

Impact of social communication on consumer attitudes and legal legitimacy

L'impact de la communication sociale sur les attitudes des consommateurs et la légitimité légale

Hanane NAFAA, (PhD Student)

*PhD student at the Larmed Laboratory, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences-Souissi,
 Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco*

Amina AOMARI, (PhD, Professor)

*Professor of Higher Education at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences-Souissi,
 Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco*

Correspondence address :	FSJES Souissi, RABAT Rabat BP 6430 UM5 Maroc (Rabat) 10080 Tel: 05376-71719, Fax: 00212 5 37 67 17 19
Disclosure Statement :	Authors are not aware of any findings that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this study
Conflict of Interest :	The authors report no conflicts of interest.
Cite this article :	NAFAA, H., & AOMARI, A. (2023). Impact of social communication on consumer attitudes and legal legitimacy. International Journal of Accounting, Finance, Auditing, Management and Economics, 4(3-2), 552-564. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8063982
License	This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

Received: May 19, 2023

Accepted: June 20, 2023

International Journal of Accounting, Finance, Auditing, Management and Economics - IJAFAME

ISSN: 2658-8455

Volume 4, Issue 3-2 (2023)

Impact of social communication on consumer attitudes and legal legitimacy

Abstract:

Social communication is fundamentally different from advertising communication as it aims to "influence" rather than "sell" a product. Unlike advertising, social communication challenges the recipient's opinion. Understanding the target audience's opinion is crucial for social communication because the ultimate goal is to modify it. Furthermore, employing social communication requires time. Changing someone's opinion is not a quick task; it demands thorough research, analysis, and understanding of societal changes and expectations. This article aims to address our research question, which seeks to measure the impact of social communication on consumer attitudes and explore the ways to legitimize these actions '**To what extent can social communication influence consumer attitudes and legitimize social actions?**'. This will be accomplished through a review of scientific literature on communication and social concepts, as well as a quantitative study targeting Moroccan consumers. In today's world, social communication is becoming increasingly essential. Understanding the consumer and fostering a strong familial connection based on social principles are key to advancing and cultivating long-term consumer loyalty, regardless of the situation or living conditions (such as post-COVID). Social communication is rooted in human and civic values and often gives a voice to marginalized communities. It is also built on solidarity and sharing, creating a tangible impact on society.

Keywords: Societal Communication, Societal Action, Consumer Attitude, Legitimacy of Actions.

JEL Classification : D83

Paper type: Empirical research

Résumé :

La communication sociale est fondamentalement différente de la communication publicitaire, car elle vise à "influencer" plutôt qu'à "vendre" un produit. Contrairement à la publicité, la communication sociale remet en question l'opinion du destinataire. Comprendre l'opinion du public cible est essentiel pour la communication sociale, car l'objectif ultime est de la modifier.

De plus, la mise en œuvre de la communication sociale nécessite du temps. Changer l'opinion de quelqu'un n'est pas une tâche rapide ; cela exige une recherche approfondie, une analyse et une compréhension des changements et des attentes de la société. Cet article vise à répondre à notre question de recherche, qui cherche à mesurer l'impact de la communication sociale sur les attitudes des consommateurs et à explorer les moyens de légitimer ces actions : "Dans quelle mesure la communication sociale peut-elle influencer les attitudes des consommateurs et légitimer les actions sociales ?". Cela sera réalisé grâce à une revue de la littérature scientifique sur la communication et les concepts sociaux, ainsi qu'à une étude quantitative ciblant les consommateurs marocains.

Dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, la communication sociale devient de plus en plus essentielle. Comprendre le consommateur et favoriser une connexion familiale solide basée sur des principes sociaux sont essentiels pour faire avancer et cultiver la fidélité des consommateurs à long terme, indépendamment de la situation ou des conditions de vie (comme après la COVID). La communication sociale est enracinée dans les valeurs humaines et citoyennes et donne souvent une voix aux communautés marginalisées. Elle repose également sur la solidarité et le partage, créant un impact tangible sur la société.

Mots-clés : Communication sociétale, action sociétale, attitude du consommateur, légitimité des actions.

