Organizational Communication as A Pillar of Resilience for Indonesian Cargo Airlines in the Post Covid 19 Crisis

Irma Kusumawati[1], Asep Suryana[2], Anter Venus[3], Hadi Suprapto Arifin[4]

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a major test of resilience for the global aviation industry, particularly the air cargo sector, which plays a vital role in maintaining logistic supply chains. This study examines how organizational communication serves as a key pillar in building resilience among Indonesian cargo airlines following the crisis, with a focus on the case study of PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines. Using a descriptive qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, observation, and internal document analysis, this study found that integrating formal and informal communication was key to the organization's success in maintaining operations, supporting employees' psychological stability, and accelerating service recovery. Formal communication provides structure and clarity in decision-making, while informal communication strengthens solidarity, trust, and the speed of information flow. When combined with communication digitization and empathetic leadership, both together form an adaptive long-term resilience infrastructure capable of withstanding repeated disruptions. Theoretically, this study extends the application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) by positioning organizational communication as the foundation of strategic resilience. Practically, the study offers recommendations for the cargo industry to develop communication strategies that are symmetrical, empathetic, and technology-based to strengthen organizational competitiveness and sustainability in the post-crisis era.

Keywords: Organizational Communication, Cargo Airlines, Crisis Communication, Communication Digitization.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic several years ago was a global crisis that tested the resilience of various industrial sectors, including the aviation industry. While the passenger sector experienced a drastic decline, air cargo services played a crucial role in maintaining global logistics supply chains (Suau-Sanchez et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic caused serious disruptions to global air supply chains, particularly for cargo airlines: route disruptions, demand fluctuations, and operational pressures (Kim, 2021). In Indonesia, cargo airlines faced significant challenges in maintaining operations amid regulatory uncertainty, demand fluctuations, and internal organizational disruptions. In this context, organizational communication plays a central role as an instrument for coordination, creating shared meaning, and managing change. In times of crisis, organizational communication serves as the primary instrument for maintaining coordination, employee motivation, and operational continuity (Kartikawangi & Dahesihsari, 2020). However, few studies have specifically addressed the strategic role of organizational communication in building resilience among cargo companies in the post-pandemic crisis, particularly in developing countries.

[1] Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor. Indonesia, Email: irma20003@mail.unpad.ac.id
[2] Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor. Indonesia.
[3] Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor. Indonesia.
[4] Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor. Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the geographical context as an archipelagic nation exacerbates disruptions to air logistics. Regulatory uncertainty, regional variations in demand, and internal organizational disruptions create layered challenges. In such conditions, organizational communication emerges as a central pillar: not only as a coordination tool, but also as a medium for creating shared meaning, mitigating uncertainty, and building internal solidarity (Sutrisno, 2024). Cargo airlines such as PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines faced extraordinary operational and financial pressure during the pandemic. Declining international cargo volumes, shifting health protocols, and fluctuating aviation fuel prices demanded organizational adaptability that was not only technical but also social-communicative (IATA, 2022). PT Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines, a Jakarta-based cargo airline operating domestic and regional routes and serving remote island areas such as Papua, implemented adaptive internal communication practices during the pandemic. For example, intensive collaboration between management and airport regulators in rerouting operations to Kertajati Airport demonstrated that efficient formal communication channels were crucial for rapid operational recovery. Furthermore, Asia Cargo Airlines also implemented informal, relationship-based communication through internal communication teams and operational groups to maintain morale and foster staff solidarity during periods of high logistical pressure, particularly on routes to Papua that transported daily essentials and vital supplies.

PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines itself is one of the non-scheduled cargo airlines holding a significant position in Indonesia's air logistics sector. The airline has a well-established track record in Southeast Asia. Its original name, Tri M.G. Airlines, comes from the initials of its founders, three "M"s and one "G", who first established the company in Singapore in 1970. The airline expanded into Indonesia in 2002 with the launch of operations in Jakarta and is now headquartered at Halim Perdanakusuma International Terminal, 2nd Floor, Room A02-03, East Jakarta. The company carries a vision to become a widely recognized airline operating a mixed fleet of jet and turboprop aircraft to support diverse flight missions across Indonesia's archipelago of more than 17.000 islands.

