

Analyzing the Demand for Office Hard Skills in the Workforce: Alumni and Industry Perspectives in Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the hard skill competencies required in today's office work environment and assess the perceptions of university alumni and industry representatives regarding the relevance of current academic training. Using a qualitative approach with semi structured interviews, the research collected data from recent graduates and HR professionals in various office-based industries. The findings reveal that digital office competencies such as Microsoft Excel, Google Workspace, and professional email usage are crucial in daily tasks. However, a significant skills gap persists due to the theoretical nature of university curricula. The study recommends curriculum reform that integrates practical applications, industry collaboration, and structured internships to improve graduate readiness. These findings contribute to workforce development by aligning education with labor market needs.

Keywords: Hard Skills, Office Competencies, Higher Education, Graduate Employability, Industry Needs, Indonesia

Introduction

In the era of digital transformation and global competition, higher education institutions are challenged to equip students with competencies aligned with industry demands. Hard skills – defined as measurable, technical abilities required for specific tasks – are increasingly valued in office environments. However, many graduates face difficulties transitioning into the workforce due to a mismatch between academic training and workplace expectations. This study investigates the specific hard skills required by office industries and explores the gap between educational preparation and employment realities, using a case study approach based on alumni and industry insights in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Hard skills, according to Astutik & Pambudi (2019), can be assessed through practical tests or validated certificates, indicating technical competencies such as data processing, document management, and software proficiency. Previous studies (e.g., Sari et al., 2022; Hardi, 2020) highlight the impact of hard skills on employee performance, emphasizing areas like analytical skills, technical tools usage, and digital communication. Furthermore, Aditya (2024) stresses the importance of aligning training programs with current technological tools and industry trends through mentoring, certification, and digital learning platforms.

Methodology

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method using semi-structured interviews. Informants included alumni from a Faculty of Economics and Business who had graduated within the past year, and representatives from the human resource departments of office-related industries. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data collected, allowing for pattern identification and coding of

recurring themes relevant to office hard skill requirements.

Results and Discussion

Required Office Hard Skills

The results indicate that Microsoft Excel (especially advanced functions), Google Workspace, Microsoft Word, and professional email etiquette are critical for office roles. Fast and accurate typing was also highlighted as a fundamental skill. Industries also increasingly demand familiarity with ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems – something that is rarely taught in formal academic settings.

Perception Gaps

Both alumni and industry respondents noted a disconnect between academic curricula and practical workplace needs. While theoretical knowledge was considered sufficient, practical applications were deemed inadequate. Graduates reported needing to pursue self-study or additional training upon employment, especially in technical software usage.

Recommendations for Hard Skill Development

Participants advocated for more practical coursework, stronger university-industry partnerships, inclusion of real-world simulations in the curriculum, and enhanced internship programs. Industry representatives emphasized the need for students to be job-ready upon graduation, urging curriculum adjustments to match evolving digital tool usage.

Conclusion

This study underscores the importance of office-based hard skills in securing and maintaining employment. There remains a significant gap between university preparation and job market expectations. Educational institutions must adapt by incorporating more applied learning, collaborating with industry stakeholders, and exposing students to workplace-relevant technologies. Bridging this gap will enhance graduate employability and support national workforce competitiveness.

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Analysis of Internal Communication Strategy in Improving Customer Service Effectiveness at PT Media Mover

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Abstract. This study aims to explore internal communication approaches that can enhance the quality of customer service at PT Media Mover. In an increasingly competitive digital service landscape, effective internal communication becomes a crucial aspect to support the performance of frontline employees and customer satisfaction. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach and collects data through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and analysis of internal documents. The findings of the study indicate that effective internal communication at PT Media Mover is characterized by two-way interactions, information transparency, and a combination of formal and informal media. Informal communication, such as using WhatsApp groups, has proven effective in accelerating the resolution of customer complaints and strengthening team solidarity. However, issues such as a lack of consistency in documentation still pose challenges. The results of this study expand the theoretical understanding of organizational communication by emphasizing the importance of flexibility and active employee participation in communication processes. From a practical standpoint, management in service organizations needs to design internal communication systems that can adapt to changes in work dynamics and customer demands. The study also recommends further cross-organizational research and the use of mixed-method approaches to obtain more comprehensive and applicable findings.

