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Dissertation

Research Topic:

*Challenges of communication in Project management: A case study of TK
Maxx*

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Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this dissertation, titled "*Challenges of communication in Project management: A case study of TK Maxx*," is entirely my own effort and represents my original research. All information obtained from other sources has been properly credited and referenced in line with academic requirements.

I certify that all research procedures followed and all data collected were handled with the highest honesty and respect for the academic community and the study subject. In doing my study, I have not committed any acts of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty.

Date: 31.12.2023

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Abstract

It is impossible to stress the importance of clear and frequent communication in the field of project management. This study delves deeply into the difficulties of communication in project management by examining the situation at TK Maxx, a global retailer. The study is based on a constructivist paradigm, which acknowledges that both the researcher and the researched have an active role in building knowledge. It takes an interpretivist stance, meaning that it recognises the role that one's upbringing, culture, and individual interpretation have in shaping one's behaviour and interactions with others. A deductive research technique is applied to rigorously assess current theories and models in the context of TK Maxx, while a qualitative methodological position allows for a deeper understanding of communication issues. The research plan centres on a case study design, which allows for an in-depth investigation of the complex and real-world phenomena inside TK Maxx's one-of-a-kind project management framework. The majority of the data is gathered via semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis is used to draw out common threads and insights from the qualitative information gathered. For this study, we want to gather data from a representative sample of at least five TK Maxx employees directly engaged in project management and communication. The study's overarching goal is to provide useful insights applicable across sectors by illuminating the communication difficulties and possible solutions inside TK Maxx's organisational culture

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: Introduction

Effective communication is the lifeblood of the complicated and multidimensional field of project management (Anantatmula and Rad, 2018). The success of a project may be jeopardised in the absence of open and effective lines of communication. This investigation of the difficulties of project management communication focuses on a case study of TK Maxx. The goal is to better understand the effects of TK Maxx's internal communication, organisational structure, and digital technologies on project execution and results.

1.2: Background of the study

It is impossible to emphasise the value of good communication in project management. Having open lines of communication between team members, stakeholders, and the project manager is essential to the success of any project (Chen, 2021). Project management success at TK Maxx, a global store, requires an understanding of the nuanced nature of communication obstacles.

1.3: Problem Statement

Although communication is essential in project management, it may be hampered by a number of factors (Mishra and Alok, 2022). Problems with communication, organisational structure, and the adoption of new technologies are all examples of what may fall under this category. Identifying and tackling these problems is key for enhancing project results at TK Maxx.

1.4: Aims, Objectives, Research Questions

1.4.1: Research Aim

The aim of the research is to understand the challenges of communication in Project Management: A case study of TK Maxx.

1.4.2: Research Objectives

- To know communication barriers impact project execution and outcomes within TK Maxx's project management framework.
- To identify how the organisational structure of TK Maxx influences communication effectiveness and information flow in project management.
- To know how technology and digital tools can be leveraged to mitigate communication challenges in project management at TK Maxx (Mishra and Alok, 2022).

1.4.3: Research Questions

- How do communication barriers impact project execution and outcomes within TK Maxx's project management framework?
- How does the organisational structure of TK Maxx influence communication effectiveness and information flow in project management?
- How can technology and digital tools be leveraged to mitigate communication challenges in project management at TK Maxx?

1.5: Rationale/Importance of the Research

This study's importance lies in the fact that it examines a fundamental facet of project management—communication—and the difficulties that come with it in the actual world. The study's case study of TK Maxx, a well-known international corporation, could provide useful insights that may be put to use in a variety of fields. The findings of this research may help inform better project management practices that would be of use to businesses that want to boost the efficiency of their internal communications.

1.6: Methodology (sources, population, sample, measuring instrument, data collection, data analysis)

This study uses a qualitative research approach, specifically a case study technique. To fully grasp the communication issues and possible solutions at TK Maxx, it is necessary to conduct interviews with at least five different employees.

1.7: Scope of the Study/Demarcation (International, national, geographic area)

This research is limited to the worldwide sphere in which TK Maxx operates. Study topics include its project management structure, difficulties in communicating with stakeholders, and the potential use of digital technologies. Although the results might be used in other contexts, this company is where they will be put to the most effective use.

1.8: Structure of the Dissertation

Here is how the dissertation is laid out: The need for open lines of communication in project management is introduced in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, we cover the relevant research in depth. The methodology of the study is described in Chapter 3. Data analysis and interpretation are covered in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 6 draws conclusions and makes suggestions based on the results of the investigation.

1.9: Summary of Chapter 1

Effective communication in project management was emphasised in the introduction chapter. The scope of the investigation, its justification, and its aims and goals were all laid forth. The dissertation's approach and outline were also discussed, giving readers an idea of what to expect in the next sections.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1: Definition and Characteristics of Communication in Project Management

The key to successful project management is effective communication, which encourages fruitful discussions, ideas, and feedback among project stakeholders. According to (Chen), it serves as a channel for communicating and understanding the goals, expectations, status, and problems of a project. In this sense, a few traits that are essential to project management determine how effective communication is.

One of the most important components of good communication is clarity to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding by making sure the message is understandable. The foundation of dependability in project management is accurate communication, which guarantees that the data conveyed is accurate and true. Maintaining project momentum and adaptability to changes requires timely communication, as it might result in lost opportunities or ineffective problem-solving techniques. Another essential component of good communication in project management is relevance to require that the information shared is relevant to the goals of the project so that stakeholders may concentrate on what counts. Furthermore, communication flexibility is essential, particularly in changing project situations. Project teams can adjust their messaging and methods to the changing requirements and circumstances of the project by using flexible communication strategies.