The role of organizational communication during the pandemic was not merely to convey information, but also to maintain operational stability and employee mental well-being. In the cargo sector, internal communication became a vital instrument for ensuring operational continuity amid VUCA conditions (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity).(J.-Y. Li et al., 2021). The rapid and effective internalization and dissemination of strategic messages helped narrow information gaps and prevent disinformation that could reduce productivity (Sun et al., 2021). Previous research shows that transparent and symmetrical internal communication can reduce uncertainty, enhance employee trust and psychological well-being, and strengthen commitment and support for the organization during crises (Qin & Men, 2022). In addition, communication that is swift, relevant, and relationship-based has also proven essential in maintaining employee engagement and operational stability amid sudden changes caused by the pandemics. Transparent and relational internal communication during the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on employee engagement and trust in the organization. The study concluded that responsive, relationship-based communication channels strengthened the internal support system, helping employees remain engaged and maintain operational stability despite sudden changes and external pressures (Santoso et al., 2023)

Effective and empathetic information sharing was able to close information gaps, prevent disinformation, and support both operational continuity and employee mental well-being. Research in organizational communication and mental health reveals that rapid, relevant, and empathetic communication responses play a crucial role in reducing uncertainty during crises

and preventing the spread of misleading information within the organization (Tkalac Verčič, 2021). A systematic, personal, and empathetic communication approach effectively addresses stigma, expands access to mental health services, and strengthens employees' psychological resilience in navigating organizational change (Adamu & Mohamad, 2019). Planned communication strategies, particularly those involving regularly updated and employee-segment-tailored mental health support, have proven to support overall workplace well-being (Wang et al., 2025).

Wahl et al., (2024) further elaborate that, in the context of the information technology industry, supportive team communication, specifically well-organized informal interaction patterns, is essential in reducing emotional stress caused by sudden changes or the adoption of new technologies. This approach has proven effective in promoting employee engagement and maintaining psychological stability during periods of transition or operational disruption, including in remote work contexts.

Formal and informal communication systems complement each other in strengthening organizational resilience, particularly when facing change or crisis. Formal communication, such as top-down instructions and horizontal coordination, provides the structure, clarity, and decision-making flow necessary for organized response and operational continuity. Meanwhile, informal communication, including suggestion networks and the grapevine, facilitates the rapid spread of critical information, strengthens trust, and supports employees' psychological well-being and social cohesion, all of which are essential for organizational adaptation and recovery (Doerfel et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2025).

Research shows that integrating these two systems, supported by adequate communication technology, enhances communication satisfaction and accelerates the adaptation process, both in face-to-face and remote work settings (Zalewska-Turzyńska & Pamuła, 2024). A strong relationship between the organization and its employees, built through symmetrical two-way communication, has proven to be an important mediator in fostering organizational resilience (Kim, 2021). In addition, informal networks such as advice-seeking ties strengthen contextual resilience by accelerating the exchange of knowledge and solutions among organizational units (Jin et al., 2025). Therefore, communication strategies that strategically manage and integrate formal and informal communication are essential for building a resilient and adaptive organization (Doerfel et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2025).

Neill & Kang,(2024) explain that formal communication models, consisting of institutionally designed hierarchical channels, enable the distribution of managerial instructions, cross-functional coordination, and clear, rapid decision-making, particularly in crisis contexts. At the same time, informal communication such as team chat groups or organic interaction platforms (as a form of managed grapevine) has been shown to increase internal solidarity, emotional engagement, and provide space for social and psychological support among employees, especially in dealing work stress.

