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Strategic Communication: A Tool to Engage Multiple Stakeholders for Corporate Sustainability

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Abstract

This paper aims to understand the role of strategic communication to engage diverse stakeholders by companies for developing strategies for corporate sustainability. Currently, companies are moving towards sustainable development for environmental protection, social well-being, and economic growth. Usually, the government and policymakers in a country play an important role in the sustainability of any economy. However, they cannot achieve this goal alone and require businesses to identify and emphasize the issues of sustainability. This paper embarks on this issue by recognizing that businesses can engage diverse stakeholders and actively communicate with them to identify, discuss, prioritize, plan, and execute sustainability-related goals. Strategic communication plays an important role in communicating with stakeholders for a meaningful purpose, which is a prerequisite for policy development. The policies developed by companies have a long-term impact on the sustainability of the company as well as on the entire economy. This paper aims to understand the current communication policies of companies for developing sustainability targets. Furthermore, this paper suggests a way forward for better development and positioning of the company's sustainable strategies through communication.

Keywords: Strategic communication, corporate sustainability, stakeholders, companies

Introduction

Pakistan is a developing economy, with an increasing population and rising demands due to its massive number of consumers. Household consumption statistics from The World Bank (2022) have shed light on the increasing trend of consumption expenditure in Pakistan. Material consumption due to the rising production of goods and services is depriving many regions of this world of water, forestation, and various other resources. Excessive consumption is also generating waste, not only at the time of production but

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also at the time of consumption. Since 1970 the human population has doubled in number, but material consumption has quadrupled in the same period (Carrington, [2020](#)). These issues of increasing waste with rising material consumption are a wake-up call for every country, which urges them to address these crises and put greater effort into developing a sustainable future for its inhabitants. This paper focuses on sustainable development issues and their recommended policy reforms in Pakistan from an organizational perspective. A strategic communication framework is employed as a suitable approach, to facilitate effective communication for corporate sustainability.

The term sustainability is wider in its conceptualization and application. Since the introduction of sustainable development in the Brundtland Commission's report entitled 'Our Common Future'¹ (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED],[1987](#)), it has developed as a term that elaborates on the need for incorporating economic development, environmental protection, and social wellbeing at the same time. United Nations' Earth Summit has highlighted that "sustainable development calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet" (United Nations, 2023). With time, sustainable development has gained traction and salience from multiple stakeholders, broadly speaking policy institutions, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and public and private companies, who are unanimously endorsing it (Bebbington & Unerman, [2018](#)). The debate on sustainability has moved beyond recognizing the mere responsibilities of the government and policymakers to achieve the required goal. Concerted efforts from business organizations are also required to contribute to the development of sustainable business practices for 'corporate sustainability'.

The increasing trend toward sustainability is making consumers knowledgeable about unsustainable conditions, such as excessive waste generation, resource scarcity, and water depletion. The emphasis on this matter is drawing the attention of customers towards using sustainable products, rather than just focusing on the price and performance of a product. This fundamental shift can be witnessed in a survey report by 54 leading consumer brands, which showed customers' interest in

¹"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

sustainability (Esposito et al., [2016](#)). Consumers have become more powerful, in terms of controlling products and they can persuade companies in developing effective strategies for sustainable practices. Boyd ([2017](#)) reported the Guardian roundtable event, to better understand and discuss the issues of sustainable practices. The key focus of this discussion was to direct the attention of the industry toward sustainable strategies. Avlonas ([2017](#)), and Kauflin ([2017](#)) also highlighted that in the near future, companies would be using sustainability, to differentiate themselves from others, and to increase their competitiveness.

Now, businesses have realized that they cannot resolve sustainability related issues in isolation. So, due to the need of the hour, they require collaborative efforts between the communities, regulatory bodies, the private sector, and NGOs. Avlonas ([2017](#)) argued that legislation and pressure from consumers, investors, and other stakeholders can increase the awareness and trend toward developing comprehensive corporate sustainability strategies by business organizations. This collaboration between stakeholders is required to meet sustainability challenges. However, there is a need to understand through research the mechanisms that companies use to collaborate with different stakeholders and develop policies for sustainability-related matters. This paper aims to identify communication channels as a tool to gather and utilize information from diverse stakeholders by companies for developing policies for sustainability-related goals. Such communication where companies utilize the information from diverse stakeholders to fulfill companies' objectives is itself strategic. Succinctly narrating, strategic communication is purposeful communication for achieving an organizational mission (Hallahan et al.,[2007](#)). It is extremely significant for organizations to develop strong ties with their stakeholders and maintain a consistent and open dialogue with them. These dialogues and discussions can help organizations to uncover risks, identify issues, and recognize opportunities for better strategic decision-making.

