



Vaasan yliopisto  
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

OSUVA Open  
Science

This is a self-archived – parallel published version of this article in the publication archive of the University of Vaasa. It might differ from the original.

## Mapping the Challenges of COVID-19 From the Point of View of Organisational Communication

**Author(s):** Kantanen, Helena; Koskela, Merja

**Title:** Mapping the Challenges of COVID-19 From the Point of View of Organisational Communication

**Year:** 2024

**Version:** Accepted manuscript

**Copyright** ©2024 Emerald Publishing Limited. This manuscript version is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY–NC 4.0) license, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

**Please cite the original version:**

Kantanen, H. & Koskela, M. (2024). Mapping the Challenges of COVID-19 From the Point of View of Organisational Communication. In S. Einwiller, J. Seiffert-Brockmann, S. Romenti & C. Valentini (Eds.), *Advances in Public Relations and Communication Management: Communication in Uncertain Times* (pp. 21-35). Advances in Public Relations and Communication Management, vol. 7. Emerald. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2398-391420240000007003>

# MAPPING THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19 FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

HELENA KANTANEN & MERJA KOSKELA

Kantanen, H. and Koskela, M. (2024). Mapping the Challenges of COVID-19 From the Point of View of Organisational Communication, In: Einwiller, S., Seiffert-Brockmann, J., Romenti, S. and Valentini, C. (Ed.). *Communication in Uncertain Times* (Advances in Public Relations and Communication Management, Vol. 7), Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 21-35. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2398-391420240000007003>

## ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the challenges of health emergency communication as presented in the COVID-19-related research articles in the fields of organizational communication, strategic communication and public relations published between 2020 and mid 2022. A qualitative literature review consisting of two rounds of data selection and ATLAS.ti-assisted content analysis was conducted. The data include 67 articles published in quality journals of communication studies, with a focus on the abstract, results and discussion sections. The findings emphasize the need for emotional support, empathy and both vertical and horizontal informal communication in uncertainty reduction during a major health emergency. The limitations of the study include that the data are limited to the first published journal articles concerning the consequences of COVID-19 and that it comprises publications in communication studies but not related fields, such as health, psychology or management. However, it provides an overview of the research findings and offers guidelines for managers and communication professionals for the development of communication practices under the threat of a major health crisis. Moreover, it proves the importance of healthy and trustful workplace relationships as a prerequisite for coping with uncertainty. All in all, the study provides a good basis for further studies of organizational communication and health emergencies.

## KEYWORDS:

COVID-19, change communication, crisis communication, internal communication, management communication, trust

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged societies, organizations and individuals to an extent not seen since World War II. Therefore, its antecedents and consequences have been and will continue to be examined from different viewpoints to learn for the future. This paper explores organizational communication, strategic communication and public relations research in the context of the health emergency caused by the pandemic. It draws on the academic literature published by mid 2022.

Consequently, the focus of this study is on exploring what were the first hot topics during an extreme crisis like COVID-19. Moreover, the study illustrates how and where the first datasets were collected when researchers had only limited opportunities to data collection. The aim of the study is to draft a preliminary model describing the breadth and variability of aspects that a health emergency raises for organizational pandemic communication. The term *organizational pandemic communication* refers to all types of organizational and strategic communication through which organizations kept themselves functioning and answered to the requirements of the new situation.

In the context of a pandemic, both *risk* and *crisis communication* are relevant concepts. The idea with risk communication is to inform the audience about recognized hazards and their typical adverse outcomes. Risk communication thus helps people prepare for the potential outcomes of certain behaviours and make decisions especially in the context of health (Reynolds & Seeger, 2014). However, the communication challenges around the COVID-19 pandemic for organizational pandemic communication are more profound than those for authorities informing the public: they include internal, managerial and stakeholder communication, that is, various forms of interaction as well as information. According to Coombs (2015), "crisis communication should be heeding the call of evidence-based management and seeking to use systematic research to guide the practice of crisis communication" (p. 147). This call is amplified by global crises such as the pandemic, which has challenged research of organizational communication and highlighted the importance of understanding uncertainty and the role of multiple, competing information channels (Guo & Cannella, 2021).

The present study is structured into two phases. The first phase, a pre-test, utilizes, in addition to communication research, earlier studies of crisis communication within the contexts of health issues (e.g., Naik et al., 2019; Rowe & Alexander, 2020) and organizational change (e.g., Aitken & van Treurer, 2021). The second phase utilizes studies published in communication journals during 2020–2022. Based on the research findings, a preliminary model of health emergency communication is introduced.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. What does pre-COVID-19 literature on health emergencies, crisis communication and organizational change offer for the research on organizational communication during the COVID-19 pandemic?

