

Importance of Supplier Communication in E-commerce industry

Patil Neeraj

Najla Shafighi

bbw University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, Germany

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to critically examine the importance of achieving effective communication by driving several factors within E-commerce organizations. This research has specifically illustrated and analyzed how information sharing, supplier conflict resolution, and channels of communication play an instrumental role in driving the phenomenon of effective communication among E-commerce buyers and suppliers. This research study has analyzed two sources of data, one data collected from the survey questionnaire responses from E-commerce professionals and other data collected through a real-time pilot communication project initiated with real E-commerce suppliers. A total of 100 responses from E-commerce professionals through surveys were analyzed along with the E-commerce company pilot communication project to validate and compare the findings in real-time implementation. By using the regression analysis, the output results indicate that information sharing, and supplier conflict resolution significantly impact and drive effective communication between buyers and suppliers. However, the channel of communication shows a moderate impact on driving effective communication between E-commerce buyers and suppliers.

Date of Submission: 22-11-2022

Date of Acceptance: 06-12-2022

I. Introduction

This research carried out in the master thesis focuses on the importance of constant effective communication in E-commerce firms and its implementation to achieve streamlined business relationships with suppliers at various stages of business partnership. This report can also be applied primarily to any small, medium, and global e-commerce organizations that want to switch from self-service supplier online portals and implement actual one to one communication lines with suppliers. This research is useful to determine what are the prominent factors that are counted towards driving effective communication between e-commerce buyers and suppliers. This report also highlights a real-time case study of an e-commerce firm Wayfair where proactive supplier communication was implemented with prominent driving variables highlighted in this thesis and provides a generalized benefit of implementing supplier communication with those variables which various e-commerce companies could follow to achieve a flawless buyer-supplier relationship.

Supplier communication nowadays seeks a lot of attention because it is considered the most effective method to enhance business performance achieved through personal relationships between buyers and suppliers. The ease of communication is majorly measured by the degree of comfort both buyer and supplier had while in the process of sharing information. Building personal relationships with suppliers as a part of supplier communication not only allows information exchange but also opens many windows for the transfer of innovative business ideas. Many researchers have also found that personal relationships with suppliers majorly foster the efficiency and effectiveness of communication. Effective supplier communication also defines the type of information that can be shared between buyer and supplier to perform tasks during business relationships. (Zhang Z. and Zhang M., 2013) Implementing communication in buyer-supplier relationships, it allows organizations to effectively collaborate with each other and exchange continuous dialogues, thus fostering and enhancing trust and mutual commitment of both parties. (Lukas S Msemwa, Cecilia Ruoja& Isaac Kazungu, 2017) It has also been quoted that buyers working play a vital role in effectively managing the relationships by creating a positive work atmosphere with absolute comfort for suppliers to share information and leverage the information for performing operations to enhance business for both parties. (Agarwal, U.A. and Narayana, S.A., 2020)

Therefore, through effective communication between buyers and suppliers, both parties can successfully fulfill the objectives of sharing information, resolving potential blockers/conflicts, and leveraging correct mode of communication at various stages of business relationships depending on the circumstances. (Claycomb C, Frankwick G.L, 2004)

In this era of digitization, most of the firms which run on the concept of doing online business (E-commerce) have benefited themselves from substantial cost savings, and reduction in manual operations like human paperwork, which increases efficiency within the organizations. The online way of operating businesses has resulted in a wide opening of sales for businesses adopting E-commerce. (Kartiwi M., Hussin H., 2018) But unfortunately, during this process of automation and implementation of new intelligent information technology systems, many firms tend to move away from the core meaning of authentic communication and diminish social contacts in partnerships. In the vicinity of complex problem solving, the organization personnel rely on experts who possess knowledge and information. Therefore, to transfer this knowledge and information, more personal interaction, initiative from partners, and intense involvement to solve potential conflicts and problems encountered in business relationships jointly. (Vuori V., Helander N. and Okkonen J., 2019)

There are certain aspects with respect to developing effective communication between E-commerce buyers and suppliers due to the aspect of 2 involvement parties. Buyers and suppliers collaborate through different channels and share tons of information and resolve conflicts generating value for suppliers and buyer's businesses. The basis for E-commerce companies is to construct a strong business relationship by leveraging **effective communication** as a mechanism and phenomena to support. Therefore, to drive an effective communication the author has mentioned following 3 important factors:

- i. E-commerce buyers share and exchange a lot of information with suppliers such as educating the supplier on partner portals, product information, payment terms, contract terms, integration setup information, logistics information, etc.
- ii. Starting from the initial partner-up stage with E-commerce buyers until selling the products site, suppliers come up with several conflicts and issues which might turn up into potential conflicts in business relationships. Hence, effective communication lines play a vital role in proactively outreaching to suppliers and resolving conflicts with respect to payment terms, dropship terms, contractual terms, product categories, etc.
- iii. Choosing the right mode of communication depending on the information to be shared, at different stages of buyer-supplier business relationship, for resolving specific conflicts together counts in to be termed as effective communication in buyer-supplier relationship.

Therefore, this study tries to answer the following questions.

1. Does persistent information sharing between buyer and supplier can drive effective communication between E-commerce buyers and suppliers?
2. Does resolving supplier conflicts and blockers play a vital role in increasing the effectiveness of communication between buyers and suppliers in E-commerce firms?
3. Does leveraging different channels of communication with suppliers have a considerable influence on effectiveness of communication?

II. Literature Review

With the effort to get insights on the effect of effective communication in buyer-supplier relationship several previous research and case studies were reviewed and analyzed. Information sharing has been a vital factor in deciding the success rate of varied kinds of businesses. Sener A, Barut M & Dag A have quoted that where the impact of information sharing was tested with aircraft industries manufacturers. This research highlighted the various kinds of information shared in supply chains such as research and development information which most termed as sensitive along with sharing production capacity information played a vital role in supplier performance enhancement. This research study also reflected that constant exchange of purchase orders, forecast demand information plays a prominent role for success of aircraft manufacturer businesses. It was also found that by sharing forecast demand information, suppliers were better able to plan their production plans, resources and maintain safety stock levels beforehand. Feedback was also considered as a critical part of information sharing in this research which proved to be a great promoter of supplier cooperation and collaboration. (Sener Barut & Dag A, 2021; Jamali, Samadi, & Gharleghi, 2015)

Agarwal U.A. and Narayana S. A throws light on having frequent information sharing strategies as a part of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in buyer-supplier relationships which in turn fosters trust in suppliers and gives back satisfaction to the buyers. The author from this research also makes a huge finding that constant maintenance of effective communication through constant critical information sharing positively affects the commitment of suppliers and buyers to contribute into business relationships and develop an emotional healthy bonding for long term supplier relationships. (Agarwal U.A. and Narayana S. A, 2020)

One of the types of research highlights a significant importance of the relationship between information sharing and communication by analyzing the relationship of two buyers and their eight suppliers. This research study pointed out information sharing fosters transparency and insights within the supply chains and provides resilient cushioning. The researcher additionally mentions that in depth reliable information about general updates and not just about disturbances/blockers, increases the speed of supply chains. Also, the researcher has studied that information like logistics information, recent market trends, schedules, forecasts, and probable blockers are the prime types of information topics which are shared within the supply chains as a part of collaborative communication. (Scholten, K. and Schilder, S., 2015)

Based on the foregoing research studies, the following hypotheses is proposed:
H1: *There is significant relationship continuous information sharing and effective communication*

One of the research studies flags a fascinating fact by stating that Chinese salespersons and oil equipment buyers are more inclined towards maintaining harmony and not intentionally hurting anybody in business relationships, thus making a constant effort to avoid probable conflicts. Thus, research findings stated that formal communication in Chinese businesses potentially leads to rise of conflicts in Guanxi (Interpersonal relationship) whereas informal communication ameliorates avoiding potential conflicts thus maintaining long term relationships. (Zhang Z. and Zhang M, 2013)

An interesting analysis from 162 buyers was reviewed where the effect of contracts and trust on destructive and constructive conflicts respectively. Detailed contracts with suppliers exert more control and have a negative effect on both constructive and destructive conflicts and the effects of overtly detailed contracts and open contracts gives rise to many conflicts in higher environmental uncertainty. The researcher points out that trust is a potential tool for effective conflict management and this trust is fostered by constant communication dialogues by inter firm managers and by performing many operational tasks along the duration of business relationships. (Yang W., Gao Y., Li Y., Shen H. and Zheng S., 2017)