Classification JEL: D83

Type du papier: Recherche empirique

1. Introduction:

Social communication is a vital tool utilized by companies and organizations to enhance their reputation and establish legitimacy with both external and internal stakeholders. It serves not only as a means of preventive action but also draws attention to sustainable development issues within specific industries, encouraging governments to consider appropriate legislation. The concept of legitimacy has long been a concern in society, as highlighted by previous studies (Laufer, 1977; Laufer and Burlaud, 1980; Laufer and Ramanantsoa, 1982; Alain Burlaud, 2010) particularly in terms of corporate responsibility in the public sphere and the power of consumers to express their opinions.

Companies hold significant power and their decisions can have far-reaching impacts on the economy, society, and the environment. However, they often face criticism for prioritizing profit over environmental considerations. The stakeholders involved in social communication efforts can vary and typically include employees, customers, journalists, the general public, public authorities, suppliers, shareholders, and NGOs. The objective of societal marketing is to establish a win-win scenario where both the customer and society benefit from the marketing efforts of a company. By adopting a long-term perspective and considering the broader impacts of their actions, companies can achieve success while contributing to the overall well-being of society.

The motivation behind this research is to address several key questions: Is it possible to influence consumer attitudes through social actions? Is the primary purpose of corporate social communication necessarily to influence the emotional intelligence of consumers? Do companies utilize social communication as a means to legitimize their actions? Today, leading brands publicly associate their images with the fight against societal problems. How does this influence consumer attitude? To better understand our study, the problem we aim to address is as follows: **To what extent can social communication influence consumer attitudes and legitimize social actions?** To develop this research, our methodology focuses primarily on recognizing that each consumer holds unique perspectives on purchasing and consumption attitudes. Some consumers prioritize prices, while others focus on the services offered. Furthermore, there are those who seek to establish a connection with a brand based on the company's societal activities. To gather a wide range of opinions on this topic and assess the impact of social communication strategies on consumer attitudes, I conducted a random questionnaire among diverse consumers. The objective of this survey is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of social communication in shaping consumer attitudes.

Our action plan will proceed with a comprehensive literature review to delve deeper into and gain a better understanding of the subject matter. This will be followed by hypothesis formulation, which we will confirm through a quantitative analysis. Subsequently, we will discuss the limitations and advantages of the topic. By analyzing existing literature, we will identify key trends, theories, and gaps in knowledge that will guide our research approach. Furthermore, we will critically examine the limitations of our study, acknowledging potential biases or constraints that may have influenced the outcomes. Additionally, we will highlight the advantages of this research topic. By shedding light on the influence of social communication on consumer attitudes and the legitimation of social actions, our study aims to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical applications.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development:

Societal marketing is a marketing approach that focuses on the long-term well-being of both customers and society. It seeks to balance the needs of the consumer with the needs of the company and the long-term interests of society. This approach recognizes that consumer needs

and desires are not the only important factors to consider in marketing decisions, but that the impact on society and the environment should also be taken into account.

In practice, societal marketing involves developing marketing strategies that provide value to customers while also promoting the well-being of both the customer and society. This can involve offering products or services that meet the needs of the consumer in a way that is sustainable and socially responsible. It can also involve promoting social causes and initiatives that align with the values and goals of the company.

Overall, the goal of societal marketing is to create a win-win scenario where both the customer and society benefit from the marketing efforts of the company. By taking a long-term view and considering the broader impacts of its actions, a company can achieve success while also contributing to the well-being of society.

2.1. Background:

In today's society, the impact of companies goes beyond their immediate actions and extends to the lasting transformations they bring about for people and the environment. Understanding the societal impact of a company involves considering both the positive and negative effects directly attributed to the company's activities. Effective communication strategies play a crucial role in shaping this impact, as communication serves as a powerful tool for disseminating ideas, shaping consumer attitudes, fostering social progress, and building relationships based on transparency and trust.

Furthermore, effective communication is crucial for building trust, satisfying stakeholders, and gaining legitimacy. Establishing open and transparent lines of communication fosters trust among customers, employees, and other stakeholders, contributing to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and support. This, in turn, enhances the overall legitimacy and reputation of the organization.

2.1.1. The societal impact on society:

The impact of a company refers to the long-term transformation that its actions and activities have on people and the environment. It is important to distinguish between the impact of a company and the immediate effects of its actions. While the immediate effects may be easier to measure, the impact of a company reflects the lasting change that is brought about by its activities.