RQ2. What are the communication challenges and solutions identified in the early research on COVID-19 published between 2020 and mid 2022?

## **Methodology**

The method of the study is a qualitative literature review (e.g., Schryen, 2015). The aim was to synthesize research published before the COVID-19 pandemic and provide a comprehensive overview of recent studies on pandemic communication. A systematic search strategy was used, as well as categorization and qualitative content analysis (Dan & Raupp, 2018; Lock, 2019). The core stages of the qualitative literature review were followed, starting with identification of the research scope, review questions, and keywords.

### **Data Selection**

Two rounds of data collection were applied. The first database search was conducted for the purpose of generating an initial coding scheme for conducting the systematic literature review in the second phase. In this first phase of the analysis, a preliminary list of research articles potentially relevant to organizational pandemic communication was compiled, between December 2021 and March 2022, based on searches on EBSCO databases, Academic Search Elite (ASE) and Communication and Mass Media Complete (CMMC). The searches were limited to peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals and written in English. During this phase, the publication year was not limited, so it included publications on pandemics before COVID-19. The search terms included *crisis* and *pandemic*, in combination with *communication*, *media*, *PR*, and *leadership/management*, and could be in the title, abstract, keywords or the article text. As this was a preliminary search, the results were not systematically coded, but references deemed to be the most relevant were manually filtered, and the articles best matching the search terms were thus included in the analysis. The number of articles considered in this phase was 31, with considerable variations in relevance. At this stage, research into earlier pandemics, crisis communication, and organizational change was highlighted, while only a few mentions of COVID-19 were discovered. This phase offered relevant guidance for the second phase.

The second phase began with compiling a list of quality journals of communication studies (see Table 1). Mass media journals were purposefully excluded from this search in order to keep the amount of

data manageable and because the focus was on organizational pandemic communication. The search for relevant articles published in these journals was limited to issues from 2020, 2021 and until mid 2022. Within the chosen journals, the search term “covid” was used. The articles found were then uploaded into ATLAS.ti software. Furthermore, articles where the role of the COVID-19 pandemic was limited to just a mention were excluded. The final number of articles selected for closer inspection was 67.

Table 1. Communication journals included in the sample and the number of COVID-related articles in them (2020–mid 2022).

**Table 1**

| Journal Name  | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| <i>Communication Research Reports</i>                     | 5         | 7.46        |
| <i>Communication Theory</i>                               | 4         | 5.97        |
| <i>Corporate Communications: An International Journal</i> | 10        | 14.93       |
| <i>International Journal of Business Communication*</i>   | 8         | 11.94       |
| <i>International Journal of Strategic Communication</i>   | 3         | 4.48        |
| <i>Journal of Applied Communication Research</i>          | 3         | 4.48        |
| <i>Journal of Communication</i>                           | 3         | 4.48        |
| <i>Journal of Communication Management*</i>               | 9         | 13.43       |
| <i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i>         | 1         | 1.49        |
| <i>Management Communication Quarterly</i>                 | 2         | 2.99        |
| <i>Public Relations Inquiry</i>                           | 3         | 4.48        |
| <i>Public Relations Review*</i>                           | 11        | 16.42       |
| <i>Women’s Studies in Communication*</i>                  | 5         | 7.46        |
| <b>Total</b>  | 67        | 100         |

Note: Journals marked with (\*) included a pandemic-related special issue.

### ***Coding Categories and Analysis***

Qualitative content analysis was performed on the article data. The first phase of the study was carried out in order to identify some of the key elements required in pandemic communication according to earlier literature in the fields of health emergencies, crisis, and organizational change. A coding scheme was developed according to these findings (Table 2). The first stage of the analysis was deductive and involved the use of the keywords listed in Table 2 in the coding. The second stage was inductive and involved open coding (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016.) Because a broad overview of current research was sought, the definitions of central concepts (health crisis communication, risk communication management, organizational communication) were not strictly specified before the analysis but emerged from the data. The second stage was focused on the abstracts, results and discussion parts of the articles. The key results in each article were condensed into short fragments, which were further categorized into main categories as will be explained next.

### ***Development of Coding Scheme and Preliminary Coding***

The first phase of the analysis revealed two focus areas, namely 1) internal communication of different types and 2) media representations of pandemics, often focused on how politicians had handled their role as leaders. Because our focus was on organizational and strategic communication, the latter area was given less attention in our analysis than the first.