The combination of these two forms of communication enhances work dynamics and solidarity in crisis situations (Jessica et al., 2023). An organization's ability to respond to pandemic-related disruptions is strongly influenced by the integration of internal and external communication, collaboration, and information integration across the supply chain. This approach is relevant for examining how cargo airlines leverage communication as a resource for adaptation and recovery (Sutrisno, 2024). With the limited number of studies specifically linking organizational communication practices to the development of organizational resilience in the cargo sector after the COVID-19 crisis, especially in the Indonesian context, this study is presented to fill the gap

(Nugroho et al., 2024). The core question is: how does organizational communication serve as a central pillar in building resilience among Indonesian cargo airlines after the crisis? Therefore, this study aims to address that gap by analysing how organizational communication can become a central pillar of resilience for Indonesian cargo airlines.

This study is important for enriching crisis communication literature in the air cargo sector and providing practical tools for airline management to enhance preparedness for future crises.

Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) emphasizes the importance of management's role in formulating communication strategies that align with the characteristics of the crisis faced and the organization's level of responsibility. In the preparedness phase, SCCT highlights message clarity, information consistency, and transparency as key elements for building public trust and minimizing uncertainty (W. T. Coombs & Holladay, 2022). SCCT also emphasizes that the success of a crisis response is heavily influenced by the choice of communication strategy that aligns with the public's perception regarding the attribution of responsibility (W. T. Coombs, 2007)

Furthermore, this theory explains that each crisis can be categorized according to its level of reputational threat, requiring organizations to tailor their communication strategies, whether by providing information, expressing empathy, or taking corrective action. In practice, SCCT provides management with a framework for crafting crisis messages that are not only defensive but also proactive in strengthening organizational credibility and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. Thus, responsive leadership and clear messaging are at the core of effective crisis communication according to SCCT.

Organizational resilience in the context of supply chains is understood as a company's ability to adapt, respond to change, and recover from disruptions through the integration of resources, responsive leadership, and an adaptive culture. Burnard and Bhamra (2011) emphasize that organizational resilience is a conceptual framework encompassing adaptive responses to external pressures, while Duchek (2020) describes resilience as a resource-based capability developed continuously over time. Lengnick-Hall, Beck, and Lengnick-Hall (2011) dd that strategic human resource management plays a crucial role in building organizational resilience capacity. In the context of supply chains, Tukamuhabwa, Stevenson, Busby, and Zorzini (2015) assert that resilience is determined by a combination of flexibility, coordination, and the ability to recover quickly.

Internal communication is a key element in supporting psychological safety and employee cohesion. Formal communication, both top-down and horizontal, ensures clarity of information and task coordination (Giri & Kumar, 2010; Koesten, Schrodt, & Ford, 2009). However, informal communication through unofficial networks or the grapevine also plays a significant role in shaping the organizational climate and strengthening interpersonal connections (Davis, 1973; Krackhardt & Hanson, 1993). Papa, Daniels, and Spiker (2007) emphasize that balancing formal and informal communication leads to greater organizational effectiveness, while Shockley-Zalabak (2011) states that healthy internal communication supports an adaptive and cohesive organizational culture.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply explore the dynamics of organizational communication and its relationship with corporate resilience. The main subject is PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines, one of Indonesia's national cargo airlines that continued operations throughout the pandemic. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with operational managers, corporate communication staff, and field personnel. Observation of

internal communication patterns during operational meetings and daily coordination. Document analysis of internal reports and crisis communication protocols. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, combined with source triangulation to enhance validity (Miles et al., 1994; Patton, 2002).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study focus on the role of organizational communication as a pillar of resilience at PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines in the post COVID-19 crisis. The analysis focuses on five main aspects: (1) organizational communication patterns in responding to the crisis, (2) internal and external communication strategies, (3) indicators of organizational resilience after the crisis, (4) comparison with international studies, and (5) communication as infrastructure for long-term resilience. Each aspect is developed in depth, supported by empirical evidence from interviews, field observations, and internal documentation.