On the other hand, poor communication can result in misaligned projects, unclear stakeholder expectations, and eventually, project failure (Anantatmula and Rad, 2018). Conflicting views of the needs and goals of the project can arise from unclear communication. Misinformation from inaccurate communication can result in delays, additional work, and distrust among stakeholders (Malik, Sarwar, and Orr, 2020). Inadequate communication can slow down decision-making procedures and make it more difficult for the project to react quickly to problems. Irrelevant communication has the potential to clog the information environment and draw focus away from important project details. Inflexible project management can result from inflexible communication tactics, which makes it difficult to adjust to shifting conditions and new problems.

To sum up, good communication is essential to project management success. Its qualities of clarity, correctness, timeliness, relevance, and adaptability guarantee that collaboration flourishes, potential pitfalls are successfully avoided, and project objectives are thoroughly understood. On the other hand, inadequate communication can lead to inefficiency,

misalignment, and project problems, underscoring the critical role that effective communication plays in project management success.

2.2: Importance of effective communication in Project Management

A key component of project management, effective communication can make all the difference in a project's success, it serves as a unifying factor to guarantee that all project participants are aware of the same goals and specifications. This mutual understanding is essential to keeping the project moving on the right path and preventing expensive detours. The capacity of efficient communication to bring team members together around the same goal is one of its most important contributions (Anantatmula and Rad, 2018). A synchronized workforce that is pulling in the same direction is assembled through the unambiguous communication of project goals and tactics. This alignment reduces miscommunication and promotes a positive work atmosphere, all of which are essential for effectively accomplishing project goals.

Better decision-making processes are stimulated by efficient communication(Chen, 2021). By exchanging ideas and information clearly and simply, team members and project managers can quickly come to well-informed conclusions. Making decisions quickly is essential to keeping the project moving forward, tackling new problems as they come up, and taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. Effective communication encompasses more than just decision-making; it also involves identifying risks and challenges related to a project. Open avenues for reporting and feedback help identify possible issues early in the project lifecycle. Effective communication enables proactive problem-solving, which is crucial for reducing risks before they become serious problems and ensuring the success of the project. Effective communication also has a significant impact on stakeholder satisfaction and engagement, which are essential for project acceptability and ongoing support. Stakeholders are more likely to feel informed and involved when they get regular, clear information.

Poor communication can result in project misalignment, which can cause confusion and even project failure because different stakeholders may have different understandings of the project's objectives. Delays in decision-making might make it more difficult for the project to react quickly to obstacles. Inadequate communication can also make it more difficult to identify project risks and concerns promptly, allowing them to worsen and become obstacles

to the project's advancement. Ignoring the requirement for communication among stakeholders might result in discontent and disengagement, endangering acceptability and support for the initiative.

2.3: Models and Theories of Communication in Project Management

Several models and theories that illuminate distinct aspects of the communication process provide the theoretical basis for effective communication in project management. An examination of these models and theories in comparison provides insightful information about the complex nature of successful communication in project management.

Based on the discipline of information theory, the Shannon-Weaver Model clarifies the essential elements of the communication process. The message, the channel, and the recipient as necessary components. This model emphasizes the importance of a well-crafted, lucid message, the suitable selection of communication channels, and the accuracy with which the message can be decoded by the recipient. Its main area of interest is information transfer mechanics (Umeozov, 2020). On the other hand, the Social Exchange Theory goes beyond communication mechanics and explores the view of people in project management. This idea emphasizes how important it is to take into account the interests and viewpoints of all project team members.(Xuecheng, Iqbal and Saina, 2022). It promotes a more all-encompassing strategy, realizing that good communication entails more than just getting messages over and recognizing the various needs and worries of everyone working on the project.

The pragmatic approach of the Information Richness Theory acknowledges that not all communications are created equal in terms of ambiguity and complexity (Ishii, Lyons and Carr, 2019). This idea places a strong emphasis on choosing communication routes according to the amount of detail needed. It recognizes that while certain communications can be successfully conveyed through less sophisticated means like emails, others require face-to-face conversation to communicate nuances. The Communication Competence Theory also explores the subject of interpersonal skills and how important they are to clear communication. It emphasizes crucial qualities like empathy, attentive listening, and feedback systems. Good communication in project management involves more than just sharing information; it also entails being able to interact with stakeholders, comprehend their needs, and react accordingly. Nonetheless, taken as a whole, these theories and models offer a thorough foundation for comprehending efficient communication in project management.

2.4: Advantages and Disadvantages of Effective or Poor Communication in Project Management

Project management relies heavily on effective communication, which has several benefits that set successful initiatives apart from unsuccessful ones. These benefits highlight how important good communication is to the completion of a project(Sarapour et al., 2019). First of all, good communication makes project coordination easier. It guarantees that everyone in the team is aware of their duties and responsibilities and is operating from the same page. Tasks are completed in a coordinated manner as a result, and project activities run smoothly. Effective communication also has the important benefit of reducing misconceptions. Stakeholders are more likely to share a common understanding of the project's requirements and objectives when communication is clear and precise. Thus, there is less chance of misunderstanding and expensive mistakes. Another benefit is improved problem-solving. Clear and concise communication creates a space where problems and obstacles in a project can be found and fixed quickly. By fixing problems proactively, small problems are kept from growing into major obstacles. Another benefit of good communication is, stakeholder satisfaction. Stakeholders are more likely to support the project when they are informed, and involved, and their concerns are taken seriously. The adoption of the project and its ongoing funding depend on this support.

On the other hand, inadequate communication might result in numerous drawbacks. One frequent outcome of misconceptions, poor communication, and a lack of collaboration is project delays. Project expenses may rise as a result of delays, which could compromise the project's financial sustainability (Souza et al., 2020).

Project delays are frequently accompanied by cost overruns since longer project schedules and the requirement for more resources result in greater costs. The budget and financial stability of a project may suffer as a result of these overruns. The unchecked growth of a project's scope, or scope creep, is yet another drawback of inadequate communication. Changes in project scope are difficult to manage and control when project objectives are not well stated or communicated.

