EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF AI ADOPTION IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The growing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in the departments of corporate communication has transformed internal communication operations, public relations, and strategic message delivery operations. This study explored the employee attitudes towards AI adoption in corporate communication departments through exploring the relationship between perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organizational support, and AI anxiety with AI adoption intention. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was performed using the Technology Acceptance Model on communication professionals who had experience with the use of AI tools. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were used to analyse data in SPSS. The results suggested that perceived usefulness was the most effective predictor of AI adoption intention, followed by perceived ease of use and organizational support, whereas AI anxiety had a negative impact on the adoption. The model described a significant amount of variance in adoption intention. The findings indicate that a successful implementation of AI in corporate communication needs to be supported by both evident performance-benefits in addition to organizational endorsement and plans to alleviate the anxiety of employees.

Keywords: AI, Communications, Perceived usefulness.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has entirely transformed itself into a universal organizational network that is changing business operations, communication, and value-making models within a fast time frame. In every sector, AI systems are used more and more to run generation content systems, chatbots, predictive analytics, and decision-support systems that run on autopilot (Dwivedi et al., 2021). In the corporate setting, communication units such as internal communications, PR, and corporate affairs, and strategic communications units have taken centre-stage in this change. Along with being strategic storytellers of AI use within the organization, these departments are the ones that are not only embracing AI tools to gain productivity and data-driven insights but are also mentoring their organizational-wide applications. Consequently, AI usage in the business communication operations forms a technological change as well as a communicative, cultural, and professional transformation.

There is a great potential in the incorporation of AI into the communication departments of corporates. Internal communication and organizational listening are enhanced in real time using the help of chatbots and conversational systems that are powered by AI (Men et al., 2022). Generative AI aids in helping generate the content, compose internal announcements, and crisis messaging, and stakeholder reports, which may make it more productive and responsive. The most recent tools in analytics enable communication professionals to track the sentiment, gauge the engagement, and develop the communication strategies to a more sophisticated degree. The capabilities are also consistent with the general trends in the digital transformation, whereby technology improves the agility and strategic decision-making within an organization (Kane et al., 2021; Vercic et al., 2024).

As these opportunities come in, however, they come with significant challenge especially at an employee level. The introduction of AI can bring about doubt in terms of employment conditions, professional identity, autonomy, and relevance of skills. Studies regarding technological disruption indicate that employees might feel extremely unsafe and lose well-being when perceived to be switched with automation (Brougham and Haar, 2020). The paradox of automation and augmentation also shows that AI is at the same time able to empower and endanger professionals, increasing their performance and also creating the fear of being displaced or losing cognitive skills

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(Raisch and Krakowski, 2021). In the case of communication professionals, where creativity, relation intelligence, and strategic judgment are crucial to their work, the precedence of AI in the production and analytical cost might initiate ambivalent perceptions.The available literature on technology adoption has helped in providing the theoretical background in studying these dynamics. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) focus on perceived usefulness, ease of use, social influence and facilitating conditions as critical factors which determine adoption intention (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2012). Recent studies are in the domain of AI-based research that expands these models with other factors, including trust, organizational support, and ethical governance (Dahri et al., 2024; Kelley, 2022). However, although these models have been widely implemented in industries, comparatively little has been done in empirical studies on this particular group of professionals like corporate communication departments.

This is a large gap since communication departments have an incomparable dual position regarding AI implementation. They are both consumers of AI technologies, as well as organizers of internal narratives in the new technology change. Their perception can affect the adoption behaviour both personal and collective of the whole organization towards AI. Furthermore, internal communication practices have been indicated to influence the staff members in terms of trust, transparency, and level of participation in the process of digital transformation (Men et al., 2022). It is also important to understand how communication professionals view AI adoption to gain theoretical and practical wisdom.