- **Organizational Communication Patterns in Responding to Crisis**

The findings from PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines indicate that the organization's communication patterns are divided into formal and informal, operating in a complementary manner. Formal communication: daily operational meetings, top-down instructions, coordination with regulators, and dissemination of health protocols. This pattern provides clear instructions and ensures that the decision-making chain remains swift and structured. Informal communication: interactions via WhatsApp groups, operational team networks, and communication based on personal rapport. This pattern has proven effective in accelerating information flow on the ground and maintaining social cohesion among staff. This finding aligns with M. S. Neill & Kang (2024), who assert that formal communication provides clarity, while informal communication strengthens trust and solidarity during crises. Furthermore, Samra et al., (2019) add that strong informal networks accelerate organizational adaptation when facing disruption.

Management of formal communication

Formal communication at Tri M.G., such as operational meetings, memos, and SOP updates, serves as a technical coordination framework that ensures critical information is delivered clearly and systematically to all organizational units. The multi-layered process of official announcements, online meetings, and SOP distribution minimizes misinterpretation and ensures compliance with safety standards. The study confirms that planned and transparent formal communication is crucial for maintaining clarity, legitimacy, and compliance during a crisis (Mwandembo, 2024).

The role of informal communication as an adaptive mechanism

Informal systems, particularly chat groups and personal relationships, serve as rapid information channels (early warning). In practice, field emergency reports, such as cargo unloading delays causing schedule disruptions on Papua routes, often first appear in WhatsApp groups before being included in official reports. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of grapevine advantage: informal networks can become a critical source of information if management effectively monitors and responds to them (Jessica et al., 2023)

Interaction between structure and flexibility

Effective communication patterns strike a balance between structure (formal) and flexibility (informal). Formal communication provides legitimacy and standards, while informal communication offers speed, on-the-ground context, and emotional support. This combination

forms a communication capital that supports organizational resilience when facing operational disruptions (Wajahat, 2024; Williams et al., 2024)

The combination of formal and informal communication is crucial for crisis response. Formal structure ensures coordination and compliance, while informal channels provide speed and adaptability, together building organizational resilience.

- **Internal and External Communication Strategies**

Modern organizational communication strategies require integration between internal communication that builds trust and external communication that maintains credibility in the eyes of stakeholders. This synergy is key to preserving institutional legitimacy, especially during crises or operational changes (Y. Lee & Dong, 2023). Effective internal communication strategies emphasize three key pillars: information transparency, managerial empathy, and employee engagement (Men & Yue, 2019). These three aspects complement one another in building trust, enhancing employee commitment, and strengthening the organization's internal reputation(Haavisto & Linge, 2022; Men et al., 2024).

Effective internal communication emphasizes information transparency, managerial empathy, and employee participation. Transparency is demonstrated through the delivery of substantive and accountable information, such as regular reports, policy changes, and operational updates. Transparent and participatory communication practices have been shown to enhance employee trust and psychological well-being, as well as strengthen the organization's internal reputation.(Qin & Men, 2022) Authentic leadership and symmetrical communication, in which management is open to feedback and involves staff in decision-making, foster employee engagement and loyalty.(Santoso et al., 2023) In addition, empathetic communication, such as health support and recognition of performance, strengthens internal solidarity and reduces anxiety during times of crisis (Qin & Men, 2022)

Post COVID-19 communication strategies of cargo airlines are divided into two main layers:

Internal: In this internal aspect, the airline emphasizes information transparency, rapid dissemination of operational instructions, and empathetic communication to support employees' mental health. Symmetrical internal communication, or open two-way dialogue between management and employees, significantly increased trust and employee engagement during the crisis(Scheiwiller & Zizka, 2021). These practices include clear information sharing, regular policy updates, and the provision of psychological support and performance recognition, all of which have proven to strengthen organizational resilience and employee loyalty.(Deveci et al., 2021). Information transparency, rapid dissemination of operational instructions, and empathetic communication to support employee mental health. This strategy aligns with Page et al.,(2023), who found that symmetrical internal communication enhances employee trust and engagement during crises.