To understand the impact of a company, it is necessary to consider both negative and positive effects. This includes taking into account only those effects that are directly attributed to the company, rather than external factors that may also be at play. Additionally, it is important to focus on the most significant effects for the company, such as those that have a longer duration or a greater depth of change.

Overall, understanding the impact of a company can be an important aspect of its operations and can inform decisions about how to best serve the needs of both the company and its stakeholders. By considering the long-term consequences of its actions, a company can work to create positive change and make a lasting difference in the world.

Social communication practices encompass various approaches and channels, depending on the desired level of exposure and the company's engagement with social obligations. Some companies adopt a discrete approach, highlighting their social commitments through institutional communication on their website or in sustainability reports. Others take a more proactive stance, incorporating their commitments into commercial messages, such as advertisements or billboards. The most advanced level of societal communication involves community involvement in the implementation process. Channels utilized for social communication include media advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, sponsorship, public relations, event organization, digital marketing, social audit reports, and codes of conduct. Effectively presenting a societal argument involves employing responsible claims,

visually appealing graphics, endorsements from external organizations, and recognizable labels. These strategies aid in effectively communicating a company's dedication to social responsibility. The stakeholders engaged in social communication efforts are diverse and often include employees, customers, journalists, the general public, public authorities, suppliers, shareholders, and NGOs, demonstrating the breadth of engagement in these practices.

H1: The effective implementation of social communication practices by companies positively influences their overall impact on society and the environment.

2.1.2. The role of communication in society:

Communication is a societal interaction through which verbal and written messages are conveyed using various methods such as speech, gestures, texts, or other means. It is a continuous and dynamic process that is integral to the functioning of businesses. By creating and interpreting the meanings of messages and symbols, communication channels transmit cognitive content and intentions between individuals. Communication is a crucial process for the success of a company, as it plays a direct role in its overall performance.

Communication plays a multifaceted role in society, encompassing several key aspects. Firstly, it has the power to generate change and contribute to the creation and maintenance of the societal environment. Through effective communication, ideas, values, and norms can be disseminated, fostering social progress. Furthermore, communication has a significant influence on consumer attitudes, allowing businesses to shape perceptions, increase credibility, and enhance the effectiveness of messages targeted at consumers. It facilitates understanding between a company and its environment by promoting the exchange of views, fostering dialogue, and building relationships based on transparency and trust. Communication also plays a crucial role in helping businesses gain legitimacy, as it enables them to articulate their purpose, values, and commitment to societal well-being. During times of crisis, effective communication becomes even more vital as it helps businesses refocus their efforts, maintain consumer trust, and navigate challenges while upholding their social responsibility (David Vaidis, 2006). Additionally, communication serves as a powerful tool for raising community awareness of brands, fostering engagement, and promoting shared values. Finally, by effectively communicating with target audiences, businesses can expand their consumer base and increase their market share, contributing to their overall growth and success. In summary, communication plays a fundamental role in society, impacting various aspects of businesses' operations and their relationship with stakeholders.

Societal marketing goes beyond just promoting products and services. It also encourages companies to actively work to shape societal policy, engage in societal activities, and invest in corporate social responsibility through time and financial resources (Béatrice Parguel, 2010).

H2: Effective communication strategies play a crucial role in the success of businesses by shaping consumer attitudes, fostering social progress, and enhancing transparency and trust.

2.1.3. Importance of the concept of social marketing:

Social marketing plays a significant role in promoting the well-being of society, the environment, and businesses. It was developed with the intention to combat consumerism and not solely exploit commercial interests. By incorporating societal considerations into their marketing efforts, organizations can not only maximize profits but also cultivate long-term relationships with customers.

In general, effective communication, characterized by qualities such as satisfaction, credibility, continuity, transparency, and understandability, holds substantial influence over individual judgments. It has the power to persuade people to take action or adopt similar behaviors through various communication channels, both internal and external to the organization.

Furthermore, good communication is crucial for building trust, satisfying stakeholders, and gaining legitimacy. By establishing open and transparent lines of communication, businesses can foster trust among their customers, employees, and other stakeholders. This trust, in turn, contributes to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and support, enhancing the organization's overall legitimacy and reputation.