Research Questions

Based on the above discussed issues this research tends to formulate certain research objectives thereby, this study intends to answer the following research questions:

- What are the communication channels between companies and diverse stakeholders?
- How do communication channels help companies in meeting their sustainability objectives?

A qualitative research design has been employed to better understand companies' stakeholders, communication channels, and their strategic perspectives for sustainability in Pakistan. The rest of the paper is divided into four sections. The next section highlights the relevant literature on strategic communication and corporate sustainability. Section three briefly explains the empirical data, followed by a section that discusses analysis and related policy reforms. The final section concludes the paper with certain future recommendations.

Strategic Communication and Corporate Sustainability

Sterling (2016) states that “we live in historically extraordinary times, characterized by hyper-connectivity, complexity, contingency, critical wicked problems and systemic issues, and rapid changes at local and planetary levels, which are mostly on unsustainable trajectories” (p. 209). Issues such as climate change, natural resource consumption, waste production, water pollution and contamination, deforestation, air pollution, poverty, human rights, living conditions, and health and safety, require serious attention from every institution as well as from every individual. However, business organizations are considered to be the ones creating unsustainable conditions with their activities. That is why they are ethically responsible to be more proactive in balancing their economic development with social equity and environmental protection (Wilson, 2003). Elkington (1998) states that businesses and societies can find approaches that would move towards all three goals—environmental protection, social well-being, and economic development—simultaneously, called a triple bottom line approach,² which can lead to sustainable development.

However, dealing with complex unsustainable issues is beyond the control of a single organization in recent times. It requires engagement with

²The triple bottom line concept of sustainability consists of; social equity, economic, and environmental factors, was coined by John Elkington. He also used the phrase, “people, planet, and profit” to describe the triple bottom line and the goal of sustainability.

diverse stakeholders to integrate resources for the betterment of society at large. Extant literature sheds light on the significance of partnerships and collaborations between academia, industry, government, and civil society, to achieve sustainability (Roseira et al., [2010](#); Biggemann et al., [2014](#); Arnold, [2017](#); Freudenreich et al., [2020](#); Velter et al., [2020](#); Acebo et al., [2021](#)). It inspires organizations to involve multiple stakeholders in developing innovative strategies to eliminate wasteful efforts from their business activities. Nonetheless, the ways through which business organizations engage stakeholders to gather meaningful knowledge and utilize it for developing and executing strategies is an important aspect, yet to be researched. In this paper, the concept of strategic communication is highlighted, which is to interact and communicate with stakeholders and identify their interests, preferences, and values to develop sustainable strategies. Both strategic communication and sustainability are strategic and are interconnected to better achieve organizational missions (Leisinger, [2015](#); Formentini & Taticchi, [2016](#); Archetti, [2018](#)).

Scholarship and practice have witnessed a lot of variations in conceptualizing and defining the term strategic communication (Macnamara & Gregory, [2018](#)). Hallahan et al. ([2007](#)) pinpointed that this term “has been used synonymously for public relations” (p. 9). Basically, strategic communication joins the strategic and communication aspects together. According to Thomas & Stephens ([2015](#)), this concept is relatively new in social science and much scholarship has yet to be emerged through research. The development of theories, ideas, and concepts of various aspects of strategic communication is significant as “they are the basis for policy articulation and formulation” (Page & Proops [2003](#)). Early definitions of strategic communication demonstrated its implication for better conceiving the overall strategy and its positioning. Argentiet *al.* ([2005](#)) defined strategic communication as “aligned with the company’s overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning” (p. 83). Hallahan et al. ([2007](#)) defined it as “the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission” (p. 4). Narrating the rationale of strategic communication, Hallahan et al. ([2007](#)) explained that this communication “implies that people will be engaged in deliberate communication practice on behalf of organizations, causes, and social movements” (p. 4).