External: Collaboration with aviation regulators, cross-airport coordination (for example, relocation to Kertajati), and communication with customers and stakeholders regarding service changes. This strategy supports supply chain continuity and builds external trust. Cross-institutional collaboration and structured communication with customers are crucial for maintaining smooth supply chain operations and fostering external trust amid uncertainty (T. Li, 2020). This strategy aligns with the SCCT (T. Coombs & Holladay, 2022; Falkheimer & Heide, 2022), which emphasizes that selecting appropriate crisis communication strategies based on providing information, expressing empathy, and taking corrective action enhances organizational credibility and minimizes the negative impacts of a crisis. It also highlights the importance of

using digital channels, such as social media and official websites, to deliver crisis messages quickly and consistently to the public (Prados-Peña et al., 2022).

Internal-external synergy as a source of legitimacy. Internal strategies that maintain workforce cohesion and external strategies that build trust with regulators and customers generate institutional legitimacy. This legitimacy is crucial when the organization implements corrective actions or operational innovations amid uncertainty, as it supports faster service recovery and helps maintain its position in the logistics supply chain.

- **Indicators Of Organizational Resilience After the Crisis**

This study identifies resilience indicators of Tri M.G. at the operational, psychological, and service recovery levels. Organizational resilience of cargo airlines in the post–COVID-19 crisis can be identified through three main indicators: operational continuity, employee psychological stability, and speed of service recovery. The study underscores the importance of these three aspects in ensuring the organization's successful response to disruptions.

1. Operational Continuity

Operational continuity is reflected in the cargo airline's ability to maintain vital routes, adjust its network, and sustain essential services despite facing demand fluctuations, resource constraints, or external disruptions. A study on China's international cargo network shows that rapid adaptation, development of hub-and-spoke systems, and government policy support are crucial for strengthening operational robustness and reducing vulnerability to disruption (Deng et al., 2025). Evaluation of the airline's operational efficiency during the pandemic also highlights the importance of flexibility in fleet configuration and network adjustments to maintain service continuity (Pereira & De Mello, 2020).

2. Employee Psychological Stability

Employee psychological stability is a central pillar in building organizational resilience, particularly when facing crises and unexpected changes. This stability is achieved through several key mechanisms: empathetic communication support, access to mental health resources, and strengthening of internal social networks. Empathetic communication support from management, both through formal and informal channels, plays a vital role in reducing anxiety, enhancing employee commitment, and strengthening motivation during time of crisis. Open and responsive communication not only builds trust but also encourages employees to be more adaptive and proactive in facing challenges (Prayag et al., 2023)

Organizations that can anticipate crises, build internal robustness, and provide psychological support will recover more quickly and maintain socio-economic sustainability (Rai et al., 2021). Transparent communication and responsive leadership also help reduce anxiety and enhance employee engagement and motivation. In addition, access to mental health resources and the strengthening of internal social networks have been shown to improve individual psychological resilience. Employees who feel psychologically supported and have access to mental health services demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction and life satisfaction, which ultimately contribute to overall organizational resilience, (Elshaer, 2024; Prayag et al., 2023)

Empirical studies also show that authentic and inclusive leadership, which fosters trust, organizational identification, and flow experience, significantly enhances employees' psychological resilience. Such leadership encourages employees to recover from pressure, adapt to change, and remain productive in highly uncertain situations.(Mao et al., 2023). Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between employee psychological resilience and organizational resilience. Resilient employees are not only able to maintain their own psychological stability

but also contribute collectively to the organization's recovery and adaptation after a crisis,(Liang & Cao, 2021)

