



The Role Of Strategic Communication In Achieving Sustainable Development

Lamouri Mehdi^{1*}

(Algeria), lamouri.mehdi@univ-guelma.dz

Grid Samir²

(Algeria), grid.samir@univ-guelma.dz

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*Corresponding author

Abstract :

This work seeks to explore and analyze the role of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development from a sociological perspective, considering it as a vital element in building social ties and enhancing interaction between the state and local communities. A detailed study will be presented, including a theoretical analysis of the concepts of strategic communication and sustainable development, followed by elucidating the relationship between strategic communication and sustainable development. Finally, the focus will be on how strategic communication influences the social, cultural, and economic relationships that form the basis of sustainable development.

The importance of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development is evident through directing focus towards enhancing effective communication and encouraging positive interaction among various segments of society. The study has shown that strategic communication contributes to raising awareness about the importance of sustainable development and promoting community participation in decision-making processes. Additionally, research has demonstrated the impact of strategic communication in enhancing understanding and collaboration among various stakeholders, including governments, non-governmental organizations, and local communities, thereby contributing to bolstering efforts towards achieving sustainable development comprehensively and effectively

1- Introduction

In an era of rapid globalization and increasing challenges facing societies worldwide, achieving sustainable development has become indispensable to ensure the sustainability of life on Earth and the well-being of current and future generations. In this context, the role of strategic communication emerges as a fundamental and pivotal factor in achieving these goals, facilitating effective communication among stakeholders and exchanging views, knowledge, and experiences to create a common environment that contributes to sustainable development.

From a sociological perspective, the importance of strategic communication is evident in analyzing the social relationships and dynamics that impact the ability to effect change and development in societies. It contributes to a deeper understanding of cultural identity, social



values, and interactions that influence the decision-making process and the implementation of development policies and programs.

From this standpoint, this work seeks to explore and analyze the role of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development from a sociological perspective, considering it as a vital element in building social ties and enhancing interaction between the state and local communities. A detailed study will be presented, including a theoretical analysis of the concepts of strategic communication and sustainable development, followed by elucidating the relationship between strategic communication and sustainable development. Finally, the focus will be on how strategic communication influences the social, cultural, and economic relationships that form the basis of sustainable development.

2 -Conceptualization:

2-1 strategic communication

Strategic communication is a term that is considered a part of several disciplines, including public relations, diplomacy, managerial communication, and advertising. It is also a sub-field within the broader field of communications. It aims to enhance the ability of all organizations - whether they are for-profit or non-profit, governmental or private - to develop a method of communication with a specific purpose, which assumes a causal relationship between it and the organization's goals and activities. Additionally, strategic communication positively and directly contributes to the accomplishment of all operations, tasks, and activities of the organization by building public awareness and understanding of the organizational objectives and mechanisms, thereby building support for specific activities carried out by the organization (POPA, 2019, pp. 174- 175).

Therefore, communication is considered strategic when it aligns with the mission, vision, and values of the organization, and when it aims and is able to increase the strategic positioning and competitiveness of the organization among its competitors.

Strategic communication is defined as the deliberate and directed use of communication processes by an organization or entity to achieve its strategic objectives. This is accomplished through crafting its messages and exchanging information in a way that strengthens its strategic position and contributes to the fulfillment of its mission and key goals. Strategic communication involves communicating in a thoughtful and systematic manner with all relevant stakeholders, whether within the organization itself or externally, with the aim of building strong relationships, enhancing mutual understanding, and exerting a positive influence on the surrounding environment and the communities it serves (Thomas & Kimberlie J. Stephens, 2015, p. 4).

In this sense, Strategic communication refers to the intentional and targeted use of communication methods by an organization or entity to accomplish its strategic goals. This involves crafting messages and exchanging information in a purposeful manner to bolster the organization's strategic position and contribute to the achievement of its mission and primary objectives. Strategic communication entails engaging with all relevant stakeholders, both internally and externally, in a systematic manner to cultivate strong relationships, foster



mutual understanding, and generate a positive impact on the surrounding environment and the communities it serves.

The strategic communication is defined as "the purposeful and organized use of communication by an organization or entity to achieve its mission or strategic objectives. Strategic communication is characterized by being deliberate and intentional, with careful planning and continuous, systematic management, taking into account environmental factors and surrounding circumstances. It relies on the ideas, resources, and skills available to communicators and organizations, directed towards achieving the deep and varied goals and tasks set by the organization. Therefore, each organization is viewed as a unique entity that makes its own decisions and implements its own strategic communication strategies according to its goals, environmental requirements, and unique circumstances (Fredriksson & Josef Pallas, 2015, p. 143).