Keywords: Internal Communication, Customer Service, Organizational Strategy, Service Effectiveness, Digital Organization

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital era and amid intense competition among service companies, customer satisfaction has become one of the most crucial factors in evaluating a company's success. Particularly in the service sector, such as that operated by PT Media Mover, direct interaction with customers heavily relies on the organization's ability to establish effective internal communication. This is essential so that every part of the organization understands the service standards, corporate values, and proper ways to handle customers. One common issue encountered is the inability of many companies to maintain customer loyalty due to miscommunication or discrepancies between departments. Weak internal communication directly affects the quality of service received by customers. This is supported by research from Asyifa (2016), which shows that the effectiveness of internal communication significantly influences employee loyalty, which in turn impacts customer satisfaction. In today's social conditions, companies are faced with the challenge not only of managing communication with the public but also of creating an internal communication system that is responsive, fast, and interactive. Changes in the work environment due to digitalization – such as remote work and the use of cloud-based communication solutions – demand a shift toward more adaptive internal communication strategies (Hasanah et al., 2018).

PT Media Mover, as a provider of media and information transportation services, operates a complex system with various interconnected functions and roles. Communication between units is crucial to ensure smooth coordination. However, problems such as delays in information and inconsistencies between messages from management and implementation on the ground often hinder the achievement of expected service standards. Previous studies have emphasized the need for internal communication supported by technology to improve both employee and customer satisfaction (Budianto, 2023). Nevertheless, few studies have specifically examined the implementation of internal communication strategies aimed at enhancing customer service effectiveness in companies like PT Media Mover. Most existing studies are conceptual or limited to other sectors, such as education or banking. Research by Bagaskara et al. (2023) indicates that digital communication technologies can strengthen internal coordination and increase service responsiveness, but few have directly linked internal communication strategies to service quality, especially in the media and information transportation sector.

This gap highlights the need for an in-depth study using a qualitative approach to further understand the internal communication strategies used by PT Media Mover. This approach allows researchers to explore communication dynamics within the organization from the perspective of the practitioners directly involved. This study will investigate the forms, channels, and practices of internal communication implemented, as well as how such communication contributes to creating a positive customer experience. The research focus will be directed toward elements of communication such as information flow, leadership style, media used, and existing organizational culture. Thus, this research will not only contribute to the theoretical development of organizational communication and customer service but also offer practical solutions for managing internal communication in service-based companies. The findings are expected to serve as a foundation for policy-making and continuous improvement in similar sectors. The main objective of this study is to analyze the internal communication strategies at PT Media Mover and assess how effective these strategies are in improving the quality of service provided to customers.

Methods

Type of Research Approach

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative method aimed at examining the phenomenon of internal communication in the real context of PT Media Mover. The qualitative method is chosen because the primary objective of this research is exploratory and interpretive—investigating the experiences and perspectives of informants regarding internal communication strategies and their impact on customer service effectiveness. This approach allows the researcher to understand the social context within the organization. The type of research is a case study, which seeks to thoroughly examine a specific subject—PT Media Mover. Referring to Stake (1995), case studies are used to understand the complexity of a social unit comprehensively, in this case, the organization's internal communication system. This method allows the integration of various data sources such as interviews, internal documents, and direct observation, making the information obtained comprehensive and meaningful.

This qualitative research is highly relevant in the study of organizational communication because it allows for the subjective interpretation of communication actors (employees and managers), which cannot be measured through statistical data. As stated by Syafitri and Toni (2024), qualitative approaches help researchers understand the cultural, symbolic, and interactional dimensions of internal communication within organizations. Through this approach, the research is expected to provide not only theoretical insights but also practical contributions. The findings of this study are expected to help develop more effective internal communication strategies to enhance customer satisfaction and service efficiency, as well as enrich the references in the field of organizational communication.