With an increasing body of research on the areas of the AI application in business and PR settings, scholarship investigating the perceptions of AI application by workplace employees is still in its consortium. Regarding the implementation of AI in communication tools, ethics, and trends in digital transformation, research has been conducted to date, but combined quantitative results are scarce between the perceived usefulness, organizational support, AI anxiety, and intention of adopting AI amongst communication professionals. Filling this gap helps advance the technology adoption theory by making constructs of TAM/UTAUT constructs relevant in a strategic communication environment, and offers a practical value to leaders with AI-based transformation to manage.

In this light, this study examines how various perceptions of AI usage within corporate communication departments can impact adoption intention; specifically, the factors of cognitive appraisal (e.g., perceived usefulness), organizational (e.g., support and readiness), and affective (e.g., AI anxiety) perceptions have an effect on the former. Through the application of the descriptive and regression analyses, the research seeks to find the critical predictors that influence the adoption of AI among communication professionals. By doing it, it also helps to develop a better understanding of AI application both in communication-heavy organizational systems and presents the evidence-based suggestions on how leaders may contribute to an effective introduction of AI use that is responsible and employee-oriented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artificial intelligence (AI) is also changing the world of corporate communication, revolutionizing the inner communication processes, professional roles, and the decision-making system, in the companies. Recent research places AI adoption in well-known technology acceptance models, like Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which focus on perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, performance expectancy and facilitating conditions as the main predictors of adoption attitude (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2012). Modern research applies these frameworks to the AI scenario, proving that trust-based situations, organizational support, and employee self-efficacy are marked factors affecting the generative AI usage in the working environment (Dahri et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2024). In addition to personal cognitive judgments, the greater structure of organizational preparedness like the Technology- Organization- People (TOP) model presents the significance of cultural preparedness, leader dedication, and employee abilities in the success of AI integration (Tursunbayeva and Gal, 2024). In a highly communicative setting, AI is not the simple technical introduction but a social-communicative paradigm shift that

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involves employee identity and independence, as well as perceptions of professional relevance. The technological disruption studies show that the perceived automation brings more job insecurity and psychological stress, hence defining employee refusal or ambivalence to AI tools (Brougham and Haar, 2020). Another aspect is the automation-augmentation paradox that AI will save productivity, and expertise and control will be threatened at the same time (Raisch and Krakowski, 2021). The use of AI in generating the content and analytics in communication departments might be seen as either as a collaborative enhancement or professional removal, as strategic messaging, creativity, and relational management are the main professional skills in the communication department. Studies on human-AI symbiosis maintains that placing AI as a supportive collaborator and not an alternative result in a better employee acceptance and performance (Jarrahi, 2021). Perception is also deeply shaped by ethical considerations: when they are well defined and AI governance principles, transparency, and accountability standards are clearly outlined in the company, employees are more likely to be acceptive (Kelley, 2022). The use of AI, especially chatbot-based communication features and Sentiment analytics, in PR and strategic communications has also been associated with improved listening and transparency in an organization (Men et al., 2022), and methodical analyses of digital internal communication reveal that AI is a continuation of wider digital transformation patterns, and not a solitary innovation (Vercic et al., 2024). However, researchers warn that AI-based management can cause a shift in the balance of power, which can decrease the level of perceived autonomy and intensify surveillance issues (Kellogg et al., 2020), and AI-mediated workplace communication can alter the norms of respect, trust, and relational exchange (Van Quaquebeke and Gerpott, 2024). The practices of knowledge management in organizations also mediate AI adoption results; cohesive training, inter-functional coordination, and knowledge sharing systems cater to less uncertainty and positive perceptions (Iaia et al., 2024). Critically, the studies of digital transformation focus on the idea that technology alone is an insufficient determinant of success in the adoption processes; instead, strategy and culture prevail (Kane et al., 2021). In a corporate communication department, that is both an initiator and a storyteller of AI implementation throughout or in the organization, the perceptions of employees develop to be strategically consequential: communication professionals do not just utilize AI tools, they also construct their meanings without and within an organization. Although there is increasing interest in the adoption of AI and its implications in the workplace, very few studies have been conducted to empirically determine the research on employee perceptions within corporate communication departments and especially integrating the theory of technology acceptance and strategic communication and internal communication theories. It is crucial to fill this gap in order to comprehend how perceptions of usefulness, organizational support, AI anxiety, and perceptions of professional identity issues can combine to determine the intentions to adopt AI by communication practitioners in modern corporate settings.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a quantitative cross-sectional research design was used to investigate employee perceptions of artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the corporate communication department such as internal communication, public relations and corporate affairs divisions. The survey method was selected since the research aimed at empirically testing relationship between perceptual, organizational and behavioural variables based on extant technology acceptance framework. The target population was communication professionals working in medium- and large-scale organizations that had an experience of using AI-based tools like generative AI platforms, chatbots, analytics dashboards or automated content systems. Participants were recruited based on the inclusion criteria, and they were included on the basis of professional networks and communication associations and digital platform with the help of purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a self-administered, online questionnaire that was structured and had two parts: demographic and measure of the constructs of the study. A five-point Likert scale was used in measuring all the perceptual variables, i.e., 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The tool contained validated and scaled instruments of all the perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organizational support, AI anxiety, and AI adoption intention. Objects were modified based on the existing