Previous research has hinted that there exists a constructive relationship between effective communication and problem-solving strategies. The researcher in his study has concluded by saying that effective communication enhances commitment and confidence between buyers and suppliers to be comfortable to share issues and blockers openly with one another. This brings both partners closer and work jointly and explore conflict resolution solutions. (Shahzad K., Ali T., Kohtamäki M. and Takala J., 2020; Samadi, Gharleghi, & Syrymbetova, 2015)

Ravi Srinivasan & Sriram Narayanan (2017) quote that in case of higher level of supplier self-governance in buyer-supplier relationship, buyers should maintain effective communication tools and processes where information is exchanged with complete authenticity and in time which fosters in fewer amount of buyer-supplier relational conflicts. (Srinivasan R., Narayanan S. and Narasimhan R., 2017)

Based on the foregoing research studies, the following hypotheses is proposed:
H2: *There is significant relationship between supplier conflict resolution and effective communication*

Johannes Veile and Marie-Christin Schmidt in their research analysis with 45 managers working in procurement, logistics and SC from German and Austrian industrial companies states that communication is mainly initiated through email, telephone calls, meetings and in person face to face contacts. Analog manual method of communication which is personal in nature mainly implemented for communicating technical information, negotiating contracts, and discussing special issues. This study also mentions that buyers and suppliers share real-time data through digitized automated communication systems thus ensuring transparency in business relationships. However, personal methods of communication are highly valued where there is presence of human factors required to track activities, when highly customized products are involved, and decision driven tasks are involved. (Veile J.W., Schmidt M.C., Müller J.M. and Voigt K.I, 2020)

Jie Wu and Zefu Wu (2016) have concluded their research findings by quoting that Internet based collaboration with suppliers during the process of product innovation is found to be more effective and efficient, but this can be achieved specifically at moderate frequency level of interaction through internet communication channels. Thus, highlighting that over communication and under communication can hamper the effectiveness and efficiency of the product innovation process. The researchers in their findings cite a crucial finding quoting that face-to-face communication between supplier's managers and buyer's manager are the prime reason fostering the product performance success, although this is limited for B2B businesses. Specifically, face to face mode of communication is the prime enhancer to increase the level of trust between buyers and suppliers. Along with trust follows up the commitment and honesty of suppliers to exchange and grasp in depth product information thus defining an effective communication between inter firm businesses. Jie Wu and Zefu Wu (2016) specially mentions the instrumental point that organizations switching completely to internet based communication can hamper the trust and thus it is necessary for managers to design their organizational

communication structures in such a way that they maintain the balance between internet based communication and face to face analog communication to leverage the benefits of stimulating intimate relationships with suppliers.(Wu J., Wu Z. and Si S, 2016)

W. Yang (2017), through his research findings, has provided a guide for buyer firm managers that face-to-face informal ways of communicating with partners results in committed intimate relationships stimulating trust in uncertainty. They explained that face to face informal communication with suppliers prevents potential inter firm conflicts and governs long term strategic relationships. (Yang W, Gao Y, Li Y, Shen H., and Zheng S, 2017;SS Brahme, 2022)

A study which has been performed with 2 focal buyers and eight of their suppliers employed face to face in-person meetings and along with constant phone conversations proved to be the best way of exchanging daily updates about processes. The buyers stated their opinions that executing factory visits to the supplier's manufacturing companies helped them to trace probable upcoming future blockers at an early stage and gain prominent insights into supplier's operations and processes which helps both buyer and supplier to keep themselves in sync with each other. (Scholten, K. and Schilder, S., 2015, SS Brahme, 2022)

Based on previous research studies, the following hypotheses is proposed:

H3: *There is a significant relationship between channels of communication and effective communication.*

III. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Framework

The research framework mentioned below in pictorial format acts as the pivot around which this research study revolves and focuses on. The variables highlighted in the research framework are the major aspects around which this research study revolves. The given research framework consists of 4 variables out of which 3 variables are independent variables and one dependent variable in this paper. The research framework illustrates that effective communication (Y) between buyer and supplier from the E-commerce side has a significant relationship with information sharing (X1), supplier conflict resolution (X2) and channel of communication (X3). This research study analyzes this relationship between variables mentioned in the figure below:

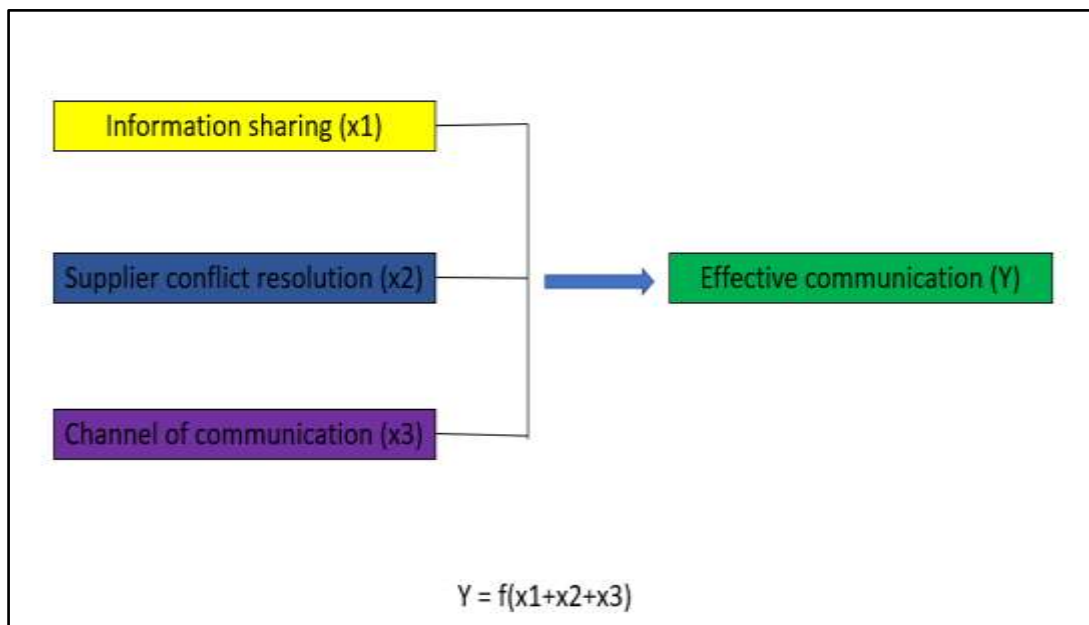


Figure 1: Research framework of this research study

A short illustration of dependent variable and independent variables is stated below:

Effective communication (DV) in buyer-supplier relationship mainly driven by following independent variables:

Information sharing (IV 1): Plethora of information about contracts, payments, logistics, product categories, warehouse locations, integration setups, etc. is shared between buyer and supplier in E-commerce business.

Resolving supplier conflicts (IV 2): Supplier uploads business and product information through partner portals driven by E-commerce firms. At various stages of business relationship suppliers face queries with regards to use of partner portals, product compliances issues, insurance issues payment terms, contractual terms, damage returns terms, etc.

Channel of communication (IV 3): Every form of communication has its own significance right from the foundation of business relationship till the expansion stage. Therefore, it is important to analyze the channel of communication based on tactical and strategic issues along with the intensity of media richness that is to be shared depending on maturity and trust in buyer-supplier relationship.

Effective communication (DV): This variable defines how effective communication is to the businesses of both buyer and supplier in terms of implementing SRM strategies and collaborating with each other to discuss innovative and improvement ideas. These strategies and ideas will add value to the organizations and give them the opportunity to implement strategies with flexibility. The effectiveness of communication is very important for E-commerce buyers and suppliers over the duration of the business relationship.

3.2 Data Collection

In this research study, data was fetched and collected from an array of multiple sources. The primary data utilized for this research study was primarily gathered through the responses of the E-commerce professionals to the survey questionnaires for major analysis purposes. This research study has tested and analyzed primary data from primary sources, that is survey questionnaires. The major drawbacks of collection of primary data are that collection of significant amounts of data is a time-consuming process. The secondary data for this research study was gathered for the purposes of reviewing previous research work on the subject matter. This survey questionnaire framed by the author was targeted and distributed to all the E-commerce professionals working on supplier facing side. The reason for directing the survey questionnaire to E-commerce professionals working with suppliers is because the respondents are knowledgeable to understand the core meaning of the questions asked which protects the responses data to be perfectly bonafide and legitimate to reach out to conclusions at the end of research analysis. The sampling size of the responses collected is approximately close to 120 E-commerce professionals coming in from top E-commerce firms like Amazon, eBay, Etsy, Otto, Wayfair, Zalando, etc. Responses recorded from each of the four major sections namely Information sharing (IV 1), supplier conflict resolution (IV 2), channel of communication (IV 3) are analyzed to measure the core real importance of effective communication (DV) in E-commerce firms.

