Social Media as an Internal Communication Tool in Project Management Practices

Exploring an Impact of Social Media Use on Employee Communication in Small and Medium-sized Companies in Uzbekistan

Authors: Yulia Ten

Supervisor: Vladimir Vanyushyn

Student
Umeå School of Business and Economics
Autumn semester 2017
Master thesis, one-year, 15 hp
Summary

Social media is progressively implemented in work organizations as means of communication among employees. Thus, it is of crucial importance to develop understanding how they empower and limit communicative activities which shape the network through which organizational tasks are accomplished, as it is these very dynamics that enforce and eternalize companies. Given these trends, the time seems ripe to investigate how Social media is used in internal communication processes in organizations, that is the main purpose of this study. Additionally, this study aims to explore positive and negative consequences of Social media use perceived by employees. The research was guided by the following research questions:

   How is Social media used for communication and collaboration of project teams?

   What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of Social media use in work by project team members?

The research adopts a grounded theory strategy which is considered to be appropriate for investigations in the field with scarce theoretical background. The data collection was conducted in two rounds: with seven unstructured interviews in the first round and five semi-structured interviews in the second round. The sample of the research comprised employees and managers of small and medium-sized companies specialized in Social Media Marketing and Digital Journalism in Uzbekistan. In accordance with the grounded theory approach, the data analysis was conducted through a coding process, which consists of three stages: open, axial and selective coding.

The research questions were answered through developing a model which visualizes the use of Social media and its possible positive/negative impacts on communication and collaboration in organizations. The model was developed based on the data derived from the interviews. The central part of the model is metaphorically named Social media as a circulatory system of a company, that explains how Social media supports vital activity of a company through maintaining smooth functioning of key organizational processes. The possible positive and negative consequences of Social media use are also represented through two core categories: digitalization of social relationships and humanization of Social media. The first concept suggests that excessive use of Social media by employees leads to development of disingenuous relationships among users and increased pressure that stems from higher control and surveillance by management which are afforded by social media use. The second core category suggests that Social media, in contrast, may enhance social connectivity, employee commitment, engagement and develop a feeling of a family within a company. To provide this management should use Social media as another avenue for collaboration and display company informal meetings, achievements, and corporate culture.

Keywords: Social Media, Internal Communication, Positive and Negative Impact, Collaboration
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor Vladimir Vanyushin, who guided me through the research process and provided with positive feedbacks that encouraged me to finish this endeavor.

I am also grateful to all participants of the research who found time and enthusiasm to contribute into the study. Each one of them showed genuine engagement, and interest in a whole research process what motivated and inspired me.

I would love to express my deepest gratitude to all the professors, program coordinators, guest lectures and supporting staff of the Master in Strategic Project Management (European) who supported us throughout the whole master program.

My thanks and sincere appreciation also go to The Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture (EACEA), who granted me a chance to become a participant of this program by awarding an Erasmus Mundus Master Course scholarship.

Last but not least, I want to thank my dearest family and friends for continual support and love.

Yulia Ten
Umeå, 2nd of January, 2018
List of Abbreviations

CEO  Chief Executive Officer
COO  Chief Operating Officer
ESM  Enterprise social media
F2F  Face-to-face
SM   Social media
SMM  Social media marketing
SNS  Social network site
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Introduction
This chapter introduces into the topic of the undertaken study by providing the problem background. Research questions and research objectives follow the problem background section. Furthermore, theoretical and practical contributions of the study are presented. Finally, the outline of the study’s disposition and relevant concepts used in research are provided in the end of the chapter.

1.1 Communication as a Notion
The notion of communication is universal and takes its roots from the beginning of existence of humanity. The name is a derivative from the Latin word communis, which means common, and purports the “common ground for understanding” (Rayudu, 2010, p. 2). The meaning and interpretations of communication evolved during the time, thus Charles E. Redfield (1954), saw communication as purely a process of human interaction through verbal exchange of facts and opinions, without any use of technology like telephone or telegraph. Later on, Allen Louis, one of the authors of the first management vocabulary, defined communication as the sum of all the ideas one individual does when he wishes to create understanding in the mind of another through a systematic and enduring process of narrating, listening and understanding. More recent definition of communication by American Management Association depicts it as “any behavior that results in an exchange of meanings” (Bisen & Bisen, 2009, p. 2). One of the communication theorist of the last century Dance (1970) analyzed over 95 published definitions of communication and identified such a variety of concepts that he suggested to theorize communication as a “family” of linked concepts rather than a solitary concept. Considering plethora of definitions of communication, and the complexity of integrating definitions deriving from domains with incommensurable knowledge agendas into one, many scholars (e.g. Fisher, 1978; Murphy, 1991; Craig, 1993) found argument over definition of communication being pointless. Despite, there is no theoretical consensus of what is communication, according to most of scholars, some of the main objectives of communication is to make others comprehend the core idea, incline to a certain point of view or to elicit an action (Bisen & Bisen, 2009, p. 3)

The author seeks to delve deeper into the meaning behind the concept of communication, and expound beyond the definition of it as a process but rather as a notion. Understanding of it may come through addressing the question of whether communication is an art or a science? First, it is important to understand the difference between these two terms. According to Rayudu (2010), science can be described as an organized and systemized body of knowledge grounded on sound findings and universally applicable principles referring to the field of study, hereby, we can speak about of the science of chemistry, astronomy, physics etc. Whereas, art is seen as an elaborated ability or skill to do something exceptionally well due to more practice than learning, here, Koontz (1997) suggests that art is an application of skills and knowledge to practice in a way to gain best possible results. Given, that art is something practical, the evidence of the practitioners’ excellence must be tangible (Rayudu, 2010, p. 5).

It is clear that according to these definitions, communication is both art and science, as it holds elements from both concepts which are interwoven in nature. Communication as a science can be regarded as a body of knowledge to guide the managers throughout the process of solving interpersonal conflicts within a team, critical evaluation of the specific situations and results, and at the same time, communication is creative, it creates new patterns of
behavior, new systems and situations. Insofar, communication can be one of the oldest of the arts, and the newest of the sciences (Rayudu, 2010, p. 6). Social communication is not a static field, but an endlessly evolving and expanding being in a global scene of contingency and discrepancy (Craig, 1999, p. 123), what requires acquiring of certain soft management skills to be theoretically mastered and practiced as an art. Yet, the emergence of communication as a science was triggered by nascence of sophisticated communication technology, which has an orderly and systemized body of knowledge that operates on its own theories, principles and concepts.

1.2 Internal Communication
Interactions between individuals shape organizational behavior, thus, one of the main functions of management is to provide an efficient communication in a company (Bloisi et al, 2003, pp. 26-27). In fact, Johnson et al. (2017, p. 197-198), assert that managers spend over three forth of their working time on communicating: for example, collecting information, persuading others, or participating in decision-making processes. Corporate external communication is undoubtedly, conceived as a great contributor to fostering a corporate image, consolidating strong market position (Chong, 2007, p. 201), and increasing corporate value. Yet, internal communication is not scrutinized in the same extent as a mean to increase value creation, despite employees are deemed to be one of the most essential audiences in relation to organizational communication and branding (Chong, 2007, p. 202). Internal communication pursues two main goals: keep employers aware of their tasks and general policies, and create a corporate culture (Francis, 1989, cited in Elving, 2005, p.31). Richmond et al. (2005, p. 25) divided these two objectives into six key functions:

- **Informative** function enables all employees to receive full information required to complete the tasks.
- **Regulative** function articulates with code of conduct and other corporate policies, rules and norms.
- **Integrative** function of communication puts emphasis on coordination of processes performed by different departments or employees towards one objective.
- **Managerial** function is aimed to build up commitment through establishing trustworthy reliable relationships between employees.
- **Persuasive** function that stems from a managerial one, seeks to convince and motivate individuals to fulfill their duties in a right manner and with accordance to required procedures.
- **Socializing** function is last but not the least one, that focuses on socializing of employees within a company, providing a sense of belonging to a corporate entity (Richmond et al., 2005, p.26)

The importance of the last function is deeply discussed in the study about interrelation between project communication and kinship, emotional ties and network scale (Roberts & M, 2011). Authors argue that interpersonal relationships in work are sensitive dynamic entities that are fueled with emotional closeness and kinship on a daily basis. Failing to meet this will lead to weakening of commitment and company culture. But how to provide frequent and agile communication within a company if there are constraints in relation to number of people, workplace locations and geographical distance?
1.3 Problem Background

The emergence of Social media as a communication tool enabled to mitigate rigid limitations and connect people regardless their location, distance, and time. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010, p.61) define Social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. This term doesn’t refer to a specific technology but rather define a family of digital tools with common set of principles in their design: user-generated content shared in the Internet in a wishful way; free and honestly provided information; free expression of unbiased opinions; the voice of a crowd is wise (Landers & Goldberg, 2014, pp. 289-290). Social media’s tremendous impact on our way to interact and communicate throughout all social contexts is undeniable (Keller, 2013, p. 10), yet, there are ongoing debates about whether this influence is more beneficial or negative for social relations. Amy Jo Martin (2015), an American author, and CEO of Digital Royalty, believes that Social media is an ultimate equalizer that enables anyone to speak out their opinion and feel engaged into social processes. However, opposing view claims that Social media brings a lot of adversarial impacts, such as privacy issues, information overload, reality delusion (Keller, 2013, p. 10). The effectiveness of Social media as a strategic communication tool in project management practices is also controversial, and poorly explored since its adoption is relatively recent (Leonardi, et al., 2013; Sharma & Bhatnagar, 2016; Soto Velez & Gomez Vasquez, 2011). Notwithstanding, Social media is recognized as a strategic communication partner in organizations, that exposes new openings to engage stakeholders into a conversation (Soto Velez & Gomez Vasquez, 2011, p. 157), enables companies to reach a better control over dynamic and complex organizational environment. The prior researches on Social media use in organizational context were mostly focused on the exploration of social media tools for external communication purposes such as customer service, marketing, and public relations, etc (Durkin, et al., 2013; Carroll & Ramachandran, 2014; Apenes Solem & Pedersen, 2016). However, internal communication, with a social media perspective, is a great avenue for research as compare to traditional tools, Social Media supports higher information accessibility and transferability (Kalpan & Haenlain, 2010), less costly and time-consuming (Macnmara & Zerfass, 2012), moreover, it promotes closer contact with the rest of members what is in line with an objective of an efficient communication. Notwithstanding, Social Media use is jeopardized by risks related to safety, privacy and functionality (Machamara & Zerfass, 2012), information overload, delusion of reality, distraction from work activities (Leonardi, et al., 2013).

Undoubtedly, there are still things to be researched in regard to how to use Social media efficiently for reaching out all employees in the most clear, comprehensible and safe way, but most importantly, there is a knowledge gap of how Social media can be used as a human resource management tool for cooperation and work engagement of employees. Elving (2005, p. 129) condemns that there is a plethora of interesting topics in internal communication field, but, yet, little academic interest to it. Other scholars (Friedl & Vercic, 2010, p.86) also encourage for more qualitative researches in the studies related to a role of Social media for an internal communication. The author believes that this research will try to contribute into understanding of the nature of Social media within an organizational context by answering the research questions, which is believed to be the subject of high relevance for the field of organizational behavior due to escalating spread of Social media in project management practices.
1.4 Research Questions
On the strength of a problem background and identified calls for research in the field by previous studies, the research will be guided by two research questions:

\textit{RQ1: How is Social media used for communication and collaboration of project teams?}

\textit{RQ2: What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of Social media use in work by project team members?}

Accordingly, the first research question tends to explore how Social media is employed in project teams for internal communication processes, whereas the second question seeks to delve deeper into understanding of Social media impact on organizational behavior through perception of employees.

1.5 Research Objectives
Up to this point, there are not enough of qualitative in-depth studies on the subject of the role of Social media in shaping corporate culture and increasing work efficiency. Thus, the research aims at contributing into understanding of this phenomenon by revealing how companies make use of Social media within their work-life processes and analyze interviewed employees` attitude towards use of Social media in project communication. Specifically, the author seeks to examine what factors of communication through web-based platforms complicate understanding between individuals, and when Social media outperforms traditional methods of communication in organizational context from employees` perspective. Eventually, one major objective of the research is to develop a comprehensive model that visualizes the influence of Social media adoption on various aspects of internal communication processes. In fine, research objectives are defined as follows:

- Explore how Social media tools are used in companies for purposes others than transmission of data;
- Identify main advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of Social media from employees` perspectives;
- Develop the model which visualizes the use of Social media in internal communication process and its impact on social actors;

1.6 Theoretical Contributions
This research aims to deepen theoretical knowledge of the role of Social media in organizational communication, hereof, contributing into exploration of how Social media affects interactions between individuals and groups within a working environment, and how Social media can be applied for bettering internal communication in small and medium-sized companies. The calls to undertake a following research were addressed by following studies: Leonardi et al. (2013) encouraged scholars to extend the research on different metaphors to understand enterprise Social media, and investigate how these metaphors can provide us with insights into different important processes in organizations. They assert that theoretically motivated research of social media in the workplace is highly critical for the domains of communication, project management, and information systems. Martin et al. (2004, pp. 822-823), Friedl & Vercic (2010, p. 86), and Jiang et al. (2017, p.38) call for non-laboratory
qualitative research settings for investigation of communication through social media channels, to examine what the actual usage of social media is, how it affects organizational behavior, uncover personal professionals` narratives on social media and its impact on work-life processes.

1.7 Practical Contributions
Despite grounded theory strategy of the thesis does not imply development of practical toolsets or statistically approved suggestions, the author believes that some practical and social contributions can be still found. The findings of the research can be practically useful for all internal stakeholders of small and medium-sized companies in different industry sectors, especially, in Uzbekistan. Considering high scarcity of the researches on social science and management in Uzbekistan, this study can add to the current limited body of knowledge on internal communication, with Social media perspective, and be used as a reference for further investigation on a larger dataset by local scholars. Additionally, as the results will be shared with the research participators, they can contemplate upon study`s conclusions and integrate appropriate changes in their internal communication management. Deeper understanding of employees` perception of Social media use is especially useful for Human Resource Management practices, since they are primarily concerned with the job-satisfaction of internal stakeholders, as it is considered to be vital for a corporate culture and organizational growth (Bloisi, et al., 2003, pp. 26-27)
1.8. Disposition

The following disposition of the research outlines the structure of the study:

**Chapter 1: Introduction** – This chapter allows readers to familiarize with the background of the research topic and a problematization of the subject based on research gaps identified in earlier studies. This is followed research questions and objectives that guide the study process; theoretical and practical contributions of the study conclude the introduction chapter.

**Chapter 2: Theoretical Methodology** – This chapter reflects philosophical assumptions of the author (ontology and epistemology), explains the choice of a research approach, as well as a literature search and selection method.

**Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework** – The theoretical framework attempts to provide an overview on the current research in the field to develop a theoretical knowledge. Firstly, the author elaborates on the topic of internal communication efficiency by trying to provide understanding of what internal communication is and what the antecedents of its efficiency are. It is followed by a discussion of Social media with a focus on the origins and development of the notion of “Social media”, and review of academic articles related to comparison of SM tools and traditional media, as well as positive and negative impacts of SM use identified in previous researches. Lastly, a summary of the theoretical background is presented.

**Chapter 4: Research Methodology** – The research methodology chapter begins from explanation of the chosen research strategy and the research design of the study. It is followed by the description of data collection method, interview design, and the process of sampling and sample selection. Succeeding step elaborates on the data analysis process for the chosen research strategy-coding process. Further, the author discusses the quality criteria of the research, namely, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, authenticity. Ethical considerations of the research are highlighted in the last part of this chapter.

**Chapter 5: Analysis** – This chapter provides detailed explanation of the analysis of the collected data. As mentioned previously, analysis was performed through a coding process which included open, axial and selective coding. Accordingly, the overview of aggregation of the core categories from the second order themes, and second order themes from the first order themes is provided.

**Chapter 6: The Study’s Findings** – The findings from the analysis of the data will be through a developed by the author model which visualizes the use of SM in internal communication processes and its impact on employees.

**Chapter 7: Concluding Thoughts** – The final chapter summarizes the findings in relation to the objectives of the study and highlights the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.
1.9. Relevant Concepts

Relevant concepts frequently used throughout the study:

**Boundary work** - “effort to mediate between knowledge and action, is a promising approach for facilitating knowledge co-production for sustainable development.”- (Adem Esmail, et al., 2017, p. 274)

**Corporate culture**- predominant values, principles and attitudes that distinguish an organization and guide its practices. (Rouse, 2013)

**Employee engagement**- “the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values.” (Rai, 2012, p. 258)

**Internal communication**- “communication between strategic managers and internal stakeholders designed to promote commitment and a sense of belonging to the organization, to develop awareness of its changing environment, and understanding of its evolving aims.” (Welch & Jackson, 2007, p. 186)

**Self-determination**- “Perceived control over independent access to information and self-organization of activities are interpreted as improved self-determination in terms of autonomy and authorship of activities. Another aspect of self-determination was interpreted as enhanced personal privacy.” (Hynan, et al., 2015, p. 1566)

**Social capital**- “typically refers to the actionable resources accumulated through the relationships among people.” (Leonardi, et al., 2013, p. 11)

**Social media**- “Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61)

**Social network sites**- “Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other.” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 63)
2. Theoretical Methodology

This chapter discusses the theoretical methodology of the study by explaining philosophical position of the author referring to research philosophy, specifically, ontological and epistemological considerations. It is followed by a discussion of the research approach. The approach to search and selection of the literature for the theoretical background concludes this chapter.

2.1. Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is determined by assumptions and beliefs of an author about the nature of knowledge that sustains the adopted research strategy and methodology (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 107). Understanding of philosophical position helps to examine taken assumptions, design the research method, formulate research questions and articulate them with the research findings to draw sensible conclusions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 12). Ontology, epistemology, methodology and paradigm are primary components of the research philosophy in social sciences (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 12). All these concepts are cross-linked with each other and shape a framework or a unified view on the research that can be referred as a paradigm (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 13). The succeeding sections will expound the philosophical position of the author that determined the choice of the research methodology and the research design of the thesis.

2.1.1 Ontological Considerations

Ontology is a system of beliefs that reflects the perception of an individual about the nature of the reality (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 110). Ontological considerations question if social entities can and should be regarded as objective entities that “have a reality external to social actors”, or whether social phenomena are conducted from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors and the reality is a subject to interpretation (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 32). These two positions are commonly referred to accordingly as objectivism and subjectivism (or constructionism) (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 32; Saunders & Lewis, 2009, p. 110). As it is mentioned, objectivism assumes that social reality confronts us as an external being outside our reach or influence (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 32)and the main role of the theory would be to identify the causes and effects of information exchange, mainly through analysis of psychological mechanism that affects the conduct, thus communication from an objectivist perspective can be regarded as a transmission of information from a sender to a receiver, and is considered successful if the content is not distorted or lost during transmission (Cobley & Schulz, 2013, p. 41). Subjectivism, on the other hand, asserts that reality does not exist outside individuals and it is continually being accomplished by individual’s and groups’ interpretations (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 14). Therefore, communication is regarded as “a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed” (Carey, 2009, p. 19), and the role of the theory would be to operate within communication processes to develop a reality of communication.