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literature on TAM and AI in the workplace, and small contextual changes to the corporate contextual sphere were also performed. A pilot test was reviewed with a sample of few communication professionals to achieve clarity, face validity, and reliability leading to slight changes in words. Analysis of data in the study was done by use of SPSS. Skewness and kurtosis were used to determine missing values, outliers, and normality as the initial data screening process. To summarize the characteristics of the respondents and overall perception trends, descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were calculated.

The Pearson correlation examination of relationships between the variables was conducted. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency and anything below.70 was considered to be acceptable. The analysis was then performed by multiple linear regression to assess the predictive power of the perceived helpfulness, perceived ease of use, organizational support and AI anxiety to the AI adoption intention. The model fit was evaluated by R^2, adjusted R^2, F- statistic and standardized beta coefficients (b), t-values and significance level were utilized in evaluating the contribution of individual predictors. Assumption of regression were checked based on the variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance of multicollinearity, homoscedasticity and linearity of the residual plots, normal probability plots of the residual normality and dependence of errors indicated by the Durbin Watson statistic. The ethical matters were also strictly followed; they were volunteered to participate in the survey, informed consent has been taken before completion of the survey, anonymity was maintained, and the data was used only with the purpose of academic use. On the whole, the methodological strategy was aimed at providing the statistical rigor, construct reliability, and the fit to the theoretical focus of the topic of technology acceptance research and tackling the particular work-related setting of corporate communication departments.

ANALYSIS
The analysis was performed using SPSS and proceeded in four stages: (1) descriptive statistics, (2) reliability analysis, (3) correlation analysis, and (4) multiple regression analysis. Assumptions underlying regression were also examined prior to interpretation.

Descriptive Statistics
The descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the demographics and central tendency of the study variables among the respondents. The sample was composed of those in the communication field and they were in the field of internal communication, public relations and corporate affairs.

The Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the main constructs.

Variable	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Perceived Usefulness	3.87	0.71
Perceived Ease of Use	3.75	0.68
Organizational Support	3.54	0.82
AI Anxiety	2.98	0.89
AI Adoption Intention	3.92	0.73

Its findings showed that the respondents tended to believe that AI is useful (M = 3.87) and moderately high intention to adopt it (M = 3.92). The mean score of organizational support was moderate (M = 3.54), which indicates that there was variability in the institutional readiness. The scores in AI anxiety were moderate (M = 2.98), which showed that the level of anxiety was not too high, but still present.

Reliability Analysis
Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. A threshold of α ≥ .70 was considered acceptable.

