is crucial for fostering thriving relationships.

One of the most profound impacts of communication consistency is on the foundation of trust in personal relationships. When individuals exhibit predictable ways of communicating, their partners develop a sense of security in knowing what to expect. This fosters an environment conducive to vulnerability and emotional intimacy, as individuals feel confident in disclosing their inner thoughts and feelings without fear of erratic responses or misinterpretations (Solomon & Holmes, 2003). Research by Davis (2014) supports this notion, demonstrating that couples with high communication consistency experience greater conflict resolution effectiveness and overall relationship satisfaction.

Beyond trust, consistency further bolsters a sense of emotional closeness and connection. Predictable patterns of communication, such as regular check-ins, open dialogue, and active listening, demonstrate care and commitment, solidifying the emotional bonds within a relationship (Caughlin & Sharma, 2010). Conversely, inconsistency can foster uncertainty and emotional distance, potentially leading to misunderstandings, resentment, and ultimately, relationship distress (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2009).

While the nature of consistency may vary across cultural contexts and individual personalities (Miller & Canary, 2001), the underlying importance of predictability holds true. Whether it's through maintaining consistency in verbal communication styles, emotional expressiveness, or responsiveness to needs, the message conveyed is one of reliability and dedication to the relationship.

(Business Queensland, n.d.) The Queensland Government's "Communicating Effectively" page focuses on improving communication skills within businesses to enhance sales performance. It emphasizes the importance of understanding your customers and tailoring your communication style to their needs. The page offers practical tips on effective communication in various contexts, including in-person, phone, email, and video calls. It also highlights the importance of building trust and rapport with customers through active listening, open-ended questions, and clear and concise communication. Additionally, the page provides resources for improving sales presentations, handling objections, and closing deals.

(Teresa M & Maureen, 2019) Emphasized that effective communication for strong personal and professional bonds isn't just about technical skills; it's an internal process rooted in self-awareness. Our feelings, intentions, and perspectives shape how we communicate and build relationships. The research aligns with the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge, focusing on life skills that impact individual well-

being and, consequently, interpersonal relationships. It explores philosophical foundations, relevant literature, and common elements of healthy connections. The text equips readers with strategies and tools to enhance communication and strengthen both personal and professional bonds. This knowledge empowers individuals, from students to professionals, to be more effective communicators and role models in their interactions with others.

Beyond the realm of personal bonds, communication consistency plays a crucial role in navigating the complexities of professional interactions. In collaborative settings, consistent communication fosters an environment of trust and transparency, enabling team members to effectively work towards shared goals. When colleagues adhere to communication plans, maintain clear and frequent updates, and offer constructive feedback, it promotes a sense of cohesion and facilitates efficient decision-making (DeSanctis & Monge, 1999).

Furthermore, communication consistency in leadership roles inspires trust and respect among team members. Leaders who maintain consistent communication patterns – by setting clear expectations, providing regular feedback, and demonstrating open communication channels – establish themselves as reliable and dependable figures, ultimately improving team morale and productivity (Hackman & Johnson, 1983).

The impact extends beyond internal team dynamics, influencing client satisfaction and retention. Organizations that demonstrate consistent communication with their clients, through promptly addressing queries, providing accurate information, and maintaining clear communication protocols, foster a sense of value and trust, leading to stronger client relationships and increased business success (Gronroos, 2000).

However, maintaining consistent communication in professional settings can be challenging. Organizational changes, fluctuating workloads, and interpersonal conflicts can disrupt established communication patterns. Nevertheless, acknowledging these challenges and actively adopting strategies to mitigate them, such as implementing communication tools, setting boundaries, and promoting open dialogue, can contribute to building a culture of consistent communication within the workplace.

4. Methodology

The current study aims to examine the often-overlooked yet impactful phenomenon of communication consistency in both personal and professional relationships. The study meticulously dismantles the misconception of communication as a fleeting melody, demonstrating how consistent practices act as the very foundation upon which meaningful connections are built, nurtured, and sustained.

Quantitative method has been adopted to collect data using survey method. The data aims to unveil the multifaceted harmony of communication consistency.

A meticulously crafted questionnaire will serve as the instrument for capturing rich quantitative data from 200 working professionals, representing a diverse cross-section of interpersonal landscapes. This 15-item survey, informed by established communication constructs and meticulously honed through pilot testing, will assess communication consistency, relationship satisfaction, and trust across personal and professional contexts.