The survey questionnaire consisted of five sections - out of which one section consisted of demographic questions and the other four sections included questions which revolved around the dependent and independent variables mentioned in the research framework. The responses to this survey questionnaire were in 5-point Likert scale format as Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly disagree = 5. The reason behind choosing Likert scale pointer is that it allows the author to evaluate and analyze the respondent's responses data in a quantifiable manner with a reliable ease and effectiveness.

3.3 Data Analysis method

The data collected through the responses of the E-commerce professionals to the survey questionnaire was analyzed through Regression analysis. The basic function of the Regression analysis is to examine the degree of significant relationship between dependent and independent variables. This research study includes a research framework with 3 independent variables IV 1, IV 2 & IV 3 and one dependent variable (DV). The independent variables IV 1, IV 2, IV 3 and the only dependent variable DV are as follows:

1. Information sharing (IV 1)
2. Resolving supplier conflicts (IV 2)
3. Channel of communication (IV 3)
4. Effective communication (DV)

In this research study, the regression analysis will be performed to test how significant impact information sharing, resolving supplier conflicts and channels of communication can have on the degree of effectiveness of buyer-supplier communication over the complete duration of business relationship.

Regression analysis helps us to evaluate if the independent variables and dependent variables are directly proportional to each other or inversely proportional to each other. The statistical significance value in the Regression analysis result will also help us to obtain which of the independent variables IV 1, IV 2 or IV3 has the strongest impact on the dependent variable DV.

IV. Empirical Findings

4.1. Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis section includes the analysis of the questionnaire responses of the respondents with respect to gender, age, and the highest educational qualification of the respondents. This questionnaire was distributed to 110 E-commerce professionals working on the supplier facing side, out of which a total of 100 E-commerce professionals responded to this questionnaire.

Gender: Out of the total 100 E-commerce professional respondents, 25 were female while the rest 75 were male.

Age: The survey questionnaire consisted of 4 options of age groups. The options for asking the age group of the respondents were 18-24 years, 25-30 years, 31-40 years, 41 and above. The maximum number of respondents were from the age group ranging from 25-30 years corresponding to 55 % of the total respondents to the survey questionnaire.

Educational Background: Out of 100 respondents, 62 respondents hold a master's degree, 24 respondents hold a bachelor's degree, 12 undergraduate and 3 respondents possess a Doctorate's degree.

4.2. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was performed on the responses collected through the survey questionnaires. To initiate the regression analysis, the average of all the 5 responses to 5 questions for each variable was taken. This average of all the 5 responses was taken and then the average of each variable's column - both dependent and independent variables. The average column of each variable was then combined into a single G sheet for performing regression analysis. The regression analysis is performed and explained in detail below:

Summary output of the regression analysis -

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.65293932
R Square	0.42632976
Adjusted R Square	0.40840256
Standard Error	0.44454183
Observations	100

Table 1: Summary output of Regression analysis

The Multiple R value is a factor which measures the degree of linear relationship between independent and dependent variables of this research study. The degree of relationship is considered as a strong intense positive relationship when the value of 1 and value of -1 of 'Multiple R' illustrates there is no relationship between variables. (Digvijay Bhujbal & Najla Shafiqhi, 2022) In the summary output of the regression analysis, the multiple R value is 0.652 which symbolizes there is strong intense positive connection between independent variable and dependent variable. A higher value of the coefficient of determination illustrates that higher degree of being a perfect strong and best suit for the data collected. (Pavan Badrinarayanan, 2022) The coefficient of determination 'R Square' given by the regression analysis is 0.426. This indicates that 42% of the variation of dependent variable (Effective communication) is explained by the independent variables of this research study namely information sharing, supplier conflict resolution and channel of communication. In this regression model, the value of the standard error' is 0.44 which is inclining towards a lesser value number which shows that the precision of regression analysis of this research study is more and can be trusted to draw conclusions.