Overall, this definition underscores the strategic nature of communication within organizations, emphasizing its role in driving mission-driven initiatives and achieving organizational success, by emphasizing the following :

-1 Purposeful and Organized Use of Communication: Strategic communication involves intentional and systematic utilization of communication channels and methods by an organization or entity.

-2 Mission or Strategic Objectives: The primary goal of strategic communication is to advance the mission or strategic objectives of the organization. This could include achieving specific outcomes, promoting certain values, or fulfilling long-term goals.

-3 Planned and Managed Process: It emphasizes that strategic communication is not random or unintentional. Rather, it is carefully planned, managed, and executed to achieve desired results.

-4 Consideration of Environmental Factors: While strategic communication is purposeful, it also takes into account external factors and environmental conditions. This includes adapting communication strategies based on the context in which the organization operates.

-5 Utilization of Ideas, Resources, and Skills: Strategic communication relies on the ideas, resources, and skills available to communicators and organizations. This could involve leveraging expertise in communication, accessing relevant resources, and employing effective strategies.

-5 Tailored to Achieve Organizational Goals: Every organization is unique, and strategic communication is customized to align with the specific goals, objectives, and requirements of each organization. This ensures that communication efforts are targeted and effective in achieving desired outcomes.

Strategic communication is considered a modern and evolving discipline that aligns with the increasing need to develop communication activities within organizations. It takes an integrated and multidisciplinary perspective, extending to various concepts grounded in traditional communications disciplines. The aim of strategic communication is to achieve specific objectives through deliberate and purposeful communication practices, which are executed in the public sphere by communication agents on behalf of the communicative



entity. At the macro level, analyzing communication in line with the company's overall strategy is part of it. Working towards achieving sustainable development goals is a significant challenge, and although it may seem daunting, it is achievable step by step through context analysis, prioritization, identification of key stakeholders, defining necessary messages and tactics, and scheduling communication with a clear timeline. Ultimately, strategic communication requires strategic thinking to succeed in achieving specific objectives (Balonas, 2021, p. 156).

Furthermore, strategic communication involves a systematic approach to communication planning and execution, with a focus on achieving organizational goals and objectives. It encompasses the development and implementation of communication strategies tailored to the needs of the organization and its stakeholders. In other words, this definition suggests that strategic communication is characterized by its intentional and goal-oriented nature, emphasizing the importance of aligning communication efforts with broader organizational strategies.

In another context, some studies in the field of strategic communication shed light on the importance of identifying strategies to improve communication performance. Strategic communication thus integrates communication strategies as a functional approach that focuses and directs the communication function. It is the critical piece bridging the situation analysis and the implementation of communication programs. Furthermore, it emerges as "the outcome of a strategic thinking process by senior communication practitioners and top managers taking strategic decisions with regard to the identification and management of, and communication with, strategic stakeholders. In fact, the effectiveness of communication campaigns depends on numerous factors, determinants, and conditions, but one of the most relevant requirements to enable effective campaigns is the strategic development process. As so, it is something that could be worth being prioritized by science communicators (Ruão & Sónia Silva, 2021, pp. 180- 181).

Furthermore, it is evident that strategic communication is the outcome of a deliberate strategic thinking process undertaken by communication experts and senior managers. This process involves making strategic decisions related to identifying, managing, and communicating with key stakeholders. Essentially, strategic communication serves as a bridge between analyzing the situation and implementing communication initiatives. It encompasses various communication strategies aimed at enhancing communication performance and achieving organizational goals. In essence, strategic communication prioritizes the development of targeted strategies to effectively engage with stakeholders and maximize the impact of communication campaigns.

From a sociological perspective, the increased interest in strategic communication can be interpreted as a consequence of modernity: "In circumstances of uncertainty and multiple choices, the notions of trust and risk have particular application." According to this line of thought, strategic communication is seen as an expert system used by organizations and individuals to achieve or enforce legitimacy in relation to different publics, institutions, or stakeholders (Falkheimer & Mats Heide, 2014, p. 131).



Based on the preceding knowledge, we can define strategic communication operationally as the purposeful and systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation of communication initiatives by an organization or individual to achieve specific goals, enhance relationships with stakeholders, and manage perceptions in a dynamic and competitive environment.