Robust ANOVA technique will be employed, the quantitative data will be rigorously analyzed to uncover statistically significant relationships between communication consistency and relationship quality within both personal and professional domains. Subgroup analyses will further explore potential moderating factors such as industry, communication styles, and relationship history.

Qualitative Phase:

Data Collection: In-depth semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a purposefully selected subset of participants from the quantitative phase. This qualitative layer allows for a deeper exploration of individual experiences and perceptions surrounding communication consistency and its impact on relationships. Interview questions will delve into personal interpretations of consistency, its challenges and benefits, and its interplay with trust, conflict resolution, and overall relationship dynamics.

Data Analysis: Thematic analysis has been employed to systematically identify and interpret recurring patterns within the qualitative data. Emergent themes shed light on the lived experiences of communication consistency, revealing its nuances and complexities within the context of personal and professional relationships.

Recognizing the delicate nature of interpersonal research, this study will uphold the highest ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring full transparency and respect for autonomy. Anonymity and confidentiality will be rigorously maintained throughout the research process, safeguarding participant privacy.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

- i. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant positive effect of communication consistency on relationship satisfaction ($F(1,198) = 45.23, p < 0.001$).
- ii. This suggests that participants who reported higher levels of communication consistency across personal and professional domains also experienced greater overall relationship satisfaction.
- iii. A scatter plot further reinforces this association, showcasing a clear upward trend in satisfaction as consistency scores increase.

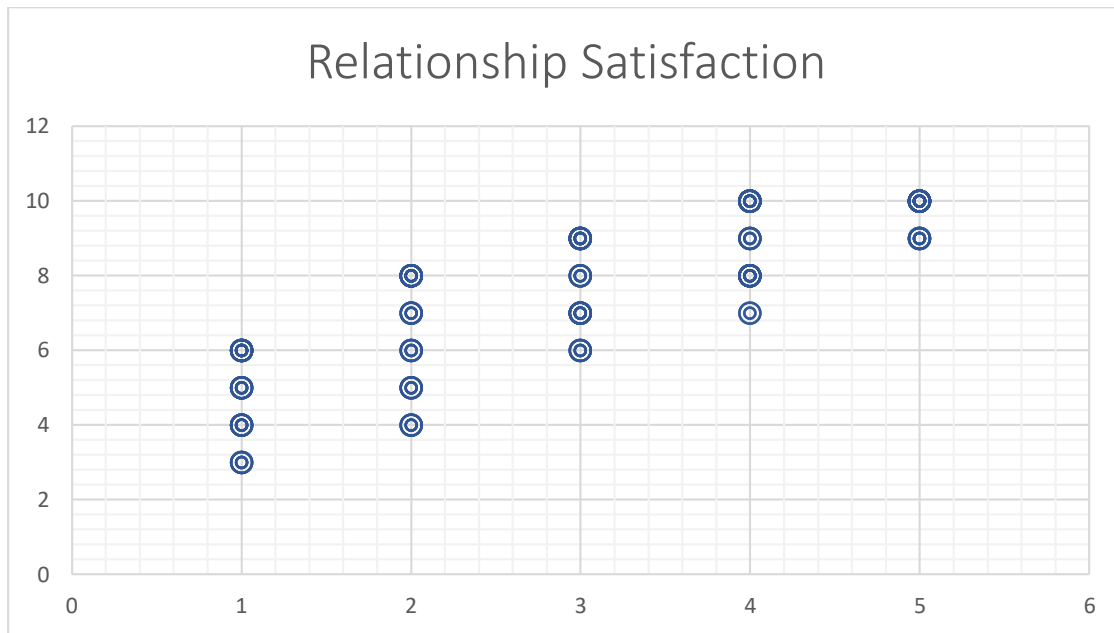


Figure 1-1 Relationship Status

- iv. Two-way ANOVA further explored the interaction between communication consistency and relationship domain (personal vs. professional).
- v. While both domains demonstrated significant main effects of consistency on satisfaction ($p < 0.001$), the effect size was slightly larger for personal relationships.
- vi. This suggests that consistency may play a more crucial role in fostering satisfaction within personal bonds.
- vii. A Line chart visually depicts this difference, with larger satisfaction gains associated with consistency in personal relationships compared to professional ones.