Preliminary observations of the data indicated that leadership and change communication in crisis situations, co-worker communication and the effects of distance work and digital platforms were highlighted and intertwined. The questions addressed were approached through and theorized based on such concepts as uncertainty and ambiguity; openness, transparency and clarity; trust, participatory leadership and flexibility; and positivity, engagement and listening.

A central finding based on the results presented in the articles is that organizational pandemic communication requires returning to the basics: the mission of the organization and organizational strategy. In addition, human values and empathy are seen as valuable assets to keep the organization functioning. Based on the review of the results of this first phase, codes for the second phase of analysis were derived. The codes and preliminary findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Codes and preliminary findings based on pandemic communication research.

**Table 2**

| <b>Communication Needs Accentuated by the Pandemic</b> | <b>Information and Sensemaking</b>   | <b>Emotional Support from Leadership</b>   | <b>Informal Communication and Encounters</b>            | <b>Empathy and Listening</b>   | <b>Employee Appreciation</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| <b>How to answer them?</b>                             | regular information events, clear information, using multiple channels                       | enabling joint discussions, time allotted to employees by leaders, calming/soothing information  | regular, informal distance encounters, walking meetings | asking how you are doing, showing understanding, reacting to worries, participatory and open communication | respectful workplace communication , situational awareness, motivated solutions, giving recognition for efforts |
| <b>Codes derived for the second phase the study</b>    | ambiguity, clarity information (+ flow, adequacy, dissemination, distribution), transparency | caring, encouragement, leadership, positivity, supervisory support, trust, uncertainty reduction | informal, social connections, peer communication        | dialogue, disclosure, empathy, listening, openness   | agility, appreciation, engagement, participation  |

## Findings of the Systematic Literature Review

In the second phase, the dataset of 67 articles published between 2020 and mid 2022 was systematically coded to map the research results for pandemic-related communication. To analyse the data, the codes describing the categories for communication needs described in Table 2 were applied. In the following presentation of results, relevant sources are listed; yet, for the sake of readability the references are examples, not exhaustive lists.

### *Information and Sensemaking*

The analysis revealed that questions of information flow (e.g., Macnamara, 2021), adequacy (e.g., Bashir et al., 2022), distribution (e.g., Ecklebe & Löffler, 2021) and transparency (e.g., Kim & Lee, 2021; Li et al., 2020) were central in the dataset. This makes much sense, as the pandemic raised numerous painful questions, from personal, even life-threatening health concerns to the fear of losing income. Therefore, there was a great need for information, and answers to the *What's in it for me?* (WIIFM) question were sought. Direct and reliable answers to this question reduced tension and relieved emotional exhaustion (e.g., Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2022). Leaders were challenged to help employees with their sensemaking process (Yeomans & Bowman, 2021), as described by one interviewee who was unhappy about the situation in the workplace (Heide & Simonsson, 2021, p. 13): 'managers do not take the communication responsibility seriously, and therefore get reduced to being e-mail carriers instead of sensemaking managers that help co-workers to understand and make sense of a situation'. Sensemaking was promoted when the amount of information delivered was in line with employees' needs and expectations (Bashir et al., 2022). According to Ecklebe and Löffler (2021), high-quality internal communication during the COVID-19 pandemic consisted of frequent communication, the dissemination of substantial information, participative communication and a clear rejection of secrecy (comparable to transparency). Transparent communication, for its part, consisted of accountable, participative and informational transparency (Li et al., 2021). Accountable transparency refers to the decision-maker accountability to the legal system or public opinion; participative transparency to the ability of employees or citizens to participate in decision-making; and informational transparency to knowledge about actors and decisions as well as to access to information (Koskela et al., 2021).

The opposites of accurate and reliable information, namely misinformation (unintentionally incorrect information) and disinformation (deliberately deceptive information), were also discussed in some of the articles (Batova, 2022; Chadwick & Stanyer, 2022) but not to the extent that one could presume, considering the public discussion about, for example, widely spread COVID-19 vaccine misinformation.

Information needs were not restricted to organizations' internal communication environments entirely but included also other stakeholders. Diers-Lawson et al. (2021) concluded that if external stakeholders have a positive view of the organization, they are receptive to informative messages that emphasize the organization's competence, caring, cooperation and identity.

### ***Emotional Support from Leadership***

In addition to the urgent need for clear and timely information, employees struck by the pandemic needed emotional support. The analysis revealed that symmetrical internal communication and its perceived quality enhanced employee perceptions of organizational support and positive emotions (Sun et al., 2021). This feeling of support, along with positive emotions, also led to stronger organizational identification. Emotional support was found to include encouragement, appreciation, respect and recognition from leadership and co-workers (Qin & Men, 2022) and, therefore, the category *Employee appreciation*, which was derived in phase 1, was merged with the category *Emotional support from leadership*.