ANOVA Analysis –

Table 2: ANOVA analysis output

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	3	14.09872517	4.69957505	23.781174	0.00000000001358175
Residual	96	18.97127482	0.1976174		

Total	99	33.07			
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The term ANOVA is the abbreviation for ‘Analysis of Variance’. The ANOVA results provide the analysis on the degree of variations in the regression model. The factor ‘degree of freedom (df) states the number of independent variables analyzed in the regression model. (Digvijay Bhujbal, 2022) This research study has 3 independent variables and hence df value corresponds to 3. The most important metric in the ANOVA analysis is the ‘Significance F’. This ‘Significance F’ value indicates the reliability of the analysis results of this research study obtained through regression analysis. If the ‘Significance F’ metric falls below 0.05, the model can be accepted (5%) and if the significance F is above 0.05, the research framework is questionable and there is a need to employ a different independent variable. In this research study, the value of the Significance F is ‘0.0000000001358175’ which is way less than 0.05. This shows that the results of the study are much more reliable and proved to be statistically significant.

Regression Analysis –

Table 3: Regression Analysis results

	Coefficients	Std. error	t-stat	p-value
Intercept	0.3042	0.1893	1.60	0.1113
Information sharing	0.4166	0.1326	3.14	0.0022
Supplier conflict resolution	0.5525	0.1428	3.86	0.0001
Channel of communication	-0.0902	0.1165	-0.77	0.4407

The coefficient results generated through the multiple regression analysis will be used and illustrated more in detail for hypothesis testing. In the above regression analysis table, there are 2 important metrics which are the ‘‘Coefficients’’ and the ‘‘P value’’ which is also called the probability value (statistical significance) which can be seen for each of the independent variables which are namely information sharing, supplier conflict resolution and channel of communication.

This can be assessed if the value of coefficients for each of the independent variables is positive or negative. (P. Badrianarayanan & N. Shafighi, 2022) From the above table it can be observed that independent variables namely information sharing (IV 1) and supplier conflict resolution (IV 2) have significant linear relationship and is directly proportional with effective communication which acts as a dependent variable in our research study. On the other hand, the independent variable namely channel of communication is negative which means that if channel of communication factor (IV 3) has weak and no significant relationship with effectiveness of communication (DV) with suppliers in E-commerce organizations.

Hypothesis Testing –

Statements	Findings	Results
H1: There is significant relationship between information sharing and effective communication	$P(0.00223) \leq 0.05$	The hypothesis is accepted
H2: There is significant relationship between supplier conflict resolution and effective communication	$P(0.00019) \leq 0.05$	The hypothesis is accepted
H3: There is significant relationship between channel of communication and effective communication	$P(0.44007) \geq 0.05$	The hypothesis is rejected

Table 4: Hypothesis testing

The above table shows the results with regards to the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis of this research study framed in the literature review of this research study. The P value of less than 0.05 implies that there area 95% chance that dependent and independent variables are directly proportional to each other. On the other hand, when the P- value is greater than ($\alpha = 0.05$) there is no establishment of a significant relationship between dependent and independent variables. (E. Jabbarzare & N. Shafighi, 2019) As seen in the above table, we make a conclusion that there is a significant relationship and is directly proportional between continuous information sharing (IV 1) between buyer and supplier and driving effective communication (DV) in buyer-supplier relationships in the E-commerce industry. In addition to this, the hypothesis testing results also imply that there is a significant and directly proportional relationship between supplier conflict resolution (IV 2) and increasing the effectiveness of communication (DV) in buyer-supplier relationships at E-commerce firms. On the contrary, hypothesis H3 that channel of communication (IV 3) has reverse effect on the effectiveness of communication (DV) and hence the hypothesis H3 is rejected as the P value of ‘‘0.44076’’ is more than 0.05

which shows insufficient evidence to establish a significant linear relationship between channel of communication (IV 3) and effective communication (DV).

4.3. Analysis of research questions

It is evident and prominent to deep dive more into the linear regression analysis and have a close meticulous look at the analysis output through visualized way. Therefore, we will now create graphs based on the average of data responses for each dependent and independent variable separately.

Information sharing (IV 1) and Effective communication (DV) between E-commerce buyers and suppliers.

Research question 1: Does persistent information sharing between buyer and supplier drive effective communication between E-commerce buyers and suppliers?

Answer: As we can clearly observe from the above linear regression graph, information sharing (IV 1) has a significant and direct influence on increasing the effective communication (DV) between E-commerce buyers and suppliers. Most of the E-commerce respondents believe in the idea that constant information is a beneficial ingredient for both suppliers and buyer's businesses.