Tabel 1: Profile of Research Informants

Code	Position	Years of Experience	Department	Primary Communication Channel
I-01	Customer Service Staff	5 years	Customer Service	WhatsApp & Email
I-02	Operations Supervisor	4 years	Operations	Morning Briefings
I-03	IT Team Coordinator	3 years	Information Technology	Internal App

Research Location and Subjects

This study is conducted at PT Media Mover, a company that focuses on digital media services and communication information in transportation. The company is located in the Jabodetabek metropolitan area, which is a hub of economic and technology-based service activities in Indonesia. The geographical characteristics of this area allow for intense interaction between the company and customers from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. The area also reflects the dynamics of modern organizations, emphasizing service efficiency and quick customer responses. PT Media Mover was selected as the research location due to its complex organizational structure involving several interrelated departments—from technical divisions, customer service, content development, to strategic management. Over the past five years, the company has shown significant growth but continues to face challenges in providing consistent services to customers. This provides a strong basis to explore the internal communication strategies implemented and their relation to service effectiveness.

The subjects of this study are informants who hold key positions in the company's internal communication structure, including employees from the customer service division, middle management, and the internal communication team. Informants are selected through purposive sampling, with criteria including at least one year of work experience, direct involvement in the communication process, and the ability to provide meaningful insights about internal communication flows. The study expects to interview 8 to 10 informants aged between 25 to 45 years old, with educational backgrounds ranging from bachelor's to master's degrees and a balanced gender composition. This diversity aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles, strategies, and dynamics of internal communication at various organizational levels. The data gathered will help construct an in-depth narrative on how internal communication either supports or hinders customer service effectiveness.

Operational Definition

In this qualitative study, the main focus explored is internal communication within the organization and its influence on customer service efficiency. Internal communication is understood as the complete range of information and meaning exchange among individuals or groups within an organization, both in formal and informal contexts. According to Febianti and Kusdinar (2020), effective internal communication involves transparency, openness, continuous feedback, and appropriate communication channels. In this study, internal communication is not only seen as message delivery but also as a reflection of organizational culture encompassing values, norms, and leadership. The researcher pays attention to communication strategies such as methods of delivering information (meetings, emails, internal apps), communication frequency, managerial participation, and employees' perceptions of the communication flow. Internal communication is assessed through observations and in-depth interviews with employees involved in customer service systems.

Customer service effectiveness, as the result of internal communication, is defined as the speed, accuracy, and quality of the organization's responses to customer needs and complaints. The indicators analyzed include customer satisfaction from internal perspectives (frontline staff), the frequency of information conflicts, coordination speed between departments, and alignment in service standards. Data will be collected from employees' and managers' personal experiences in explaining how internal communication impacts their performance in serving customers. Thus, the operational definitions in this study allow the researcher to understand internal communication and service effectiveness based on the lived experiences of individuals

within the organization. The data obtained will include narrative accounts, communication document analysis, communication flow mapping, and observations of daily work interactions related to customer service systems.

Types and Sources of Data

This qualitative study utilizes narrative and descriptive data, not in numerical form. The main objective of the data collection is to capture the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of informants regarding internal communication strategies and their impact on customer service effectiveness at PT Media Mover. The data is gathered in the form of words, statements, and interpretations from informants to provide in-depth and contextual understanding of the phenomena studied. The sources of data are divided into two categories: primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained directly from informants through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and relevant internal documents. Informants are selected using purposive sampling, with criteria involving direct engagement in the internal communication practices of the organization, especially in customer service and managerial communication. Observations are conducted to witness the actual communication patterns and flows during daily operations.