The dataset revealed that charismatic forms of presentation were required of leaders to enhance employees' affective commitment to change and to decrease their turnover intention (Yue, 2021). Employee organizational identification modifies this relationship. The concepts of organizational identification and employee job engagement are closely related, the former being a prerequisite for the latter. Lee et al. (2022) suggested that employee satisfaction is the strongest driver of the employee–organization relationship for increasing employee job engagement.

Moreover, the dataset showed how effective leadership communication and, more specifically, motivational language (Men et al., 2022) can counter crisis negativity. It was suggested that leaders should show humanity, sensitivity and care both verbally and non-verbally, accept anxiety and also take employee needs for relatedness into account (Tao et al., 2021). Therefore, the COVID-19 pandemic called for true crisis leadership and collaborative sensemaking, not top-down problem solving (Heide & Simonsson, 2021). Uncertainty is not always negative but depends on the ability to cope with uncertain circumstances. However, many aspects of the pandemic, such as job security, called for effective managerial communication to relieve feelings of uncertainty (Charoensukmongkol & Suthatorn, 2022).

### ***Informal Communication and Encounters***

Informal communication can serve several functions in the organization: it provides information and complements formal communication, helps with organization and coordination, integrates employees into their teams, creates breaks from work tasks, and allows venting of anger and frustration (Koch & Denner, 2022). Moreover, the results of the review demonstrated the



importance of both vertical and horizontal informal communication as a central means of uncertainty and stress reduction (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2022; Qin & Men, 2022). Peer support was experienced, not only within organizations but also within the same field or the same phase of life. One example of this is a group of academic mothers who offered peer support on the challenges of parenting, remote teaching and research pressures during the pandemic (Bauer & Ngondo, 2022). Humour was one of their key tools of coping.

Informal workplace communication increased employees' perceptions of being informed (Koch & Denner, 2022) and their acceptance of managerial decisions (Einwiller et al., 2021) but also their affective commitment, which for its part contributed to better job satisfaction (Koch & Denner, 2022) and job engagement (Einwiller et al., 2021). Co-worker support relieved emotional exhaustion and compensated for a lack of formal communication (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2022). Moreover, the development of interpersonal rapport was found to require personal and informal channels of communication (McGloin et al., 2022).

Different employees may have different needs for informal communication. Koch and Denner (2022) identified five types of employees: chatterers, small-talkers, networkers, strategists and focusers. The first three groups suffered because their needs were seldom met by means of formal communication via MS Teams, while the two latter types neither appreciated nor needed informal communication. According to McGloin et al. (2022, p. 8): "Face-to-face, unplanned, informal conversations can provide shared identity, shared context, and reduce conflict, whereas video calls are typically scheduled with an agenda to avoid time-wasting and increase certainty in meeting outcomes".

The analysis of the dataset also revealed a negative side of informal workplace communication: rumours. When formal information channels fail, rumours may easily fill the gap. During the COVID-19 pandemic, rumours could sometimes ease uncertainty (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2022). However, it was found that the negative effects of rumours were particularly destructive and impacted on employees' emotional exhaustion when combined with role ambiguity (Puyod & Charoensukmongkol, 2021).

### ***Empathy and Listening***

Challenges of listening were identified in the review sample. For example, Neill and Bowen (2021) identified senior management's reluctance, lack of time and lack of trust as challenges. It was hard to connect with employees in remote work but, on the other hand, the pandemic enhanced moral sensitivity and empathy. However, this was not an easy task when the organizational culture was not open and did not normally involve discussions of health and safety questions (Lee, 2022).

Dialogic internal interaction was seen to lead to communal relationships within the organization, to better efficacy and also to better pandemic-related safety behaviours (Lee, 2022). Communication researchers have called for two-way communication for years, and it seems that the pandemic made this need even more topical. Careful listening is needed to understand employee needs, concerns and perceived risks and to address these with clear, relevant responses (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsonthorn, 2022; Lee, 2022). This was extremely important during the pandemic because of the physical and social loneliness of remote work. One article (Campbell & Ross, 2022) conceptualized solitude as “noncommunication”.