The author believes that limiting communication through Social media to an almost technical process would lead to failure to answer the research question of how Social media contributes to the formation of an efficient cooperation within a team. Additionally, according to Kuhn & Porter (2011, p.19), organizational knowledge that has to be shared between employees doesn’t reside in people but rather exist in relationships in which individuals find themselves
embedded, namely, knowledge or communication is not a product but rather a process or a social construct, created and disseminated by people. Lastly, since the exploration process requires a profound evaluation of aspects producing better understanding between team members through reflection on personal experience of employees, subjectivist viewpoint is chosen for the study as it is believed to address the research questions more accurately.

2.1.2 Epistemological Considerations

Epistemological viewpoints are closely bounded to ontological viewpoints and refer to a Theory of knowledge, namely how people come to discovering the knowledge about surrounding processes and beings, and the question could be asked “how we know what we know” (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 14). In social science, epistemology defines which scientific procedures produce reliable social scientific knowledge. Indeed, there are different and equally rightful philosophically embedded standpoints on the way how we can discover and acknowledge the World (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 15). Two epistemological positions are predominating in philosophical discourse: positivism and interpretivism (Saunders, et al., 2009, pp. 114-116; Bryman & Bell, 2015, pp. 27-32). The realism stance, which is in-between realism and interpretivism, relates to scientific enquiry. The reality from realism standpoint, is independent of the mind in which it is similar to the positivist position, however, realism is also divided into two contrasting types: direct realism, that claims that the way we experience the world through our perceptions and senses reflects accurately the true reality of it, whereas critical realism assumes that sensations and images we experience are just representations of what is real (Saunders, et al., 2009, pp. 114-115; Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 29). In this regard, the author finds critical realism is more in line with the objectives of the research than direct realism, however critical realism is focused on explaining phenomena within a context or social conditioning, mostly through observations (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 119), while the research wants to explore subjective meanings of social actors on communication. For this reason, critical realism is not adopted for the study. Positivism is regarded as a mainstream philosophical view in management studies (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 17). One underlying reason for it stems from the nature of business and management knowledge. Such a functional knowledge should hold some universal truth for an easier application of it across different industries, businesses, and cultures (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 17). When a research is conducted from a positivism position, it will be more likely aim to use existing theory to produce hypothesis about studied phenomenon. Consequently, hypothesis will be tested to develop law-like generalizations that will be consistent with the notion of “observable social reality” (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 113). Communication is a complex dynamic social process, adding a Social media perspective makes it even more sophisticated, therefore a positivist approach with its law-like generalizations can oversimplify the conclusions. Additionally, the research question that aims to understand the meaning that human beings are addressing to the communication processes through Social media, it will not be answered accurately if positivism stance is applied. The contrasting epistemological position to positivism is interpretivism (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 28). The focus in interpretivism stance is clear understanding the subjective meaning of human actions, rather than forces that drive it. Schutz (1962, p.191) expounded interpretivism with two key assumptions:
• Human beings attach some meaning to the reality, thence their action is meaningful and based on the meanings they attribute to their acts and to the acts of others.
• The purpose of a researcher is to comprehend people’s “common-sense thinking” and accordingly to interpret their behavior and their social reality from their point of view.

According to these assumptions, interpretivism, in contrast to positivism, asserts that the social reality is far too compound to be determined and theorized into definite laws. Likewise, supporters of interpretivism stance argue that rich insights into complex systems cannot be sustained with application of law-like generalizations (Saunders, et al., 2009, pp. 115-116). The author believes that ignoring difference in perceptions is omitting the fundamental determinant of behavior. Understanding of the message could vary from person to person depending on receiver’s attitudes, interests, mood, trust and other individual characteristics. In other words, a human organizes and interprets information through various senses when he gives the meaning to the environment. Considering that the research question seeks to understand and interpret human interaction through Social media through in-depth interviews, interpretative stance is chosen for the study. Saunders (2009 p.115) highlights that interpretivist perspective is especially adequate in the field of management and business research, particularly in the department of organizational behavior due to high complexity and uniqueness of situations occurring throughout a working process.

2.2. Research Approach
Research approach is defined by the role of the theory within a piece of research (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 20). That is how an author wants to bring forward knowledge about the phenomena to the study (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 21). There are two most common approaches to establish relationship between theory and research: deductive and inductive approaches (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 23; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 21; Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 124). The deductive approach is prevailing in the natural sciences, and it aims to explore an existing theory or phenomenon and test it within a researched context (Snieder & Larner, 2009, p. 16). Robson (2002, cited in Saunders & Lewis, 2009 pp. 124-125) suggests that deductive research progress through 5 sequential stages:

- Deducing a hypothesis from a theory
- Developing a hypothesis which proposes a causal relationship between two particular concepts or variables
- Hypothesis testing
- Examination of the results of the inquiry, thus confirming or rejecting the hypothesis
- Modifying the theory if the findings contradict to a proposed hypothesis

The essential characteristics of deductive approach is that a research will seek to expound a causal relationship between variables, which can be measured numerically and could provide some generalizing conclusions, for this, a research must be based on a sample of sufficient numerical size and adopt well-structured methodology to ensure an accurate replication (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 125).

The second most common approach in scientific research is inductive, and it follows the opposite stance between theory and research compare to deductive. Specifically, it processes a research from empirical research to theoretical conclusions, videlicet, inductive approach aims to build a theory as a result of data analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p.
Inductive approach commonly conducts a study on a smaller sample of subjects (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 126), and analyzes the data through qualitative methods to create comprehension the nature of the problem (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 25). The advantage of induction over deduction is an opportunity to reveal alternative explanations of the problem, apart from the ones defined in the beginning of the research (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 125).

The deductive approach is generally in concordance with a positivist research philosophy, whereas the inductive approach owes more to an interpretive research philosophy (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 124). Notwithstanding, the two approaches are not incompatible, and many researchers implement both inductive and deductive approaches at different stages of their research, this method is defined as abduction (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 23). According to this approach, deduction can be employed for evaluation of the hypothesis and induction for explaining it with an empirical data. This approach has grown in popularity in business research as it overcomes some of the limitations of deduction and induction, unclarity about the choice of the theory to be tested and lack of empirical data to provide a quality theory-building accordingly (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 27). The essence of an abduction is in finding the best explanation to a problem out of all possible explanations (Ketoviki & Mantere, 2013, p. 26).

The choice of a research approach is highly reliant on research objectives and questions. Thesis is aimed to deepen an understanding of impact of Social media on the cooperation among team members and explore individual experiences and perceptions of internal communication specifics. Social media gains prominence throughout industries, business, cultures, therefore, its nature is highly volatile depending on the context of usage and users. Yet, Social media in the context of internal project communication tool is a relatively modern topic and, there is little existing literature that can provide sufficient data to articulate and test a hypothesis. Thence, deductive approach found to be not appropriate. Given rigid time constraints, abduction approach is believed to be less suitable for the current research due to necessity to perform two types of analysis and reflect the findings from a big sample of subjects. Providing ontological, epistemological assumptions of the author and some supportive arguments stated above, inductive approach is adopted for a research.

2.3 Approach to Literature Search and Selection

The key step in conduction of the research is providing a literature review on existing literature about the topic. Exploration of the existing literature on the topic helps to acknowledge of what is already known in the area, methods and strategies employed in previous studies on the subject, detecting significant controversies and inconsistencies, and finding research gaps (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 101). This literature aims to create a foundation for justifying the research questions and literature design, besides it aims to be supporting in development of arguments about significance of the study and its contribution for future researches. (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 100; Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 61). Albeit, selection of the literature can be entangled with finding relevant publications among all sources about chosen topic, which sometimes covers much larger subject area than a potential research. Social media is a vast topic that doesn’t have clearly defined boundaries, linking it to internal communication in organizations narrowed down the research area, and at the same time challenged the search due to high literature scarcity on the specific topic. For the literature selection an emphasis was put on searching through such online sources as Umea
library search engine, Google scholar, and Discovery, an online database of Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh. Additionally, scanning of the reference list of select articles enabled to find supplementary literature in the area of research, Martins et al. (2004, p. 806) highlight efficiency of this method. The main key words used for the literature search were (also in combination): social media, internal communication tools, project communication, project management, corporate discourse.

After the first selection, the author conducted an overview of abstract and key findings of all articles to detect the most relevant articles to be included into theoretical background for the research. The study relies also on some relevant well-cited books in the field, that contributes into academic fundamentality of the research. All sources are reviewed scrupulously to ensure high relevance and trustworthiness.
3. Theoretical Background

The theoretical framework chapter starts from discussions upon the topic of internal project communication with further elaboration on the antecedents of its efficiency. The topic of Social media is introduced next through providing an overview on the emergence of Social media in the World, its use in work organization with a focus on communication processes, the review of literature on comparison of Social media tools with traditional media is presented, as well as, reflection upon the empirically proven positive and negative impacts of Social media on internal communication. The chapter is concluded with a reflection of the author upon the provided theoretical framework.

3.1 Internal Project Communication Efficiency

3.1.1 What is Internal Communication

Definition of internal communication has not undergone significant change over the years (Welch & Jackson, 2007, p. 178), since Frank & Brownell (1989, pp.5-6) defined it as “communication transactions between individuals and/or groups at various levels and in different areas of specialization that are intended to design and redesign organizations to implement designs, and co-ordinate day-to-day activities”. However, the rise of internal communication as a specialization did not start until 1990s (Verčič, et al., 2012, p. 223), that explains a lack of theoretical understanding of how internal communication can contribute into organizational effectiveness, noted by one of the communication scholars of that time Grunig (1992, p. 536). Henceforth, several scholars have provided empirical evidence that successful internal communication underpins and develops employee understanding of opportunities and threats, organizations` objectives and goals, facilitate interaction between senior managers and employees, promotes organizational commitment and contributes into building of a positive sense of employee identification (Quinn & Hargie, 2004; Robson & Tourish, 2005; Welch, 2012). Also, internal communication is not purely work-related, and definitely touches upon some non-professional aspects of the life. Smidts et al. (2001, p.1052) saw internal communication as a multidimensional construct, that can be reflected in different ways, and comprises two major components which are antecedents of organizational identification: the content of the message that is transmitted between employees and the “communication climate” or how communication is being perceived, interpreted within an organization. The first component aims to guarantee that employees receive correct data about what is central and distinctive about a company, since being well-informed about company issues helps to comprehend the salient characteristics which make the company be different from other entities (Dutton et al., 1994, cited in Smidts, et al., 2001, p. 1052). This way repeated exposure to information about the company can inhance perceived attractiveness of the company by employees, as it increases the feeling of self-worth in them. This phenomenon has its roots in social identity theory and “conveys the extent to which an individual perceives her/himself as belonging to the group and as being a typical member of it” (Tajfel, 1982, cited in Smidts et al. 2001, p.1051). Communication climate is comprised of such elements as “judgement on the receptivity of management to employee communication or the trustworthiness of distributed information”, other pertinent dimensions of it identified by early communication scholars, such as Guzley (1992, cited in Smidts, et al., 2001, p.1053) and Redding( 1972, cited in Smidts, et al., 2001, p.1053), are openness and
trust, sense of participation in decision-making process, support, or recognition. Providing that employees share perception on all these aspects of communication, communication climate can justifiably be unified into a congeneric, group-level variable (Smidts, et al., 2001, p. 1053).

Theoretical classifications of internal communication
Progressively, researchers tried to explore internal communication by breaking it down into composite parts for facilitation of analysis and evaluation. Thus, Kalla (2005) divided internal communication into four domains:

- Business communication, what refers to the use, adaptation and development of language, signs, and symbols with a purpose to conduct activities that can satisfy one`s needs by delivering goods or services for gaining profit;
- Management communication, that focuses on managerial skills and capabilities to disseminate information or knowledge among employees, that can contribute into efficiency of management functions in organizational context;
- Corporate communication defines formal discourse that company uses to project itself to different audiences, otherwise constituencies;
- Organizational communication is somehow similar to what was addressed by Smidts et al., (2001, p. 1053) as communication climate, meaning how communication unfolds depending on situational contexts and specifics of individuals` interpretations of messages.

Welch and Jackson (2007, p.185) also classify internal communication by four dimensions, but according to stakeholder groups: internal line management communication, that refers to issues about employee roles and the influence of their personal communication, such as short talks and appraisal meetings; internal team peer communication, which is focused mainly on task discussions in a group setting; internal project peer communication is similar to internal team peer communication, with a difference of participation of managers as project members in discussions which revolves around project issues, and internal corporate communication. Proceeding from aforesaid, internal communication is a complex system that can be measured from different perspectives, depending on the angle of interest of a researcher, and it is increasingly recognized as a key success.

3.1.2 Knowledge-level, skills and other antecedents of efficient internal communication

As it is mentioned above, internal communication is considered to be a specialty, hence it behooves to attribute specific knowledge and skills to this domain to conduct successful internal communication (Verčič, et al., 2012, pp. 226-227). A Delphi study conducted by Ana Tkalac Vercic et al. (2012) had one of their objective to determine the views on this topic among members of national associations in Federation of European Business Communicators Associations. The data collection was carried out in two rounds: the first qualitative round of interviews aimed to find out what knowledge and skills are linked to successful internal communication according to respondents; in the second-round respondents were asked to rank identified skills and competences on a scale from 1 to 5, where 5 means strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. The results of the first round showed that such skills as writing and editing, basic psychology, multilingualism, cultural flexibility,
media sphere competences, knowledge of research techniques, change management, marketing etc. are primarily associated with successful internal communication to interviewees. The majority of respondents also highlighted importance of good oral presentations skills, gathering and critical analysis of data, and knowledge of the Internet for increasing of the efficiency of internal communication (Verčič, et al., 2012, p. 226). The results of the second round provided preference of internal communication efficiency related skills in numerical form, namely, the highest overall score was given to such communication skills as designing, presenting, speaking (M=4.88); diplomacy and mediating skills were also highly ranked (M=4.63); general management competences, strategic communication and networking knowledge variables received all 4.5 overall score; strategic business skills (M=4.25), intercultural knowledge (M=4.13); project management knowledge (M=4.0), journalism skills (M=4.0), business and coaching skills (M=3.88). Within the scope of the same research, it was also examined what participants perceive as main current issues in internal communication. Notably, the highest score with a modal value 5 out of 5 was given to new internal digital media, that outpaced such issues as, change management (M=4.63), employee engagement, commitment and motivation (M=4.38), trust and credibility of leadership (M=4.0). Surprisingly, cultural diversity issue received very low average rating (M=3), but its modal rate was 4 out 5, what suggests that perception of this issue highly dependent on the origins of the respondent. It underpins the assumption of the author that communication is a construct made of perceptions and interpretations of people, and doesn’t exist independently of people’s mind.

Exploring the impact of internal communication on a company’s efficiency and productivity is not limited with defining what skills and competences are required to disseminate knowledge, but also what are people’s perceived characteristics of an effective and efficient communication. Thus, Molena and Rovai (2016), conducted a research that aimed to propose a structured and analytical model for dealing with project communication management (PCM) to reach advances in organizational cooperation (Molena & Rovai, 2016). To create the model, Molena and Rovai adopted a mixed research approach. First, they conducted an internet-based survey on a sample of 89 project professionals. Respondents were asked to answer several questionnaires which were conducted based on literature research on project communication, and intended to classify feelings on different actions, tools, issues and ranging of importance of some phenomena in relation to organizational communication (Molena & Rovai, 2016, p. 686). And within the research they identified which perceived factors associated with internal communication are the most valuable according to employees. Namely, respondents had to identify 5 most crucial factors for successful project communication out of proposed ones which were:

- Clarity (a comprehensive and well-structured content);
- Trust (if information is believed to be credible);
- Periodicity (frequent communication);
- Conciseness (synthetic and clear way to deliver information);
- Time (reasonable deadlines and conformity in case of position changes);
- Language (general language, understood by everyone)
- Formality (adoption of formal models and templates for communication)
- Feedback (criticism, proposals, comments, appraisal);
- Completeness (availability of all required data);
• Storing (having access to previous data);
• Transparency (having everyone being involved and aware of the task);
• Security (confidentiality)
• Others (specify)

Additionally, they answered some general questions about the company and an occupied position, a few questions that required evaluation of current situation in a company relating to communication (Molena & Rovai, 2016, pp. 700-705). It must be mentioned that respondents were divided into two groups according to administrative level, to identify if employees have different view on the same issues depending on the position occupied. First group comprised of representatives of high and senior management level (CEO, program manager, CIO, directors) the second one of representatives from operational administrative level (project managers, coordinators etc.). After gathering the results of the survey, researchers proceeded to data analysis and creation of the proposed model. According to the results of the survey, operational managers are more concerned with clarity and credibility of information, agility and provision of information that contains all important details, whereas higher levels of professionals give more value to quality feedbacks, in time responses, conciseness and appropriate clear language. The outcomes of the survey demonstrated a high dissatisfaction by respondents to the item “Communication is filed by access history”, what highlights the necessity for improvements in technology that stores and process information (Molena & Rovai, 2016, pp. 689-690). The authors emphasize importance of organizational culture and refer to an article of Marchiori (1999), that is titled as “Communication is culture, and culture is communication”. What means that the role of communication in the organization is not limited to transferring information between members but rather leads to sustain organizational culture and foster commitment of individuals. Based on the results of the analysis, Molena and Rovai developed a descriptive model (see Table 1) that divided deficiencies related to communication into five levels, permitting comprehension of reality, evaluation and advised action by project managers. The management process engaged at each level, factors and objectives to be worked on are the headings. The second stage of the research implied evaluation of a proposed model on a sample of 64 professionals on the subject of applicability and consistency of structure of the model. They had to evaluate the proposed model on several criteria on the grade of: very bad, bad, average, good, excellent. The respondents assessed the model with a high concentration of “good” marks, that proved practicability of the model. The most significant contribution of this research, according to the authors, is proposing new structured approach to deal with communication problems, and present a communication as a multidimensional process (Molena & Rovai, 2016, p. 695). Another research with employee-centric emphasis explored media specific attributes of efficient internal communication (Welch, 2012). They identified such factors as controllability, dissemination capability, and usability (Welch, 2012, p. 248). Here, communication through media can be measured on a control continuum as controlled, part-controlled, and uncontrolled methods. When a content, a format, a channel of a message is managed by the communicators, it is referred as controlled media, whereas uncontrolled media is mainly filtered by gatekeepers. Dissemination strategy is related to the way information is delivered through media to employees, and generally classified as “push” and “pull media”, where push media refers to information which is sent to employees, and pull media require employees to conduct collection of data. Usability stands for convenience and
efficiency of media use by a receiver, namely, an opportunity to find information credible information within a short time, and in a simple manner (Welch, 2012, p. 249).