Communication is the key to developing authentic relationships with diverse stakeholders and the significance of stakeholders does not require

any introduction from the companies. However, communication does not always mean generating meaningful outcomes. That is why strategic communication requires the synchronization of words and actions in organizational setups. This synchronization is not possible in isolation and requires coordination in the internal and external environment of an organization. Archetti (2018) demonstrated strategic communication as a process that is grounded in an organizational strategic plan and enables the implementation of these plans through communication channels. Archetti (2018) argued that strategic communication is in all policy reports, defense, and security. Despite all of its usage in policy-making vocabulary, its implementation is still complicated. Paul (2009) identified 22 challenges for its implementation, among which mostly talked about are: “the need for leadership, improved coordination, a better leverage of the private sector, greater focus on measurement, updating doctrine and increasing training” (p. 15).

Therefore, it can be said that any communication directed toward meeting company goals is strategic. According to Thomas and Stephens (2015), strategic communication research is dominated by two important themes: stakeholders and alignment of strategic positions. Stakeholders play an enormously significant role in strategic communication. Allen (2016) argued that to operate effectively and develop social legitimacy, organizations must strategically communicate with their stakeholders. Communication can be used as a tool to gain consent from diverse stakeholders, improve cooperation, establish accountability relationships, and enhance participation and collaboration. Succinctly narrating, this communication is required to develop a relationship among diverse stakeholders. However, these relationships among stakeholders require formal and informal communication channels to exchange diverse resources, which can be named as engagement platforms (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). These engagement platforms or communication channels, either online or offline, should support the interactions between stakeholders with transparency and unlimited access to the information (Leclercq et al., 2016). Resources are exchanged among companies and stakeholders through multidimensional communication channels, which can be physical or virtual touchpoints (Braidbachet et al., 2014). Further, these resources are utilized by companies to fulfill their mission. The next section explains the empirical data collected for this study to identify

communication channels between companies and various stakeholders, as well as, their role in developing corporate sustainability.

Data Collection and Analysis

Currently, there are 559 listed companies in Pakistan but unfortunately, many companies have little knowledge about sustainability. A report by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) explained the sustainability landscape in Pakistan and recommended increasing awareness for companies, capacity-building workshops for sustainability, policy-level interventions, sustainability disclosure practices, and recognition of the company's sustainability efforts (The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants [ACCA], [2017](#)). Multinational companies and various international organizations are promoting the concept of sustainability in Pakistan and providing awareness regarding its importance. However, the scale of operation is small and only a few companies can engage in sustainable practices and disseminate sustainability reports for diverse stakeholders.

Escalating population, lifestyle, and consumer tastes and preferences are continuously growing the consumption of FMCGs (Research and Markets, [2012](#)). Within FMCG, the food and beverage sector has the largest growing portion. Rising food and beverage consumption is proportional to the mounting waste contribution, either through production or through its usage. It calls for awareness and a wake-up call for the industry to introduce sustainable business practices. Nestlé, PepsiCo, and The Coca-Cola Company are the largest food and drink companies in the world (Mcgrath, [2017](#)) that is why they are selected to conduct the current study analysis. These companies are selected to understand their stakeholder communication processes for developing and maintaining sustainability mainly in Pakistan. Qualitative research is designed to conduct this research and within each company, official sustainability reports (if any), website sources, and eight semi-structured interviews with the company representatives are used for collecting the data. Interviewees are selected based on the purposive sampling technique. All interviewees selected are in managerial positions in the selected companies, who are either dealing with sustainability matters or communicating with external stakeholders.

Interviewees are asked various questions related to communication channels they use while communicating with different stakeholders, their

sustainability agendas, stakeholders' views, and any influence of stakeholder communication on the identification and execution of sustainability agendas. The eight interviewees are:

Table 1

List of Interviewees

Interviewee	Designation
Company representative (CR) 1	CSV manager
CR-2	Marketing manager
CR-3	Sustainability manager
CR-4	Public affairs manager
CR-5	HR plant head
CR-6	Sustainability manager
CR-7	Corporate affairs manager
CR-8	Manager Sales

A series of iterations of data has been used to bring emerging themes from data through the thematic technique. The thematic technique is adapted from Attride-Stirling (2001) to give meaning to the collected data. Each interview time ranged from 45-60 minutes. Both interviews and documents were coded, which were organized to identify themes and linkages among various themes. After repeated reviews of the interview transcripts and official documents, multiple codes emerged. Twenty major codes are further grouped to develop five main themes, which are considered the main aspect of the relationship between communication and sustainability. These five aspects are focal sustainability agendas by the companies, multiple stakeholders, diverse communication channels with different stakeholders, companies' policies to engage stakeholders, and linkages between communication channels and sustainability agendas. These aspects are discussed below:

Focal Sustainability Agendas

Globally companies identify their sustainability agendas in the light of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations(UN)³. Within the broader SDG goals of the UN, companies identify their sustainability targets and develop strategies to execute them. Our analysis highlighted that the most widely focused sustainability agendas in Pakistan

³ SDGs by UN can be accessed through <https://bit.ly/3hgy8H7>

are water conservation, responsible sourcing, waste management, human rights, and nutrition (in the case of the food and beverage sector). One of the company representatives interviewed quotes: “[...] Pakistan is going through a national crisis of water scarcity, so we are investing in that because our industry also uses water as a raw material”. Another company representative stated their focus on waste management and narrated that:

[...]globally we are working on reducing the water wastage, that’s one of our global agenda, then on the waste side, on the paper and all the other wastes that are resulting into global warming, reducing them also have a strong place in our agenda (CR-2).

Table 2 shows sustainability agendas identified by diverse stakeholders of the selected companies.

Table 2
Sustainable Agendas of the Selected Companies in Pakistan

Stakeholder	Sustainability initiatives in Pakistan		
	Nestlé	Coca-Cola	PepsiCo
Company representatives	Human rights, water conservation, waste management, gender diversity, stress and resilience, and anti-corruption or anti-bribery	Human rights, water conservation, safe water access, waste management, and anti-corruption or anti-bribery	Human rights, water conservation, waste management, and anti-corruption or anti-bribery
Customers	Safe and clean water, hygiene, nutrition, and education	Clean water to communities, women empowerment, education	Lighting up lives and Liter of Light campaign for remote impoverished communities, sustainable mentoring to schoolgirls, scholarships

Stakeholder	Sustainability initiatives in Pakistan		
	Nestlé	Coca-Cola	PepsiCo
Investors and shareholders	Human rights, waste management, improving yield, compliance with laws	Packaging, renewable energy use	Environmental protection, health and wellbeing
Suppliers	Training to farmers to improve yield, packaging	Packaging	Resource management, Sustainable Farming Initiative
Governing bodies	Water conservation, introducing drip irrigation at farms, Guidelines for environmental management, food, nutrition	Guidelines for environmental management, food, nutrition	Guidelines for environmental management, food, nutrition, introducing drip irrigation at farms
Research and business partners	Water and sanitation, education, supporting women, farmer training, tree plantation projects, waste management, environmental protection	Responsible water management, clean water to communities, tree plantation, packaging, nutrition and health, women empowerment, education, environmental protection	Resource management, water replenishment, tree plantation projects, promoting education

Note. Source: Fieldwork (Company documents, web sources, and interviews)

Multiple Stakeholders

Fieldwork highlighted that identification, discussion, prioritization, planning, and execution of sustainability agendas require communication with diverse stakeholders. These stakeholders vary from internal

stakeholders, such as company representatives or leadership teams to external stakeholders such as governing bodies, investors, customers, suppliers, and research and business partners as mentioned in Table 2. These stakeholders are identified after a repeated review of the global and local sustainability reports of Nestlé, PepsiCo, and The Coca-Cola Company. Therefore, the researcher has also recognized that the business ecosystem, including local laws, culture, religion, market competition, and scarce resources may sometimes modify the sustainability agendas. For example, in the case of Pakistan, religion, and law prohibits food and beverage companies produce certain products in Pakistan, which are being sold elsewhere.