 3. Speed of Service Recovery

The speed of service recovery is measured by the organization's ability to reconfigure resources, accelerate decision-making, and implement process innovations in an adaptive manner. The development of dynamic capabilities, such as rapid response to demand changes and the use of digital technology, significantly influences the speed of recovery and enhances supply chain resilience,(Belhadi et al., 2020; Kähkönen et al., 2021). Cross-stakeholder collaboration and the use of real-time data also accelerate recovery and adaptation following disruptions. Organizational resilience is reflected in the ability to adapt, recover, and innovate after a crisis. It can be identified through several key indicators: operational continuity (the organization's ability to maintain core functions and services during and after a crisis), employee psychological stability (support for staff well-being through communication, leadership, and access to resources), and speed of service recovery (the organization's ability to adapt, evaluate, and quickly improve processes after a disruption),(Huang et al., 2020). This study also highlights the importance of selecting indicators that align with the type of crisis, evaluation objectives, and data availability, as well as the need for a multilevel and dynamic approach in measuring organizational resilience,(Ignatowicz et al., 2023)

 • **Comparison With International Studies.**

Empirical comparison between Tri M.G.'s communication patterns and resilience strategies and international studies reveal a fundamental similarity: the importance of rapid, empathetic, and transparent communication in building organizational resilience during crises. Studies across various sectors and countries confirm that strategic communication, both internal and external, strengthens stakeholder relationships, enhances trust, and accelerates organizational recovery,(Houston & Buzzanell, 2020). Symmetrical two-way communication between management and employees has proven to be a key predictor of organizational resilience, as it fosters engagement, adaptation, and innovation during times of crisis,(Chen et al., 2023). International studies also highlight the role of digital technology, big data, and artificial intelligence (AI) in accelerating crisis communication and logistics performance monitoring, particularly in developed countries,(Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025; Ivanović et al., 2025). Organizations in Europe, the United States, and China are increasingly relying on real-time communication systems, automated monitoring, and data analytics to support decision-making and adaptive responses,(Cartono et al., 2025) For example, multinational companies that implement real-time monitoring and communication transparency have been able to reduce the spread of disinformation by up to 40% and enhance stakeholder trust (Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025). Recent studies on airlines and aviation workforce also confirm the importance of communication that is swift, relevant, and supportive in maintaining both productivity and employees' psychological well-being during crises (Folke & Melin, 2024; Paraschi et al., 2024) Tri M.G.'s communication patterns are consistent with these findings.

However, in the Indonesian context, limitations in digital infrastructure and the archipelagic geography drive organizations like Tri M.G. to optimize interpersonal communication, local networks, and social relationships as primary resources for building resilience,(Rahman & Ahmad, 2024). Studies on Indonesian MSMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic confirm that relationship-based communication and local adaptation were key to sustaining business continuity amid technological limitations. Additionally, cultural factors and collective values

enhance the effectiveness of social network based communication in Indonesia (Ekayanthi et al., 2024). Overall, while the fundamental principles of effective and empathetic communication are universal, their implementation strategies are strongly shaped by social, cultural, and infrastructural contexts. Integrating technological approaches with social relationships can serve as an adaptive and sustainable resilience model for the future,(Chen et al., 2023; Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025).

Based on the explanation and analysis above, the comparison of Tri M.G.'s communication patterns and resilience strategies with international studies shows that rapid, empathetic, and transparent communication serves as the main foundation of organizational resilience across various global contexts. International studies emphasize the importance of strategic communication, both internal and external, in strengthening stakeholder relationships, building trust, and accelerating organizational recovery after a crisis,(Ekayanthi et al., 2024). In developed countries, the adoption of digital technology, big data, and AI is increasingly dominant in supporting crisis communication and performance monitoring, whereas in Indonesia, infrastructure limitations drive the optimization of interpersonal communication and local social networks,(Ivanović et al., 2025). The integration of technological approaches and social relationships forms an adaptive and relevant resilience model for diverse organizational contexts,(Rahman & Ahmad, 2024).

- **Communication As Infrastructure for Long-Term Resilience.**

In the contemporary context, organizational communication should be viewed as infrastructure for sustained resilience, not merely as a short-term coordination tool. This infrastructure is built through the integration of formal and informal channels that together form social capital, adaptive capacity, and institutional legitimacy. Formal channels ensure order and compliance, while informal communication provides flexibility, early problem detection, and psychological support that strengthens internal solidarity. The combination of both makes the organization better prepared to face recurring crises,(Eise & Rawat, 2023).