**Table 1:** Model for improved communicability in projects. Source: Molena & Rovai, 2016, p.693

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE</th>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>MANAGEMENT INVOLVED</th>
<th>FACTORS</th>
<th>CONTROL OBJECTIVES TO BE WORKED ON</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW LEVEL LAYER – PROJECT COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE</td>
<td>Level 1 – operational – process design</td>
<td>Process management</td>
<td>Formal documents; plain language; and completeness</td>
<td>Definition of communication as processes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Completeness: having all the information necessary and nothing more</td>
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<td>Identification of stakeholders</td>
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<td>Formal documents and channels (quality and aesthetics)</td>
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<td>Plain language for projects; Organizational culture pervading project management</td>
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<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Level 2 – operational – information definition</td>
<td>Information management</td>
<td>Agility; periodicity; and storing</td>
<td>History and traceability.</td>
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<td>Definition: capture; structuring; recuperation; and utilization of information</td>
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<td>Definition of channels.</td>
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<td>Segmentation of public/stakeholders</td>
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<td>Information organized (subject, date, origin, destination, etc.)</td>
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<td>Definition of the frequency of communications</td>
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<td>Value chain</td>
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<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Level 3 – operational – process control</td>
<td>Information security management</td>
<td>Agility; transparency; periodicity; storing; and security</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reach the correct people and no one else. Have all the necessary information and nothing more</td>
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<td>Redundancies (information and processes)</td>
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<td>Identification of noise and informal communication.</td>
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<td>Security</td>
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<td>Feedback with assurance as to the understanding between parties</td>
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<td>Communication process approach: understood as a process that demands planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level 4 – management – evolution of systems process</td>
<td>People management; knowledge management</td>
<td>Clarity; conciseness; objectivity (synthetic); agility; and feedback</td>
<td>Alterations are advised in time; received with a reasonable deadline (in time for response and action)</td>
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<td>Participation (commitment); Value creation/Value Network</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational culture, participation in results, coherence</td>
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<td>HIGH LEVEL LAYER – STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION</td>
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3.2. Social Media

3.2.1 What is Social Media

The concept of Social media is far from being groundbreaking, notwithstanding, there seems to be some uncertainty among scholars and managers as to what precisely must be enclosed under this definition (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60). Answer to this question can be provided through looking into the nascent of Social media, which can be loosely associated with creation of Usenet in 1979 by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis from Duke University. It was the early prototype of a social network site that allowed Internet users publish messages in a worldwide discussion system, however, the era of Social media that is close to modern understanding of it is dated back in 1998, when an American programmer Bruce Abelson created “Open Diary”, an early social networking site, that was a sort of community for online diary bloggers. It was then when the term “blog” was introduced into the world, after one blogger jestingly transformed the term “weblog” into the sentence “we blog”. The increasing access to high-speed internet triggered development of this concept, that resulted in creation of well-known MySpace in 2003, and Facebook in 2004. That was the moment of establishing prominence of Social media globally. A formal definition of Social media relies on drawing a line to interrelated constructs that are often mentioned in conjunction with it: Web 2.0 and User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). The concept of Web 2.0 was first introduced as a term in 2004 to explain a new method of use of World Wide Web to software developers and end-users, namely, it described a platform whereby content is created and published not solely by individuals, but by all Internet users in a collaborative mode. So, the era of Web 1.0 and such applications as Encyclopedia Britannica Online, personal web pages gave place to blogs, wikis, and other collaborative projects in Web 2.0. Whereas Web 2.0 refers to ideological and technological grounds, User Generated Content unifies all methods in which Social media can be used, and mainly referred to describe different types of media content that are publicly accessible and developed by end-users. Vickery & Wunsch-Vincent (2007) in cooperation with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development identified three basic requirements adherent to User Generated Content: first, the content must be available publicly on websites or SNS; second, it has to be creative in nature, and finally, it must not be related to professional routines. The first condition eliminates content transferred through Email and private messages; the second condition excludes any type of replications of an extant content; and the third, prohibits all
content with a commercial context. Providing clarifications of the concepts of Web 2.0 and UGC, it can be concluded that “Social media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61)

3.2.2 Comparison of Social Media and Traditional Media Tools

Efficient internal communication in large extent relies on appropriate information reaching people in formats that is useful and acceptable to them (Welch, 2012, p. 248). From a receiver’s perspective, internal communication media can be classified by format in three main categories: print/hard (accessed on paper), electronic (access through a technological device), and face-to-face (interpersonal), thus, Mary Welch (2012), conducted a qualitative research with a purpose to investigate employees’ preferences for internal media formats, namely, what are the attributes employees value the most with preferred formats, and which attributes in contrast, are the most unfavorable and why. Data collection was performed in a large-scale UK higher education organization, with a total number of 64 respondents, where 44% of participants were academic and research staff, and 56% support staff. According to the results of a qualitative survey, 47% of participants find electronic format of messages the most preferable, while 16% expressed a dual preference for both hard and electronic formats, only 3% of respondents showed preference to a print format over electronic. One of the main reasons for criticism towards print media concerns high costs related to wasted resources and financial costs of print production line. Therefore, electronic format is found to be more environmentally sustainable and cost-efficient compare to paper documents. They argued that there is a significant cost cut on travel and conferences for a favor of glossy brochures, and appearance of expensive wasteful hard copies cause a continual annoyance, irritation, and frustration. Moreover, 28% of surveyed expressed high annoyance towards paper-based documentations. Additionally, participants highlighted another valued attribute associated with electronic documents which is easier usability in terms of access, storage, edition, scanning. The research identified clear preference of electronic format of messages compare to paper-bases, however, the author notes that employees cannot be seen as a uni-dimensional entity, therefore, communication preferences cannot be uniform across different organizations, and even within one company.

Another article that addressed the topic of affordances of Social media adoption in internal communication (Treem & Leonardi, 2013), stated that there are at least two properties of Social media tools that make them distinct from other communication media commonly used in companies: first, they enable visibility into communicative patterns of the colleagues and other stakeholders and make these visible traces being persistent over time, what means that information will remain accessible in the original format. Consequently, its afforded visibility and persistence of information about communicative actions of internal stakeholders allow to expand the range of sources from which employees can learn across the company (Treem & Leonardi, 2013, pp. 148-149).

The preference for certain type of communication media depends also on the capability of the tool to respond to contextual communication need. Meaning how well the medium unfolds communicative efficiency in certain communicational process. Qusef & Ismail
(2016) distinguish between traditional communication tool formats and Social media formats. Traditional communication tools included: hard copy, phone calls, voice mail, email, meetings, and websites. Practical Communications Inc, communication consulting firm provides a guidance in respect to how different types of traditional media are suitable for particular communication needs (see Table 2).

Table 2: Traditional communication method choice in respect to particular communication processes. Adapted from: Tess Galati, Email Composition and Communication (EmC2), Practical Communications, Inc., www.praccom.com, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW WELL MEDIUM IS SUITED TO:</th>
<th>HARD COPY</th>
<th>TELEPHONE CALL</th>
<th>VOICE MAIL</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
<th>MEETING</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ASSESING COMMITMENT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. BUILDING CONSENSUS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MEDIATING A CONFLICT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. RESOLVING A MISUNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Addressing negative behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. EXPLAINING SUPPORT/APPRECIATION</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ENCOURAGING CREATIVE THINKING</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MAKING AN IRONIC STATEMENT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. CONVEYING A REFERENCE DOCUMENT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. REINFORCING ONE’S AUTHORITY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PROVIDING A PERMANENT RECORD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. CONVEYING SIMPLE INFORMATION</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. ASKING AN INFORMATIONAL QUESTION</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. MAKING A SIMPLE REQUEST</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. GIVING COMPLEX INSTRUCTIONS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. ADDRESSING MANY PEOPLE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the same period when internal communication established as a discipline, most websites operated only as informational sources (Landers & Goldberg, 2014, p. 285). However, by 2010 there was a turning point; when the most popular website on the Internet with over half of a billion of members was not an e-commerce website, and not the searching engine Google, but a social network site (SNS) Facebook. However, Facebook is only one type of Social media amongst many others used by organizations for internal communication. Qusef & Ismail discussed major Social media tools for communication in their article “Social media in project communications management” (2016).
LinkedIn is a network that shares experiences, announce job opening positions, connect business professionals. It is very practical for recruitment purposes, as LinkedIn profile provides more information about a candidate than a regular CV. Additionally, endorsement option enables to reflect the credibility of skills and competences of a candidate according to the number of endorsements. In project communication perspective, this media tool is convenient for having a conversation with a lot of members.

Twitter is a media platform, where people can publish messages which are limited to 140 characters and called “tweets”. Some researchers have analyzed the impact of Tweeter on the quality of collaborative work and identified some positive results (Zhao & Rosson, 2009), however, Tweeter is most commonly used in project communication for informing the audience about a simple instruction, informal announcement, and reaching out to their customers (Landers & Goldberg, 2014, p. 287) Hashtag option is a user-generated metadata tag that permits finding messages with a specific subject or content without application of markup language, which is convenient as a pull communication method.

Facebook can be used in multiple ways for internal communication as it supports video and audio calls, private and public information exchange, event planning, pole creation, data transmission and notifications (Qusef & Ismal, 2016). Landers et al. (2013, p.286), also claim that SNSs like Facebook are also convenient for communicating policies and practices and company vision, as it is supports open communication with an entire community.

Instagram and Snapchat are mobile phone applications, which enable to share information with pictures and videos, and both may be used in event planning by recording short videos with details for sending to an intended audience, provide a visual instruction, or a short message.

WhatsApp is a web-based instant-messenger that can be used both for video and audio calls, but primarily as a private and group chat messenger. This media tool can be used on a private PC and a mobile phone. Another useful feature of this application is a possibility to see if the message is delivered and read.

Skype is another media tool commonly used for project communication for video and audio calls.

Table 3 provides how different types of Social media are suitable for various communication needs.

Table 3: Social communication media choice in respect to particular communication processes. Source: Qusef & Ismal, 2016, p. 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW WELL MEDIUM IS SUITED TO</th>
<th>LINKEDIN</th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
<th>INSTAGRAM</th>
<th>SNAPCHAT</th>
<th>WHATSAPP</th>
<th>SKYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. MEETINGS PLANNING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. EVENT PLANNING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. INTERVIEWS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blogs is another very popular type of Social media, that follows a model of information distribution but compare to SNS, the content is published for a large audience, rather than for closed group of friends (Landers & Goldberg, 2014, p. 286). The content is strictly controlled by an individual or a group of such, who possess an ultimate authority over the information published in blog. The rest of internet users can only participate as readers of a content, or by leaving comments under the articles, which will be also visible to further visitors to the blog. In internal communication context, blogs are used as tools to receive comments or feedbacks on daily events of employees during their workday. Only 5% of American workers conducted their personal blogs in 2006, but in a few years this percentage almost doubled and comprised 11% (Landers & Goldberg, 2014, p. 286), however, only 29% of companies adopted Social media policies by 2010 (Bullas, 2010). A survey conducted by Macnamara & Zerfass (2012) in Australasia and Europe identified the most common types of Social media used by local organizations (Table 4)\(^1\). Another wider pan-European research of 43 countries published in the European Communication Monitor 2011 (Zerfass, et al., 2010), shows the same preferences of Social media tools by organizations in their study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL MEDIA USED</th>
<th>AUSTRALASIA</th>
<th>EUROPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL NETWORKS (E.G. FACEBOOK)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICROBLOGGING (E.G. TWEETER)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIDEO SHARING (E.G. YOUTUBE)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOGS</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOTO SHARING (E.G. FLICKR)</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list of identified Social media tools is not exhaustive, with new Social media emerging regularly. There are such existing Social media which are commonly used along with mentioned above such as Google+, Flickr, Viber, Tumbir, and others. The new digital systems often merge previously existing media and blur the boundaries between extant technologies.

Social media preferences by “Digital natives”

Within the last decade young professionals born approximately after 1980 increasingly growing as an employee segment (Friedl & Verčič, 2011; Tkalac Verčič & Verčič, 2013).

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\(^1\)Note. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select several types
These people are often called “Gen Y” or “digital natives” or “Millennial Generation”, mainly, because they have grown up when digital media gained prominence across the world and became a lifeline and basic necessity for most people, but specifically for young generation at the age group between 15-29 years old, that according to statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau, comprises of around 25.7% of the world total population by 2015 (cited in Rai, 2012, p.261). It is undeniable that Social media is an integral part of Gen Y universe. The term “digital natives” was brought in by Prensky (2001, p.3), who condemns that this generation is surrounded by an abundance of digital devices such as computers, video games, mobile phones and cameras. Jensen (2008, cited in Friedl & Verčič, 2011, p.84), in its turn, believes that the way this generation perceives, and processes information is different from other generations. Given that unit of analysis for this research is comprised of professionals within age category of 20-26 years old, the author believes that an overview of literature related to perception of Gen Y on Social media is relevant and contributing in theoretical framework for the study.

Extensive research on the topic shows that Gen Y feels the most comfortable in digital environment due to having access to Social media since early childhood (Rai, 2012), for example, a survey conducted by a digital innovation company “L12 think tank”, on a sample of 535 young professionals average aged 27 years old, identified that 81% of respondents use Facebook daily, and 50% of participants confirmed that Social media greatly impacts their opinion about brands and their products, another research provides an empirical evidence that there is a positive correlation between activeness of an individual in Social media and a willingness to share an opinion among US students of 15-24 years old, moreover, that study highlights that students are more trustful to the opinions expressed through the known networks.

However, Friedl & Verčič (2011) argue that despite common opinion that most of Gen Y is completely immersed in digital environment, their adherence to Social media is not so obvious in professional life. The research was carried out in a large multinational organization, by using probability sampling, through an internet-based survey. The survey aimed to identify personal and professional attitudes and behavior towards Social media use and in some communication situations happening during work life, participants were also asked to evaluate the use of digital (blogs, microblogging, social networks, discussing forums, video and photo sharing platforms etc) and traditional media (“employee magazines, intranet news, corporate television, email and newsletters”), the last part of a questionnaire included questions related to demographic questions, such as age, gender, nationality and professional domain (Friedl & Verčič, 2011, p. 85). In total, 310 respondents participated in a survey, 68% of it were males, and 32% females. The majority of the respondents were Asian, a quarter European, and about 12% comprised individuals from the USA and Canada. According to the results of the survey, the most popular digital media was social networking sites (69%) followed by watching online videos and participating in online forums and chats, 65% and 64% accordingly. Only 9% of respondents showed interest in writing on Twitter or similar microblogging websites. However, the results regarding preference between social and traditional media tools in specific situations showed that young employees prefer email newsletters, intranet news and face-to-face meetings when they deal with strategic information, as well as for transmission of general information. Yet, in the case of “many-to-many” discussions, Social media with its blogging and video sharing media showed greater
preference than in the case of “one-to-many” communication. Notably, discussion forums are seen as the most favorable tool for employee-to-employee communication, while discussions with managers are preferable through both discussion forums and employee meetings. In general, respondents showed unexpectedly high preference to traditional media for internal communication over Social media. The results of the survey are consistent with another large-scale research on the topic by European Communication Monitor (Zerfass, et al., 2010), and suggest that Social media impact on internal communication is overestimated, and adoption of Social media in working settings develops more slowly than in private life.

Another research, that addressed the same question in the university setting in Croatia (Tkalač Verčič & Verčič, 2013), with a focus on three different groups: students, university staff, and general public, provided contrary results for digital natives. Videlicet, undergraduate students (308 respondents) showed clear preference for the use of Social media over traditional tools, that was almost identical to the precedence in their personal use of digital media for functional communication (Tkalač Verčič & Verčič, 2013, p. 602). 71.3% of respondents answered that they use web portals to follow the news regularly, while 61.2% of them watch TV. Slightly more than a half of the students receive news from online newspapers, whereas only 11.7% prefer printed papers. Only 18.1% listen to the radio. The absolute majority, 91.5% of participants, confirmed that they use at least one form of social networking platform, notably, 90% confirmed that they use it more than once per day, and only 2.6% did not use any type of social network. 88% claim that they use Social media to communicate about the business school, 61% use forums connected to business schools, and confirm that it is convenient to receive information about studies from Social media. These contradictory results of the researches that Social media in the professional and private life of Gen Y.

Overall, the researchers did not identify the necessity for a complete shift to Social media in all dimensions of internal communication. However, Social media tools are found to be complementing traditional media, with a main purpose to facilitate expression of personal opinions of employees, knowledge sharing, and creating a solid fundament for community building.

3.2.3 Positive and Negative Impact of Social Media on Internal Communication

The use of Social media in project communication, undoubtedly, has a great impact on many operational processes, thus, Leonardi et al., (2013) attempt to explore all essential negative and positive consequences that adoption of Social media may have for those sociotechnical systems that are known as organizations They highlight that within last decades a research interest was mostly focused on the use of Social Media by companies for communication with external stakeholders, such as customers, suppliers, and the public at large, whereas the less studied employment of Social Media for internal communication can be a good avenue for an academic research, as it develops an understanding how technology enables or constrains communicational activities that constitute main channels for workflow (Leonardi, et al., 2013, pp. 2-3). To lay the groundwork for this endeavor, Leonardi et al., conducted a widescale literature review on the topic of use of Social media in project management. They find Social media communication being distinct from traditional means for communication, as it operates as a platform for social interactions, rather than just a channel for transmission
of a message (2013, p.2). Authors integrated all types of Social media tools used for an internal communication in one group called Enterprise Social media (EMS). After deep analysis of all identified advantages and disadvantages, scholars developed three grand metaphors to explain the role of EMS in organizational context: Leaky pipe, Echo Chamber, Social Lubricant (Leonardi, et al., 2013, p. 6), which comprise both negative and positive impacts on organizational processes.

Leaky pipe metaphor highlights easy accessibility to the content of information sent through EMS tool to other people who were not an intended audience. From one hand, Leaky pipe enables to disperse knowledge across nonredundant groups, create communication bonds between people who normally do not interact in real life, allow managers understand atmosphere within a staff through digital trace, and keep awareness of working processes without significant social contribution. From the other hand, awareness that any input information is public constrains people’s honesty and even refrains from communication, thus, interaction becomes more generic, also, since such platforms may cover all organizational departments, there is a risk for cognitive overload, hence, missing important information (Leonardi, et al., 2013, pp. 8-10).