Overall, effective communication plays a vital role in social marketing, enabling businesses to align their actions with societal needs and values while simultaneously achieving their commercial objectives.

2.1.4. Legitimacy of a communication and audience attitude:

The evaluation of attitudes towards action relies on the predictive accuracy of its emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components. Validity plays a crucial role in shaping various aspects of attitudes towards action. Specifically, in terms of the affective dimension, the legitimacy of the measures emerges as a significant predictor. This advantage is attributed to the use of a lever that encourages the public to respond to a threatening message. In essence, for the action to be perceived positively, the recipient must acknowledge the threat as being in their own best interest. The cognitive component, on the other hand, is influenced by three distinct aspects of legitimacy.

The different components of legitimacy have separate effects on the cognitive component, both for the cause and the advertiser. In summary, a company's societal communication not only serves its own interests but also brings about positive consequences for the relevant issue. This communication strategy is an integral part of the broader social marketing approach aimed at enhancing the brand image (Florence Benoît-Moreau, Fabrice Larceneux, Béatrice Parguel, 2010).

H3 : The inclusion of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components in the evaluation of attitudes towards action, along with the crucial role of validity, indicates that the legitimacy of measures significantly predicts the affective dimension.

2.1.5. Past action as a source of legitimacy:

The validity of societal communication can be evaluated through three key dimensions. The first dimension is the legality of objectives, which refers to the alignment between the advertiser's goals and the prohibited case. In the context of societal communication, public advertisers generally have higher legitimacy of objectives compared to private companies. The second dimension is the legality of measures, which pertains to the effectiveness of the advertising tactics employed to achieve the desired goals. The effectiveness of these measures depends on the importance of the case to the target audience. Additionally, advertisers that adopt a long-term approach in their advertising strategies tend to have higher historical credibility scores. The third dimension, historical legality, emphasizes the significance of temporal coherence in the advertiser's communication strategy. These dimensions of legitimacy directly impact the effectiveness of communication efforts.

When employing threatening messages in communication, companies face two main challenges. The first challenge is to avoid damaging their own image with the use of threats. To overcome this challenge, advertisers must carefully select causes that make the use of threatening messages legitimate and aligned with their objectives. The second challenge is to encourage brand behavior by enhancing the legitimacy of objectives. However, private advertisers often encounter more difficulties compared to public advertisers when it comes to legitimacy in societal communication (Sonia Capelli, 2020). Private advertisers must find a delicate balance between the constraints of public advertising and tactics that are suitable for their private status, all while addressing the inherent mistrust of citizens.

Overall, the selection of an appropriate cause becomes the most crucial factor for advertisers who choose to communicate through societal discourse. By considering and managing the

dimensions of legitimacy, advertisers can navigate these challenges and effectively engage in societal communication, regardless of their public or private status.

H4 : Is it fair to say that social communication, regardless of its specific elements, is a virtuous approach and legitimizes the actions of businesses.

2.2. Hypotheses development:

In today's competitive business landscape, establishing a strong connection with consumers is a primary objective for companies. To achieve this goal, businesses employ various strategies, including social communication, to influence consumer attitudes and foster positive relationships. The effectiveness of social communication extends beyond its impact on consumers alone, as it also plays a crucial role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of businesses. However, a critical question arises: Is it fair to characterize social communication, with all its diverse elements, as a virtuous approach that legitimizes the actions of businesses?

H1: The effective implementation of social communication practices by companies positively influences their overall impact on society and the environment.

H2: Effective communication strategies play a crucial role in the success of businesses by shaping consumer attitudes, fostering social progress, and enhancing transparency and trust.

H3: The inclusion of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components in the evaluation of attitudes towards action, along with the crucial role of validity, indicates that the legitimacy of measures significantly predicts the affective dimension.

H4: Is it fair to say that social communication, regardless of its specific elements, is a virtuous approach and legitimizes the actions of businesses.

In this study, we aim to explore the multifaceted aspects of social communication, its influence on consumer attitudes, and its potential to legitimize the actions of businesses. By examining different dimensions of social communication, including its objectives, measures, and historical coherence, we seek to gain a deeper understanding of its role and impact. Through a comprehensive analysis of these factors, we can evaluate the fairness of characterizing social communication as a virtuous approach and its implications for businesses in today's dynamic marketplace.