Recent research confirms that communication digitization is a determining factor in building long-term organizational resilience, particularly in sectors directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital transformation has proven to facilitate not only coordination efficiency but also strengthen adaptive capacity, social capital, and institutional legitimacy. Studies in the telecommunications sector highlight that companies with a high level of digitization maintained better financial stability and operational continuity compared to those with lower levels of digitalization,(Tei et al., 2025). Moreover, the literature shows that digital-based communication, whether through formal or informal channels, contributes to strengthening internal solidarity and individual psychological resilience, which collectively support organizational sustainability,(Tachkova & Brannon, 2025). In this regard, digitized internal communication also plays a strategic role in building organizational resilience by improving information flow, enabling early risk detection, and strengthening cohesion among members (J. Y. H. Lee et al., 2024; Tachkova & Brannon, 2025). Thus, communication digitization is not merely a technical instrument, but also a strategic infrastructure that determines an organization's ability to endure and adapt in the face of recurring crises (Eise & Rawat, 2023).

Recent research confirms that communication digitization plays a crucial role in building long-term organizational resilience. Cross-industry studies show that companies with higher levels of digitization experienced milder declines in financial performance during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to companies with low levels of digitalization,(Abidi et al., 2023). Research in Indonesia's telecommunications industry shows that digital transformation is

positioned as an operational renewal strategy that enables companies to maintain service continuity and enhance competitiveness during periods of disruption, (Susetyo et al., 2024). Moreover, empirical evidence from SMEs in Spain shows that digital transformation enhances organizational learning and innovation, which in turn strengthens adaptive capacity and resilience in the face of recurring crises,(Awad & Martín-Rojas, 2024)

Beyond technological aspects, organizational learning and innovation are also integral components of communication as infrastructure. A study in the construction sector confirms that a learning culture supported by open communication enables organizations to respond to external pressures more quickly and accurately. In other words, internal communication that encourages dialogue, reflection, and the exchange of experiences forms the foundation for strengthening resilience (Abidi et al., 2023; Awad & Martín-Rojas, 2024).

Furthermore, the institutional legitimacy that underpins organizational sustainability stems not only from formal communication but also from the organization's ability to listen to its stakeholders. The combination of information visibility, organizational listening, and cross-sector partnerships forms a legitimacy pathway that strengthens organizational resilience. This underscores that monitoring informal communication, including the grapevine, can serve as a strategic instrument for early detection of stakeholder aspirations and concerns,(Fu & Wang, 2024) Thus, strategic recommendations for organizations are: (1) strengthen digital communication capacity as part of resilience infrastructure; (2) institutionalize grapevine-aware monitoring mechanisms to understand internal dynamics; and (3) develop empathetic communication–based employee well-being programs to maintain psychological stability. Together, these factors affirm that organizational communication is a long-term resilience pillar that integrates technical, social, and external legitimacy dimensions.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that organizational communication functions as a strategic infrastructure underpinning the resilience of cargo airlines in the post COVID 19 crisis. The findings show that the integration of formal and informal communication, reinforced by digitization, enabled PT. Tri M.G. IntraAsia Airlines to maintain operational continuity, employee psychological stability, and rapid service recovery. Theoretically, this study enriches crisis communication literature by positioning communication as the foundation of long-term resilience. Practically, it provides guidance for the cargo industry to develop communication strategies that are transparent, empathetic, and incorporate grapevine-aware monitoring to strengthen institutional legitimacy and organizational adaptation. Thus, integrated and digitized communication becomes a central pillar of competitiveness and sustainability for the air cargo industry in facing recurring disruptions (Fu & Wang, 2024; Jin et al., 2025; Tachkova & Brannon, 2025; Tei et al., 2025).