Echo chamber is a term used by media and scholarly to describe an ability of EMS tools to act like a “giant echo chamber” that connects people with similar mindset and interests (Pariser, 2011; Singer, 2011) This is possible due to search algorithms and recommendation engines that propose us the results which is generated according to our previous searches in the Internet (Leonardi, et al., 2013, p. 12). Positive impact of online social network practice on different aspects of social capital is empirically proven by researches in Social media (Ellison et al., 2007), including in the study on use of social network site in enterprise context (Steinfield et al., 2009). By exposing employees’ interests and knowledge to the rest people, the company establishes a platform for linking like-minded people, what creates communities of practice that is essential for fostering of sense of belonging, and lore sharing (Brown & Duguid, 2001, p 203) However this phenomena has negative association as well, an echo chamber effect provoke balkanization, which could result in weakening of integration of knowledge across communities with different focus (Van Alstyne & Brynjolfsson, 2005). Namely, the composition of network binding and knowledge sharing across groups might be restrained due to this subgrouping tendency (Leonardi, et al., 2013, p. 13).

Social Lubricant metaphor, here, is used to describe the role of ESM as a social lubricant for smoothing social network interactions, to decrease the intervention from an authority (Leonardi, et al., 2013). Similar to leaky pipe metaphor, EMS as a social lubricant contributes into establishing of ties between employees from different departments, as ESM provides an insight on in what activity other people are engaged, so that gives a reason to initiate a conversation, but in contrast to face-to-face communication, a threaded and temporally ordered online communication does not impose constant focus on an interlocutor, and allow to enter the conversation at meaningful times. However, Leonardi et al. (2013, pp.8-10), note that communication through ESM creates impression of having real social connection that can be delusive, also, people will be more likely try to form a strategic self-presentation, or interact into conversations not intended for them, lastly, abundance of social information distract from work-linked communication.
Another research conducted by Jiang et al., aimed to examine how employees perceive an impact of Social media use on their work and leadership behavior. The study analysis was based on the data collected from 458 surveys completed by communication professionals from US-based companies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and variety of other entities (Jiang, et al., 2017, p. 27). The findings of the study show that employees believe that extensive Social media use supports professionals to increase productivity, gain greater flexibility in hours they have to work, facilitates knowledge share ability, and improve professional relationship, what is in line with statements made by Leonardi et al., (2013, p.13). On the other hand, many respondents associated increase in workload and stress with intensive use of Tweeter, this perceived interrelation, surprisingly, was not revealed in respect to Facebook. The research failed to find any statistically significant evidence of neither positive nor negative impact of Social media on such important strategic communication functions as Community relations, Reputation management, external stakeholder management and etc (Jiang, et al., 2017, p. 28).

All advantages and disadvantages of Social media use in organizational communication which were revealed in extant literature on the topic are summarized and listed in Table 5.
Table 5: Summary of advantages and disadvantages of Social media use in project communication in respect to major organizational processes. Adapted from: Leonardi, et al., 2013, pp.8-10 and Jiang, et al., 2017, p. 36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESSES</th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL CAPITAL</td>
<td>1. Collaboration without significant social investment</td>
<td>1. Awareness of publicity of the posted or sent content discourage from contributing so as not to undermine brokerage position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Broad knowledge connects nonredundant groups</td>
<td>2. Risk of power loss due to higher exposure of private rolodexes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Reinforces sense of belonging through mounting common ground for interactions</td>
<td>3. Group-thinking becomes less critical and multidimensional due to similarity of mindsets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Insights into routine of other groups helps to find a conversational fodder to inchoate new connections and maintain extant ones.</td>
<td>4. Delusion of real social connections that comes from virtual communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Distraction from work-related communication</td>
<td>5. Distraction from work-related communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOUNDARY WORK</td>
<td>1. Easier knowledge sharing due to awareness of what people do in other departments</td>
<td>1. Awareness that posted information is visible to a whole community imposes more generic communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Opportunity to see relations between people and forge alliances</td>
<td>2. Harden boundaries between social groups in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Promotion of interaction between global teams</td>
<td>3. Context collapse makes it difficult to know which “self” to present in what situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Blurring boundaries between private life and work-related communication</td>
<td>4. Highlights differences in communication style across cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Showcase of personal interests and similarities creates touch points for work communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTENTION ALLOCATION</td>
<td>1. People tend to provide more accurate and honest information, when they know it will be visible to a whole company</td>
<td>1. Many information inputs ignite cognitive overload and individuals allocate attention only to specific areas of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Due to threaded and temporally ordered nature of conversation, people can focus their attention in ways that allows them to enter conversations more easily at meaningful times.</td>
<td>2. People meet in conversations not intended for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL ANALYTICS</td>
<td>1. Because communication is visible and available, managers can use these digital traces to understand the organization’s informal information economy</td>
<td>1. Increased ability for surveillance and possibility of control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Better understand who are the various communities within the organization, even if those communities are not tied to formal organizations</td>
<td>2. Knowledge that management is watching may compel people to refrain from communicating on the platform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Mistaken understanding of what communities are or who key players in them might be because analytics do not sample communication that occurs offline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>1. Improved ability to share ideas among co-workers</td>
<td>1. Increased demand for overtime work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Increased stress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3. Summary of the Theoretical Background
Overall, theoretical background creates a general review of different dimensions of the research areas – internal communication management and Social media in organizational context, its positive and negative consequences on team performance, some insight on employees’ perceptions on internal communication, with a focus on a social group of digital natives. This literature review was conducted in an iterative process, adding new concepts for examination throughout the whole process of a research, according to new notions raised during empirical data.

According to the grounded theory strategy, literature review is not concluded with a theoretical framework. Given nascent character of the study of the role of Social media in organizational setting, the author believes that thorough theoretical framework cannot emerge from few studies about the topic. Ergo, this study aims to contribute to the scarce academic knowledge on the topic through a theory-building and developing a theoretical model as a result of the research.

An importance of a literature review in grounded theory is argued by scholars with some of them claiming that carrying out a literature review prior data collection may cause bias, whereas an opposing view suggests that a general theoretical overview is valuable for the research (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 125). The author finds a literature review to be helpful in getting a comprehension of the research area by identifying key concepts in Social media and internal communication academia. In the next chapter, the author explains the choices that were made for the research strategy and research design.
4. Research Methodology

Research methodology chapter elaborates in detail upon the choices of the research strategy and the research design. Furthermore, the data collection method and process are outlined, followed by sample selection approach and discussion of the sample itself. Moreover, the outline of the data analysis process is presented, as well as the detailed description of the quality of the research which support its value, and ethical considerations underpinning the study.

4.1. Research Strategy

Bryman and Bell (2015, p.37) state that there are two distinct research strategies in academia recognized by many writers on methodological issues: the qualitative and the quantitative ones. On the face of it, the difference between two strategies lies on the fact that quantitative research employs statistical measurements, whereas qualitative doesn’t, however the preference of the strategy relies also on some philosophical considerations of a researcher, videlicet, ontological and epistemological assumptions of a study (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.37).

The quantitative research puts emphasis on the quantification of the data collection and analysis, with a preference for a deductive research approach, ergo, hypothesis testing (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 161). From a philosophical perspective, quantitative approach incorporates generally assumptions of a positivism stance and takes a view of social reality being external to a human`s mind, objective reality (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 38). In contrast, qualitative research strategy is influences by an interpretive worldview (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 11; Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 38), with a focus on words in the data collection and examination. The qualitative research aims to explore, understand and describe social phenomena from the perception of social actors, and further, generate the theory (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 13). Notwithstanding, Bryman & Bell do not define a clear-cut difference between two strategies and allow combination characteristics of both strategies in one research (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 38).

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the choice of a strategy design should be highly reliant on ontological and epistemological assumptions and research approach of the thesis. Given subjectivist and interpretivist stance of the research, qualitative strategy is found to be appropriate to analyze communication as experienced by individuals “not as something linear and logic but open, complex and human” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 6). Moreover, communication relationship is ineverable from social contexts which they cause, what is an integral part of the contextualized nature of qualitative research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 6).

Conditioned with nascent theoretical foundation on the linkage between Social media and organizational communication and cooperation, the area of the research has to be first explored and comprehended. Quantitative approach cannot reveal in-depth rigorous holistic understanding of the organizational communication from the perspectives of internal actors in the same extent as a qualitative approach (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Given this, non-numerical data will be collected to provide in depth insights of informants who are aimed to be involved in some aspects of interpretations through offering contextual information. Saunders et al. (2009, p. 139) assert three most used research purposes in academia: descriptive, explorative and explanatory studies. The main purpose of the research is to examine whether and how Social media affects organizational communication, interpersonal relationship, work activities and a corporate culture in project management practices. Given
this research perspective, the purpose of the research has an exploratory nature, as it aims to clarify an understanding and impact of Social media in organizational context and get an insight on this phenomena from employees’ perspective (Saunders, et al., 2009, pp. 139-140).

4.2. Research Design

Research design outlines a framework for data collection and analysis, which aims to disclose the priorities taken towards a range of dimensions during a research process (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 49). Sanders et al. (2009, p.141) define seven research design strategies: experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. The case study, grounded theory, and ethnography are the most common approaches employed in public relations and marketing communications studies, also, integration of two and even three approaches in one research is possible (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 107), however not advisable for an inexperienced researcher. The choice of the research strategy should be also reflected by the topic and focus of the study, aims, objectives, philosophical views, research experience, and time and budget constraints (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 108). Accordingly, a grounded theory strategy is adopted for the research. According to Goulding (2002, p. ), this strategy is particularly helpful in researches that aim to investigate and explain behavioral patterns in particular contexts, what is quite common in researches in management and business (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 149). This research design is constantly evolving throughout the research, but is not defined strictly in the beginning compare to other qualitative methods. It is typical for the researches in the area with little empirical knowledge about phenomenon. Data collection and analysis interact with each other, and the most preferable data sources are observations and interviews (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 109). Adoption of a grounded theory approach can be time consuming and risky in terms of feasibility, however, this approach is believed to answer research questions at its best and reflect on philosophical stances of the author.

4.3. Data Collection

4.3.1 Data Collection Method

Research method is a process of collecting data through application of particular instruments such as structured or semi-structured interviews, observations or questionnaires (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 49). Within a grounded theory strategy, traditionally, data is collected through observations of events, such as: participant observations, diaries, and documents, like letters or published reports, which are supported by literature searches. Second common practice after observations is interviews, which provides data based on interviewees` accounts of phenomena rather than own observations. (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 135). Partington (2000, p.95) asserts that an interview method is justified within a concept of a grounded research as it allows “to capture tacit knowledge which is gained from the reflexive accounts of relevant interviewees”. From the beginning of the research with a grounded theory approach, data collection and data analysis are in constant interaction. Launching of data collection is simultaneous with the start of an analysis, thus, all key points emerged from the first round of interviews are used as a fundament for developing the next set of interviews.
(Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 135). Similarly, the collection of data is not definitely finished until the end of the research, as concepts and new questions constantly appear throughout and lead to new data sources, what underpins more specific and focused data as the research progresses (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 139). Interviewing method is primarily associated with a qualitative research in the field of marketing communication and public relations, interpretive scholars support the method for providing an opportunity to explore the meanings, intentions of various humans involved in managing formal communication in a collaborative manner. Moreover, despite guidance by the structure of the research, encouragement to articulate the issues of personal interest of respondents may turn the interview into unexpected directions (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 220). One major advantage of interviews is a flexible nature of it which allows to develop and catch understanding of the perceptions of a respondent (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 221). Given the exploratory purpose of the study, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are applied for data collection, what is common within a grounded theory design.

Data collection will be conducted in two rounds. The first unstructured interviews will be held to provide in depth information about the topic, what is aligned with an exploratory nature of the research (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 323). Such in-depth interviews will help to understand the meanings that interviewees attach to an internal communication through Social media and uncover some discussions in the topic that were not considered by a researcher or an interviewee (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 323), what is fit in with the interpretivist stance of the research. The following round of interviews will be semi-structured interviews, conducted on the discussed and examined concepts detected during unstructured interviews, as according to the logic of grounded theory, all outwardly linked issued must be incorporated into the second set of interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 1999, p. 6). Figure 1 describes the data collection process. The research is conducted through cross-sectional data collection method, providing the data collection at one specific moment in time (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 155). Time horizon of the research is not influenced by defined research strategy and design, rather it is conditioned with given time constraint, what deprives from an opportunity to collect the data over a longer period. Despite preferability of a longitudinal study in terms of profoundness of the results, the author believes that limitation can be compensated or reduced by well-conducted questions that reveal views on communication through Social media in the past and the outlooks for the future. Interview guides can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

**Figure 1**: Data collection process
4.3.2 Interview Design

According to Daymon & Holloway (2011, p. 224), there is a continuum of interview sorts, whereas, qualitative research mainly adopts the unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Structured interviews are considered less appropriate for a qualitative research, because they tend to restrain the flexibility that is highly valuable for this kind of research. The interviews will be held through Internet, as all interviewees reside in foreign country, Uzbekistan. Morgan and Syman (2004, p.3) call Internet held interviews in real time “electronic interviews”. Some criticize this method on the subject of lower levels of interactivity and spontaneity in a conversation compared to face-to-face interviews, due to limitations of Social media to transmit social cues well (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 350). Others, including the author, believe that this constraint is overestimated, and the effectiveness and interactivity of the interview can be reached regardless the method used for an interview. Saunders et al. (2009, p. 349) distinguish two types of internet-based interviews, depending on the time of conduction: synchronous (in real time); asynchronous (offline). The latter method is employing email, Internet forums or discussion groups, what implies a more extended period of time (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 350). Synchronous method requires from both a participant and an interviewer to have an appropriate web conferencing software to be downloaded to their computers or any other electronic device supporting online conference service (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 350).

Interview will be held through IMO, an online instant-messaging service that supports video and audio calls. This way, non-verbal behavior can be also observed during an interview. Following recommendations of Saunders et al. (2009, p. 349), each interview will be audio-recorded. Transcription of the interviews will be based on the audio record.

All interviewees and the author of the research are native Russian speakers; therefore, the interview guide was translated into Russian. Interview, conducted in native language for both an interviewer and an interviewee, allows careful interpretation of words and minimizes misunderstandings and mistranslation of some terminology, what is aligned with the grounded theory strategy of the research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 131). Besides, the author offered to clarify terminology and some questions, when interviewees expressed signs of confusion or lack of understanding reflected through the video.

Prior to interview all participants were sent an email providing an overview of the interview in terms of length and topic of the study. The consent form that reflected data collection method, analysis and ethical considerations regarding anonymity and confidentiality was also attached with an email. As it was mentioned above, interviews were held in two rounds. The first round of unstructured interviews comprised two stages. At the first stage, the author shortly introduced herself, asked if an interviewee gives a permission for recording the interview, and briefly introduced the topic of the research. The second part of the interview started from general questions about an interviewee’s background and role in a company and followed up by grand tour questions (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 228), which aimed to receive broad description of thoughts and feelings of the participant associated with internal communication in general and use of Social media, in particular. This was done with a purpose to identify some emergent ideas on the topic that could be examined and included in the follow-up semi-structured interview, what follows the iterative character of the grounded theory. According to Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree (2006, p.315), no interview can truly be
called unstructured, but when they are defined so their nature is more similar to a guided conversation. Thus, opposed to unstructured interview strategy, some questions were posed but only to ensure the relevant direction in discussions about the topic. The author tried to provide as much flexibility as possible to unveil some interesting concepts and get a profound understanding of interviewees’ perceptions on a subject. The second round of semi-structured interviews comprised of three blocks of questions, that were conducted based on theoretical background of the study and ideas that were discovered and found to be relevant after analysis of the first round of interviews. First two blocks of questions covered two major areas of the research: internal communication and Social media, whereas the last set of questions aimed to discover what practical implications could be introduced into internal communication practices in general and with a focus on Social media in particular, according to interviewees’ perceptions. The majority of the questions are of “soft nature” which purports deep detailed responses, this is done to encourage interviewees to embrace analytical critical thinking before answering and discover those concepts that even respondents themselves were not consciously aware of.

4.3.3 Sampling and Sample Selection

The quality of the results of the research do not necessarily imply collecting data from a sample size of an entire population, additionally, it is rather impractical due to time and budget constraints, thence, taking a sample from the entire population provides a valid alternative for the purpose of data collection (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 212). The method of a sample selection is generally based either on a probability or a non-probability approach. Probability sampling approach uses random selection, thus the chance to be selected is uniform for each unit in a population, in contrast, non-probability sampling implies certain requirements for the examined group, therefore some units in the populations have more chances to be selected (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 187). The choice of a sampling method mainly derives from research questions and objectives (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 233), and can be also determined by the research strategy (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 136). In grounded theory, “theoretical sampling”, which is one form of purposive sampling (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 431), is believed to be best fitted as it is guided by the concepts that are relevant for a theory-building. Unlike other sampling techniques, where selection framework exists from the beginning of the research, theoretical sampling is carried out throughout the whole research process.

At the initiation stage of the study, sampling decisions are guided by the choice of settings of the phenomenon that is wished to be studied. Thus, the choice of the sample at this stage was based on own judgement of the author regarding which unit can provide the best answers for the research questions, which aims to answer how Social media can be used for reinforcing collaboration inside the company, and how its impact is perceived by employees. Therefore, employees in small and medium-sized enterprises, which activities imply intensive use of Social media with a locus in Uzbekistan found to be suitable as it allows to interview employees who work in similar environmental and operational settings. Once the research progressed up to literature review, and initial data was analyzed, new characteristics for the sample emerged, namely, there was an empirical evidence that young generation at the age group of 15-29 years old, frequently referred as Gen Y and digital natives (Friedl &
Verčič, 2011; Tkalac Verčič & Verčič, 2013), are the most active users of Social media and their information procession method is greatly impacted by this phenomenon. Given this, young professionals whose age doesn’t exceed 28 years old, and who work in small and medium-sized enterprises specialized in online marketing, digital journalism, and internet-service providing in Uzbekistan comprised the study sample. All participants were chosen from a personal network of the author, what also defined the locus of the research, since the author is originated from Uzbekistan. The initial list of seven respondents was conducted based on given characteristics.

First round of interviews provided further illumination on the research topic and narrowed the sample size to 5 people for the following set of interviews, as aligned with theoretical sampling technique (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 136). Two short-listed interviewees did not provide evidence on intensive use of Social media in their work routine, consequently, their answers found to be not valid enough to rely on for drawing conclusions about the studies. The most unexpected and frequently mentioned concepts from the first interviews were elaborated for further detailed discussion in the second round of semi-interviews. According to Daymond & Holloway (2011, p. 136), theoretical sampling should continue until the point of saturation, meaning when additional data collection round stops providing any new concepts which are relevant for the research. The second round of interviews did not show significant discrepancies in the answers of the respondents, neither new ideas which could be covered within the scope of the research. Therefore, theoretical model saturation was considered to be reached after the second round of interviews. Table 6 provides the summary of semi-structured interviews. The interview length for the last two participants listed is concerned the first round of unstructured interviews.