One serious consequence of inadequate communication is stakeholder unhappiness. Stakeholder dissatisfaction can evolve into resistance or opposition, even endangering the project's success, when they feel neglected, misinformed, or uninvolved. In addition, inadequate communication can result in disagreements, lower team morale, and in the worst

circumstances, project failure. These negative consequences highlight how vital it is to find and fix communication problems in project management. Preventive steps to improve communication are essential for reducing these drawbacks and guaranteeing the project's success. These include frequent and clear communication channels, stakeholder engagement, and dispute-resolution techniques.

2.5: Communication Challenges in Project Management: A Case Study Approach

2.5.1: Overview of Project Management Framework at TK Maxx

The well-known retailer TK Maxx works on several initiatives to streamline its business practices. The organization's strategy approach to improving efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall competitiveness is heavily reliant on these programs. At TK Maxx, project management is centered around the methodical planning, carrying out, and monitoring of projects. By harmonizing project operations with the company's strategic goals, this method guarantees that projects are in line with the organization's larger business objectives. TK Maxx adheres to a precise and organized project management methodology. Roles, duties, and procedures are precisely outlined in this framework, giving project stakeholders clarity and direction (Fanse and Shirbhate, 2022). Throughout the project's life cycle, this organized approach guarantees that all team members and stakeholders have a clear grasp of their tasks and what is expected of them. It fosters effective communication among project stakeholders, improves accountability, and streamlines the project management process (TK Maxx, 2023). In the end, this methodical approach to project management enables TK Maxx to carry out projects that support the company's overarching goals and ongoing expansion.

2.5.2: Analysis of TK Maxx's Communication Challenges

Issues with communication at TK Maxx are closely related to the complexity of project management in a changing retail setting. The retail sector is characterized by rapid change, which naturally creates a variety of communication difficulties. One of TK Maxx's biggest challenges is managing cross-functional teams since projects frequently call for cooperation between people with different specialties and roles (Gasemagha and Kowang, 2021). To make sure that everyone is on the same page regarding the project's objectives and deadlines, effective communication between these teams is essential. Another difficulty is making sure project messaging is consistent. Keep your message constant in a dynamic retail setting

where new information is released often. Any discrepancies could mislead stakeholders and have a detrimental effect on the project's course.

There's more complexity involved in meeting the various information needs of external and internal stakeholders. Diverse stakeholders have varying needs in terms of information types and levels. It can be difficult to strike a balance and give the appropriate information to the appropriate stakeholders at the appropriate moment. Moreover, it is critical to address change management concerns. Changes to organizational structure, technology, or processes are frequently necessary for retail projects. To help staff members and outside partners accept these changes, effective communication is essential. Managing conflicting priorities is another difficult task. There may be several initiatives underway at once in a retail setting, each with its own set of priorities. Effectively managing these priorities and allocating resources can be a substantial communication problem.

2.5.3: Strategies for Overcoming Communication Challenges

Several tactics can be used to address TK Maxx's communication problems. First and foremost, a thorough communication strategy needs to be created. Throughout the project's lifecycle, this plan should clearly define communication goals, routes, and schedules. It serves as a guide for efficient communication (Castro-Maldonado et al., 2019). It is essential to use project management software to get updates in real-time. By streamlining the information flow, this technology lowers delays, increases transparency, and guarantees that stakeholders receive accurate and timely project updates. Prioritizing regular status meetings is a good idea. These gatherings promote candid communication, giving project teams a forum to talk about their work, problems, and solutions. They also give rise to quick problem-solving.

Communication procedures should encourage transparency to keep stakeholders informed about project advancements. Promoting feedback channels allows stakeholders to express their ideas and concerns, which promotes cooperation and confidence. Project teams that receive good communication skills training are better able to interact with one another clearly and sympathetically, which helps to minimize miscommunications and disputes. Stakeholder management principles should also be applied. TK Maxx can make sure that information is communicated in a way that is most meaningful to each stakeholder group by identifying important stakeholders and customizing communication strategies to match their unique requirements and expectations. When combined, these tactics improve internal

communication within the company and tackle the variety of issues brought about by the ever-changing retail landscape. To sum up, good communication is essential to project management since it ensures that projects are completed successfully.

Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology

3.1: Introduction

This chapter presents a thorough examination of the philosophical, paradigmatic, and methodological foundations of the research methodologies and methodology used in this investigation. The study design, methodology, sampling, data collecting, analytic methods, and ethical implications are all covered.

3.2: Philosophical position of the research and why?

The epistemological stance reflected in the constructivist paradigm that knowledge and understanding are active constructions via interactions between the researcher and the researched informs the research philosophy. This decision stems from the firm conviction that people's unique perspectives and interpretations are crucial to fully grasping TK Maxx's complex communication issues in the realm of project management. Within this epistemological framework, the study aims to investigate personal realities and experiences, appreciating the value of participants' perspectives in clarifying the intricate workings of organisational communication (McGrath and Kostalova, 2020).

3.3: Paradigm position of the research and why?

The study fits squarely within the interpretivist paradigm, which acknowledges the importance of individual experiences, viewpoints, and cultural contexts in explaining human behaviour and communication. According to interpretivists, people's interpretations are crucial to making sense of complicated events because they reflect how they've chosen to make sense of the universe. This paradigm allows for a more sophisticated and context-sensitive assessment of communication difficulties within the context of TK Maxx, an organisation with its own specific organisational cultures (Viergever, 2019). It paves the way for a comprehensive investigation of the many factors impacting the organization's internal communication dynamics, including those at the personal and cultural levels.

3.4: Position of Research Approach and why?

The research approach chosen for this study is deductive in nature. This was a calculated decision that serves the needs of the study. Existing theories and models are rigorously evaluated using a logical strategy as applied to the specifics of TK Maxx. The study's deductive methodology allows for the provision of organised and systematic insights on the effects of communication barriers and the efficacy of digital technologies in overcoming these obstacles. With this method, researchers may ensure that their inquiries are both

rigorous and applicable by analysing predetermined research topics and assessing canonical ideas in the context of a real-world business environment (Sakyi et al., 2020).