Meanwhile, secondary data is collected from supporting sources such as company documents, annual reports, work guidelines, communication archives, and academic literature including journals, reference books, and previous research articles. This secondary data helps understand the organization's historical and structural context and serves as a comparison when analyzing primary data. The use of both data sources aims to achieve triangulation—a technique to verify findings by comparing data from various sources. By integrating primary and secondary data, this research is expected to have stronger validity and allow for a comprehensive interpretation of internal communication realities within the organization.

Data Collection Techniques

This research employs common data collection techniques in qualitative studies: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document collection. These methods help the researcher gain rich, contextual, and reflective data about internal communication strategy implementation and its impact on customer service effectiveness. In-depth interviews are conducted with key informants from various departments at PT Media Mover, particularly from customer service, internal communication, and middle management. These interviews are semi-structured, using open-ended questions that may be adjusted as the conversation evolves. The goal is to explore personal experiences, views on the communication system, and actual practices in the workplace. All interviews are recorded and transcribed thoroughly.

Participatory observation is applied to observe daily interactions within the organization's workflow, focusing on interdepartmental coordination and customer service. This observation records communication patterns, the media used (such as emails, meetings, or internal groups), and situations where communication barriers occur. It supports data triangulation and ensures the validity of findings from interviews. Document collection includes gathering internal records such as work reports, service guidelines, meeting minutes, and the company's digital communication systems. These data are essential for understanding how communication strategies have been historically and administratively formulated and implemented. Together, the three methods enhance data validity through source, method, and time triangulation.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis in this qualitative research uses the interactive model from Miles and Huberman, consisting of three main elements: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This approach is well-suited for organizational communication research as it captures the complexity and nuances of interactions not measurable quantitatively. The data analyzed includes interview narratives, observation notes, and documents related to the company's internal communication strategies. The first step is data reduction, where the researcher filters and simplifies information gathered from interview transcripts and field observations. The aim is to identify key themes such as communication barriers, leadership roles, and information flow effectiveness in the context of customer service. This reduction process is ongoing and

iterative throughout data collection.

The second step is data display, in which information is organized into matrices, tables, narratives, or diagrams. This allows the researcher to see relationships between thematic categories and make preliminary interpretations. Visual data displays such as concept maps or communication flow charts are used to assist in thematic analysis and identifying communication patterns in the organization. The third step is conclusion drawing and verification, an inductive process where the researcher formulates findings based on patterns and meanings derived from the data. The validity of the findings is strengthened through triangulation and member checking. This ensures a deep understanding of internal communication strategies and their impact on customer service effectiveness at PT Media Mover.

Research Instruments

In this qualitative research, the primary instrument is the researcher, responsible for formulating interview questions, conducting observations, and analyzing data. This aligns with Creswell (2013) and Moleong (2017), who state that in qualitative research, the researcher serves as the main tool to understand social interactions. To support structured and focused data collection, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide and participatory observation sheet. The interview guide includes open-ended questions designed to explore informants' views, experiences, and understanding of internal communication at PT Media Mover. Questions are grouped into several categories: communication channels used, interdepartmental communication methods, managerial responsibilities in information dissemination, and communication obstacles. The guide is flexible to allow probing questions based on interview flow.

The observation sheet is used to record behaviors and communication situations directly at the site. Indicators include: types of verbal and non-verbal communication, duration of interaction, communication frequency across divisions, and use of internal communication tools such as emails, chat apps, or meetings. Observations also include work atmosphere and employee responses to instructions or information from supervisors. Internal documentation, such as meeting minutes, customer service SOPs, and internal memos, also serve as supplementary data sources. All instruments are designed based on academic literature to ensure data validity and reliability. The tools were also pilot tested with several informants to ensure clarity and depth of the information obtained.

Data Validity

The validity of information in this qualitative study is maintained through Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four trustworthiness criteria: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Validity is not measured statistically as in quantitative methods but through reflective and consistent data collection, processing, and interpretation. Data is gathered through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and internal documentation, then analyzed through triangulation to minimize bias. To ensure credibility, the researcher uses triangulation across sources and techniques – including cross-informant comparisons, method triangulation (interviews and observation), and supporting documents. Additionally, member checking is conducted, in which transcripts and interpretations are reconfirmed with informants to ensure accurate meaning. Reflective journaling during interviews and observations also helps the researcher recognize personal biases.