Table 6: Interview summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Second interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Akmal</td>
<td>SMM</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38:11</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bobur</td>
<td>SMM</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57:34</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cayora</td>
<td>SMM</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>58:33</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dilshod</td>
<td>Digital Journalism</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48:00</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>SMM</td>
<td>Marketing Specialist</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32:46</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feruza</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Procurement Manager</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24:44</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Guzel</td>
<td>Internet Provider Company</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26:12</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis within a grounded theory approach is carried out through the coding process, which is the most central process in the research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 164; Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 137; Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 586). According to Strauss (1990, p.20), coding is a process of “raising questions and providing provisional answers about categories and their relations”. Namely, all concepts and themes which are emerged in the research can be defined as a code and categorized, whereas term coding itself is used to define conceptualization of data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 164). The analysis of the data continues throughout the study, by constant comparing of collected data, in a search for
similarities, discrepancies, and linkages until reaching the theoretical saturation of concepts, meaning until further reviewing of data does not provide better conceptualization of the concepts (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 585). One of the originators of the grounded theory Strauss and Corbin (1990, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 586) identify three types of coding practices: open, axial and selective coding. Open coding starts from the first set of the collected data and implies breaking down the data into components, examination, comparison, conceptualization and naming, such a produced unit of data, hereinafter, is referred as a “concept”. The significance of the concept is determined by two factors: the frequent occurrence and contextual relevance recognized by the respondents. Further, data goes through axial coding, where developed concepts are put back together and liaised to certain contexts and patterns of interactions. This process is aimed to develop categories, or second-order themes, which subsume several concepts and consequently, may transform into a core category. Lastly, selective coding is applied for synthesis of a core category which is a focus of integrated and refined analysis from all categories, that creates a basis for a larger theoretical scheme (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 165).

As such, open coding examined and analyzed data gathered from unstructured interviews and identified eight first level concepts. Axial coding revealed a few new open coding categories and attempted to link identified categories and subcategories to create conceptualized foundation for a core category. However, not all subcategories have shown explicit linkages with categories, as not all contexts and causal conditions were identified in data. Given this, minor assumptions were taken to fit in subcategories into categories. In the next stage, data collected from the second round of interviews was verified against extant data to develop principal categories and linked subcategories. Finally, selective coding concluded data analysis by developing three core concepts that were aggregated from major categories to create an explanatory grounded theory. The core concepts synthesize major concerns of research respondents and form a new theory, which is presented as a model that pictures the relationships between causal conditions, situational factors and consequences of the phenomenon. The model is discussed in more detail in the “Research Findings” chapter.

4.5 Quality Criteria of the Study

Conventionally, the goodness or the quality of the researches is evaluated by referring to notions of validity and reliability (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 78). Yet, these quality criteria are derived from a quantitative approach to the research, and believed to be less relevant for qualitative researches (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 78; Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 399). Namely, many researchers argue that meanings of the terms should be altered to carry more appropriate connotations for assessing a quality of a qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 400). Thus, the following criteria are found to be most in line with qualitative studies: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bryman & Bell, 2015, pp. 400-405)

4.5.1 Credibility

According to Lincoln and Cuba (1985), the focus of the qualitative research should be in credibility of the study rather than in its internal validity. The research is meant to be credible if readers recognize the findings to be safe enough to refer to them in their own social contexts
According to Daymon & Holloway (2011, p. 84), credibility can be achieved by providing trustworthy and decisive evidence for the claims an author makes, this will be done by showing the findings of the study to the participants and asking if the findings reflect accurately the social world in their perceptions.

Shenton (2004, pp. 64-69) identify following provisions that can be adopted by researchers to promote confidence about credibility of the research: the adoption of the research methods which are appropriate and well-recognized in qualitative scrutiny, thus, grounded theory research strategy is believed to be appropriate for the study given the scarcity of the theoretical background linking Social media use in internal communication and team collaboration. The author tried to follow accurately specific procedures of a grounded theory approach which include constant comparison between each set of collected data, theoretical sampling, and progressive concentration of meanings by analyzing data through coding as suggested by grounded theory approach (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 130). Second, development of a prior knowledge on the corporate culture in the companies of respondents, taking into account that most of participating companies are specialized in online marketing and digital journalism, the author had a chance to trace their publications and activity in Internet prior conducting data collection dialogues, therefore, some familiarity and understanding of the company and its public discourse were developed. Third, adopting the strategy that can help to provide honesty in respondents, to provision this criterion, each respondent was given an opportunity to reject participation in the investigation, hence, data collection involved only those individuals who expressed genuine will to take part in the research and provide data freely. Additionally, in order to uphold free and frank answers, in the beginning of each interview it was clearly indicated that there are no right answers to the questions and some deep knowledge on the topic is not required. Moreover, as a consent guaranteeing confidentiality was signed, interviewees were encouraged to disclose their real perceptions of reality in the company without fear of jeopardizing their credibility in the eyes of the company’s authority or colleagues. Fourth provision identified by Shenton is concerned with peer evaluation and feedback of the research, the process of the study was guided by the research supervisor who offered frequent feedbacks and comments on the research narrative, what helped to the author to develop a better explanation of the scrutiny design and reinforce some arguments in the light of provided comments, furthermore, organized brainstorm sessions, where students, who also conduct researches, shared with their investigation narratives and progress enabled to gain fresh perspectives on the study and challenge assumptions made by the author. Another factor increasing study`s credibility is background and experience of a researcher which is essential in a qualitative research, as an investigator is the major tool for data collection and analysis. Professional background of a research in HR management is believed to be relevant to the phenomenon under the study, as one of the key human resource functions is to motivate employees at all levels and help to establish relationship between different departments through communication, in fact, all human resource activities involve communication with internal stakeholders. Hence, qualification of the author can be addressed as a supportive factor for higher credibility of the research.

Lastly, given interpretivist philosophical view of an author, great attention was paid to accurate transcription of the interviews that can precisely reproduce initial meanings that respondents associated to them. Considering common cultural background and language of
the author and participants, contextual or linguistic misunderstandings were reduced to minimum.

4.5.2 Transferability

Transferability in a qualitative research is corresponding to external validity in a quantitative research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 95). The idea of transferability doesn’t mean replication of the knowledge, but rather reflects the extent of similarities between the study, partially or as a whole, and other researches in the field (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, p. 294). As the majority of qualitative researches entails through analysis of very small sample sizes, statistical generalizations are not possible, hence, applicability of a knowledge gained from the study to different populations and settings relies on to which extent a researcher can provide a sufficient description of a narrative of the study (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 94). Thorough depiction of the research process helps readers to develop understanding of the phenomenon and make their own informed judgements about linkages between a study’s narrative and their personal perceptions and experiences. To do so, the author provided an information about boundaries of the study, and contextual details of the research, as recommended by Shenton (2004, p.70). Thick description of the underlying philosophical stances, detailed description of the respondents, their number, locus of the companies, data collection method, interview design and outline, summary of the interview with each participant, the number and duration of the data collection sessions, the interim over which the data was collected.

4.5.3 Dependability

Dependability is an equivalent to reliability in a quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403), and concerned with the responsibility of the researcher to demonstrate to the readers that the study was conducted in logical, traceable, and consistent manner (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 86). This means that the research process should be recorded at each stage, so the readers can assess the adequacy of the analysis by following the documented decision-making process and detailed description of the context of the research. According to Bryman & Bell (2015, p.403), such records include: “problem formulation, selection of research participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, data analysis decisions-in an accessible manner”. By providing a clear description the processes of the research, the research design may be seen as a “prototype model” for future researches. Proceeding from recommendations of Shenton (2004, p. 71), the research design and its implementation was described in detail, as well as data collection method and explanation of the choice of the research method and its effectiveness to answer research questions. All data, including notes, drafts, transcripts and video of the interviews will be kept throughout the research and afterwards.

4.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is concerned with the responsibility of an author to ensure that interpretations of the data are derived directly from primary sources and are not affected by assumptions and preconceptions of an author (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 86). Shenton (2004, p. 72) highlights the importance of triangulation as an instrument that is less dependent on human
skills and perceptions, therefore, reduces researchers’ bias. Another valuable method to provide confirmability of the research, mentioned by Shenton is “audit trial”, which enables a reader to trace the flow of the study stepwise through description of the procedures undertaken. Bryman & Bell (2015, p. 403), however, claim that confirmability of the research can be provided if investigators act in good faith and “not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it.”. The author proceeded in good faith against subjectivity upon conducting interviews and analysis of data. Additionally, the author provided detailed methodological description: methodological choices, research design and the process of data analysis through coding is visualized in a figure demonstrating the formation of categories and core categories.

4.5.5 Authenticity

In addition to all above mentioned criteria of quality of the research, authenticity criteria are believed to be thought-provoking, yet, not that influential compare to other criteria of trustworthiness (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403). According to Guba and Lincoln (1985, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403), authenticity criteria comprise fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticity. Fairness of the research is concerned whether the research fairly reflects different viewpoints among individuals of social settings. Research sample is comprised of representative from different industrial sectors, hierarchical levels, occupations, and gender. Given this, variety of perceptions on a research phenomenon increase fairness of the findings. Ontological authenticity refers to whether participating in a research helps to come to a better understanding of social reality for all members. Tje author considers that intensive research on the topic enabled to gain deep knowledge in the area and comprehend social environment better, as well as appreciate the standpoints of participants who took part in the research, what is in line with ontological and educational authenticities. Catalytic authenticity concerns whether the research motivated participants to “engage in action to change their circumstances”, whereas the tactical authenticity regards if the research “empowered members to take the steps necessary for engaging in action.”. The research was conducted in attempt to correspond with all criteria of quality of the research, however time limitations and lack of experience in research did not allow to avoid certain deviations from quality standards in the study.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

All studies have to adhere to certain ethical principles throughout a whole research process from clarifying the topic of the scrutiny to analysis of data and report conduction (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 183; Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 55). The basis on which the research built is constructed by personal ethical values of an author and his/her sensitivity to the cultural context in which research is processed, however, there are some well-recognized ethical codes in qualitative researches which can be defined as follows: “the right of free and informed choice, protection from harm, privacy: anonymity and confidentiality, autonomy: informed consent and debriefing, honesty: omission, interpretations, plagiarism.” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, pp. 65-75). These ethical conventions must be articulated and referred in the initiating, developing and concluding stages of the study.
According to Daymon & Holloway (2011, p. 76), the planning stage of the research involves ethical dilemmas towards methods of recruitment of the participants and dealing with gatekeepers, people who are authorized to grant or refrain an access to data. Recruitment of participants should be based on a voluntary basis, videlicet, people should not feel forced to take part in the study but do it willingly. The settings of the data collection must be organized in a way that all respondents are not discommoded or harmed (“emotionally, psychologically, physically, reputationally”). Additionally, the use of all resources in the research should not imply any harmful consequences for participating parts, such as, disclosure of information that concerns private issues, or content that can jeopardize reputation of credibility of a participant. Given these points, all interviewees participating in the research were contacted through Social media with an inquiry to take part in the study, only agreed respondents were sent “informed consent” (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 190) with a brief description of a topic, data collection method and settings of an interview, expected duration of an interview, details upon the final presentation of the data, guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality. Anonymity was maintained through the use of pseudonymous and concealment the name of the companies, as recommended by Daymon & Holloway (2011, pp. 67-68). All participants were approached directly without involvement of “gatekeepers”, since information required for the research did not encroach upon private information of the company, documentation or corporate secrets but aims to explore personal experiences and perceptions of individuals on the phenomenon under scrutiny. When signed informed contents were receive, the process of participant recruitment was ensured to be performed with accordance to ethical conventions in qualitative researches. Prior the beginning of interviews all participants of the study were recalled that they can withdraw from the study (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 319). Developing rapport with a participant is essential, especially when data collection from interviews is not prolonged over time (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 316). The author tried to pose questions in a comprehensive and short way, asked if an interviewee needed clarification on terminology and attempted to maintain relaxed informal flow of a dialogue to establish honest and sincere rapport between parties. Interviews started from simple open-ended questions, so a respondent could overcome discomfort that stems from the strangeness of the context in which interview takes place. Consequently, when an interviewee started to feel more freely, and an interview progressed into exploration phase, some sensitive questions regarding personal experience and feelings were posed, what would be not appropriate in the beginning. Processing of the data collected from interviews included minor involvement of personal information, since some answers were exposing episodes from personal life of participants, however, the author tried to remain objective and avoid including data that can potentially damage reputation of the interviewees into findings that will be in public domain (Saunders, et al., 2009, p. 199). Ultimately, all participants were given an access to the final report to ensure that no harm can be experienced from the content of the study.
5. Analysis
This chapter provides a description of the data analysis process in a very detailed manner. According to the grounded theory strategy, the analysis process must start from the uncovering of the first order concepts, which were partially derived from theoretical background and first round of unstructured interviews. The second round of semi-structured interviews aimed to explore emergent concepts in more profound way, what helped to find relationships between first order concepts and aggregate them into categories named second-order themes. In its turn, developed categories were also analyzed, compared, and aggregated into core categories. The author provides underlying reasons and principles for aggregation of the first order concepts into the second level themes by the means of illustrative quotes derived from the interviews. Each section with an explanation of the second order themes is followed by a table with illustrative quotes from respondents, that best articulate the concepts. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed process of the analysis for the grounded theory.

5.1. Social Media as a Circulatory System of a Company
In accordance with the first research question of “How is Social Media used for communication and collaboration of project teams?”, the study aimed to explore and visualize the impact of Social Media use on internal communication processes and all external stakeholders. After uncovering all essential concepts and categories on the topic one major core category emerged: Social media as a circulatory system of a company. The process of developing this major core category is visualized in Figure 2. The concept of Social media as a circulatory system of a company suggests that Social media is of vital importance for an organizational body and its use goes beyond a basic function of establishing communication channels for information transfer among company stakeholders, but involve educating, managing and planning, motivating, conflict mitigating, opportunity-generating functions. Furthermore, the aggregated concept of Social media as a circulatory system of a company is discussed through explanation of second-order categories constructing it which are: “ultimate business opportunity generating mechanism”, “competences heterogeneity”, “online-social ties and shackles”, “times and distance proximity”.

5.1.1 Ultimate Business Opportunity Generating Device
When discussing advantages and opportunities provided by Social media use many respondents mentioned ideas of “virtual teams”, “self-rating”, and “entrepreneurship”. As all participating interviewees from the second round of unstructured interviews are specializing in online marketing or digital journalism, therefore, Internet is a very familiar environment for them in terms of working and they perceive it as a platform to develop business and collaborative learning: “Offline media loses its actuality, whereas online media increases its coverage every day, and I believe, it will not stop any time soon. This way, it is of high importance for businesses to know how to use it in their operations.” The first round of unstructured interviews showed that most of respondents find a way to use Social media for other purposes rather than purely communicative “I have an Instagram account where I show my craftworks”, “I do blogging on Facebook”. Thus, it became apparent that Social media is seen as a tool for developing opportunities, in this perspective, the study wanted to explore
how employees find Social media working as a business opportunity generating mechanism from a company perspective. One of the respondent highlighted that Social media enables to shift to a new way of conducting work, namely: “One of the future objective of our company is to create a virtual team, where people will be able to have a flexible schedule and work from any place.” He notices that virtual teams is not a very common practice in Uzbekistan, but it is a great prospect for business, as it helps to safe on costs and find people who are very competent but cannot work full-time due to high business. Another respondent elaborated on a concept of “SM as a tool for creating an image”, bringing a concept of “self-rating”: “Some companies assign a person who is using his personal profile for external communication…however, in the eyes of customers, communication through a real person is more trustworthy, plus this representative gain reputation as a good professional (self-rating) which will stay with him even if he leaves the company.” She added that so called “self-rating” through Social media may eventually result in profit-bringing activity. Lastly, several respondents reflected on using a Social media for small entrepreneurship or projects which could be both realized as a business unit within organization or a private business: “The person who learnt how to work in Social media secured his future as he has some prospects for work both for a company and as a private entrepreneur.”, “Recently we launched a mini-project and the idea came from the hobby of one of our employee to make internet “memes”. Now he makes memes about companies that we promote.” Ultimately, all respondents acknowledge the capability of Social media to provide options for profit-making opportunities across a wide spectrum of business activities.

Table 7: Second order theme: "Ultimate business opportunity generating device"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virtual teams</td>
<td>“One of the future objective of our company is to create a virtual team, where people will be able to have a flexible schedule and work from any place.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-rating</td>
<td>“Some companies assign a person who is using his personal profile for external communication. In the latter case, boundaries between private and professional life are much more fragile or less-explicit, however, in the eyes of customers, communication through a real person is more trustworthy, plus this representative gain reputation as a good professional (self-rating) which will stay with him even if he leaves the company.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>“Offline media loses its actuality, whereas online media increases its coverage every day, and I believe, it will not stop any time soon. This way, it is of high importance for businesses to know how to use it in their operations.” “The person who learnt how to work in Social media secured his future as he has some prospects for work both for a company and as a private entrepreneur.” “Recently we launched a mini-project and the idea came from the hobby of one of our employee to make internet “memes”. Now he makes memes about companies that we promote.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.2 Competences Heterogeneity

Theoretical framework identified “communication success factors” term (Molena & Rovai, 2016), relating to skills, conditions and character traits associated with efficient team collaboration and cooperation. As this concept emerged at the initial data collection set, it prompted to develop discussion concept in the consequent data collection stages. The first round of unstructured interviews tried to approach this topic by asking a broad question of “What do you believe make your team collaboration efficient?”. Answers showed that employees find an explicit interdependence between collaboration efficiency and professional attainments and personal qualities of employees and senior managers. Mainly, discussions showed that most of respondents highly value soft skills, such as basic psychology “people are all different and each needs his own approach”, oratory “convincing customers, inspiring employers, explaining clearly the concepts…”, cognitive skills, as well as adaptivity, flexibility and such personal characteristics as care, empathy “Our boss often asks us if we need something, especially female coworkers…, so our girls often ask some little things for the office like a flowerpot or a soap-dish. He cares about us. I really appreciate it.”, ambitiousness and sense of humor “I love seeing my people challenging themselves. This way I feel we can go really far in our business”. Semi-structured interviews aimed to explore the concept more specifically with a focusing on communication success factors in more details and a goal to identify core capabilities attributing communication efficiency by asking two questions: “What skills and knowledge are important in internal communication?”, and “What do you believe makes communication easier and more efficient in a working process?”. Participants expressed a range of different opinions on this topic but the majority of them agreed that combination of skills and versatility of knowledge are the most powerful advantage during a working process in small teams (See Appendix 3), “Knowledge and literacy will facilitate maneuvering among projects and catching opportunities”, “I expect my team to be able to take a wholistic perspective on the tasks”. Clarity of the message was again highlighted by many respondents as a key success factor “Poorly defined objectives are the most frequent and frustrating hardship of an efficient communication.”, “Mistake of employees is lack of confidence to ask specifying questions.” This was not fully in line with the findings of Molena & Rovai (2016, p. 689), who identified in their research that successful communication of the team is mainly associated with such attributes as the trust to a receiver and information, whereas clarity of information was also rated as the second most valued attribute of an efficient internal communication. However, the author considered that the notion of trust can vary in interpretations of respondents and they actually define characteristics that develop in them the feeling of trust towards their coworkers “I am confident in competences of my subordinates, otherwise I wouldn’t keep them. So, if there are some mistakes in their job, it is probably me who unclearly defined objectives”.