Diverse Communication Channels with Different Stakeholders

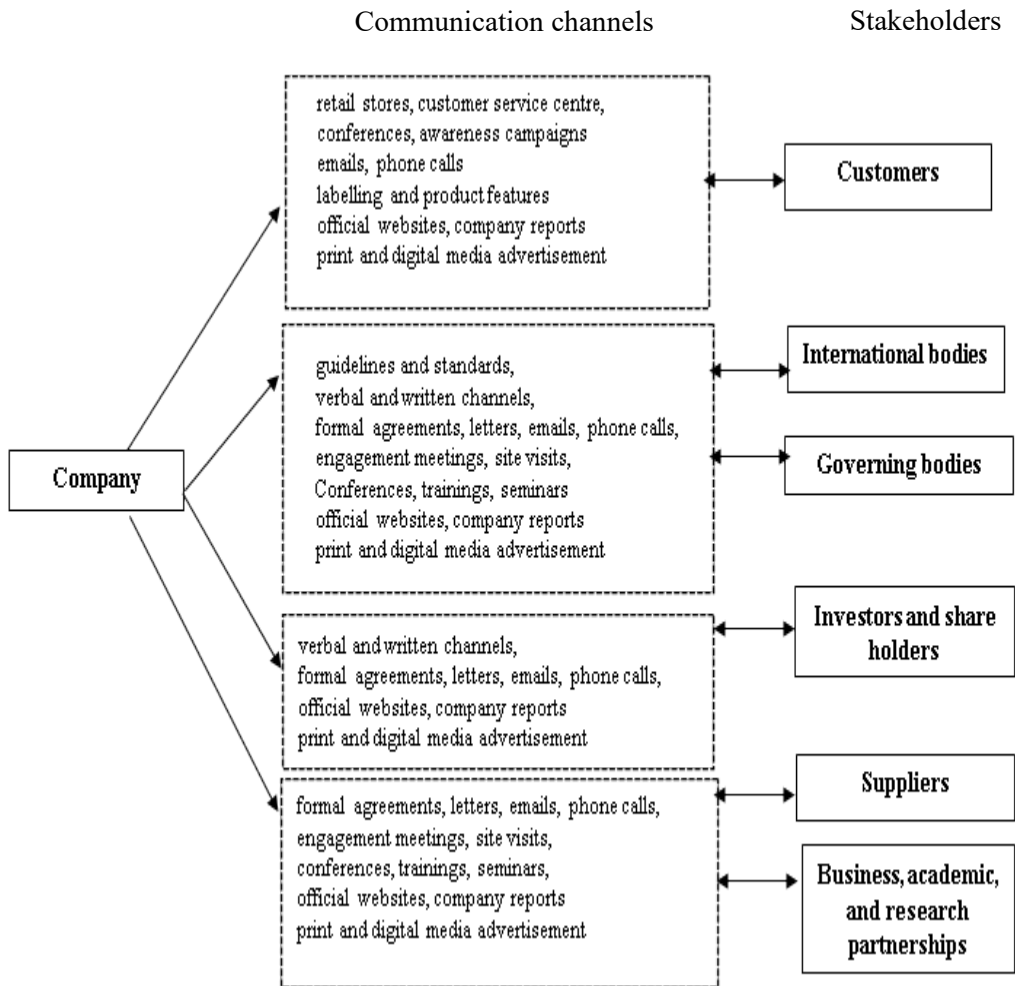
Companies in this study use both formal and informal channels for communication with various types of stakeholders. For example, community engagement meetings, site visits, customer complaint centers, social media pages, emails, and conferences. Most of the time, specific personnel are associated to communicate with external stakeholders, for example, the corporate relations team or project managers on any specific project. The purpose of this communication is to identify the views of various stakeholders, which depicted the strategic perspective of communication. However, normally managers focus on strategic planning and implementation, ignoring the communication aspects. Analysis of our data highlighted several communication channels with diverse stakeholders. One of the company's representatives interviewed talked about the communication channels for stakeholders and stated,

[...] People can call us, and people can send us emails, and requests, I usually receive a long list of requests for donations or some sort of sponsorship through our online system. Then we have got a Facebook page and Twitter. So, now there are multiple digital channels available everywhere. (CR-1).

Another company representative discussed the diverse communication channels and narrated, “[...]It can be written communication, telephonic communication, through emails.” (CR-6). Figure 1 below illustrates various communication channels to engage stakeholders that are identified during fieldwork.

Figure 1

Communication Channels Between Companies and Stakeholders



Companies’ Policies to Engage Stakeholders

Companies have separate policies and channels to engage with diverse stakeholders. Some channels act as a source of communication between the company and all stakeholders, such as official websites, company reports, and print and digital media advertising. Some are specific to one group of

stakeholders, such as a customer service center. Company representatives talked about the efficacy of these communication channels and narrated,

[...]Our communication team does not have any biases involved and they are just there to listen and address the issues which have been raised by anybody concerning the organization, be it the product, be it the person, be it services, be it anything else. So that individual is going to a completely third individual, which is the legal department usually or the corporate affairs department. (CR-6).