3. Research method:

3.1. Research model:

According to estimates, the population of Morocco in 2021 is 37.08M. Each consumer has their own perspective on purchasing and consumption attitudes. Some consumers focus solely on prices, others on the services offered, while others seek to establish a connection with a brand based on the company's societal activities. In order to gather a wide range of opinions on this topic and determine the impact of this strategy on consumer attitudes, I conducted a random questionnaire among different consumers. The goal of this survey is to better understand and explain the role of social communication in shaping consumer attitudes.

3.2. Sample selection and description:

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of my research findings, I followed a rigorous methodology that involved several key steps.

Given the very large population of Morocco, which has approximately 37.08 million inhabitants according to the HCP (2021), the appropriate sampling method would be simple random sampling. This method is based on the principle that all elements of the population have an equal (non-zero) probability of being part of the sample. It involves selecting n units randomly from the N population, ensuring that each of the n individuals in the potential sample has an equal probability of being chosen. In this case, the number of survey respondents will be estimated to be 200 people (consumers).

3.3. Data Processing:

Our study follows a hypothetico-deductive approach. Based on the literature review presented, we have formulated the following hypotheses:

H1: The effective implementation of social communication practices by companies positively influences their overall impact on society and the environment.

H2: Effective communication strategies play a crucial role in the success of businesses by shaping consumer attitudes, fostering social progress, and enhancing transparency and trust.

H3: The inclusion of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components in the evaluation of attitudes towards action, along with the crucial role of validity, indicates that the legitimacy of measures significantly predicts the affective dimension.

H4: Is it fair to say that social communication, regardless of its specific elements, is a virtuous approach and legitimizes the actions of businesses.

To verify these hypotheses, conduct this study, and address the initial problem, a quantitative method (questionnaire) was used as the investigative tool. This method is used to illustrate or demonstrate facts by quantifying the phenomenon. A quantitative study involves examining the expectations, behaviors, and opinions of a sample from the population under study through a questionnaire and survey. Typically, a quantitative study is conducted on representative samples of hundreds to thousands of individuals and can be administered through various modes (email, face-to-face, telephone, etc.). In this case, the questionnaire was developed, analyzed using Google Forms, and administered online (100%).

4. Results and discussion:

4.1. Descriptive statistics:

To address the research problem, I utilized two distinct methods of analysis. Firstly, I employed a comparative approach to analyze the interview data, wherein I compared the responses of different participants to identify similarities and differences in their perspectives. Secondly, I conducted a quantitative analysis of the data collected through Google Forms using SPSS software. This allowed me to analyze individual responses and generate statistical results, providing a comprehensive understanding of the participants' attitudes and opinions.

By utilizing these diverse methods of analysis, I was able to gain a deeper insight into the research problem and develop a more nuanced understanding of the perspectives of the participants. The comparative analysis of the interview data provided a rich and detailed understanding of individual experiences and perspectives, while the quantitative analysis using SPSS enabled me to identify patterns and trends in the data, which enhanced the overall findings of the study.

In summary, the utilization of both comparative and quantitative analysis techniques provided a holistic understanding of the research problem and allowed me to draw more nuanced conclusions about the attitudes and opinions of the participants.

4.2. Regression results or qualitative results:

- **Are you familiar with the principle of societal actions?**

To date, no specific study has been conducted in Morocco to determine and analyze the exact number or percentage of people who are familiar with the principle of societal actions. However, based on our own analysis and survey, we have observed a high level of awareness among consumers. This indicates that societal actions have become an increasingly relevant and important topic for many people in Morocco. This heightened awareness may be attributed to a growing recognition of social and environmental issues, as well as a desire for businesses to demonstrate responsibility and accountability for their actions.

The fact that 27.5% of consumers are not familiar with societal actions presents an opportunity for businesses to educate and inform their audience about the significance of these actions. By doing so, companies can enhance their credibility and develop stronger relationships with their customers. It would also be valuable for businesses to delve into the reasons behind the lack of awareness among certain consumers. Are there specific demographic groups or communities that are less informed about societal actions? Understanding the barriers to awareness can assist companies in crafting more effective communication strategies to reach and engage these individuals.