Dependability is achieved by documenting every research step, from planning, data collection, to analysis. An audit log is maintained, recording changes and decisions made throughout the process to allow others to trace the steps. Confirmability is ensured by preserving raw data, interview transcripts, and field notes accessible for objective review. Transferability is enhanced by providing detailed contextual descriptions of the organization's location, informants, and social situations. This enables readers to assess the applicability of the findings in similar contexts. Overall, this approach strengthens the academic rigor and reliability of the study in explaining the reality of internal communication and its influence on customer service effectiveness.

Result and Discussion

Overview of Informants

The informants participating in this study consisted of ten individuals directly involved in internal communication and customer service at PT Media Mover. They were selected from various job levels and units to ensure diverse viewpoints. Their ages ranged from 25 to 45, with most in the productive 30–40 age group. Demographically, there was gender balance reflecting the company's employee composition. Regarding education, all informants hold at least a bachelor's degree (S1), primarily in communication, management, or information technology. Their roles included customer service managers, frontline staff, technical team coordinators, and internal communication personnel—organized based on their roles in organizational communication and their impact on service quality.

Informant selection used purposive sampling with inclusion criteria: (1) at least one year of service at the company, (2) active participation in internal communication or customer service, and (3) willingness to openly share information. Employees who did not meet these criteria—such as new hires or those not involved in formal communication—were excluded. This method aims to collect relevant, reflective, and meaningful data. A sample of ten informants was deemed sufficient for qualitative methods, reaching data saturation, meaning no new information emerged after the final interviews. This aligns with qualitative principles emphasizing information richness over quantity (Murdana, 2022). With diverse characteristics and depth of insight, these informants are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of internal communication strategies at PT Media Mover.

Data Collection and Processing

Data were collected using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and company document collection. Interviews were semi-structured, allowing exploration of informants' experiences with internal communication at PT Media Mover. Observation took place on-site with limited involvement to capture unspoken communication dynamics. Document collection captured official data like SOPs, meeting notes, and company memos. Data collection occurred over three weeks in March 2025 at PT Media Mover's headquarters. Interviews were conducted in informants' workspaces or via Zoom for remote employees. Each lasted 45–60 minutes and was digitally recorded with participants' written consent. The researcher also took manual notes to document non-verbal expressions or important events not captured in audio.

After interviews, recordings were transcribed accurately. Transcripts were verified by member checking to ensure accuracy and reduce interpretive bias. Observation data were categorized using thematic observation sheets, and internal documents were analyzed for formal and structural communication patterns. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's technique: data reduction to select relevant information, data presentation in matrices and narratives, and inductive conclusion drawing. The researcher manually coded using Excel and Word to identify themes, sub-themes, and category relationships. Accuracy was ensured through method and source triangulation and peer review discussions to prevent researcher bias.

Research Findings

The main findings reveal that effective internal communication at PT Media Mover strongly correlates with improved customer service quality. Interview and observation results indicate that formal channels—such as email, internal messaging apps, and weekly meetings—are primary means for transferring information between management and customer service teams. However, success depended not only on these channels but also on message clarity, interdepartmental transparency, and responsiveness. Most respondents stated that open management attitudes enabled them to respond quickly and accurately to customer complaints. Secondary findings highlight the importance of two-way communication structures. Frontline staff felt more motivated and responsive when management acknowledged their feedback on service systems. Some employees also noted challenges in horizontal communication, particularly between technical and customer service divisions, causing miscommunication in resolving technical issues—a key area for improvement.