Another company representative talked about specific company personnel to communicate with stakeholders and explained,

[...] we communicate it to stakeholders that there is a proper channel that who and on behalf of who would speak with each category of stakeholder. For example, there is a communications manager for the company and only he is allowed to talk if there is any media query.(CR-4).

The companies also acknowledge the views of the stakeholders and described,

[...] the views of stakeholders are very much important to the company, as I said it should be a mutually beneficial relationship. If we don't value our stakeholders and their opinions, then they won't value us which will result in many more issues than the existing ones. (CR-7)

Companies highlight their stakeholder engagement through continuous dialogue and incorporate their opinions into organizational policies and procedures. For example, due to stakeholder engagement, PepsiCo has globally adopted goals to reduce saturated fats, sodium, and added sugar in its products. Moreover, it has an improvised labeling policy to inform customers about product ingredients to make better choices.⁴

Linkages Between Communication Channels and Sustainability Agendas

⁴PepsiCo stakeholder's engagement is aimed to engage its customers, consumers, shareholders, employees, suppliers, and various other organizations. The input they receive from all these stakeholders provides them basis for the development, implementation, and evolution of sustainability agenda (PepsiCo, 2018).

Interviews have highlighted that diverse stakeholders' opinions are gathered through different communication channels, which provide grounds for companies to identify, prioritize, and execute key sustainability issues. These opinions can be in the form of regulations, feedback, tastes, and preferences. Companies gather and prioritize these opinions and fieldwork, which also highlights empirical excerpts of company representatives who talk about the processes of changing company practices due to stakeholder communication. One representative narrated,

[...]We have certain departments, who are custodians of our policies, so for example, if it's a process or policy related to agro, then agro is the custodian of it. That is then looked after by another department, for example, the control department or finance. So that this process exists, and they do regular audits whether this process is being followed in its true spirit or not [...]That's how collaboratively we change our processes, we change our controls if required, and we change our policies, that's how we do it. It's a systematic approach through which you go about.(CR-1).

Companies' relationships and communication with stakeholders result in beneficial outcomes. As one of the company representatives quoted, “[...]The benefits that we expect are mainly to get sustainability in our business because as far as we are there as an organization we contribute to the community and we can serve our customers to the best.” (CR-3). It showed that companies engagement and communication with stakeholders resulted in sustainable outcomes.

Discussion

Sustainability-related issues are beyond the control of mere governments. Business organizations and societies can contribute towards better identification, prioritization, and execution of sustainability-related goals. This requires an ecosystem, where diverse organizations, society, and stakeholders communicate through direct and indirect channels. Allen (2016) argued that communication plays its role when “sustainability-related issues are conceived, defined, discussed, planned, initiated within and between organizations, modified, and, perhaps, terminated” (p. 12). Communication occurs with stakeholders' encounters, and in this way, they intentionally or unintentionally become part of sustainability-related issues. Our

analysis highlights that business organizations require stakeholders' views or opinions to identify, discuss, prioritize, plan, and execute sustainability-related goals. Fieldwork shows that companies in the FMCG sector use multiple channels to communicate with stakeholders. All these communication channels allow one-way or two-way communication between a company and its stakeholders. It is analyzed that the interactions between companies and stakeholders not only guide companies to recognize material sustainability matters but also guide them to exchange resources to address these issues.

Business organizations develop and refine policies for communication and interaction with diverse stakeholders. Fieldwork identified several aspects that help companies in developing policies for sustainable development. Some of these aspects and their related policy reforms are outlined here:

1. Government regulations are already in place to guide businesses on certain aspects of sustainability, such as waste control and air omission control. It is urged that companies introduce policies aligned with the government-provided framework to identify material sustainable issues. As per findings, companies have policies that define channels to communicate with stakeholders. External pressure from stakeholders can also guide companies to identify channels to communicate with these stakeholders. By taking into account these factors, companies can develop policies to acquire resources that can further guide them to identify material sustainability issues.
2. Concern has been raised that companies must have preferences and procedures to prioritize the execution of sustainability agendas. It is identified that companies mostly target those sustainability-related areas that are in line with their overall mission. For example, companies in the dairy industry are concerned with the sustainable resourcing of farmers, who are their direct stakeholders. It is recommended that companies also align their business objectives, stakeholder needs, innovation, and resource availability for prioritization and execution of their sustainability plans.
3. The findings also highlighted that companies prioritize sustainability issues according to alignment with their business strategy and availability of resources. It is suggested that companies