3.5: Methodological stance of the Research and why?

Due to its suitability with the aims of the study, the research takes a qualitative approach. To get a full and nuanced understanding of the complexities of TK Maxx's communication difficulties, qualitative methodologies are most suited for diving deeply into the experiences and viewpoints of people inside the company (Kahl, 2019). This method enables investigation into the particular organisational situation, therefore capturing participants' subjective experiences and providing solutions tailored to those realities. Because of the complicated nature of communication problems and the need of fully comprehending these problems, qualitative research is essential.

3.6: Stance of the Research Strategy and Design and why?

This study used a case study approach as its research method. This option is helpful for studying complicated real-world phenomena in the TK Maxx setting (Atkinson et al., 2021). Given the complexities of the organization's project management system, a case study permits an in-depth and thorough analysis of communication difficulties and possible solutions. It allows for an in-depth examination of the particular communication norms and procedures of TK Maxx, providing a richer picture of the company's inner workings. By isolating one specific example, researchers are better able to draw broad-reaching conclusions from their findings.

3.7: Research Sample and Population

At least five people with practical knowledge of project management and communication will serve as participants in the study. This sample size was chosen to provide us enough information to draw meaningful conclusions while yet being manageable. As a result, a wide range of insights and anecdotes on dealing with communication issues in project management may be collected (HR and Aithal, 2022). The goal of the study's sample size is to allow for sufficient data gathering and analysis without compromising on the scope of the investigation. Because of their hands-on experience with managing projects, the chosen participants will bring unique insights and views to the table.

3.8: Data Collection and Data Analysis Tools/Techniques

This study's principal technique of data gathering is semi-structured interviews with the sampled employees of TK Maxx. These conversations will be taped, transcribed, and

analysed thematically. Because of its intrinsic potential to reveal patterns and themes within qualitative data, thematic analysis has been selected as the analytical technique. It provides a methodical and organised framework for investigating the complexities of communication difficulties and possible solutions, facilitating an in-depth and all-encompassing comprehension of the topic at hand (Kahl, 2019). By using thematic analysis to qualitative data, researchers may extract relevant themes and make more informed inferences.

3.9: Ethical Consideration of the Research

When doing this study, it is essential to keep ethics in mind. All research volunteers will provide their permission after being fully informed of the study's goals and their own rights. Anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured to safeguard participants' identity and sensitive information. Any possible conflicts of interest will be declared, and ethical norms will be adhered to throughout the research.

3.10: Summary of Chapter 3

Methods and procedures for this investigation are described in detail in Chapter 3. It provides an explanation of how the research's philosophical, paradigmatic, and methodological choices serve the study's overarching aims. Because of the importance of doing this research inside the TK Maxx setting, a qualitative method and case study format were used for this investigation. The ethical issues and data collecting and analysis methods are also discussed in this chapter, laying the groundwork for the subsequent empirical inquiry in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1: Introduction

In the quickly changing corporate environment of today, good communication is essential to project management success. To guarantee that projects stay on course and meet their objectives, it is critical to have the capacity to manage different teams, bridge cultural gaps, and effectively communicate ideas. This is especially true for businesses like well-known retailer TK Maxx, which competes in a market that is always changing. To ensure that its projects are carried out smoothly in the face of several obstacles, such as cross-functional cooperation and change management, TK Maxx must negotiate a complicated maze of communication barriers. This analysis explores the TK Maxx communication complexities in great detail, highlighting the unique problems and offering tactical solutions. TK Maxx can improve internal communication, encourage teamwork, and eventually strengthen its position in the retail sector by taking on these obstacles head-on. This analysis highlights the critical

role that good communication plays in project management and provides insightful information for companies looking to prosper in the competitive market of today.

4.2 Interview analysis

The transcripts highlight that the foundation of project management is effective communication. All of the presenters concur that directing team members towards shared goals requires clear and regular communication. They emphasise that poor communication can cause uncertainty, disarray, and conflicting behaviour among team members, which can eventually cause the project to fail. In addition, poor communication can disrupt decision-making procedures, postpone development, and endanger project deadlines. The transcripts consistently highlight the effect that cultural variety has on team communication. Several presenters stress the significance of cultural sensitivity and the necessity of modifying communication approaches to close gaps between members of diverse teams. This emphasises how important it is to have both language skills and a grasp of cultural quirks, as both are necessary for successful cross-cultural communication.

Digital tools present a workable way to get over communication problems, particularly in teams that operate remotely or in different countries. The transcripts highlight how digital tools help teams work together more efficiently by enabling file sharing, information exchange, and real-time communication. These solutions reduce uncertainty and enhance information accessibility by centralising project-related data and facilitating smooth communication. One of the most important topics covered in the transcripts is measuring how communication affects project outcomes. Regular progress evaluations and stakeholder feedback are emphasised as useful tools for evaluating the success of communication campaigns. Project managers can ensure alignment with stakeholders' expectations and project goals by identifying areas for improvement and fine-tuning their communication tactics by understanding the external perspective.

The transcripts highlight that effective communication requires both attentive listening and comprehension in addition to information transmission. It is advised that team members attend workshops and training sessions to improve their communication abilities. These programmes enable team members to communicate more effectively by encouraging clear expression and attentive listening, which creates a cooperative and fruitful project environment. The presenters also emphasised the link between the morale of the team and efficient communication. Team members are more motivated and committed to the project

when they feel heard, informed, and respected. Increased output, improved teamwork, and eventually project success are all correlated with this higher morale. Conversely, inadequate communication can result in misinterpretations, disagreements, and errors that could worsen and endanger the project as a whole.