Table 8: Second order theme: "Competence heterogeneity"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>“Communication is all about understanding not language but thoughts and feelings and problems.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptivity &amp; company-wide vision</td>
<td>“Ability to grasp new ideas fast and being really visionary person is essential not only for communication efficiency but generally “Knowledge and literacy will facilitate maneuvering among projects and catch opportunities.” “I expect my team to be able to take a wholistic perspective on the tasks. I don’t ask you to promote a restaurant or make a “cool” slogan, I want you to create a brand, you understand the vision of a customer on his project”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oratory skills</td>
<td>“Oratory skills are definitely important. When people are not convinced with what you say, the result will be correspondingly not convincing either.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>“Erudition and curiosity for new knowledge are important. I think every person in a team should be able to understand the essence of the work of others and be able to give a feedback from his/her perspective that can bring different insight on a problem.” “Poorly defined objectives are the most frequent and frustrating hardship of an efficient communication.” “Mistake of employees is lack of confidence to ask specifying questions.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the comparison of the answers did not identify clear consensus in perceptions of factors for efficient internal communication, except for emphasis of the majority on heterogeneity of competences to be a facilitating and enhancing factor for efficient internal communication in small and medium-sized companies. “I think every person in a team should be able to understand the essence of the work of others and be able to give a feedback from his/her perspective”, what consequently lead to forming the first major category of “Competences heterogeneity” which empower internal communication.

### 5.1.3 Online Social Ties and Shackles

Leonardi et al, (2013, p. 14) discussed the term of online social ties in a negative perspective, defining it as disingenuous relationships which do not hold the same strength in real communication or even proved to be fully nonexistent. However, the second round of interviews revealed that most of respondents perceive relationships built online to be valuable and credible, as commonly, communication on Social media is a continuation of an extant relationship in real life, or a way to establish connection with a certain person or a group of people with a further goal to support real-life communication. “When you come to any kind of a big social group, it is always hard to get to know all and sundry. Plus, it is more likely people would address to you in a formal way, what makes interaction less human. So, when I came to this company I added some of them on my Facebook and looked through their profile to have at least general idea of what the person is like, that eased to find approach to each person and establish some relationship”. This fact supports the idea of the role of Social media in strengthening corporate culture, developing sense of belonging and lubricate social connections.Leonardi et al, (2013, p. 15) suggests that such lubrication of social relationships is supported by small talks which are typical for communication online. Being aware of coworkers’
activities give a reason to find a touch point for a conversation initiation, which is confirmed by several respondents “Facebook profiles of people who I work with provided me with good information about them, and I could develop a communication approach, partially, basing on what I have learnt from SNS. That helped me to become a part of the company or at least to feel this way”.

However, some respondents stated that online social relationships can also restrict or shackle the freedom of online behavior “One of the customer of our company is a Fast-food chain, and I am an official of this company in media. I often have to response to their customers in Facebook from my personal account, and people associate me with this brand. However, in my real life I don’t eat fast-food, moreover, I am a vegetarian. And now I cannot show this part of my life in media, because people see me as a representative of a Fast-food chain”. This way a participant confessed that there is a significant pressure deriving from the necessity to support an image we create in Social media for our professional or personal purposes, thus the concept of “SM as a tool to create an image” emerged from provisional codes describing this idea. The concept of SM as a tool to create an image was also discussed in a positive light, for example, during the first round of interviews some respondents stated that nowadays increasing social significance and popularity is easier through social media: “Our graphic designer has several thousands of followers on Instagram because he posts pictures that makes his life look fabulous. This has nothing to do with his real life, but it makes him popular and brings some profit”.

Another specific of online communication is well defined by the term Leaky pipe, used by Leonardi et al., (2013, p.7) to explain that directionality of conversations happening online and most importantly, the content of this information can be accessed by people who are not meant to be involved into the conversation. All participants were explained the meaning of this metaphor and asked to give their opinion on it, a few participants admitted experiencing negative impact of it: “…I sent a message to my friend that I would be late because my manager did not let me go earlier...and the discourse was not very polite. So, happened that this message went directly to my boss instead of my friend”. The concept of SM as a leaky pipe has also much to offer in terms of increasing social ties in a positive perspective, namely, it helps individuals to expand their network of contacts, and most importantly, overcome not only spatial boundaries within organization but also occupational and departmental (Leonardi, et al., 2013, p. 11). As experienced by one of the respondent: “Once we needed a literate translator from Russian into Uzbek language, what could take some time to find. As all employees from different departments are connected on Facebook and can read each other’s posts, we could easily find a person in a company who often published posts in Uzbek language and asked him to help with the task.”.

When discussing personal specific experience of Social media use, many respondents reflected upon such a drawback of communication online as lack of visual and tactile contact that limits understanding of meanings and increases occurrences of understatements and bias “Wrong emoji can totally change the context of a message”. Moreover, sometimes misunderstandings occurred online lead to actual conflictual situations in real life. When trying to establish the relationship between these aspects, the first time the concept of “Social media ethics” emerged. Consequently, upon elaborating the meanings respondents associate with “social media ethics”, interviewees were asked to describe their personal experiences of conflictual situations in relation to Social media communication: “Once we discussed some
task in a group chat, and our project manager used an abbreviation for one term when describing the details of a task. One of our colleagues asked what that abbreviation means. Meantime, I was typing an answer to what was sent previously and added an emoji that meant “Facepalm”. That was just a way to express irritation towards another change in scope of a project, but this girl thought I address this emoji to her ignorance of this abbreviation. So, she got angry at me.” All respondents notice that despite Social media is commonly used for informal entertaining discourse, some ethical principles must be followed to avoid damage to personal, professional, and brand images. “Having Social media policy is an important measure that should be taken by most of companies”. Introducing social media policy can be seen as another restriction imposed on communication in Social media. However, at the same time any sort of corporate ethics can be a measure to increase commitment of the employees to the company, if articulated accurately by managers (Jackson, 2004, p. 28), as it demonstrates the value company gives to company’s reputation and reputation of their employees.

Upon grouping the first-order concepts of “SM as a corporate culture construct and social lubricant”, “SM as a leaky pipe”, “social media ethics”, “SM as a tool to create an image” into the second-level theme, the author followed the logic that all these concepts share in common the meaning of binding and restricting online social connections, and each concept implies positive or negative consequences depending on the context and articulations of individuals. This way, the property of Social media to tie and foster people connections or shackles and restrict freedom of online demeanor formed the major category that was labeled “Online social ties and shackles”.

Table 9: Second order theme: "Online social ties and shackles"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SM ethics</td>
<td>“Once I have posted a video on our Corporate social media page with a stand-up artist who made a joke about pork. This is not something tolerable in a Muslim country. We received many negative comments from regular internet users and some of our corporate customers sent screenshots of these comments to my boss. “Once we discussed some task in a group chat, and our project manager used an abbreviation for one term when describing the details of a task. One of our colleagues asked what that abbreviation means. Meantime, I was typing an answer to what was sent previously and added an emoji that meant “Facepalm”. That was just a way to express irritation towards another change in scope of a project, but this girl thought I address this emoji to her ignorance of this abbreviation. So, she got angry at me.” “Having social media policy is an important measure that should be taken by most of companies, as considering great power and omnipresence of Social media, social media ethics should exist to restrict or manage its impact and avoid additional conflicts.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM as a corporate culture construct</td>
<td>“When you come to any kind of a big social group, it is always hard to get to know all and sundry. Plus, it is more likely people would address to you in a formal way, what makes interaction less human. So, when I came to this company I added some of them on my Facebook and looked through their profiles.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and social lubricant: profile to have at least general idea of what the person is like, that eased to find approach to each person and establish some relationship”.

“Yes, of course, Facebook profiles of people who I work with provided me with good information about them, and I could develop a communication approach, partially, basing on what I have learnt from SNS. That helped me to become a part of the company or at least to feel this way”.

“Probably, since our communication is mainly happening in Social media, as we often work remotely. Social media often replaces office settings for us”.

SM as a leaky pipe: “Once we needed a literate translator from Russian into Uzbek language, what could take some time to find. But as all employees from different departments are connected on Facebook and can read each other’s posts, we could easily find a person in a company who often published posts in Uzbek language and asked him to help with the task.”

“Open information in Social media not only helps me to find information but also let other people to know about me and my work.”

“I cannot recall a situation where I would be affected by the information leak in Social media, I am careful with that.”

“It happened to me once that I asked my manager to leave work a bit earlier, but she refused. So, I sent a message to my friend that I will be late because my manager did not let me go earlier…and the discourse was not very polite. So, happened that this message went directly to my boss instead of my friend, as they were the last two opened chats on my phone.”

SM as a tool to create an image: “One of the customer of our company is a Fast-food chain, and I am an official of this company in media. I often have to response to their customers in Facebook from my personal account, and people associate me with this brand. However, in my real life I don’t eat fast-food, moreover, I am a vegetarian. And now I cannot show this part of my life in media, because people see me as a representative of a Fast-food chain”.

“In Social media no one really shows his real self. Everyone wants to look better, more successful, more beautiful.”

5.1.4 Time and Distance Proximity

The following major category “Time and distance proximity” stemmed from the first level concepts that discussed advantages of Social media compare to other types of communication. Many scholars emphasized that one prominent and useful feature of Social media use is an ability to work remotely (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Leondardi, et al., 2013). This gave a raise to such notion as virtual teams, increased freelancing opportunities, collaborating communities, and knowledge sharing in geographically distributed companies and health-care sphere (Durkin, et al., 2013; Carroll & Ramachandran, 2014). Upon developing the understanding and determination of first-level concepts referring to advantages of Social media, at the first round of unstructured interviews respondents were asked if they think that Social media is more a negative or a positive thing, what they think about Social media in Uzbekistan, and if they communicate virtually more than in real life. All seven respondents claimed that they find Social media being mostly a positive
phenomenon due to a number of reasons: some of them emphasized that communication online doesn’t imply high emotional or social investment what provides higher degree of psychological safety for those individuals who are not normally inclined to communicate “I am a shy person and starting a conversation with someone without a serious reason is something I try to avoid, however, it doesn’t mean I don’t want to interact with people, but in Social media this psychological barrier to talk is less bothering me”. The second most frequent reason underlying positive perception of Social media was affordances of high mobility and ubiquitous availability for friends, family, and coworkers “Two of my brothers live abroad. But I talk to them every day in IMO or Viber. I remember many years ago my parents used international phone cards to call…”, “basically, I have everything I need in mobile phone-my contacts, my music, my documents…and it is always with me”, some of participants highlighted benefits of Social media in a working context “As I am still studying I still need to attend classes, but even during classes I receive messages regarding work, so it keeps me updated about processes even when I am not in the office”, “My customers usually contact me through Viber…”. Lastly, several respondents talked about participatory nature of communication in Social media or an ability to communicate with many people at the same time: “We use group chat…”, “When me and my friends discuss in Viber…”, “it is very easy to gain a big audience in Telegram channel (a new option of this instant messaging application) as users share our posts”. After comparing the answers from the first interviews and making subsequent review of relevant literature, similar emerged ideas were grouped and labeled according to the process of open coding analysis. Second round of interviews explored opinions of people on benefits of Social media use in professional context by posing a question of “What do you think are main advantages of Social media compare to traditional media and in general?”. The big majority of respondents clearly emphasized the advantage on “Instantaneous transmission of information” that saves time and overcomes the distance limitation: “Our CEO actively promotes virtual communication…. This works much more time-efficient than meetings… plus not all people can participate in meetings all the time”. However, not all respondents agreed that communication through Social media is more time efficient: “When I talk to someone face-to-face, I can say 10 sentences in 1 minute, but when I use a messenger I have to think to make up the sentence, and it also takes time to type it, what is not always convenient”. The same respondent highlighted also distracting character of communication through Social media: “Communication through Social media seems to be more time consuming as there are lots of distracting factors, such as pop-up notifications. It takes time before you actually come to the right information.” Despite there was only one contrasting opinion on the subject of time-efficiency benefit of communication through Social media among respondents, it emphasizes the difference in perceptions and interpretations among individuals, about phenomena, what accentuates the relevance of interpretivism standpoint of the research.

Table 10: Second order theme: "Time and distance proximity"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offline communication challenges</td>
<td>“I am not a very sociable person it was hard for me in the beginning to start a conversation with colleagues, so I would just send texts, songs, or interesting articles through Telegram to them and it was initiation of relationship that transformed into friendship.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Offline communication challenges | “Instantaneous transmission of information and opportunity to enrich the content with graphical support, video, or simply links to instructions. Plus, you can send it to many people at the same time.”
“Even when I am attending my lectures in the university I know what happens in the office through Social media” |
| Availability and mobility are success factors in project management | “Communication through Social media saves time, it also enables to distribute information to different groups equally without significant actions involvement, it saves money, as when you meet in person you would probably have to arrange meeting in a café or a restaurant and consequently, pay for it.”
“Communication through Social media seems to be more time consuming as there are lots of distracting factors, such as pop-up notifications. It takes time before you actually come to the right information. Also, when I talk to someone face-to-face, I can say 10 sentences in 1 minute, but when I use a messenger I have to think to make up the sentence, and it also takes time to type it, what is not always convenient.” |
| Participatory nature of communication in social media | “Our CEO actively promotes virtual communication what can be a way to sort and monitor all employees. He made group pages for each department, to upload tasks and updates. This works much more time-efficient than meetings, plus information is saved and the chance someone misheard something, or forgot is less, plus not all people can participate in meetings all the time, as journalists spend a lot of time looking for information from sources that are not available in Internet, for example, people.” |

During the course of interviews, all respondents reflected upon their working routine and most of them again referred to high importance of having a constant access to information, a chance to participate in discussions, and reach out their colleagues from different geolocations “Our CEO actively promotes virtual communication what can be a way to sort and monitor all employees”. Considering high concentration of answers related to advantage of Social media to overcome time and distance barriers, the second order theme “Time and distance proximity” was developed.
5.2. Digitalization of Social Relationships

In accordance with the second research question of “What are the perceived disadvantages and advantages of Social media use in work by employees?”, the research objective was to explore how Social media empower and restrain communicative activities through which working processes are accomplished from the perspective of employees. Upon detailed scrutiny of the data, the author could conclude that the main negative consequence of Social media use heavily applied to digitalization of social relationships. Namely, respondents emphasized self-identification discrepancies due to overlap between professional and personal lives, lack of real communication and increased pressure from management afforded by additional mean for surveillance and control. Therefore, “self-determination
discrepancies and online challenges’ together with the “social media as a controlling and monitoring tool” represent second-order themes which comprise the core category of Digitalization of social relationships that aimed to answer the first part of the second research question of “What are the perceived disadvantages of Social media use in work by employees?”. The process of aggregation of the second core category is visualized in Figure 3.

5.2.1 Self-determination Discrepancies and Online Challenges

Throughout all data collection sets including literature review, and both rounds of interviews, the author encountered the concept that Leonardi et al, (2013, p.15) identified as a “context-collapse”, whereas participants described this idea as a confusion upon which “personality” of the self to display in communication on Social media, being aware that this “face” will be available for multiple audiences at the same time. Upon comparing the answers of the respondents some underlying factors emerged: first, most of participants stated that Social media blurred line between their professional and private lives: “… my work is very bound to Social media in general, and my work is a very big part of my life. So, some overlap of these two lives is unavoidable and Social media aggravates this overlap.” Consequently, mixing private and professional bounds calls for some sort of audience management actions, which in its turn develop less natural relationships, what was also observed by Marwick (2011, p.117) and Karakayali & Kilic (2013, p. 73). Some participants agreed that many of their contacts in SNS are not based on true social ties: “Most of my friends on Facebook are not my real-life friends, but people who added me on some professional reasons.” or they know someone who experienced this “context collapse” “At my previous working place there were stories when colleagues started to engage into active “friendship” in social nets and in chats, what did not find confirmation in offline. Such reality discrepancies create mistrust and tension between colleagues.” Therefore, it may lead to wondering the status of the relationships and uncertainty upon deicing which “face” to show. Considering that context collapse is highly probable in the situations of communication in Social media between employees and managers, the author posed the corresponding question, however, all interviewees suggested that Social media either did not affect such relationships or even lowered the psychological barriers between them. However, one respondent said that some sort of context collapse occurred between her and online audience on Facebook: “One of the customer of our company is a Fast-food chain, and I am an official of this company in media. I often have to response to their customers in Facebook from my personal account, and people associate me with this brand. However, in my real life I don’t eat fast-food, moreover, I am a vegetarian. And now I cannot show this part of my life in media, because people see me as a representative of a Fast-food chain”. Additionally, three respondents noted that the most active users online are not necessarily the most active community members in reality or the most competent, which is another example of self-determination discrepancies or distortion of reality in Social media.

Apart from self-determination problems, many respondents highlighted such limitations of Social media communication as technological problems: “old phones that don’t support some work-related functions or have small memory card or cannot get update of necessary applications my work is affected”; the issue of poor quality of Internet connection in Uzbekistan: “The second biggest problem is definitely poor Internet connection in
Uzbekistan”, “People who live a bit further from the city already don’t have a chance to use Internet properly.”. The third most frequently mentioned problem that makes communication through Social media less attractive was lack of visual contact with an information receiver: “Without visual contact it is hard to understand how a receiver perceived the information.”. These vivo codes (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 137), used by respondents to describe main issues which heavily limits the process of transmission of information from a sender to a receiver while using Social media were transformed into open code onine communication “bottlenecks”. In academic literature “bottlenecks” are used to refer to some resources or utilities which impedes or limit capacity of a production system (Wang, et al., 2005, p. 349).

These two first-level concepts online communication “bottlenecks” and delusionary relationships were grouped into one second-order theme named “Self-determination discrepancies and online challenges”, as they both reflect most frequently mentioned negative experiences of participants in relation to Social media use.