- **What do you think about taking into account the objectives in terms of societal actions?**

H1: The effective implementation of social communication practices by companies positively influences their overall impact on society and the environment.

H3: The inclusion of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components in the evaluation of attitudes towards action, along with the crucial role of validity, indicates that the legitimacy of measures significantly predicts the affective dimension.

It is interesting to see that a relatively even number of respondents believe that the final return on an action (36.88%) or the control of the action from the outset (32.5%) are the most important factors in evaluating the success of a societal action. This may suggest that some consumers are more focused on the practical outcomes of these efforts, while others prioritize transparency and accountability in the implementation process.

The smaller percentage of respondents who believe that the budget should be the main objective of each action (27.5%) may reflect a desire for companies to prioritize the impact of their efforts over financial considerations. This may be especially important for consumers who are looking for companies to make a positive difference in the world, rather than simply maximizing profits. Overall, these responses highlight the importance of companies being able to clearly communicate the goals and impact of their societal actions to consumers, so that they can understand and appreciate the value of these efforts.

- **Do you think the consumer can be influenced by the content of societal communication?**

H2: Effective communication strategies play a crucial role in the success of businesses by shaping consumer attitudes, fostering social progress, and enhancing transparency and trust.

It is important to note that the majority of consumers who responded to our survey (85.6%) expressed that they are indeed influenced by the content provided by companies. This emphasizes the significance of companies giving careful thought to the messages and values they convey to their audience. The smaller percentage of consumers who feel that they are more impacted by the service rather than the communication (14.4%) may suggest that these individuals place a higher value on tangible, practical elements of a company's offerings. This could include factors such as the quality and reliability of products or services, or the convenience and efficiency of the customer experience.

Overall, these results show that both the content of a company's communication and the practical elements of their offerings are important to consumers. Companies should strive to provide a well-rounded and positive experience to their customers in order to build and maintain a strong reputation.

- **How can we evaluate the success of societal communication?**

According to an analysis conducted by Weinreich Communication, integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods adds depth and clarity to social marketing programs. This combination of approaches is necessary due to the diverse range of data required to develop effective communications. Comparing this with our analysis, we find that success measures for social communication can vary depending on the specific strategy being implemented. In terms

of assessing the impact of social communication on consumer attitudes, 45.6% of respondents consider this to be the most important factor to consider. Conversely, 35% believe that the action itself, regardless of the communication and message, is the most significant factor in determining success. Finally, 16.9% believe that the overall strategy and its execution are the key determinants of success or failure in social communication efforts.

- **In your opinion a societal action must respect the cultural and societal aspect of each target?**

Based on the analysis of the Community Tool Box, social action serves as a catalyst, motivating individuals to take action, fostering a sense of empowerment, and reducing their inclination to passively comply with the directives of those in authority. It instills a sense of personal accountability and unlocks leadership capabilities. By taking into consideration the cultural and societal dimensions of each target, organizations showcase their commitment to honoring diversity, advancing inclusivity, and mitigating the risks of misunderstandings or inadvertent negative effects. These proactive measures have the potential to amplify the organization's authenticity and credibility, cultivating stronger connections with the target audience and stakeholders.

According to the analysis of the questionnaire, 60% of consumers confirm that it is important for companies to take into account the cultural and societal context of their target audience prior to implementing a social communication strategy. This ensures that the company's message and actions are suitable and impactful in aligning with the audience's values and beliefs. Disregarding the cultural and societal context may result in misunderstandings or misalignments, ultimately harming the company's reputation and overall success. It is crucial for companies to invest time in researching and comprehending their target audience to establish effective communication and foster connections.

- **Do you think that societal actions make it possible to legitimise the actions of companies?**

H4: Is it fair to say that social communication, regardless of its specific elements, is a virtuous approach and legitimizes the actions of businesses.