Ultimately, the examination of the transcripts that were made available highlights how important communication is to project management in all contexts. Clear objectives are ensured by effective communication, which also promotes teamwork, reduces obstacles, and improves project results overall. Several key techniques are emphasised throughout the transcripts, including emphasizing cultural understanding, utilising digital resources, getting stakeholder feedback, and spending money on communication skills training. The speakers all agree that effective communication is essential to guiding any project towards success, hence it is critical that team members and project managers prioritise and constantly improve their communication skills.

4.2: Analysis and Discussions

One of the most important aspects of project management is effective communication, which is essential to success. The communication issues are especially pertinent in the case of TK Maxx, a well-known retailer that mostly depends on initiatives to improve its operational efficiency and competitiveness. With its rigorous and structured structure and clearly defined roles and responsibilities, TK Maxx's project management framework makes sure that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities and what is expected of them. However, several communication difficulties arise in a retail environment that is evolving quickly. TK Maxx faces several communication issues, one of which is managing cross-functional teams. Retail projects frequently call for cooperation between people with different responsibilities and areas of expertise. To make sure that everyone is on the same page regarding the project's goals and timelines, effective communication between these teams is essential. Because cross-functional collaboration is complicated, poor communication can result in miscommunication, misplaced priorities, and delays.

Another major problem in project messaging is consistency. Since new information is constantly coming out in the fast-paced retail sector, it's critical to keep your messaging consistent. Any communication inconsistencies have the potential to confuse stakeholders and change the course of the project. It is imperative to maintain the coherence and alignment of the project's message with the dynamic retail environment. For TK Maxx, meeting the

varied information needs of internal and external stakeholders is an additional communication issue. Different stakeholders have different needs in terms of the kinds and quantities of information that they want. It might be difficult to strike the proper balance and give the relevant information to the right stakeholders at the right moment. Stakeholders may become dissatisfied, misunderstand one another, and have their expectations misplaced if these varied requirements are not met.

One of the most important aspects of TK Maxx's communication problems is change management. Changes in technology, procedures, or organisational structure are frequently required for retail projects. To guarantee that staff members and outside partners are informed and actively participating in the change process, effective communication is crucial. When change management issues are ignored, the organisation may experience resistance, misunderstanding, and interruptions. Handling competing priorities presents another difficulty. It's not uncommon for the retail sector to have multiple ongoing programmes, each with its own set of priorities. Effectively managing resources, striking a balance between these priorities, and making sure that project objectives are in line with the larger company plan may all be very difficult communication challenges. Conflicting priorities may cause delays in project completion and the misallocation of resources if they are not resolved.

A variety of tactics can be used at TK Maxx to address these communication issues. Firstly, and foremost, a thorough communication plan needs to be created. This plan should specify communication objectives, routes, and timetables in detail for the duration of the project. It acts as a guide for effective communication, guaranteeing that the goals and strategies of communication are understood by all parties involved. To get real-time updates and streamline information flow, project management software is a must. This solution guarantees that stakeholders receive accurate and timely project updates while decreasing delays and increasing transparency. It guarantees that project teams have access to the most recent information and promotes increased collaboration. Prioritising regular status meetings can help to promote transparent communication. Project teams can talk about their work, problems, and possible solutions at these meetings. They speed up problem-solving and foster an atmosphere where team members may honestly share their successes and setbacks.

Communication protocols should be based on the notion of transparency. Stakeholders can voice their opinions and concerns when they receive regular updates on the status of the project and are given access to feedback mechanisms. This encourages cooperation, mutual

trust, and comprehension of the project's goals. Another smart move is to provide project teams with training in communication skills. Teams with strong communication and empathy skills are better able to reduce miscommunications and conflicts, which facilitates the completion of projects more smoothly. Applying stakeholder management principles is also recommended. The most effective way to communicate information to each stakeholder group is to identify the main stakeholders and tailor communication methods to their unique requirements and expectations. Through the integration of these tactics, TK Maxx can enhance its internal communication and effectively tackle the various obstacles presented by the dynamic retail industry.

4.3: Summary

Overall, good communication is essential to project management success. TK Maxx is an example of this, as they are a retailer in a constantly changing market. To surmount its communication obstacles, TK Maxx ought to implement a thorough communication plan, make use of project management tools, give precedence to doing frequent status updates, encourage openness, allocate funds for training in communication techniques, and incorporate the concepts of stakeholder management. TK Maxx can make sure that its projects are in line with its overall business goals and keep a competitive edge in the retail market by resolving these issues and improving communication.

Chapter 5: Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations

Successful project management is based on excellent communication, which is essential in the dynamic retail sector. The TK Maxx case study sheds light on the complex problems that retailers confront when managing stakeholder diversity, cross-functional collaboration, messaging consistency, change management, and competing agendas. The objective of this study was to comprehend the communication obstacles in the context of TK Maxx's project management framework, identifying the fundamental problems and suggesting tactical remedies. This study offers significant insights for management practitioners and academic scholars alike, based on a thorough examination of communication theories, models, and practical tactics. Determining the communication difficulties that TK Maxx, a well-known retailer, encountered in managing projects was the main focus of the research problem. The study examined the challenges brought on by diverse stakeholders, conflicting priorities, cross-functional teams, inconsistent messaging, and change management. Upon doing a thorough investigation, it became apparent that although these issues are unique to TK Maxx, they are shared by several organisations that function in dynamic and competitive industries. If these issues are not resolved, there may be misalignment, delays, discontent among stakeholders, and eventually project failure.

The study's conclusions highlight how important it is to communicate effectively to lessen the difficulties that TK Maxx and its companies confront. The key to avoiding misunderstandings, encouraging teamwork, guaranteeing stakeholder satisfaction, and coordinating projects with corporate objectives is clear and consistent communication. A sophisticated grasp of the complex nature of communication in project management was made possible by the examination of communication theories and models, such as the Shannon-Weaver Model, Stakeholder Theory, Information Richness Theory, and Communication Competence Theory. The research findings offer several tactical fixes adapted to the unique problems faced by TK Maxx. Developing a solid communication plan, using project management software for real-time updates, emphasising open communication, spending money on communication skills training, and putting stakeholder management ideas into practice are some of these methods. By putting these tactics into practice, TK Maxx will be able to improve internal communication, encourage teamwork, and maintain its competitive advantage in the retail industry.