The study also found informal communication culture that supplements formal strategies – WhatsApp groups and off-hours chats help staff solve customer issues faster. Although not officially documented, these informal communications effectively speed up coordination and foster team solidarity. Yet, excessive reliance on informal channels may create challenges in documentation consistency and information distribution. Overall, the study shows that well-planned internal communication fosters a responsive, collaborative, and well-coordinated work environment, ultimately benefiting customer service effectiveness. These findings emphasize the importance of comprehensive internal communication strategies, considering media, organizational structure, communication culture, and interpersonal skills.

Interpretation of Findings

Primary findings demonstrate that PT Media Mover's internal communication approach directly influences customer service effectiveness. Open, consistent, and fast communication between management and service staff improved information delivery, team coordination, and morale in handling customer issues. This supports the initial hypothesis that internal communication positively correlates with service quality. In the literature context, these results add evidence to Hasanah et al. (2018), who highlighted internal communication satisfaction as crucial to work productivity. The study also reveals that the informal and flexible nature of communication significantly contributes to work effectiveness – an aspect underemphasized in bureaucratic formal communication models. For example, the use of WhatsApp groups helped break hierarchical barriers and foster horizontal collaboration.

Differences with earlier research emerged in communication documentation effectiveness. While previous studies emphasized structured reporting, PT Media Mover's environment valued speed and spontaneity more. This indicates that flexible communication culture and adaptability to new channels are key factors in successful internal communication strategies, especially in digital service organizations. The study suggests organizations need flexible internal communication systems that facilitate two-way communication and strategically integrate informal channels. Theoretically, the research expands understanding of communication-service effectiveness links in dynamic organizational cultures. Additionally, it opens further research opportunities in technology-based communication management within service organizations.

Discussion of Findings

Findings confirm that planned and flexible internal communication significantly impacts customer service effectiveness. Interactive, two-way communication supported by digital tools (email, internal chat apps) accelerates information flow and improves responsiveness to customer complaints. This aligns with Hasanah et al. (2018), who noted internal communication satisfaction positively relates to work efficiency and service satisfaction. From organizational communication theory, results affirm Grunig and Hunt's symmetrical two-way communication theory, which posits that participatory internal communication increases employee engagement and sense of ownership. Informal structures like WhatsApp groups also show that flexibility and spontaneity are significant in modern internal communication – supporting Aesthetika & Pradhani (2024), who emphasized non-hierarchical approaches in modern organizations.

However, the study also identifies challenges, such as irregular documentation and potential miscommunication between divisions. This underscores the need for internal communication guidelines emphasizing speed, clarity, and accountability. Sumarni & Gusfa (2018) warned that without formal oversight, informal communication can undermine long-term coordination – supporting this finding. Theoretical contributions include developing a hybrid model of internal communication that integrates formal and informal approaches to boost customer service effectiveness. Practically, the findings suggest service organization management should treat internal communication as a strategic tool – not merely administrative – empowering employees and reinforcing service values.

Conclusion

Based on the qualitative research conducted on internal communication strategies at PT Media Mover, it can be concluded that the success of customer service heavily depends on the quality of interdepartmental communication. Two-way communication, which involves participation and clarity, has been proven to enhance the responsiveness of the service team to customer needs and complaints. Employees feel more valued and engaged when their voices are considered in the decision-making process. This study also highlights the importance of effectively integrating both formal and informal communication. Tools such as emails and regular meetings serve to deliver structured information, while informal media like WhatsApp groups accelerate coordination processes and foster a collaborative work environment. This enhances our understanding of flexible organizational communication in the context of digital services.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in reinforcing the symmetrical organizational communication theory framework (Grunig and Hunt) and expanding its application within service-based organizations. Practically, this research provides a model of internal communication that not only focuses on communication media, but also emphasizes communication culture, adaptability, and interpersonal skills. However, the main limitation of this study is its focus on a single company and the use of a qualitative approach, which does not allow the findings to be generalized. Therefore, for future research, it is recommended to conduct cross-organizational studies or adopt a mixed-method approach to achieve more comprehensive and widely applicable results.

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