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Table 2 Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Perceived Usefulness	4	.88
Perceived Ease of Use	4	.85
Organizational Support	4	.83
AI Anxiety	4	.81

All constructs demonstrated good internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from .81 to .90. These values indicated that the measurement scales were reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among variables prior to regression analysis.

Table 3 Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Perceived Usefulness	—				
2. Perceived Ease of Use	.62**	—			
3. Organizational Support	.48**	.45**	—		
4. AI Anxiety	-.36**	-.29**	-.41**	—	
5. Adoption Intention	.68**	.59**	.52**	-.44**	—

Note:p < .01

The perceived usefulness also demonstrated the strongest positive association with the intention to adopt AI (r = .68, p < .01), then perceived ease of use (r = .59, p < .01), and organizational support (r=.52. p<.01). The concept of AI anxiety showed a moderate negative relationship with adoption intention (r = −.44, p < .01), meaning that the more people were reserved by AI anxiety, the less they were willing to use AI tools. Multicollinearity testing revealed that there were satisfactory predictor interrelationships.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive effects of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organizational support, and AI anxiety on AI adoption intention.

MODEL SUMMARY

Table 4 Model Summary

R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error	Durbin–Watson
.74	.55	.53	0.49	1.98

The regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, XXX) = XX.XX$, p < .001, explaining 55% of the variance in AI adoption intention (R^2 = .55). The adjusted R^2 (.53) indicated strong explanatory power. The Durbin–Watson statistic (1.98) confirmed independence of residuals.

Coefficients

Table 5 Regression Coefficients

Predictor	β	t	p	VIF
Perceived Usefulness	.42	7.85	<.001	2.10
Perceived Ease of Use	.24	4.62	<.001	1.95
Organizational Support	.19	3.88	<.001	1.78
AI Anxiety	-.21	-4.15	<.001	1.64

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The most significant predictor of an AI adoption intention was perceived usefulness (b =.42, p <.001), suggesting that the employees holding the view that AI increased their work performance were more inclined to adopt it. Perceived ease of use was also a significant predictor (b =.24, p <.001) of adoption intention indicating that the usability is a relevant attribute in acceptance. The positive and significant impact was found on the organizational support (b = .19, p < .001), which puts emphasis on the leadership and institutional readiness. There was a significant negative contribution of the AI anxiety (b = [?].21, p <.001), that is fear of being replaced or losing control over the job inhibited adoption intention. The values of variance inflation factor (VIF) were less than 5 which ensures that multicollinearity was not present.

Before the interpretation, regression assumptions were explored. The line plots showed a linear relationship and a non-uniform variance. Normal probability plot (P-P plot) showed that there is an approximate normal distribution of residuals. The value of VIF was between 1.64 and 2.10, which did not show any samples of multicollinearity. Independent errors were verified by the value of Durbin-Watson (1.98).

The findings have shown that cognitive appraisals (perceived usefulness and ease of use) and organizational appraisals (organizational support) and affective reactions (AI anxiety) had significant effects on the AI adoption intention of corporate communication practitioners.

The strongest predictor was perceived usefulness and the adoption was impacted negatively by the AI anxiety. The model predicted a significant percent of the variance thus demonstrating a strong predictivity.

DISCUSSION

In the study, the perception of staff regarding the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in the corporate communication departments was studied and major cognitive, organizational and affective predictors of the adoption intention were identified. The results proved that perceived usefulness was the most important predictor of the intention to adopt AI and the next strongest was perceived ease of use and organizational support, whereas AI anxiety had a strong negative impact. These findings prove the explanatory power of technology acceptance models like TAM and UTAUT to the subsidiary context of AI in the workplace (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2012), and reap their application to the corporate communication professionals specifically.The great impact of perceived usefulness implies that communication employees would be better oriented to the AI tools that obviously contribute to performance improvement, efficiency, and strategic effectiveness. The use of AI that positively influences productivity seems to promote favourable inclination in communication departments, in which timely messages are core, information processing leads to insights, and upkeep of the content are of primary importance. This observation is consistent with the current studies on adoption of AI that reveal that performance expectancy has been the strongest predictor of behavioural intention in organisational contexts (Kim et al., 2024). In the case of communication practitioners, usefulness can come in the form of rapid writing of content and better audience analysis, as well as listening capabilities within the organization.