Table 11: Second order theme: “Self-determination discrepancies and online challenges”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online communication “bottlenecks”</td>
<td>“I would say that for me one of the most important thing is to be well-equipped technically speaking. What I mean is mobile phone is a complete working tool for us, and when my colleagues have old phones that don’t support some work-related functions or have small memory card or cannot get update of necessary applications my work is affected, as in SMM sphere success is tightly bound to mobility of data. The second biggest problem is definitely poor Internet connection in Uzbekistan, for example, yesterday I was supposed to do online broadcasting from one of our project but because Internet connection was bad I couldn’t do it.” “People who live a bit further from the city already don’t have a chance to use Internet properly.” “Sometimes wrong emoji or a full stop sign instead of an emoji can totally change the context of the message. Without visual contact it is hard to understand how a receiver perceived the information. This way Social media communication concedes to, for example, face-to-face communication. The second disadvantage is of technical character, namely, bad quality of Internet in Uzbekistan, what causes frequent interruptions in work-flow.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illusionary relationships</td>
<td>“Most of my friends on Facebook are not my real-life friends, but people who added me on some professional reasons.” “At my previous working place there were stories when colleagues started to engage into active “friendship” in social nets and in chats, what did not find confirmation in offline. Such reality discrepancies create mistrust and tension between colleagues.” “I think my work is very bound to Social media in general, and my work is a very big part of my life. So, some overlap of these two lives is unavoidable and Social media aggravates this overlap.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“One of the customer of our company is a Fast-food chain, and I am an official of this company in media. I often have to response to their customers in Facebook from my personal account, and people associate me with this brand. However, in my real life I don’t eat fast-food, moreover, I am a vegetarian. And now I cannot show this part of my life in media, because people see me as a representative of a Fast-food chain”.

5.2.2 Social Media as a Controlling and Monitoring Instrument

Another second order theme emerged from the data is “Social media as a controlling and monitoring instrument”. This phenomenon was also mentioned by Leonardi et al., (2013, p. 12), who argued that the use of digital communication traces which can be processed by machine learning algorithms can provide management with extra monitoring and controlling opportunities, which is not always positively perceived by employees. Despite companies of participants do not use any digital algorithms to trace communicative activities of employees, several participants deliberately discussed the issue of all-day pressure stemming from Social media. One participant, who works as a project manager in SMM company, mentioned that he uses two mobile phones to communicate, as he cannot afford being disconnected from his coworkers at any moment. He was also the one who perceived it both as an advantage and a disadvantage: “Having a 24-hour connection with all my employees is a strong advantage of Social media, sometimes I want everyone to know some important information before the beginning of a tomorrow working day, but I don’t want to bother calling everyone at late time in the evening. I send the message in Telegram, and I know that everyone will read it in the morning. However, it is also the biggest disadvantage.”. Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that occupying a managing position, his perspective on it may differ from regular employees. Another participant related a 24-hour online connection to information overload “24-hour connection, which could be exhausting sometimes, lack of visual contact reduces understanding.”, which was described in the article “Enterprise Social media: definition, history, and prospects for the study of social technologies in Organizations” (Leonardi, et al., 2013). The authors argue that information overload is not only exhaustive, but also reduces quantities of processed information. This is in line with observations made by Pike et al., (2011, p. 80), who find that enterprise Social media create an exuberance of information for organizational decision-making without providing method to interpret the quality of taken decisions. Another respondent who occupied a managing position gave an example of how Social media enables to monitor if a receiver read an information, what could be used not only check if the message was seen, but how alert an employee and how he monitors alterations and updates on tasks: “For a manager, the option “last seen” is a good way to see which employees are responsive and responsible. It gives me confidence that an employee is constantly checking for updates, and replies accordingly.”. This knowledge about what and whom other people in the company know is defined as a metaknowledge (Ren & Argote, 2011, p. 201). All respondents emphasized that Social media is an excellent tool to get an insight on people’s lives what can be used as an antecedent to the transfer of knowledge, however, it also decreased the level of confidentiality and security of private life: “Lack of security and confidentiality. People can even find information that was deleted.”. It worth mentioning that affordance of monitoring and controlling of employees is not
defined as something purely positive or negative, however, it makes communication less human, as awareness of surveillance increases control pressure and impedes free interactive communication.

Table 12: Second order theme: "Social media as a controlling and monitoring tool"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-hour pressure</td>
<td>“Having a 24-hour connection with all my employees is a strong advantage of Social media, sometimes I want everyone to know some important information before the beginning of a tomorrow working day, but I don’t want to bother calling everyone at late time in the evening. I send the message in Telegram, and I know that everyone will read it in the morning. However, it is also the biggest disadvantage”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaknowledge</td>
<td>“For a manager, the option “last seen” is a good way to see which employees are responsive and responsible. It gives me confidence that an employee is constantly checking for updates, and replies accordingly.” “Lack of security and confidentiality. People can even find information that was deleted.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information overload</td>
<td>“24-hour connection, which could be exhausting sometimes, lack of visual contact reduces understanding.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Aggregation of the second core category
5.3. Humanization of Social Media

After exploring main negative consequences of Social media use perceived by employees, the following section explains what benefits Social media adoption may have for organizations and their internal stakeholders. The author discovered based on the interviews’ data that Social media is no longer perceived by young professionals as a channel through which information travels. It is rather sensed as a platform where communication is played out, social relationships emerge, develop, and got terminated, as well as in any real social physical environment. Furthermore, Social media slowly transforms into the system that can operate as a deliberate infrastructure where people are able to interact with all properties inherent in human communication, such as feelings, emotions, thoughts, visual contact. Therefore, “Humanization of social media” core category was introduced to reflect upon this phenomenon. In total, two major categories were aggregated from the open codes which are Enriched content and multidimensional use of Social media and Online media as a professional virtual playground for employees (see Figure 4) and will be explained in the subsequent sections.

5.3.1 Enriched Content and Multidimensional Use of Social Media

The following second order theme Enriched content and multidimensional use of Social media reflects those peculiarities that enable communication through Social media interact in ways other than physical confrontation without losing social etiquette. As argued by many scholars, Gen Y (Prensky, 2001; Tkalac Verčič & Verčič, 2013; Friedl & Verčič, 2011), who grew up in a vastly new communication environment where access to information and knowledge was eased by technological progress, “needs to be connected at all times and feels most comfortable in digital environment” (Rai, 2012, p. 261). As all select participants belong to Gen Y (see Table 7), it was sensible to explore credibility of this statement by posing a number of questions aiming to reveal their true thoughts on how deeply they are immersed into digital environment. According to most of respondents, online communication is prevailing in their daily routine, mostly, because their work is tightly bound to Social media. When asked what the main advantages of social media tools are compare to traditional media in terms of transfer of data, the majority of interviewees noted that nowadays the choice of formats for information is so diversified that informatory capacity of the content outreaches even verbal communication: “Nowadays all these Social media tools support video, audio calls, even online broadcasting. Also, before when you had to explain a person how to get to some place you would either draw a map or explain very long on the phone how to get there. Now you can just share location through a messenger.”. One participant again referred to the notion of Social media as a social lubricant: “When people don’t use social networks, they are less in “trend”. And by “trend” I don’t mean being “cool”, I mean that they don’t follow up the latest news, and their understanding of people may be reduced, what is a great barrier in communication”. By this he demonstrates that Social media is not a complementary but predominate source of knowledge for a modern individual what increases social embeddedness. Additionally, as it was discussed before, Social media is believed to be a good platform for different business ideas, apart from it, it can be used for many different purposes: “Social media is a multidimensional notion that provides a lot of opportunities in respect to how to handle information what helps to make decisions. You can communicate, create network, earn money, realize your creative plans.”, “Telegram is not
only the most common communication tool in Uzbekistan, but also provides an option of doing channels. Channel is a chat where people can read information that we post, but cannot comment it, what is very good for those who administrate this channel.

During the course of the interviews, participants repeatedly mentioned that Social media significantly simplifies the process of learning, as it may operate as a knowledge sharing platform: “When people work in a small team, they can easily learn from each other, if Social media provides us an opportunity to increase this learning, we have to seize it and use it at maximum.” This complies with the argument of Leonardi et al., (2013, p. 4) that participating in any type of Social media can potentially increase instrumental knowledge, which is learning about how to do something, and known to be useful for social learning in organizations (Huber, 1991).

Table 13: Second order theme: "Enriched content and multidimensional use of social media"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technological progress narrowed down the gap between online and offline communication</td>
<td>“Data sent through Social media is more informative, as it can be supported with pictures, links, videos, voice-message and geolocation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I think that communication in Social media can be more diverse than other types of media, meaning, it can be expressed by several attributes—texts, pictures, memes, gifs, voice messages, links, video, and so on... Also, information is saved permanently and easily accessible.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Nowadays all these social media support video, audio calls, even online broadcasting. Also, before when you had to explain a person how to get to some place you would either draw a map or explain very long on the phone how to get there. Now you can just share location through a messenger”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Social media is a multidimensional notion that provides a lot of opportunities in respect to how to handle information what helps to make decisions. You can communicate, create network, earn money, realize your creative plans.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“When people don’t use social networks, they are less in “trend”. And by “trend” I don’t mean being “cool”, I mean that they don’t follow up the latest news, and their understanding of people may be reduced, what is a great barrier in communication”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental knowledge</td>
<td>“Telegram is not only the most common communication tool in Uzbekistan, but also provides an option of doing channels. Channel is a chat where people can read information that we post, but cannot comment it, what is very good for those who administrate this channel. Also, gaining the audience is very easy as people share the news posted on this channel through any other platform, moreover, when you reach high number of users you can sell this channel at very good price.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When people work in a small team, they can easily learn from each other, if Social media provides us an opportunity to increase this learning, we have to seize it and use it at maximum.”

5.3.2 Online Media as a Professional Virtual Playground for Employees

If the previous second-order theme discusses what properties make communication through Social media replicate or even transcend real-life communication in terms of informational benefits, the following second order theme “Online communication as a professional virtual playground for employees” reveals how such communication affects employees’ engagement and commitment to the company.

When discussing internal communication in general during the first round of unstructured interviews, many participants insisted that healthy working environment is based on friendly interpersonal relationships, which are shaped during informal communication and preferably outside of working settings: “The time when we feel the closest to each other, surprisingly, happens during our lunch time break, where we talk informally and discuss regular life-related topics.”. They emphasized that “open space” or environment outside of the office settings help to establish more informal course of conversation: “...I would also say that environment, specifically open space, facilitates communication, the absence of walls helps you to evaluate visually if a person is in a mood for communication.”. Consequently, transition from formal to informal discourse lowers communication barriers between employees: “One good thing that always helps me to establish good rapport with a new person is communication without surplus formalities. These formal phrases such as “could you please” or “wouldn’t you mind” raise some barriers between people that shackle efficient communication.” Sense of humor was another frequently mentioned aspect supporting internal communication and social interaction. It could be concluded that efficient internal communication derives from outside of working settings and formal discourse what is the first-level concept developed by the other based on vivo codes of participants. Despite, this first-level concept is not directly related to the topic of Social media communication, the author sees it as conceptual element of the core category of “Humanization of social media” that enables to provide readers with more holistic vision on the described phenomenon and ease understanding of it.

Consequently, linking both first-level concepts of this major category, the author provides some examples of participants’ answers that illustrate that often, communication in Social media is also perceived as communication outside of workplace: “There is a feature in Telegram that enables to make a sticker with your image on it and some short description. Our team likes to use this option and create funny stickers about each other the meaning of which only who work with us can understand. I guess that makes us closer too.” This example shows that in internal communication Social media is used not only for task-related formal communication but afford more social-related interaction. Also, several participants of higher-level positions emphasized that by sharing organizational achievements through Social media they design employees’ commitment as this measure cultivates the sense of belonging: “In my company we like to share our best moments on our group page on Facebook, and when employees go through the page, they think: “Wow, it is so great to be a...”
part of it!”. If such moments are not recorded somewhere, they just fade away from one`s memory and having a social group page helps to remind our employees that we are a team and they belong to it.”. This way Social media can be seen as an environment with a higher level of psychological safety, where employees may informally contact each other, make jokes, have small talks and even “talk their own corporate language”. Overall, respondents emphasized that Social media even if primarily Social media channels are used for task-related communication in organization context, it gives much freedom for social communicative activities that increase social ties and create a “feeling of a family within a workplace”. Proceeding from above “Online media as a professional virtual playground for employees” second-order theme was aggregated.

Table 14: Second order theme: "Social media as a virtual playground for employees"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Internal communication starts outside of working settings & formal discourse | “The time when we feel the closest to each other, surprisingly, happens during our lunch time break, where we talk informally and discuss regular life-related topics.”  
“…I would also say that environment, specifically open space, facilitates communication, the absence of walls helps you to evaluate visually if a person is in a mood for communication.”  
“One good thing that always helps me to establish good rapport with a new person is communication without surplus formalities. These formal phrases such as “could you please” or “wouldn’t you mind” raise some barriers between people that shackle efficient communication.”  
“Sense of humor helps to release possible tension between people.” |
| SM as a channel for informal task-related communication    | “In my company we like to share our best moments on our group page on Facebook, and when employees go through the page, they think: “Wow, it is so great to be a part of it!”. If such moments are not recorded somewhere, they just fade away from one’s memory and having a social group page helps to remind our employees that we are a team and they belong to it.”  
“There is a feature in Telegram that enables to make a sticker with your image on it and some short description. Our team likes to use this option and create funny stickers about each other the meaning of which only who work with us can understand. I guess that makes us closer too.” |
Figure 4: Aggregation of the third core category
6. The Research’s Findings

The Research’s Findings are based on the profound coding analysis and aim to give answers to the two research questions. As the main objective of the research was ambitious to develop a model that visualizes the use and impact of Social media on organizations and its internal stakeholders, the first main section of this chapter presents a developed model which consists of second order themes and corresponding core categories. Three core categories constituting this model, as well as relationships between elements of the model are explained in separate sections to provide detailed answers to the research questions.

6.1. Model of Social Media Use in Internal Communication Processes and its Impact on Employees

According to a key objective of the research, the final product of the grounded theory research is to be a model that visualizes the use of Social media in internal communication processes and impact on internal stakeholders in the organization. Based on the analysis described in the previous chapter, the author developed a model where the use and impact of Social media are depicted by second-order themes (competence homogeneity, time and distance proximity, online social ties and shackles, ultimate business opportunity generating mechanism, self-determination discrepancies and online challenges, Social media as controlling and monitoring tool, online media as a virtual playground for employees, enriched content and multidimensional use of social media) and the core categories (social media as a circulatory system of a company, digitalization of social relationships, and humanization of social media) to answer research questions. Therefore, the model is presented below (Figure 5) and will be explained in detail in the following sections.

Figure 5: Model of Social media use in internal communication processes and its impact on employees
6.1.1 Social Media as a Circulatory System of a Company

Addressing the first research question, four main conceptual elements were developed from the first-level concepts to describe how Social media is used for internal communication and collaboration among internal stakeholders. Consequently, after thorough analysis of the data, the author realized that causal relationships between second-order themes are similar in act to a circulatory system of a human body after which metaphorically was named the core category “Social media as a circulatory system of a company”.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica (Rogers, 2017), the indispensable components of a human circulatory system are the heart, lungs, blood vessels and blood. As well as blood flows from the heart to each part of the body, information flows from the decision-making organ to other departments of the company through information channels. Decision-making organ can be also seen as a business-opportunities generating mechanism, thus, many respondents noted: “Social media is a multidimensional notion that provides a lot of opportunities in respect to how to handle information what helps to make decisions.”, what means that Social media is used in decision-making processes and realizations of business ideas. The blood then travels through the lungs to get oxygenated, similarly, using a combination of diverse competences employees filter, analyze, and modify information to transform it into a “vital fuel” that supports continual uninterrupted functioning of all departments in the organization. The broader variety of competences applied, the more efficiently information can be used, and Social media facilitates transferring of instrumental knowledge what increases social learning: “When people work in a small team, they can easily learn from each other, if Social media provides us an opportunity to increase this learning, we have to seize it and use it at maximum.”. The blood vessels form the network by the means of which the blood is transported to organs, in a like manner, online Social media is a platform where information is distributed by the means of social ties which connect people: “Open information in Social media not only helps me to find information but also let other people to know about me and my work.”. As well as human body must be energy-consumption efficient, the company must be time-efficient, what is one of the most apparent benefit of communication through Social media according to data derived from the interviews: “Communication through Social media saves time”, along with an opportunity to work remotely: “Even when I am attending my lectures in the university I know what happens in the office through Social media”.

This core category describes the primary use of Social media in work organizations, whereas, negative or positive impacts of Social media described in the following sections.

6.1.2 Digitalization of Social Relationships

Addressing the first part of the second research question, the author revealed that main disadvantaged perceived by employees are related to issues of psychological and technological character. Namely, many respondents stated that communication online stimulate the development of the social network which are based on illusionary relationships: “Most of my friends on Facebook are not my real-life friends, but people who added me on some professional reasons”. As it was confirmed by few participants, Social media blurs the line between professional and personal life, consequently, it may cause confusion about what
“face” to display during a conversation in online media, and question oneself if to behave as a friend, as a boss, or as a colleague. This phenomenon was labeled by the author as self-determination discrepancies.

Furthermore, many respondents expressed clear dissatisfaction towards quality of Internet connection in Uzbekistan: “The second biggest problem is definitely poor Internet connection in Uzbekistan”. Another drawback of communication through Social media that makes it less interactive and lively is lack of visual contact. Participants said that quite often visual feedback is more informative than verbal: “Without visual contact it is hard to understand how a receiver perceived the information.”, “For me visual contact is very important-mimic, body language, even tactile contact, like handshake or a greeting hug”, “Body language is less deceiving than verbal”.

The topic of increased pressure and control because of Social media was raised by several respondents. Some participants mentioned information overload and high dependence on internet connection. In fact, Social media activeness and responsiveness was mentioned by one participant as a measure of employee engagement into work. Therefore, the author concluded that main negative trend of Social media is related to digitalization of social relationships, in other words, employees perform the role of instruments for transferring and receiving information without emotional articulation and social involvement, what may adversely affect corporate culture (Leonardi, et al., 2013, pp. 9-10).

6.1.3 Humanization of Social Media

When trying to uncover the possible positive impact of Social media on internal communication processes and its social actors, the author revealed that participants highly appreciate informatory capacity of messages what has become possible due to technological progress: “I think that communication in Social media can be more diverse than other types of media, meaning, it can be expressed by several attributes-texts, pictures, memes, gifs, voice messages, links, video, and so on...”. During discussions with participants it became apparent that for most of them Social media is not only a platform for communication, but also an opportunity to share their knowledge, skills, show off their talents, make money, do shopping, increase social significance, engage into relationships, and keep being informed about actual news: “You can communicate, create network, earn money, realize your creative plan”. Accordingly, it could be assumed that online behavior of individuals is guided by the same intentions as in real life, and consequently, it can be used as an environment within which people can exist and satisfy their regular social needs.