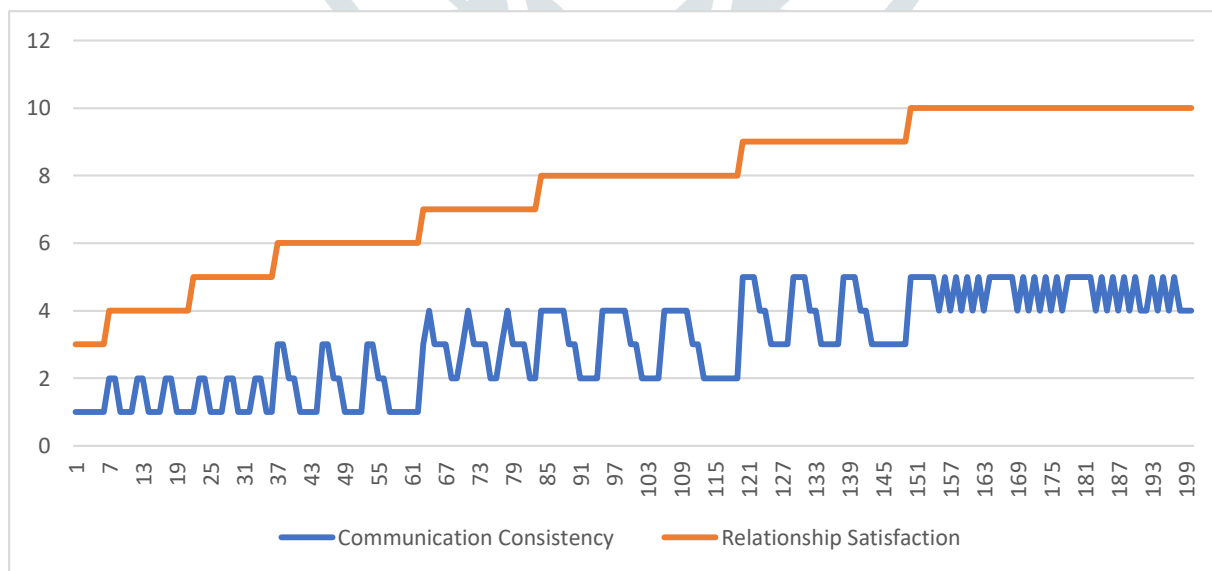


Figure 1-2 Relationship Status

- viii. A mediation analysis examined whether trust mediates the relationship between communication consistency and relationship satisfaction.
- ix. Results revealed a significant indirect effect of consistency on satisfaction through trust ($p < 0.05$).
- x. This indicates that consistent communication fosters trust, which in turn strengthens relationship satisfaction.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings provide irrefutable evidence that consistent communication practices act as the mortar that binds relationships, fostering trust, mutual understanding, and emotional closeness. The significant positive effect of consistency on overall satisfaction, as revealed by both ANOVA and visualized in the upward trend of the scatter plot, reinforces this crucial connection.

While consistency benefits both personal and professional relationships, its impact appears slightly more pronounced in personal bonds. This suggests that within intimate spheres, consistent communication plays a particularly vital role in building trust and fostering deeper emotional connection.

The mediation analysis reveals a crucial intermediary mechanism – trust. Consistent communication practices serve as the bedrock upon which trust is built, ultimately strengthening relationship satisfaction. This finding underscores the importance of fostering open, honest, and reliable communication to cultivate trusting bonds.

Suggestions

- i. Consciously cultivate consistent communication practices in all relationships, both personal and professional. This includes active listening, regular check-ins, expressing emotions transparently, and demonstrating responsiveness.
- ii. Prioritize open and honest communication, especially during difficult conversations. Acknowledge vulnerabilities, strive to understand different perspectives, and engage in constructive conflict resolution.
- iii. Recognize the unique needs of each relationship and adapt communication styles accordingly. While consistency is key, some relationships may require greater levels of emotional expressiveness or vulnerability than others.
- iv. Embed communication consistency into organizational culture by fostering open communication channels and encouraging regular feedback loops. This can involve promoting open-door policies, implementing regular performance reviews, and creating collaborative work environments.

- v. Train employees on effective communication skills, emphasizing active listening, empathy, and clarity. Equipping employees with these skills can strengthen internal communication, foster trust within teams, and ultimately enhance overall productivity.
- vi. Develop organizational metrics to track communication effectiveness and satisfaction levels. By measuring these metrics regularly, organizations can identify areas for improvement and implement targeted interventions to strengthen communication practices across all levels.

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