The graph line begins at below 1.5, indicating that most of the E-commerce survey respondents are of the opinion that effectiveness of communication can be enhanced through constant information sharing between buyers and suppliers.

Supplier conflict resolution (IV 2) and Effective communication (DV) between E-commerce buyers and suppliers.

Research question 2: Does resolving supplier conflicts and blockers play a vital role in increasing the effectiveness of communication between buyers and suppliers in E-commerce firms?

Answer: As depicted in the above linear regression graph of supplier conflict resolution (IV 2) vs Effective communication (DV) - we can clearly make a statement that most of the E-commerce respondents to the survey questionnaire stated that solving potential supplier blockers and conflicts drives the concept of effective communication in buyer-supplier relationship in E-commerce firms.

The linear graph line begins at just above 1 which clearly implies that E-commerce professional respondents confidently put forward the point that resolution of supplier conflicts and blockers fosters the effective value of communication between buyers and suppliers.

Channel of communication (IV 3) and Effective communication (DV) between E-commerce buyers and suppliers.

Research question 3: Does leveraging different channels of communication with suppliers have a considerable influence on effectiveness of communication?

Answer: The linear regression graph of channel of communication (IV 3) vs effective communication (DV), the linear regression line begins above 1.5. Also, the trendline in the above-mentioned graph is not perfectly inclined upwards and at the same time not perfectly inclined downwards which shows insufficient reasons to establish significant relationship between channel of communication (IV 3) and effective communication (DV).

This indicates that some of the E-commerce professional respondents feel and believe that different channels of communication (IV 3) can have an impact on the effective value of communication. However, some respondents also implicate that the impact of channel of communication (IV 3) is not strong enough to establish a strong relationship to drive effective communication (DV) as compared to information sharing (IV 1) and supplier conflict resolution (IV 2).

V. Conclusion

The main aim of this research study was to discover which are the factors that play a vital and instrumental role in enhancing the effectiveness of communication (DV) between buyers and suppliers in the domain of E-commerce business. This research study tries to find out which of the independent factors, namely information sharing (IV 1), supplier conflict resolution (IV 2), and channel of communication (IV 3) do, the E-commerce respondents think will foster the effectiveness of communication and will eventually provide value to

E-commerce organizations. A critical multiple regression analysis was performed on the average columns of responses for independent and dependent variables. In addition to this, linear regression graphs were drafted to verify and authenticate the mandate of the respondents to the survey questionnaire for each of the independent variables and dependent variables in the research framework.

According to the survey, E-commerce professionals think that persistent information sharing between buyers and suppliers helps the E-commerce business to fast-track the partnership process by sharing real-time information. The respondents have given their responses that information sharing with regards to payment terms, logistics information, product information, contracts, business information, etc., helps the E-commerce buyers to precisely build the correct business model for their suppliers to generate value-added businesses. The respondents who are working in pioneering E-commerce firms think that resolving supplier conflicts and potential blockers generates ways to have flawless partnerships. Potential blockers like product compliance issues, and difficulties to understand business models can be resolved through the utilization of supplier platforms, supporting suppliers by providing additional resources and training materials for easy understanding of business models, etc. Thus, providing hands-on support and guidance to suppliers to collectively and jointly develop solutions seeks to drive the concept of effective communication in the field of E-commerce. The respondents had mixed opinions on the effect of channels of communication while communicating with suppliers. The respondents are unsure to what extent they strongly agree or disagree with the impact of having different modes of communication (phone calls, or email or in-person meets) to get the attention and traction of suppliers to partner up with E-commerce suppliers. Moreover, the respondents are unsure if specific modes of communication should be employed for specific conflict resolution and sharing specific data for record-keeping purposes.

5.1 Managerial Implications

This research can be beneficial to all the E-commerce organizations - from small scale to global E-commerce firms. Especially the global E-commerce organizations can add value to their business by firstly effectively establishing communication lines with their suppliers. Hence, here the E-commerce firms should develop supplier facing online portals and dashboards to share information, reduce the number of supplier conflicts and utilize different communication modes for fast tracking business operations. The vision of building an effective buyer-supplier communication can be practiced and tested in top pioneering E-commerce firms like Amazon, eBay, Etsy, Myntra, Shopify, Media Markt and numerous other firms who buy and sell their products via the Online platforms.

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