### ***Other Findings: Trust, Identity and Resilience***

All the dimensions analysed above (information delivery and sensemaking, emotional support, informal communication, and empathy and listening) contribute to, or could be consequences of, one central element of organizational life, namely trust. Interpersonal trust can be defined as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another” (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). It seems that the pandemic both challenged trust and, in the best cases, increased it. It was found that when negative feelings such as uncertainty and anger grew as the health crisis progressed, they had a trust-damaging effect (Batova, 2022). On the other hand, when leaders helped employees in their sensemaking efforts, expressed empathy and used direction-giving language, employee trust towards leaders and the organization increased (Men et al., 2022).

The connection of organizational pandemic communication and employees’ professional identity is an interesting feature in the findings. It was found that change communication generally reduced identity threat and increased the meaningfulness of work, but disruptions involved identity threat to so-called “non-essential workers” – those whose work was not crucial during an emergency – and influenced their mental health (van Zoonen et al., 2022).

The need to develop both organizational and individual resilience became central during the pandemic. According to health occupation experts, a resilient workplace focuses on appreciative leadership, internal and external cooperation, risk anticipation and work continuity (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.). In the dataset, a positive association between individuals’ cognitive flexibility and their adherence was found, and flexibility also protected against social-distancing fatigue (Seiter & Curran, 2021). Wilson et al. (2021) even developed a Communication Resilience Processes Scale to assess resilience during disruptive events.

**Discussion: Learnings from Organizational Pandemic Communication**

In this study, 67 journal articles dealing with the communication aspects of COVID-19 were analysed based on a preliminary analysis of 31 articles on health emergencies, crisis communication and organizational change. The analysis shows that the findings and categories derived from earlier literature served well as a scheme to analyse the research published specifically on the COVID-19 pandemic. However, other communication challenges were also identified, and a broader picture emerged.

It seems that questions related to health and safety were quite new topics to be discussed in many work environments. Sensitive issues often require time and face-to-face meetings, and there was a lack of both because of the hasty arrangements and remote work required for the new way of working during the pandemic.

Business and management research have discussed agile business development for over 20 years (e.g., Beck et al., 2001) and, obviously, the pandemic made the concept even more salient also in communication research (e.g., Dühring & Zerfass, 2021; van Ruler, 2021). “Agile” means flexible business development with the ability to respond quickly to new challenges, needs and changes which arise in unpredictable environments. This approach may lead to shorter project timelines and an increased ability to fulfil customer demands. In the context of organizational communication, van Ruler suggests an agile communication strategy framework that would take constant change into account and enable adaptation (van Ruler, 2021).

Trust was identified as one of the key elements of organizational life which was highlighted during the pandemic. According to Reynolds and Quinn (2020), trust and credibility are demonstrated through empathy and caring, competence and expertise, honesty and openness, and dedication and commitment. Therefore, it would be interesting to know what happened in such work environments where employee expectations of the different elements of trustworthiness – competence, benevolence and integrity (e.g., Kähkönen, 2020) – were not met. Within the framework of trust research, it has been found that the major problems challenging trustworthiness are inadequate information sharing, incompetent management and lack of caring (Kähkönen, 2020). Future research could address what steps should be taken to repair trust (e.g., Gillespie & Dietz, 2009) that was damaged during the pandemic.

Figure 1 summarizes the central findings of the literature review. It depicts what organizational pandemic communication should be like, who should do it and what can be achieved by it. Even though communication research concerning the pandemic is evolving, the findings of this study

demonstrate the breadth and variability of aspects that a health emergency raises for organizational communication.