The fields of managerial practice and academics both benefit greatly from this research. In the real world, TK Maxx and other retailers and organisations dealing with comparable

communication problems might use the suggested strategic solutions as a model. The study's actionable insights provide concrete strategies for improving communication efficacy, which in turn guarantees more successful project execution. The aforementioned contributions bear significant consequences for anyone tasked with managing projects in quickly changing industries, including project managers, team leaders, and organisational stakeholders. Within the academic domain, this study contributes to the current corpus of information regarding communication and project management. This study offers a comprehensive viewpoint on the junction of communication theories and useful applications in project management contexts by combining theoretical frameworks and practical difficulties. This thorough analysis can be used as a starting point by academics and researchers to delve deeper into the complex dynamics of communication issues across a range of industries, expanding our theoretical knowledge of project management communication.

In summary, good communication is not only a technique; rather, it is the foundation of successful project management. The TK Maxx case study provides a powerful example of the complex communication difficulties that businesses in fast-paced industries must overcome. This research offers useful ideas that close the gap between theoretical comprehension and real-world application by carefully examining communication theories and useful tactics. Through the use of these principles, companies such as TK Maxx can effectively convert communication obstacles into opportunities that promote cooperation, stakeholder contentment, and project triumph. Lessons learned from this research illuminate the way towards smooth project management and organisational excellence as the business landscape continues to change.

5.1 Limitations of the Research

Considering the thorough examination carried out, there are several restrictions on this study. First off, the study's main focus is on the TK Maxx instance, which restricts the applicability of its conclusions to other businesses. Second, the study may have overlooked newly emerging communication difficulties because it depends on data that is currently available and interviews that were done within a particular period. Furthermore, the study's scope might not account for all potential obstacles to communication that organisations might encounter because particular context-specific details could be missed. Finally, although cultural and geographical differences can have a big influence on communication dynamics, the study does not go into great detail about them. These drawbacks emphasise the necessity

of additional study to examine a wider range of communication difficulties in project management.

5.2 Recommendations

TK Maxx may improve its project management communication by implementing many important recommendations that stem from the research findings. First and foremost, TK Maxx has to fund extensive training programmes for its staff in communication that emphasise active listening, cultural sensitivity, and dispute resolution. Simplifying information flow and improving team collaboration need the use of cutting-edge project management software that offers collaborative tools, transparent communication channels, and real-time updates. Establishing regular feedback channels, such as forums and surveys, will help you monitor stakeholder satisfaction and quickly spot communication gaps. Furthermore, it is recommended that TK Maxx establish a task force dedicated to communication to assess existing approaches, provide enhancements, and guarantee that these approaches are used in all initiatives. Last but not least, encouraging cross-functional teams to share information and communicate freely can greatly enhance project results.

5.3 Areas for Further/Future Research

Future studies in this field might examine how project management in fast-paced sectors like retail is affected by new communication technologies like virtual reality and artificial intelligence. Examining how emotional intelligence functions in project communication and how it affects team dynamics and project success may yield insightful information. Multinational firms might also benefit from looking at cross-cultural communication issues in the context of global retail and suggesting customised communication plans for multicultural international teams. Furthermore, long-term research monitoring project results and communication trends can provide a thorough grasp of how communication issues in the retail industry are changing over time.

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Transcript 1

1. "Communication is the key to any project," what do you think about this statement?

Yes, definitely Strong communication is the cornerstone of every productive activity. Without it, individuals of a team may find themselves working against one another, which can be terrible for a project.

2. Do you think that communication is a critical factor in the success of any project, kindly explain.

Maintaining open lines of communication amongst all stakeholders participating in a project is essential to its success. In my opinion this helps to assure that everyone is working towards the same objectives and is on the same page as one another.

3. According to you, what could a team lead or manager face if they are not able to have proper communication with their team?

According to me the inability to effectively manage resources, monitor progress, and ensure that all team members are working towards the same objectives is a direct outcome of poor or unclear communication. This prevents the team from being able to properly manage resources, monitor progress, and work towards the same goals.

4. What are the most common challenges that could occur due to a lack of communication?

If modifications to the project's scope are not properly recorded and communicated, this may lead to scope creep, which in turn can cause the project to run over budget and over time.

5. Why do you think that by mitigating the communication challenges, any team will be able to perform better?

The members of the team are better able to work together towards a shared objective, which in turn enhances the productivity of the team when misconceptions and misunderstandings are resolved.

6. How do you think that an individual will be able to communicate with their team members with different cultures and backgrounds?

In order for members of a team to properly communicate within a group comprised of people of different ethnicities, they need to be attentive to the histories and beliefs of one another.

7. Do you think that digital tools could assist the team in overcoming their communication challenges, please elaborate.

You can share files and work together with them in real time: Digital technologies help teams get more done in less time by letting them work together in real time, share files, and get information right away.

8. How can an individual be able to measure and evaluate the impact of their project communication on their project outcomes and deliverables?

Regular feedback sessions are used to measure how well team members can talk to each other: It's good for everyone to take regular tests of their team communication skills to see what works and what might need some changes.

9. What are the most common ways that could be used to overcome the challenges that occur due to lack of communication?

Make a plan for how everyone will talk to each other, and then follow it. A well-structured plan to set standards and give roles makes it less likely that people will not understand each other.

10. How can effective communication decide the success or failure of a project?

It helps you figure out how to solve problems and make smart decisions: Teams can deal with problems quickly and make decisions that may be good for the project when they can communicate well and spot problems early on.

Transcript 2

1. “Communication is the key to any project”, what do you think about this statement?