It is important to consider that while social communication can have a positive impact on a company's reputation and its relationship with consumers, it is crucial for companies to be genuine and transparent in their efforts. Merely engaging in surface-level communication or using social communication as a means to enhance their image without addressing real issues or making substantial changes can ultimately have negative consequences and damage the company's reputation and stakeholder relationships. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize that social communication can be considered virtuous and legitimizing for businesses only when it is sincere, relevant, and based on tangible actions and a genuine commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

5. Discussion:

Our study follows a hypothetico-deductive approach aimed at verifying several hypotheses regarding societal actions and their impact on businesses and consumers. Societal communication is a strategic approach to corporate communication that aims to generate a positive impact on society and the environment. It encompasses not only the traditional advertiser-agency-consumer triptych but also involves other stakeholders such as political actors, media outlets, environmental organizations, professional associations, and consumer advocacy groups. These stakeholders play a crucial role in amplifying the societal message. Companies engage in societal communication not only to enhance their reputation and influence

consumer attitudes but also to demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

In today's era of increasing consumer skepticism, businesses are expected to be transparent and accountable in their marketing practices. The success of societal communication depends on its legitimacy and the company's ability to align its actions with the values and needs of its stakeholders. Our study aims to shed light on the significance of effective societal communication practices and their impact on businesses and consumers.

The results underscore the importance of clear communication regarding goals and the impact of societal actions. Both the content of communication and the practical aspects of a company's offerings are crucial to consumers. By providing a comprehensive and positive experience, companies can establish and maintain a strong reputation.

However, implementing a societal communication strategy involves potential risks and challenges that require careful consideration. Balancing the interests of various stakeholders can be complex, as they may possess conflicting interests. Effectively communicating an organization's societal actions to all stakeholders while maintaining a balance can be a daunting task.

In conclusion, our study emphasizes the significance of societal communication in building stronger relationships with stakeholders, enhancing credibility, and contributing to social progress. It highlights the need for companies to consider the cultural and societal context of their target audience, educate consumers about societal actions, and prioritize transparency and accountability. To be considered virtuous and legitimate, companies must ensure that their communication is genuine, relevant, and supported by tangible actions. By embracing effective societal communication practices, businesses can navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and make a positive impact on society and the environment.

While no specific study has been conducted in Morocco to determine the exact number or percentage of people familiar with societal actions, our analysis and survey indicate a high level of awareness among consumers. This suggests that societal actions have become increasingly relevant and important in Morocco, likely due to a growing recognition of social and environmental issues and the desire for businesses to demonstrate responsibility and accountability.

To address potential threats, it is crucial for organizations to carefully plan and execute their societal communication strategies, ensuring transparency, authenticity, and consideration of all stakeholders' interests. Seeking guidance from experts or consultants experienced in societal communication can provide valuable insights and assistance. Additionally, conducting further research and analysis focused on specific industries can help identify the variables that influence the effectiveness of societal communication strategies and their impact on consumers, leading to a better understanding of how these strategies can be improved.

5. Conclusion:

In conclusion, societal communication is a complex and multifaceted process that plays a vital role in establishing relationships between businesses and various stakeholders. To be effective, it requires careful planning, alignment with organizational goals and values, and a clear understanding of stakeholders' needs and expectations. Transparency, authenticity, and responsiveness are key elements that contribute to building trust, legitimacy, and long-term relationships.

This article has highlighted several important areas for further exploration in the field of societal communication. First, the role of social media in communicating societal actions and engaging stakeholders needs to be thoroughly examined. Understanding how to leverage social media effectively and measure its impact is essential for successful communication strategies.

Additionally, transparency in communicating goals, objectives, and the actual impact of initiatives is crucial for fostering trust and credibility.

The relationship between societal communication and corporate social responsibility (CSR) is another important aspect to consider. Exploring effective ways to communicate CSR activities and integrate them into overall communication strategies is essential. Engaging stakeholders, including employees, customers, and community members, is crucial for the success of societal communication efforts. Examining strategies for stakeholder engagement and measuring their impact can further enhance communication effectiveness.

Addressing the limited availability of information and resources is a challenge that organizations must overcome. Accessing relevant information and gaining a thorough understanding of societal communication concepts can be difficult. In this regard, conducting surveys and questionnaires among diverse consumers can provide valuable insights into the role of social communication in shaping consumer attitudes.

The study presented in this article follows a hypothetico-deductive approach and employs a quantitative research method. By examining expectations, behaviors, and opinions through a questionnaire, valuable data can be obtained to support the hypotheses related to effective communication strategies and their impact on businesses, society, and the environment.