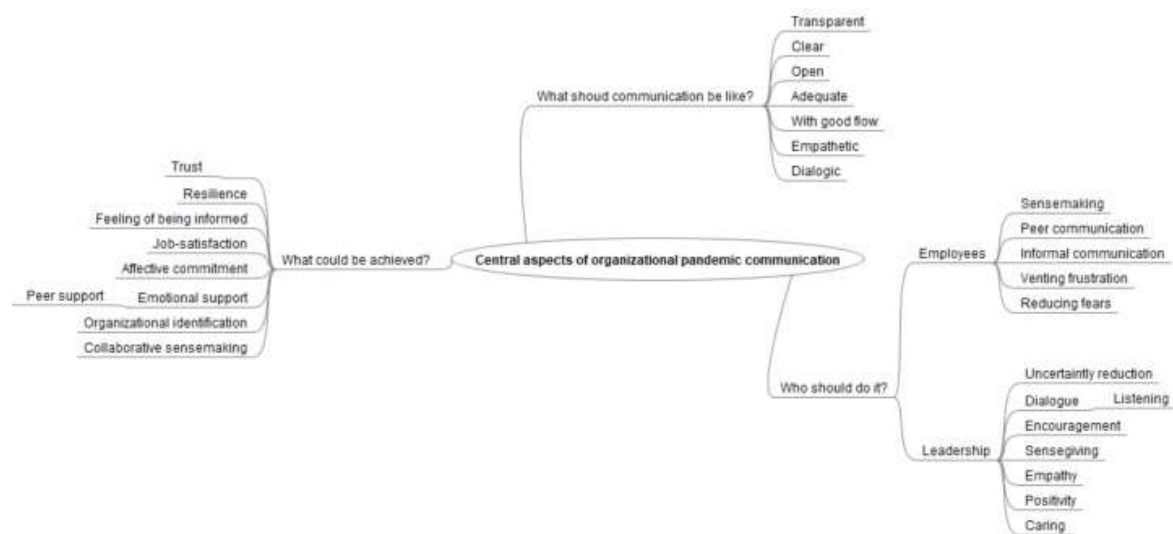


Fig. 1. A preliminary model of central aspects of organizational pandemic communication.

Overall, it can be concluded that organizational pandemic communication requires high standards of leadership and management. Leaving aside their own concerns, leaders are expected to offer open and honest information with regular sense-giving opportunities, meet people on their own terms and treat everyone equally, listen to employees and give recognition – and remain positive while doing all this. Simultaneously, leaders are required to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity and come up with reasoned solutions for a brighter future. Employees, on their part, are required to be respectful, active and responsive, and flexible and innovative in learning new ways of carrying out tasks.

In addition, the findings of the study emphasize the importance of workplace relationships. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these relationships were challenged in many ways, and if they were poor before the pandemic, it was certainly very difficult to develop them when working remotely. Furthermore, organizational conflict history affected employees' negative megaphoning and turnover intentions (Chon et al., 2021). The findings of this study encourage leaders and communication professionals to enhance informal communication in the workplace for the development of interpersonal relationships and employee well-being and to prevent unwanted workplace changes.

It was presumed that signs of a digital divide or a digital gap (Naudé & Vinuesa, 2021; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013) would be found in the data. However, the studied articles did not address this issue. Only one article focused on the topic (Yang et al., 2021), but otherwise it was not mentioned.

### Limitations and Conclusion

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the communication research community, the data for the first studies were often collected in researchers' immediate surroundings (e.g., university, professional networks). Much of the data available so far have been gathered through quantitative approaches because qualitative methods require more time for data collection and analysis. Moreover, this study concentrated entirely on communication journals. There is also a lot written about the pandemic in, for example, management, psychology or health-related journals, and an expansion of the dataset to those areas could be beneficial. Furthermore, there is an increasing body of pandemic-related research within media studies, and the field deserves an analysis of its own.

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, an expert organization focusing on well-being at work, has published a guide for organizations on how to support employees' work ability in remote work (Vuorento et al., 2022). It contains three categories: leadership; guides, models and plans for remote work; and support for health and recovery. The leadership category involves workplace communication and encourages quick, interactive communication in rapidly changing situations. The connection between agile communication (Dühring & Zerfass, 2021; van Ruler, 2021) and fluent work processes, perceived work well-being and trust is also emphasized. Therefore, the development of agile communication models and practices seems to have a bright future in the post-pandemic world.

### References

Articles cited and included in the review sample marked with an asterisk (\*). All 67 articles involved in the review could not be listed due to space limits.

Aitken, K., & von Treurer, K. (2021). Leadership behaviours that foster organisational identification during change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 34(2), 311–326. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-01-2020-0029>

\*Bashir, H., Nangoli, S., Musaasizi, Y., Nakajubi, F., Basemera, M., & Ayibo, C. (2022). Information adequacy and strategic behavioral change communication as a pandemic management tool: The

mediating role of interaction resonance. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 59(2), 242–268. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884211027545>

\*Batova, T. (2022). To wear or not to wear: A commentary on mistrust in public comments to CDC tweets about mask-wearing during COVID19. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 59(2), 287–308. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884211008584>

\*Bauer, J. C., & Ngondo, P. S. (2022). Moms, memes, and mitigating pandemic stress: Exploring themes and implications in an Academic Mamas' Facebook group. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 45(1), 45–69.

Beck, K., Beedle, M., Bennekum, A., van Cockburn, A., Cunningham, W., Fowler, M., Grenning, J., et al. (2001). *Principles behind the agile manifesto*. <http://agilemanifesto.org/iso/en/principles.html>

\*Campbell, S. W., & Ross, M. Q. (2022). Re-conceptualizing solitude in the digital era: From 'being alone' to 'noncommunication'. *Communication Theory*, 32(3), 387–406. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtab021>

\*Chadwick, A., & Stanyer, J. (2022). Deception as a bridging concept in the study of disinformation, misinformation, and misperceptions: Toward a holistic framework. *Communication Theory*, 32, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtab019>

\*Charoensukmongkol, P., & Phungsoonthorn, T. (2022). The interaction effect of crisis communication and social support on the emotional exhaustion of university employees during the COVID-19 crisis. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 59(2), 269–286.