2 -2Sustainable development:

The roots of the concept of sustainable development trace back to promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. Legal regimes aimed at conserving marine resources, wildlife, habitat, cultural and natural heritage, as well as protecting the global environment and resources, indicate a widespread international acceptance of sustainable use of natural resources. With the increasing complexity of direct or indirect economic connections in the global economy, experts felt the need to redefine the concept. Sustainable development, as a concept, originates from the global environmental crisis and later evolved by incorporating all economic, social, and human aspects, reaching its current state where sustainable development represents a new approach for humanity. Therefore, sustainable development was conceived as a solution to the environmental crisis caused by intensive industrial exploitation of resources and ongoing environmental degradation, primarily seeking to preserve environmental quality (Duran & et al, 2015, p. 813).

The concept of sustainable development from a sociological perspective is based on the concept of development (social and economic development within environmental constraints), the concept of needs (distribution of resources to ensure quality of life for all), and the concept of future generations (the ability to use resources over the long term to ensure the necessary quality of life for future generations). The essence of sustainable development stems from the concept of the triple bottom line, which entails achieving a balance between three pillars of sustainability - environmental sustainability, which focuses on maintaining the quality of the environment necessary for economic activities and people's quality of life; social sustainability, which seeks to ensure human rights and equality, preserve cultural identity, and respect cultural, racial, and religious diversity; and economic sustainability necessary to maintain the natural, social, and human capital required for income and living standards (Klarin, 2018, p. 68).

In other words, the concept of sustainable development, from a sociological perspective, encompasses the idea that societal progress should occur within the framework of environmental preservation, equitable resource distribution, and the safeguarding of future generations' well-being. In essence, sustainable development aims to strike a balance between economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental integrity to ensure the long-term viability of human societies.

Despite the numerous definitions of sustainable development, the most cited definition of the concept is the one proposed by the Brundtland Commission Report, which defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Mensah, 2019, p. 6).

Certainly, the definition from the Brundtland Commission Report emphasizes that sustainable development is a development approach that seeks to fulfill the needs of the present



generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This implies a balanced and responsible use of resources, ensuring that economic, social, and environmental considerations are integrated to support long-term well-being and prosperity for all, both now and in the future.

In the same context, sustainable development requires a convergence between the three pillars of economic development, social justice, and environmental protection in all sectoral policies, while promoting the interconnectedness and coherence of policies and legislative frameworks related to environmentally sound development goals. Furthermore, the purpose of sustainable development is to eradicate poverty, leaving no one marginalized from benefiting from natural resources, with a focus on human dignity, regional and global stability, ensuring the "health" of our planet, just and resilient societies, and prosperous economies (Mazza, 2021, pp. 107- 112).

In the same semantic context, sustainable development is defined as a social and economic process resulting from the integration of political, economic, and social activities, while maintaining natural balance and sustainability of basic natural processes to ensure the possibility of meeting the basic needs of specific communities or citizens of both present and future generations. However, some researchers believe that the issue of sustainable development should be considered from a sectoral perspective due to its multidisciplinary nature and the need to link many areas of life (Ogryzek, 2023, pp. 8- 9).

The definition clearly affirms that sustainable development is an ongoing process that requires integration between political, economic, and social activities, all while ensuring the preservation of natural balance and the sustainability of essential natural processes. This integration is aimed at guaranteeing the ability to fulfill the basic needs of specific communities or citizens, both in the present and for future generations. However, it is important to note that some researchers advocate for considering the issue of sustainable development from a sectoral perspective, given its multidisciplinary nature and the necessity of connecting various domains of life.

Based on the previous knowledge, we can adopt a procedural definition of sustainable development as follows: The concept of sustainable development is based on three conceptual pillars: "economic sustainability", "social sustainability", and "environmental sustainability". The traditional conceptual framework for sustainable development has been expanded to include a fourth pillar: culture, integrating the increasing importance of cultural sustainability as a key element in the new strategy for sustainable economic growth. Considering that development in nature-society-humanity is a creative process aimed at maintaining an uninterrupted increase in the efficiency of utilizing opportunities. A special role is given to the human system - a source of creativity and innovation (TRUSINA & Elita JERMOLAJEVA, 2021, p. 306).

-3In explaining the relationship between strategic communication and sustainable development:



Strategic communication is considered a fundamental tool for achieving sustainable development goals. This includes using effective communication to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable development and exchange knowledge and experiences among stakeholders, including governments, institutions, civil society, businesses, and citizens.

Strategic communication works to enhance understanding and cooperation among these stakeholders, encouraging the adoption of decisions and the implementation of policies and practices that support sustainable development. Strategic communication can also promote transparency and accountability, contributing to building trust and fostering partnerships based on common interests among all parties.