- can develop policies to engage diverse stakeholders for resource exchange to prioritize and execute sustainability-related agendas.
4. It is advised that companies must develop policies to strategize the execution of activities to meet their sustainability objectives as well as to meet the government regulatory framework for accountability purposes. For example, companies are accountable to report their environmental parameters to the Environmental protection agency (EPA) in Pakistan. Government can also establish separate departments to develop policies for targeting various aspects of sustainability.
 5. This paper has recognized that the identification of material issues and development of strategies to plan and execute various activities, emphasize the need to communicate and exchange resources with stakeholders. It is suggestive for companies to have adequate communication channels as a prerequisite for policy making and implementation, which makes it a strategic tool.

Previous research has depicted that companies communicate strategically with stakeholders to gain environmental legitimacy (Allen & Caillouet [1994](#); Hunter & Bansal [2007](#); Allen, [2016](#)). The analysis in this paper also demonstrates that on one hand, companies involve stakeholders in various sustainability-related policies and processes, and on the other hand, stakeholders demand companies to tangibly disclose the outcomes of sustainability-related information. Hence, strategic communication is the active gathering of stakeholders' opinions and is not just limited to the dissemination of information. Companies' internal resources such as knowledge, experience, and financial resources facilitate them to communicate strategically toward personal and organizational sustainability-related goals (Allen, [2016](#)).

Thus, strategic communication is an instrument for effective policymaking and public participation, facilitating information exchange, and establishing consensus among divergent opinions and interests for various stakeholders. Overall, social interaction, including accurate information gathering, and dissemination is very important for better identification, prioritization, and execution of sustainability agendas. The social interactions between various stakeholders are antecedents to resource exchanges and resource integrations, as explained by Gummesson and Mele ([2010](#)). Sustainable policies made by businesses,

impact the macro environment in the long run and help them in the overall sustainability of a country. Moreover, regulatory, or governing bodies can speed up the process by conveying sustainable strategies to a large population. The fieldwork demonstrated in this paper also depicted that government institutes are responsible for creating awareness for environmental protection and social well-being issues but many stakeholders, particularly small companies and consumers in Pakistan are unaware of the rules and regulations by the governing bodies related to the environment and society.

Conclusion

This paper highlights sustainability issues in Pakistan and the role of selected companies in the identification and execution of sustainability-related goals through strategic communication with diverse stakeholders. This study effectively contributes to the extant literature on strategic communication and corporate sustainability. The rising social and environmental issues are pressing companies to think beyond their profit-making perspective and move towards an effective sustainability approach. Strategic communication is identified as a tool to engage diverse stakeholders to identify and resolve various unsustainable issues. The current study contributes in theorizing the relationship between strategic communication channels and corporate sustainability. Various communication channels have been highlighted between companies and multiple stakeholders. Moreover, an account has been explained of companies and their current usage of channels for exchanging resources from a sustainability viewpoint. Furthermore, it is suggested that the companies can use their communication channels strategically to develop policies for the identification, prioritization, and execution of sustainability-related issues. However, the recent policy changes certainly do not deliver the final answers to the question regarding the role of different stakeholders in identifying and developing the company's policies related to sustainability. Several issues are recognized in this regard: firstly, companies lack a sufficient understanding of the complexities regarding the information gathering between stakeholders and utilization of this information; secondly, companies only focus on those issues that are related to promoting their overall mission, while ignoring the other significant aspects; thirdly, only a few companies disseminate their sustainability-related initiatives publicly; and lastly, a few government departments are

specifically targeted to develop policies for sustainability-related issues and to ensure its proper implementation.

Scope of Future Research

Future research can be undertaken to guide companies in identifying sustainability-related issues through strategically communicating with diverse stakeholders and developing proper policies to better manage and utilize stakeholders' resources. Moreover, it can also be identified that communication channels can be meaningfully used to gather and integrate the resources of stakeholders for better strategy development and implementation. Government can also align its strategies with the sustainable development goals of the United Nations and establish country-wide policies to ensure the implementation of effective sustainable strategies.

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