\*Charoensukmongkol, P., & Suthatorn, P. (2022). How managerial communication reduces perceived job insecurity of flight attendants during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 27(2), 368–387. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-07-2021-0080>

\*Chon, M.-G., Tam, L., & Kim, J.-N. (2021). Effects of organizational conflict history and employees' situational perceptions of COVID-19 on negative megaphoning and turnover intention. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 298–315. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-10-2020-0114>

Coombs, W. T. (2015). The value of communication during a crisis: Insights from strategic communication research. *Business Horizons*, 58(2), 141–148.

Dan, V., & Raupp, J. (2018). A systematic review of frames in news reporting of health risks: Characteristics, construct consistency vs. name diversity, and the relationship of frames to framing functions. *Health, Risk and Society*, 20(5–6), 203–226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698575.2018.1522422>

\*Diers-Lawson, A., Symons, A., & Zeng, C. (2021). Building crisis capacity with data breaches: The role of stakeholder relationship management and strategic communication. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 26(4), 675–699. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-02-2021-0024>

\*Dühning, L., & Zerfass, A. (2021). The triple role of communications in agile organizations. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 15(2), 93–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2021.1887875>

\*Ecklebe, S., & Löffler, N. (2021). A question of quality: Perceptions of internal communication during the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 214–232. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-09-2020-0101>

\*Einwiller, S., Ruppel, C., & Stranzl, J. (2021). Achieving employee support during the COVID-19 pandemic – the role of relational and informational crisis communication in Austrian organizations. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 233–255. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-10-2020-0107>

Eriksson, P., & Kovalainen, A. (2016). *Qualitative methods in business research* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Gillespie, N., & Dietz, G. (2009). Trust repair after an organization-level failure. *Academy of Management Review*, 34(1), 127–145.

Guo, W., & Cannella, A. A. Jr (2021). No need to know it all: Implications of COVID-19 for corporate communications research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(5), 1421–1425. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12705>

\*Heide, M., & Simonsson, C. (2021). What was that all about? On internal crisis communication and communicative coworkership during a pandemic. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 256–275. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-09-2020-0105>

\*Kim, K. H., & Lee, Y. (2021). Employees' communicative behavior in response to emotional exhaustion: The moderating role of transparent communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 15(5), 410–424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2021.1967959>

\*Koch, T., & Denner, N. (2022). Informal communication in organizations: Work time wasted at the water-cooler or crucial exchange among co-workers? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 27(3), 494–508. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-08-2021-0087>

Koskela, M., Enell-Nilsson, M., & Hjerpe, C. (2021). Communication practitioners' views on transparency and its impact in Finnish companies. In Katajamäki, H., Enell-Nilsson, M., Kauppinen-Räsänen, H., Kääntä, L., & Salovaara, H. (Eds.), *Workplace communication IV* (pp. 101–116). VAKKI Publications 13. <https://vakki.net/index.php/2021/12/21/workplace-communication-iv/>

Kähkönen, T. (2020). Employee trust repair after organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 33(6), 1143–1161.

\*Lee, Y. (2022). How dialogic internal communication fosters employees' safety behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Public Relations Review*, 48. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102156>

\*Lee, E., Kang, M., Kim, Y., & Yang, S. (2022). Exploring the interrelationship and roles of employee–organization relationship outcomes between symmetrical internal communication and employee job engagement. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 27(2), 264–283.

\*Li, J., Sun, R., Tao, W., & Lee, Y. (2021). Employee coping with organizational change in the face of a pandemic: The role of transparent internal communication. *Public Relations Review*, 47(1), 101984. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101984>

Lock, I. (2019). Explicating communicative organization-stakeholder relationships in the digital age: A systematic review and research agenda. *Public Relations Review*, 45(4), 101829.