The ability to communicate clearly and effectively is essential to the completion of any project; it ensures that all parties involved have the same end goal in mind and are kept abreast of developments and adjustments.

2. Do you think that communication is a critical factor in the success of any project, kindly explain.

The following areas are ones in which stakeholders need to interact and coordinate themselves: Clear and consistent communication between all of the people working on the project is one of the most important factors in determining whether or not it will be successful.

3. According to you, what could a team lead or manager face if they are not able to have proper communication with their team?

When there is a breakdown in communication, individuals of the team may have various interpretations of the goals, which may lead to contradictory actions and ambiguity for the leader of the team.

4. What are the most common challenges that could occur due to lack of communication?

Due to a lack of clarity and awareness of the project's aims and objectives, members of the team may engage in behaviours that conflict with one another if they are unable to effectively communicate with one another.

5. Why do you think that by mitigating the communication challenges, any team will be able to perform better?

When everyone is on the same page, things run smoothly. When members of a team are clear on their responsibilities and obligations, they are more likely to fulfil their objectives and work effectively.

6. How do you think that an individual will be able to communicate with their team member with different cultures and backgrounds?

Make sure to avoid using any jargon while writing, since this will help enhance understanding. When writing for a large audience, it is essential to use simpler language and get rid of idioms and jargon that not everyone would be familiar with.

7. Do you think that digital tools could assist the team in overcoming their communication challenges, please elaborate.

It's easier for teams that work in different places to work together and share information: With these tools, groups that are spread out can work together as if they were in the same place.

8. How can an individual be able to measure and evaluate the impact of their project communication on their project outcomes and deliverables?

When you track a project's key performance indicators (KPIs), you might find out: KPIs that measure growth and success may show how communication affects the results of a project.

9. What are the most common ways that could be used to overcome the challenges that occur due to lack of communication?

Encourage honest and open lines of conversation to help people understand each other and keep problems from getting out of hand.

10. How can effective communication decide the success or failure of a project?

Keeping track of what stakeholders want helps everyone stay on the same page. People working on a project need to be able to handle their expectations of it well for it to be successful.

Transcript 3

1. Communication is the key to any project”, what do you think about this statement?

It is vital for members of a team to communicate clearly and effectively with one another in order to properly plan and carry out a project.

2. Do you think that communication is a critical factor in the success of any project, kindly explain.

For a project to succeed, communication serves as a vital compass that must be followed: Sharing vital facts and progress reports with one another is how communication acts as a compass for a project, ensuring that it moves in the right direction.

3. According to you, what could a team lead or manager face if they are not able to have proper communication with their team?

It is common for poor communication to be the cause of missed deadlines. If members of a team are not provided with appropriate information on due dates, assignments, and priorities, it is possible that they will be unable to reach project milestones.

4. What are the most common challenges that could occur due to lack of communication?

If essential information is not conveyed in an accurate manner, there may be delays in decision-making, which may stop development and cause the timeline for the project to move more slowly.

5. Why do you think that by mitigating the communication challenges, any team will be able to perform better?

It helps in the early identification and settlement of problems: Problems and challenges may be discovered and handled early on via effective communication, which prevents them from becoming more intractable as time passes.

6. How do you think that an individual will be able to communicate with their team member with different cultures and backgrounds?

Bringing people from different cultures together via dialogue and investigation: The members of the team need to feel comfortable asking questions and having open conversations about the many ways people from other cultures live their lives.

7. Do you think that digital tools could assist the team in overcoming their communication challenges, please elaborate.

It is important to use digital tools to break down hurdles to contact because they make teamwork easier and more effective.

8. How can an individual be able to measure and evaluate the impact of their project communication on their project outcomes and deliverables?

Documentation research shows that there are communication problems with the project: A study of the documentation could show times when bad communication slowed down or stopped a project that would have been successful otherwise.

9. What are the most common ways that could be used to overcome the challenges that occur due to lack of communication?

Set up regular times for progress talks, notes, and reports: Meetings and reports on results keep everyone up to date and on the same page.

10. How can effective communication decide the success or failure of a project?

To stay on track with the project and make sure everyone is on the same page, team members and other partners need to talk to each other often and clearly about their goals.

Transcript 4

1. Communication is the key to any project”, what do you think about this statement?

When members of a team are unable to interact with one another in an efficient manner, there is a greater chance that the project may veer off course.

2. Do you think that communication is a critical factor in the success of any project, kindly explain.

It helps to clear up any misunderstandings and keeps the project going in the right direction: When individuals are able to communicate themselves articulately, there is less likelihood that they would misunderstand one another or disagree with one another.

3. According to you, what could a team lead or manager face if they are not able to have proper communication with their team?

Because of the following, managers may have difficulty making reasonable decisions: A manager's ability to make decisions that are based on facts and are crucial to the success of a project may be hindered if the management does not have sufficient information or does not get frequent updates.

4. What are the most common challenges that could occur due to lack of communication?

If team members are not provided with clear instructions on quality standards and expectations, they may not provide the level of quality that is required of them. This uncertainty about standards may lead to a reduction in quality.

5. Why do you think that by mitigating the communication challenges, any team will be able to perform better?

The ability to succeed lies on one's ability to make sound choices: Keeping lines of communication open enables teams to improve their decision-making processes, which in turn helps them stay on track to finish their projects on time and under budget.

6. How do you think that an individual will be able to communicate with their team member with different cultures and backgrounds?

It is essential to have a cultural awareness and the ability to adapt one's communication style to different settings: It's possible that the capacity to move between direct and indirect communication might assist bridge the gap between different cultures.

7. Do you think that digital tools could assist the team in overcoming their communication challenges, please elaborate.

Being able to get and know how to use the right tools makes you more productive. To use digital tools to get around communication problems, everyone on the team needs to be good at using them.

8. How can an individual be able to measure and evaluate the impact of their project communication on their project outcomes and deliverables?