Overall, strategic communication is seen as an effective means to enhance positive interaction among various stakeholders and motivate them to take actions that contribute to achieving sustainable development goals, whether through raising awareness about environmental and social issues or promoting innovation and adopting more sustainable practices in daily operations and activities.

In this context, the relationship between strategic communication and sustainable development emerges to achieve consensus and engage all relevant stakeholders across three main categories.

Firstly, it targets directly involved stakeholders, who must actively foster enduring and beneficial relationships, capable of achieving sustainable goals through environmental sustainability with the local community and region.

Secondly, it aims at residents who should actively participate in sustainable objectives, understand their benefits, assume responsibility, and fully engage in the process.

Thirdly, it addresses users to raise awareness, promote positive attitudes, and encourage the transformation of their behaviors towards sustainability (Mazza B. , 2023, pp. 3- 4).

From a sociological perspective, the importance of strategic communication for sustainable development can be explained by considering the nature of sustainability. First and foremost, social dialogue is essential to provide legitimacy in sustainable development. Secondly, sustainability is an extremely complex issue that requires overcoming challenges specific to social communication. Typically, sustainability-related issues are characterized by high levels of complexity and tension, and therefore, strategic communication plays a crucial role in delivering information across stakeholders. By providing high levels of communication and dialogue, and involving stakeholders to broaden the information base as well as increasing the quantity of social values. Additionally, sustainability goals appear contradictory in terms of involving conflicts of interests and values conflicts. At this point, strategic communication becomes crucial to create a common understanding of societal values regarding sustainability and to identify specific goals that need to be pursued. Finally, implementing measures for sustainable development is somewhat challenging, as governance capacities for sustainable development are not centralized, but rather widely dispersed among various societal actors and involve multiple levels of decision-making. Therefore, coordination based on network-like forms can be useful to allow effective negotiations and social learning, which in turn contribute to the implementation of sustainable development strategies (Genç, 2017, p. 514).



Sociologically, the significance of strategic communication in the context of sustainable development can be understood by reflecting on the nature of sustainability. Firstly, social dialogue is deemed essential for granting sustainable development legitimacy and support. Secondly, sustainability is characterized by its highly complex nature, necessitating overcoming challenges in social communication specific to it. Typically, issues related to sustainability involve high levels of complexity and tension, and herein lies the role of strategic communication in delivering information across all stakeholders. By enhancing levels of communication and dialogue, and engaging stakeholders to broaden the knowledge base, in addition to increasing the quantity of social values, strategic communication can contribute to fostering common understanding about the social values related to sustainability and identifying specific goals to be pursued. Finally, implementing measures related to sustainable development is relatively challenging, as governance capacities are decentralized and widely dispersed among various entities in society, necessitating effective coordination among them. Through forming cooperative networks, negotiation and social learning can be facilitated, thus contributing to the implementation of sustainable development strategies.

Furthermore, strategic communication plays a vital role in facilitating effective interactions, collaboration, and information exchange among various stakeholders involved in sustainable development initiatives. This entails the deliberate and planned use of communication tools and strategies to convey messages, influence attitudes and behaviors, and enhance active participation. Therefore, sustainable development and strategic communication are not merely technical processes but deeply rooted in social relationships and power dynamics. Sociologists analyze the roles and interactions of various social actors, such as community members, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders involved in sustainable development efforts. They explore how power dynamics, social inequalities, and cultural values influence the formulation and implementation of development strategies, as well as the communication strategies used to engage and mobilize various stakeholders to achieve sustainable development goals (derbal & Nora benouhiba, 2024, p. 101).

From a sociological perspective, we can understand the close relationship between strategic communication and sustainable development in various ways. For example, strategic communication is considered a means to raise awareness and encourage social interaction on environmental and social issues affecting society. Additionally, strategic communication can shape social perceptions and concepts regarding sustainable development, ultimately leading to increased support and broader adoption of these efforts within society. It is worth noting that strategic communication also helps improve interaction and collaboration among various stakeholders, including governments, non-governmental organizations, and local communities, enhancing opportunities for sustainable development in a sustainable and comprehensive manner.

-4The role of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development:



The role of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development is essential and vital. It contributes to conveying knowledge and awareness of sustainable development issues and enhancing understanding and consensus among different stakeholders. It also works to promote public participation and transparency in decision-making processes, and encourages behavioral change towards sustainable practices. Additionally, strategic communication supports the implementation of sustainable policies and strategies, and fosters innovation and the exchange of creative ideas and solutions. Overall, strategic communication plays a crucial role in balancing the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, directing efforts towards achieving desired goals effectively and efficiently.