\*Macnamara, J. (2021). New insights into crisis communication from an 'inside' *emic* perspective during COVID-19. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 10(20), 237–262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2046147X21999972>

\*McGloin, R., Coletti, A., Hamlin, E., & Denes, A. (2022). Required to work from home: Examining transitions to digital communication channels during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Communication Research Reports*, 39(1), 44–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2021.2012757>

\*Men, L. R., Qin, Y. S., & Jin, J. (2022). Fostering employee trust via effective supervisory communication during the COVID-19 pandemic: Through the lens of motivating language theory. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 59(2), 192–218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884211020491>

Naik, R. I., Vagi, S. J., Uzicanin, A., & Dopson, S. A. (2019). Influenza-related communication and community mitigation strategies: Results from the 2015 pandemic influenza readiness assessment. *Health Promotion Practice*, 20(3), 338–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919826582>



Naudé, W., & Vinuesa, R. (2021). Data deprivations, data gaps and digital divides: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Big Data & Society*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517211025545>

\*Neill, M. S., & Bowen, S. A. (2021). Ethical listening to employees during a pandemic: New approaches, barriers and lessons. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 276–297. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-09-2020-0103>

\*Puyod, J. V., & Charoensukmongkol, P. (2021). Effects of workplace rumors and organizational formalization during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case study of universities in the Philippines. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 26(4), 793–812. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-09-2020-0127>

\*Qin, Y. S., & Men, L. J. (2022). Exploring the impact of internal communication on employee psychological well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: The mediating role of employee organizational trust. *International Journal of Business Communication*. Advance online publication, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884221081838>

Ragnedda, M., & Muschert, G. W. (Eds.). (2013). *The digital divide*. Routledge.

Reynolds, B., & Quinn, S. C. (2008). Effective communication during an influenza pandemic: The value of using a crisis and emergency risk communication framework. *Health Promotion Practice*, 9(4), 13S–17S. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839908325267>

Reynolds, B., & Seeger, M. W. (2014). *Crisis and emergency risk communication manual*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta. [https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/ppt/cerc\\_2014edition\\_Copy.pdf](https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/ppt/cerc_2014edition_Copy.pdf)

Rousseau, D. M., Sitkin, S. B., Burt, R. S., & Camerer, C. (1998). Not so different after all: A cross-discipline view of trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 23(30), 393–404.

Rowe, S., & Alexander, N. (2020). Risk communication in the time of COVID. Early lessons for nutrition, food, and health communicators. *Nutrition Today*, 55(4), 182–185. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NT.0000000000000424>

\*Ruck, K., & Men, L. R. (2021). Guest editorial: Internal communication during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 185–195. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-08-2021-163>

Schryen, G. (2015). Writing qualitative IS literature reviews – guidelines for synthesis, interpretation, and guidance of research. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 37(12), 286–325.

\*Seiter, J. S., & Curran, T. (2021). Social-distancing fatigue during the COVID-19 pandemic: A mediation analysis of cognitive flexibility, fatigue, depression, and adherence to CDC guidelines. *Communication Research Reports*, 38(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2021.1880385>

\*Sun, R., Li, J. Q., Lee, Y., & Tao, W. (2021). The role of symmetrical internal communication in improving employee experiences and organizational identification during COVID-19 pandemic-induced organizational change. *International Journal of Business Communication*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884211050628>

\*Tao, W., Lee, Y., Sun, R., Li, J., & He, M. (2022). Enhancing employee engagement via leaders' motivational language in times of crisis: Perspectives from the COVID-19 outbreak. *Public Relations Review*, 48, 102133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102133>

\*van Ruler, B. (2021). Communication planning: Agility is a game changer in strategy development. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 15(20), 113–125.

\*van Zoonen, W., Rice, R. E., & Hoeven, C. L. (2022). Sensemaking by employees in essential versus non-essential professions during the COVID-19 crisis: A comparison of effects of change communication and disruption cues on mental health, through interpretations of identity threats and work meaningfulness. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 36(2), 318–349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189221087633>

Vuorento, M., Soikkanen, A., Ruohomäki, V., & Koivunen, M. (2022). *Työkyvyn tukeminen etätyössä: opas organisaatioille [How to support work ability in remote work: Guide for organizations]*. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

\*Wilson, S. R., Kuang, K., Hintz, E. A., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2021). Developing and validating the Communication Resilience Processes Scale. *Journal of Communication*, 71, 478–513. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqab013>

\*Yang, T., Ticona, J., & Lelkes, Y. (2021). Policing the digital divide: Institutional gate-keeping & criminalizing digital inclusion. *Journal of Communication*, 71(4), 572–597. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqab019>

\*Yeomans, L., & Bowman, S. (2021). Internal crisis communication and the social construction of emotion: University leaders' sensegiving discourse during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(3), 196–213. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-11-2020-0130>

\*Yue, C. A. (2021). Navigating change in the era of COVID-19: The role of top leaders' charismatic rhetoric and employees' organizational identification. *Public Relations Review*, 47, 102118.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102118>