However, the majority of participants believe that real communication cannot be fully substituted by online communication, and corporate unity and commitment are better shaped within informal environment outside of workplace. Therefore, the author concluded that employee communication can be improved if interaction in Social media is embodied in the form of informal communicative activities which increases transparency of the social constituent of the company, which in turn facilitates social connectivity. Consequently, as an overall recommendation, management should create an environment where informal interactions among employees are not restricted by rigid boundaries of a workplace, but rather promote new avenues for collaboration through displaying company informal meetings, achievements, values, and celebrations in Social media.
7. Concluding Thoughts
The last chapter of the study concisely summarizes the overall findings of the research. Further, the theoretical and the practical contributions of the research are presented. The very concluding section of the research elaborates on the limitations of recommendations for further research in the field.

7.1. Conclusion
Considering that understanding of the role of Social media use in organizational context in its infancy, the main purpose of this study was to explore how organizations implement Social media in work for communication and how it affects other important organizational aspects. Specifically, positive and negative consequences of Social media use from employees’ perspective. To recap, the directive research questions of the scrutiny were:

RQ1: How is Social media used for communication and collaboration of project teams?

RQ2: What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of Social media use in work by employees?

The author prevailed in building a new theory by developing an illustrative model (see Figure 4) where the influence of the Social media use is described through core categories which represent inevitable, positive, and negative impacts of Social media use on internal communication processes from perceptions of employees.

The central part of the model comprises those conceptual elements where use of Social media is of predominated importance. First, Social media is used as a platform to generate business opportunities and ideas. Second, it facilitates knowledge sharing, which in turn increases social learning and competence homogeneity of employees. Third, Social media increases social connectivity and lubricate social interactions among employees. Lastly, an ability to work remotely through Social media enables to attend multiple goals instantaneously and be more time-efficient.

Yet, communication in Social media risks to develop disingenuous relationships among employees what adversely affects collaboration and sense of belonging, moreover, increased affordance of surveillance and control by management aggravates tension and stress of employees. In order to mitigate the risk of digitalization of social relationships, Social media interactions need to run freely without significant managerial intervention. In other words, more informal communication in Social media stimulates openness, engagement, transparency of intentions and actions of employees. Finally, technological progress enables to equip Social media with multiple options to process and transfer data in the formats which will best reflect the core meaning of information, what will improve understanding of the message by a receiver.

7.2. Theoretical Implications
As it was outlined in the beginning of the research, several scholars consider that up to date there were not many qualitative studies which aimed to explore how Social media use impacts internal stakeholders in organizations (Martins, et al., 2004, pp. 822-823; Jiang, et al., 2017, p. 38). Grounded theory approach of the study led to the development of a model (see Figure 4) which visualizes how Social media affects organizational behavior and
personal professionals’ narratives of employees on Social media by the means of core categories and second-order themes elaborated from the profound analysis of data collected from interviews with employees. The developed model can be used as a reference or the basis for further investigations in the field. Additionally, Leonardi et al., (2013, p.16) call for researches that can develop good descriptive metaphors to address the subject of what role Social media plays in the organization and which will provide an insight into important processes in internal communication, organizational behavior, and management. Accordingly, this study developed three core categories which are metaphorically labeled to explain the influence that Social media holds on important organizational aspects. By creation of this model, the author contributed to the knowledge about factors which impact the quality of interpersonal communication within a company, social connectivity and corporate culture, which are imperative for the domains of internal communication management and public relations, as argued in previous studies in the field (Wood, 1999, p. 136; Verčič, et al., 2012, p. 229). The author is aware that at the current stage this model does not provide extensive scientific value, however, it can be used as a knowledge to guide both potential researchers and managerial practitioners in the area of internal communication in project management. Moreover, the study added empirical knowledge to the concept of media precedencies by Gen Y through providing an insight on perceived functional reasons that guide preferences of young professionals for use of Social media for private and organizational communication (Friedl & Verčič, 2011, p. 86).

7.3. Practical Implications
In regard to practical contributions, first, all companies of participants may find it useful to reflect upon research conclusions, to gain understanding which implications introduced into internal communication practices are less or more attractive according to their employees. The findings of the study may find essential practical usefulness for Human Resource Management, as it provides an evidence on which communicative activities shape corporate culture, connectivity between dispersed social groups, and a climate or trust, what in turn increases employee retention. Besides, since the study was conducted within not rigidly defined industry settings, the findings may apply for companies with other backgrounds than the ones of companies of respondents. Taking into account high scarcity of the studies in the field of social science and specifically, internal communication management in Uzbekistan, this research can be used as a reference for future studies in the field.

7.4 Research Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research
The research analysis was based on data collected from in total twelve interviews with seven different participants. This sample size proved to be sufficient to identify some consistent patterns, however, larger data set can provide more distinct regularities of emerging concepts, as well as wider range of interesting ideas that could corroborate the findings of the research. This limitation goes along with another limitation related to a sample, which is a locus of the study. Since all participants reside in one country, it is acknowledged as a limitation. Further research can conduct a cross-cultural research to explore if there are variations in opinions on the subject across different countries. This would create another avenue for the future research with a focus on a cultural context. Also, the sample size of the study included
participants who occupied different hierarchical-level positions, however, analysis of the research did not include explicit comparison of the answers with an application of filter according to occupied position of respondents, what is recommended as a research method for further investigation in the field.

Given limited timeframe, the author was not able to use mixed-method design and combine quantitative and qualitative collection techniques and analysis, what would have provided deeper insights and more explicit explanations of relationships between emerged concepts. The further research can increase the credibility of the research by applying data triangulation and combining interview data collection with surveys.

The author had not had previous experience in conducting interviews, what could be the reason the first round of unstructured interviews did not uncover a wide range of unexpected concepts and discrepancies in opinions. Consequently, the second interview guide was designed based on a limited amount of data derived from the interviews. Since the author was solely conducting interviews and interpreting data, some interpretive bias is possible. However, since interviews were conducted in a native language for both respondents and an interviewer, misinterpretations are highly improbable.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide of the first round of interviews

Unstructured interviews were held from the 7th of December till 10th of December 2017

Held via IMO application

Interview Guide

Part 1: Introduction:

• The author introduce herself and thank for the agreement to participate in the interview
• Brief introduction into the topic: Exploring the role of Social media in internal communication
• Asking for the consent on audio-recording of an interview

Part 2: Asking some general questions about an interviewee:

• Could you tell me about yourself? (age, education, interests)
• What is your position in a company?
• Could you tell me about your company?

Grand tour questions about the topic:

• Could you describe me your typical working day?
• What do you believe make your working team collaboration efficient?
• What do you think about Social media in Uzbekistan?

If answers did not reveal interesting concepts, some additional questions were posed:

• How many people work in your team?
• How do you usually communicate with your colleagues?
• How much of your working time do you dedicate to communication?
• Do you communicate more virtually or in real life?
• Do you think Social media is more a positive or a negative thing?
• What do you think about Internet audience in Uzbekistan?

Wrap-up: Thanking for a participation and asking for an availability for the second interview.

Appendix 2: Interview guide of the second round of interviews
Semi-structured interviews were held from the 15th of December till 19th of December 2017

Held via IMO application

**Introduction:**
- Thanking for an availability for the second interview
- Asking for a consent on audio-recording of an interview

**Part 1: Asking questions about internal communication:**
- What do you believe makes communication easier and more efficient in a working process?
- What are the main issues you face in internal communication?
- How do you usually solve conflicts with the colleagues?
- What skills and knowledge are important in internal communication?

**Part 2: Asking questions about a role of Social media in internal communication**
- What Social media tools do you use for internal communication? How and Why?
- Can you say that Social media helped you to integrate faster into the project team when you just started to work in the company?
- Could you describe me your experience of using Social media in work that helped you to get closer with coworkers?
- Can you describe (if it is the case), the situation where you undergone the effect of “Leaky pipe” (metaphor was explained). Both positive and negative
- Can you describe (if it is the case), the situation where you undergone the effect of “Echo chamber” (metaphor was explained). Both positive and negative
- Can you describe (if it is the case), the situation where you undergone the effect of “Social lubricant” (metaphor was explained). Both positive and negative
- Do you believe that your coworkers communicate differently through Social media and in real life? How and why?
- What do you think are main disadvantages of Social media compare to traditional media and in general?
- What features of Social media make internal communication more efficient compare to traditional media and in general?
- Do you believe that Social media helps to reinforce corporate culture? Why and how?
- Do you think that Social media blurs the lines between personal life and professional life?
- Do you think Social media helps to overcome the barrier between managers and employees?
- Have you had a conflict with your coworkers because of something that happened in Social media?
Part 3: Asking for ideas or practices that can be introduced into internal communication management:

- What practical implications can be introduced into internal communication practices, and to Social media use in particular?
- How companies can increase collaboration and cooperation in project teams through Social media?

Wrap-up: Thanking for availability and readiness to participate in in
## Appendix 3: Detailed grounded theory analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
<th>Second-order themes</th>
<th>Core category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>“Communication is all about understanding not language but thoughts and feelings and problems.”</td>
<td>Competences Heterogeneity</td>
<td>Social Media as a Circulatory System of a Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptivity &amp; company-wide vision</td>
<td>“Ability to grasp new ideas fast and being really visionary person is essential not only for communication efficiency but generally Knowledge and literacy will facilitate maneuvering among projects and catch opportunities.” “I expect my team to be able to take a wholistic perspective on the tasks. I don’t ask you to promote a restaurant or make a “cool” slogan, I want you to create a brand, you understand the vision of a customer on his project”</td>
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<td>Oratory skills</td>
<td>“Oratory skills are definitely important ..when people are not convinced with what you say, the result will be correspondingly not convincing either. “Erudition and curiosity for new knowledge are important. I think every person in a team should be able to understand the essence of the work of others and be able to give a feedback from his/her perspective that can bring different insight on a problem”</td>
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<td>Clarity</td>
<td>“Poorly defined objectives are the most frequent and</td>
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<td>Offline communication challenges</td>
<td>Availability and mobility are success factors in project management</td>
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<td>&quot;I am not a very sociable person it was hard for me in the beginning to start a conversation with colleagues, so I would just send texts, songs, or interesting articles through Telegram to them and it was initiation of relationship that transformed into friendship.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Instantaneous transmission of information and opportunity to enrich the content with graphical support, video, or simply links to instructions. Plus, you can send it to many people at the same time.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Mistake of employees is lack of confidence to ask specifying questions.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Communication through Social media saves time, it also enables to distribute information to different groups equally without significant actions involvement, it saves money, as when you meet in person you would probably have to arrange meeting in a café or a restaurant and consequently, pay for it.&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;frustrating hardship of an efficient communication.&quot;.</td>
<td>&quot;Communication through Social media seems to be more time consuming as there are lots of distracting factors, such as pop-up notifications. It takes time before you actually come to the right information. Also, when I talk to someone face-to-face, I can say 10 sentences in 1 minute, but&quot;</td>
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<td>Participatory nature of communication in social media</td>
<td>“Our CEO actively promotes virtual communication what can be a way to sort and monitor all employees. He made group pages for each department, to upload tasks and updates. This works much more time-efficient than meetings, plus information is saved and the chance someone misheard something, or forgot is less, plus not all people can participate in meetings all the time, as journalists spend a lot of time looking for information from sources that are not available in Internet, for example, people.”</td>
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<td>SM ethics</td>
<td>“Once I have posted a video on our Corporate social media page with a stand-up artist who made a joke about pork. This is not something tolerable in a Muslim country. We received many negative comments from regular internet users and some of our corporate customers sent screenshots of these comments to my boss. “Once we discussed some task in a group chat, and our project manager used an abbreviation for one term when describing the details of a task. One of our colleagues asked what that abbreviation means.”</td>
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Meantime, I was typing an answer to what was sent previously and added an emoji that meant “Facepalm”. That was just a way to express irritation towards another change in scope of a project, but this girl thought I address this emoji to her ignorance of this abbreviation. So, she got angry at me.”

“Having social media policy is an important measure that should be taken by most of companies, as considering great power and omnipresence of Social media, social media ethics should exist to restrict or manage its impact and avoid additional conflicts.”

SM as a corporate culture construct and social lubricant

“When you come to any kind of a big social group, it is always hard to get to know all and sundry. Plus, it is more likely people would address to you in a formal way, what makes interaction less human. So, when I came to this company I added some of them on my Facebook and looked through their profile to have at least general idea of what the person is like, that eased to find approach to each person and establish some relationship”.

“Yes, of course, Facebook profiles of people who I work with provided me with good information about them, and I could develop a communication approach, partially, basing on what I have learnt from Social nets.
| SM as a leaky pipe | “Once we needed a literate translator from Russian into Uzbek language, what could take some time to find. But as all employees from different departments are connected on Facebook and can read each other’s posts, we could easily find a person in a company who often published posts in Uzbek language and asked him to help with the task.”  
Open information not only helps me to find information but also let other people to know about me and my work.  
“I cannot recall a situation where I would be affected by the information leak in social media, I am careful with that.”  
“It happened to me once that I asked my manager to leave work a bit earlier, but she refused. So, I sent a message to my friend that I will be late because my manager did not let me go earlier…and the discourse was not very polite. So, happened that this message went directly to my boss instead of my friend, as they were the last two opened chats on my phone.” |
this company in media. I often have to respond to their customers in Facebook from my personal account, and people associate me with this brand. However, in my real life I don’t eat fast-food, moreover, I am a vegetarian. And now I cannot show this part of my life in media, because people see me as a representative of a Fast-food chain”.

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<th>Virtual teams</th>
<th>Ultimate Business Opportunity Generating Device</th>
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<td>“One of the future objective of our company is to create a virtual team, where people will be able to have a flexible schedule and work from any place.”</td>
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| Self-rating |  |
|-------------|  |
| “Some companies assign a person who is using his personal profile for external communication. In the latter case, boundaries between private and professional life are much more fragile or less-explicit, however, in the eyes of customers, communication through a real person is more trustworthy, plus this representative gain reputation as a good professional (self-rating) which will stay with him even if he leaves the company.” |  |

| Entrepreneurship |  |
|------------------|  |
| “Offline media loses its actuality, whereas online media increases its coverage every day, and I believe, it will not stop any time soon. This way, it is of high importance for businesses to know how to use it in their operations.” |  |
“The person who learnt how to work in Social media secured his future as he has some prospects for work both for a company and as a private entrepreneur.”

“Recently we launched a mini-project and the idea came from the hobby of one of our employee to make internet “memes”. Now he makes memes about companies that we promote.”

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<tr>
<th>First level concepts</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes</th>
<th>Second-order themes</th>
<th>Core category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Online communication “bottlenecks”</td>
<td>“I would say that for me one of the most important thing is to be well-equipped technically speaking. What I mean is mobile phone is a complete working tool for us, and when my colleagues have old phones that don’t support some work-related functions or have small memory card or cannot get update of necessary applications my work is affected, as in SMM sphere success is tightly bound to mobility of data. The second biggest problem is definitely poor Internet connection in Uzbekistan, for example, yesterday I was supposed to do online broadcasting from one of our project but because Internet connection was bad I couldn’t do it.” “Sometimes wrong emoji or a full stop sign instead of an emoji can totally change the context of the message. Without visual contact it is hard to understand how a receiver perceived the information. This way social...”</td>
<td>Self-Determination Discrepancies and Online Challenges</td>
<td>Digitalization of Social Relationships</td>
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media communication concedes to, for example, face-to-face communication. The second disadvantage is of technical character, namely, bad quality of Internet in Uzbekistan, what causes frequent interruptions in work-flow.”

**Illusionary relationships**

“Most of my friends on Facebook are not my real-life friends, but people who added me on some professional reasons.”

“At my previous working place there were stories when colleagues started to engage into active “friendship” in social nets and in chats, what did not find confirmation in offline. Such reality discrepancies create mistrust and tension between colleagues.”

“Yes, but I think that it is more related to my work being very bound to Social media in general, and my work being a very big part of my life. So, some overlap of these two lives is unavoidable and Social media aggravate this overlap.”

“90% of my working time I communicate with my colleagues and friends through Social media.”

**24-hour pressure**

“Having a 24-hour connection with all my employees is a strong advantage of Social media, sometimes I want everyone to know some important information before the beginning of a tomorrow
working day, but I don’t want to bother calling everyone at late time in the evening. I send the message in Telegram, and I know that everyone will read it in the morning. However, it is also the biggest disadvantage.”

“For a manager, the option “last seen” is a good way to see which employees are responsive and responsible. It gives me confidence that an employee is constantly checking for updates, and replies accordingly.”

“Lack of security and confidentiality. People can even find information that was deleted.”

“24-hour connection, which could be exhausting sometimes, lack of visual contact reduces understanding.”

“Data sent through Social media is more informative, as it can be supported with pictures, links, videos, voice-message and geolocation. “I think that communication in Social media can be more diverse than other types of media, meaning, it can be expressed by several attributes-texts, pictures, memes, gifs, voice messages, links, video, and so on... Also, information is saved permanently and easily accessible.”

“Nowadays all these social media support video, audio calls, even online.”
broadcasting. Also, before when you had to explain a person how to get to some place you would either draw a map or explain very long on the phone how to get there. Now you can just share location through a messenger.”

Social media is a multidimensional notion that provides a lot of opportunities in respect to how to handle information. You can communicate, create network, earn money, realize your creative plans.

“When people don’t use social networks, they are less in “trend”. And by “trend” I don’t mean being “cool”, I mean that they don’t follow up the latest news, and their understanding of people may be reduced, what is a great barrier in communication”

**Instrumental knowledge**

“Telegram is not only the most common communication tool in Uzbekistan, but also provides an option of doing channels. Channel is a chat where people can read information that we post, but cannot comment it, what is very good for those who administrate this channel. Also, gaining the audience is very easy as people share the news posted on this channel through any other platform, moreover, when you reach high number of users you can sell this channel at very good price.”

“When people work in a small team, they can easily
| Internal communication starts outside of working settings & formal discourse | “The time when we feel the closest to each other, surprisingly, happens during our lunch time break, where we talk informally and discuss regular life-related topics.”

“...I would also say that environment, specifically open space, facilitates communication, the absence of walls helps you to evaluate visually if a person is in a mood for communication.”

“One good thing that always helps me to establish good rapport with a new person is communication without surplus formalities. These formal phrases such as “could you please” or “wouldn’t you mind” raise some barriers between people that shackle efficient communication. Sense of humor helps to release possible tension between people.” |

| Online Media as a Professional Virtual Playground for Employees | “In my company we like to share our best moments on our group page on Facebook, and when employees go through the page, they think: “Wow, it is so great to be a part of it!”.” If such moments are not recorded somewhere, they just fade away from one’s memory and having a social group page helps to remind |
our employees that we are a team and they belong to it.”
“There is a feature in Telegram that enables to make a sticker with your image on it and some short description. Our team likes to use this option and create funny stickers about each other the meaning of which only who work with us can understand. I guess that makes us closer too.”