You can find differences between the real results and the ones that were planned. This could show how bad or good communication affected the project's success or failure.

9. What are the most common ways that could be used to overcome the challenges that occur due to lack of communication?

Use digital tools to make it easy to share and get to project-related information. This makes things more open and productive.

10. How can effective communication decide the success or failure of a project?

It's more likely that projects will be finished on time and on budget if team members talk to each other clearly and often.

Transcript 5

1. Communication is the key to any project”, what do you think about this statement?

When everyone has the same knowledge of the situation, it is much easier to coordinate operations, reduce the number of times misunderstandings arise, and get everyone working together towards a single objective.

2. Do you think that communication is a critical factor in the success of any project, kindly explain.

The ability of members of a team to communicate effectively is essential to the accomplishment of a project: The level of communication between participants in a project is one of the most important factors determining whether or not it will be successful. Effective communication makes it possible for participants to work together, find solutions to problems, and make decisions.

3. According to you, what could a team lead or manager face if they are not able to have proper communication with their team?

When there is a breakdown in communication, the morale of the team may deteriorate as a result. If members of a team are not informed of what is taking place, it may have a detrimental effect on the team's morale, which in turn may have an adverse effect on their performance.

4. What are the most common challenges that could occur due to lack of communication?

The inability to communicate and manage project expenditures in an acceptable manner may result in cost overruns, which put the long-term financial viability of the project as well as its successful completion in jeopardy.

5. Why do you think that by mitigating the communication challenges, any team will be able to perform better?

The morale and motivation of team members skyrocket when they are listened to and provided correct information, which in turn increases their productivity and devotion to the project.

6. How do you think that an individual will be able to communicate with their team member with different cultures and backgrounds?

Training in cultural awareness has several aims, one of which is to improve communication across different cultures. Through increased cultural knowledge and enhanced communication skills, individuals of a team may be better able to collaborate with colleagues who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

7. Do you think that digital tools could assist the team in overcoming their communication challenges, please elaborate.

The use of digital tools makes it possible to combine project data, which makes it easier to browse: By putting all project-related data in one place, these solutions make it easier to find and use information quickly, which reduces confusion and information separation.

8. How can an individual be able to measure and evaluate the impact of their project communication on their project outcomes and deliverables?

Stakeholder interaction gives you a view from the outside: Stakeholder feedback shows how communication affects the project's outcomes and outputs from the outside.

9. What are the most common ways that could be used to overcome the challenges that occur due to lack of communication?

Give workshops and training on how to talk and listen effectively: Training might help team members improve their communication skills, making it easier for them to speak clearly and listen carefully.

10. How can effective communication decide the success or failure of a project?

On the other hand, poor or inadequate communication can cause mistakes, fights, and other issues that can build up and cause the loss of a project.

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate

research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the “principal researcher”.

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.
Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Nina Ilieva Angelova			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student
3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David - London			
4	Campus:				
5	E-mail address:				
6	Contact Telephone Number:				
For students:					
7	Student Number:	2023254			
8	Programme of Study:	BA - Business Management			
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:				

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☐	NO	X
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
Institute Research Committee		☐			
Other (write in)		☐			

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.				
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice				X
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy				X
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>				☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution					
2	Contact person name					
3	Contact person e-mail address					
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	X
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Challenges of communication in Project management : A case study of TK maxx			
2	Proposed start date:	15 september 2023	Proposed end date:	23 december 2023	
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how Existing Research has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>				
3	Purpose of Research Activity The purpose of the research activity was to identify the main areas of communication in project management of TK Maxx in the UK. Also analyse quantitative data from the survey. (this box should expand as you type)				
4	Research Question 1.How do communication barriers impact project execution and outcomes within TK Maxx's project management framework? 2.How does the organisational structure of TK Maxx Influence communication Effectiveness and Information flow in Project Management? 3.How can Technology and Digital tools be leveraged to mitigate communication challenges in project management at TK Maxx? (this box should expand as you type)				
5	Aims of Research Activity Understand the challenges of Communication in a project management of TK maxx (this box should expand as you type)				
6	Objectives of Research Activity To know how communication barriers impact project execution and outcomes within TK Maxx's project management framework, also how technology and digital tools can be leveraged to communication challenges. (this box should expand as you type)				

	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	Quantitative survey <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	only United Kingdom <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	X
		YES	☐
11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	X
13	A resilient Wales	☐	X
14	A healthier Wales	☐	X
15	A more equal Wales	☐	X
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	X

17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	X
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	X
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	(this box should expand as you type)		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	X	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	X
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	X
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	X
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	X
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	X
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	X
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	X
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	X
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	X
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	X
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	X
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	X
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	X
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	X
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	X
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	X
	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	X
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☐	X
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	X
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	X
5	Prisoners?	☐	X
6	Young offenders?	☐	X
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	X
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	X
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	X
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	5 (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be?	The participants are employees in a research organisation. (this box should expand as you type)
12	How will you identify the participants?	There are adults, working for research organisation who can share their experience about communication challenges (this box should expand as you type)

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	X	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	X	☐	☐

15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	X	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	X	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐ X		☐
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	X		☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	X		☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	X	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	X	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	(this box should expand as you type)			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	X	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	X	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	X	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	X	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	(this box should expand as you type)			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	X
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	Risk to participants: (this box should expand as you type)	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: (this box should expand as you type)	

3	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent

	Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	(this box should expand as you type)
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	X
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	(this box should expand as you type)		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	X
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	(this box should expand as you type)		
	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO

5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	x
6	University computers?	☐	x
7	Private company computers?	☐	x
8	Home or other personal computers?	x	☐
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	x
10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☐	x
11	Other – specify:	☐	x
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☐
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☐
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☐
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☐
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☐
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☐
20	Data archiving?	☐	☐
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
24	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	x
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	x

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	Nina Angelova	Date: 23.12.2023

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

x	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
x	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
x	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
x	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
x	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk, with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name. You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:
<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>