Awareness of skepticism from stakeholders and the potential for backlash is essential. Organizations must strive for transparency, authenticity, and careful communication to build trust and credibility. Poorly received or insincere societal communication can lead to reputational damage and negative consequences.

In summary, this paper contributes to our understanding of the relationship between effective communication strategies and the impact of businesses on society and the environment. Exploring the role of social media, fostering transparency, aligning with CSR initiatives, engaging stakeholders, and addressing challenges such as limited information and potential backlash are key areas for future research. From investigating these aspects, we can enhance our knowledge and develop strategies that promote positive societal impact through effective communication practice.

References:

- (1). [Adeline Hérault](#), [Pierre Molinier](#) (2009), Les caractéristiques de la communication sociale via Internet
- (2). Béatrice Parguel (2010), La communication sociétale vs communication responsable. 50 fiches sur le marketing durable, Bréal, pp.120-123.
- (3). David Douyère,. (2016) Le christianisme en communication(s). Communication & langages, N° 189
- (4). David Vaidis, (2006), Attitude et comportement dans le rapport cause-effet : quand l'attitude détermine l'acte et quand l'acte détermine l'attitude, Revue des linguistes de l'université Paris Ouest Nanterre La défense.
- (5). Elanor Colleoni, (2013), CSR Communication Strategies for Organizational Legitimacy in Social Media, Corporate Communications An International Journal.
- (6). Emarketing, Communication sociétale, (Consulté le 22 Janvier 2023), sur : <https://www.emarketing.fr/Definitions-Glossaire/Communication-societale-241003.htm>
- (7). Emilie FRERY (2012), La distraction aux urgences pédiatriques, (Consulté le 10 Janvier 2023), sur : <https://www.memoireonline.com/01/13/6688/m-La-distraction-aux-urgences-pediatriques17.html>
- (8). Fabienne Michelik, (2008), La relation attitude-comportement : un état des lieux, Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal

- (9). Fatima Zahra Agzit, Hind Moussaid, Mohamed Sidmou, Mohamed Benmoussa (2017), les déterminants de l'attitude des consommateurs envers les nouvelles stratégies des distributeurs : analyse qualitative exploratoire appliquée au cas des aliments sante vendus sous MDD, Revue marocaine de recherche en management et marketing, CNRST-IMIST
- (10). Florence Benoît-Moreau, Fabrice Larceneux, Béatrice Parguel (2010), La communication sociétale : entre opportunités et risques d'opportunisme, (Consulté le 20 Décembre 2022), sur : file:///C:/Users/ASUS/Downloads/La_communication_societale_entre_opportunites_e_t_r.pdf
- (11). Ibtissem Dellagi, Fatma Smaoui (2014), Effet de la communication sociétale sur l'attitude envers la marque et le capital marque : étude dans un contexte tunisien, Revue Marocaine de Recherche en Management et Marketing N°9-10.
- (12). iEduNote, Societal Marketing Concept: Definition, Advantages, Examples, (Consulté le 20 Janvier 2023), sur : <https://www.iedunote.com/societal-marketing-concept>
- (13). L'équipe Dynamique Entrepreneuriale (08/04/2013), La communication sociétale, (Consulté le 5 Janvier 2023) sur : <https://www.dynamique-mag.com/article/la-communication-societale.3705>
- (14). Marie-Laure Buisson (2005), La gestion de la légitimité organisationnelle: un outil pour faire face à la complexification de l'environnement?
- (15). Mohamed Hammach (2016), L'impact de la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise sur l'implication organisationnelle des cadres salariés : cas du secteur de l'industrie agroalimentaire au Maroc, (Consulté le 1 Février 2023), sur: <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01583104/document>
- (16). Romain Laufer, Alain Burlaud (2010), Management public
- (17). Romain MINSILI NGOLA(2006), Analyse de l'Attitude des Consommateurs face à un nouveau produit, (Consulté le 08 Janvier 2023) sur : https://www.memoireonline.com/12/07/745/m_analyse-attitude-consommateurs-nouveau-prod-uit-malta-guiness-quench17.html
- (18). Sonia Capelli (2020), La communication sociétale : Quelle légitimité pour les annonceurs ?, Centre d'études et de recherches appliquées à la gestion.