It also happened that perceived ease of use was a strong predictor of adoption intention, which is to suggest that even among digitally-skilled employees, usability becomes a very important consideration. It implies that AI that are only minimally trained (require set up) and easy to use interfaces will have an easier time gaining acceptance. Since most communication departments are usually time constrained, complexity can be a drawback to integration. Therefore, the simplicity and accessibility are the keys to the implementation strategies of AI.Another significant positive predicate of organizing support proved to be significant, which is why leadership endorsement, training opportunities, and institutional readiness were emphasized. The result is incidental to the general body of digital transformation scholarship that has pinpointed culture and strategy as key determinants of success in technology implementation over technical infrastructure (Kane et al., 2021). Leadership framing and open in-house communication on the role of AI in communication departments can create less uncertainty and build trust.

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Since communication professionals also contribute to the overall organizational discourse of AI, their impressions are probably predetermined by the ability of AI adoption to be communicated internally in a transparent and ethical manner.

AI anxiety on the other hand had a significant negative relationship with the adoption intention. Employees who raised questions about being displaced or having their professional obsolescence lowered or their autonomy were less likely to embrace AI tools. This observation is consistent with the automation-augmentation paradox (Raisch and Krakowski, 2021) that hypothesizes that AI can improve the productivity level but also establishes identity-related issues. Fears of automation can be especially acute in communication occupations, where strategy, creativity, and relationship competence are of great importance. This means that that emotional and psychological responses should be incorporated as well as functional benefits when implementing AI.All in all, the results point to the fact that the adoption of AI in the sphere of corporate communication departments is a complex process that can be influenced by both logical considerations and emotional responses. Though the cognitive and usability perceptions of usefulness are predominant, the impact of organizational culture and feelings have great impacts on behavioural intention. Any combination of the TAM constructs with anxiety-related variables will offer a more comprehensive picture of AI adoption in areas that require communication.

CONCLUSION

The study is part of the increasingly expanding literature on adoption of AI, as its scope was limited to understanding employee perception in corporate communication departments. The findings assisted by descriptive and regression analysis proved that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and organizational support have positive influence on the intention to adopt AI, and AI anxiety had negative impact on the intention. Perceived usefulness was the strongest predictor among these predictors.The findings highlight that AI application in communication departments is not only a technological issue but a strategic and human-centred revolution. The communication professionals have to look at AI as a performance enhancing partner, and not as a threat to their profession. When any organization is interested in applying AI tools to communication functions, then a greater focus should be on showing tangible advantage, introducing easy to use systems, delivering formal training, and handling psychological issues like security in the job and professional identity.

The study applies technology acceptance models to corporate communication space with the application of affective variables like AI anxiety to help form a more detailed explanatory model. In practice, the results could inform communication leaders to handle AI-led change: clear communication within the organization (requiring investment in technology), ethical governance and enabling leadership is necessary in order to make the change successful. Despite its contributions, had a limitation of being cross-sectional and the use of self-reported data. In the future studies, longitudinal designs can be used to evaluate how perception might change, use qualitative concept to examine how professional identity develops in a deeper way, or relative the communication departments of various industries and countries.

To sum up, with AI setting to revolutionize the organizational communication environments, employee perception becomes vital. The corporate communication departments are in a peculiar dual-functionary position of being adopters of change and the narrators of change of AI. Positive perception among these professionals is thus a requirement to the long-term sustainability, ethical and strategic effective implementation of AI in a modern organization.

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