Strategic communication also plays a vital role in achieving sustainable development. It serves as a catalyst for disseminating knowledge, raising awareness, and enhancing understanding of the goals and practices of sustainable development among various stakeholders. Strategic communications facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and consensus-building, leading to effective decision-making where sustainability is prioritized. Additionally, strategic communications empower individuals and communities to adopt sustainable behaviors and lifestyles through targeted messaging and participatory initiatives. By aligning communicative efforts with sustainable development goals, strategic communications contribute to creating a more resilient, just, and environmentally aware society.

The communication strategy for sustainable development is based on the following objectives:

- Convincing decision makers in the country to adopt new policies and provide support simultaneously.
- Strengthening the leadership's, NGOs', and community-based organizations' capabilities for better economic, environmental, and social management.
- Developing partnerships between governments, local communities, and NGOs to encourage collaborative efforts for change.
- Motivating people to adopt clean production technologies.
- Increasing awareness of the issues related to sustainable development.
- Accelerating and improving people's behavior in adopting responsible actions.
- Convincing and assisting individuals in changing their behavior and generating enthusiasm in the community to change behavior at the community level (Bucur & Cosmin Petra, 2011, pp. 48 – 49).

In the current discourse on sustainable development, strategic communication plays a fundamental role in driving change and learning processes. It does so by shaping social, political, or environmental awareness through cultural contexts, visions, lifestyles, and values - all of which are learned through strategic communication. Moreover, criteria and options for making decisions regarding sustainable practices are influenced by public discourse and transparently communicated alternatives. Consequently, sustainable development cannot rely on manipulating behavior but rather on reflection and diversity, which helps civil society develop the necessary skills to overcome social, political, or environmental crises. Successful



strategic communication for sustainable development also involves recognizing specific elements of public interest, seizing opportunities to clarify connections between people's concerns and the economy or environment, presenting positive aspects and future opportunities, and promoting a clean environment. Effective communication practices such as explaining relevant aspects, providing real-life examples, and using direct language rather than abstract recommendations are also integral components (Oopen & et al, 2006, p. 26).

Strategic communication contributes to achieving sustainable development by raising awareness of environmental and social issues. Effective communication is the first step in identifying the challenges and risks facing communities. When problems are clearly identified and attention is directed towards them, groups and institutions can work together to find sustainable solutions. Therefore, strategic communication is an essential tool for stimulating sustainable thinking and encouraging collective action to mitigate negative impacts on the environment and improve quality of life (Song, 2023, p. 3)

In this sense, communication strategy plays a crucial role in mitigating the threats that hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals globally. Therefore, based on Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals as for the 2030 World Agenda, the need to enhance peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels has been identified. By incorporating communication strategy, answers will be provided on how to avoid instability in the social environment to achieve peace and justice, promote peaceful and inclusive communities for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions (Khairil & et al, 2018).

In this context, communication strategy plays a crucial role in addressing the challenges that hinder the achievement of sustainable development goals globally. The focus is on the importance of enhancing peaceful and inclusive societies, ensuring access to justice for all, and establishing effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. By integrating communication strategy, solutions will be provided on how to deal with instability in the social environment, facilitating the achievement of peace and justice, promoting peaceful and inclusive communities for sustainable development, ensuring access to justice for all, and establishing effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions.

- Conclusion:

Certainly, the role of strategic communication in achieving sustainable development cannot be realized without active engagement and participation from all members of society. The social and environmental changes we witness require a deep understanding of the challenges we face, the exchange of ideas and experiences, and the building of strong cooperative ties among various social partners. Thanks to strategic communication, we can achieve this interaction and enhance effective communication among individuals, communities, and institutions.

It is worth noting that the transition to more sustainable and just societies is not the responsibility of one individual or entity but rather a challenge that requires comprehensive



cooperation and integration. By directing our efforts towards enhancing and developing strategic communication, we can build strong bridges of understanding and collaboration that contribute to achieving sustainable development goals globally.

Thus, success in achieving sustainable development largely depends on our ability to enhance effective and comprehensive communication and to adopt innovative strategies to guide change towards a better future for humanity and our planet. Let us work together with a spirit of cooperation and understanding to build more sustainable and just communities and to make our mark in shaping a future characterized by progress and prosperity for all.

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