REFERENCES

Abidi, N., El Herradi, M., & Sakha, S. (2023). Digitalization and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Telecommunications Policy*, *47*(4), 102522. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2023.102522

Adamu, A. A., & Mohamad, B. (2019). A reliable and valid measurement scale for assessing internal crisis communication. *Journal of Communication Management*, *23*(2), 90–108.

https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-07-2018-0068

Awad, J. A. R., & Martín-Rojas, R. (2024). Digital transformation influence on organisational resilience through organisational learning and innovation. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, *13*(1), 69. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-024-00405-4

Belhadi, A., Kamble, S., Jabbour, C., Gunasekaran, A., Ndubisi, N., & Venkatesh, M. (2020). Manufacturing and service supply chain resilience to the COVID-19 outbreak: Lessons learned from the automobile and airline industries. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *163*, 120447. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120447

Cartono, C., Bajari, A., Suryana, A., & Rahmat, A. (2025). Strategic Communication as a Catalyst for Enhancing Resilience in Medium-Sized Export Enterprises. *Journal of Posthumanism*. https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i3.840

Chen, X.-X., Xu, X., Wang, T., Qiu, C., & Li, M. (2023). Couple communication quality and family resilience among Chinese gynecologic cancer patients and their spouses: a dyadic study. *Supportive Care in Cancer*, *31*, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00520-023-07727-1

Coombs, T., & Holladay, S. (2022). *Chapter 18: Crisis communication as strategic communication: process and insights* (pp. 259–273). Edward Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800379893.00025

Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting Organization Reputations During a Crisis: The Development and Application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, *10*(3), 163–176. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1550049

Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2022). The Handbook of Crisis Communication. *The Handbook of Crisis Communication*, 1–561. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119678953

Deng, Y., Zhang, Y., Wang, K., & He, Y. (2025). Navigating through and beyond the COVID-19 crisis: Evaluating the resilience of Chinese international air freighter networks. *Transport Policy*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2025.01.022

Deveci, M., Ciftci, M. E., Akyurt, I. Z., & Gonzalez, E. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Turkish civil aviation industry. *Sustainable Operations and Computers*, *3*, 93–102. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.susoc.2021.11.002

Doerfel, M., Kim, M., Kwestel, M., Yoon, H., & Quow, J. (2022). Resilience organizing: a multilevel communication framework. *Journal of Communication*. https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqac027

Eise, J., & Rawat, M. (2023). Spiritual but not religious seek unrestricted connection to selves, others, and earth: Formative research on the explosive growth of an 'inactive public' beyond the organization. *Public Relations Review*, *49*(1), 102276. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102276

Ekayanthi, D., Lubis, D., Sumardjo, & Sarwoprasodjo, S. (2024). Communication strategies to strengthen the resilience of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review. *Multidisciplinary Reviews*. https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2025137

Elshaer, I. (2024). Come and Gone! Psychological Resilience and Organizational Resilience in Tourism Industry Post COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Life Satisfaction. *Sustainability*. https://doi.org/10.3390/su16020939

Eze, U. Z., & Zacky-Eze, C. J. (2025). Combatting Disinformation: Analyzing Effective Communication Strategies and Tactics for Organizational Resilience. *Tripodos*. https://doi.org/10.51698/tripodos.2025.57.01

Falkheimer, J., & Heide, M. (2022). *Research Handbook on Strategic Communication*. Edward

Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800379893

Folke, F., & Melin, M. (2024). Ramp-up in the air: Impairing or repairing aviation crews' working conditions? A mixed-methods survey study on working conditions, health, and safety among cabin crew and pilots in Europe. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *119*, 102642. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2024.102642

Fu, J. S., & Wang, R. (2024). Multiple pathways to organizational legitimacy: Information visibility, organizational listening, and cross-sector partnerships. *Public Relations Review*, *50*(4), 102484. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2024.102484

Haavisto, V. E., & Linge, T. T. (2022). Internal crisis communication and Nordic leadership: the importance of transparent and participative communication in times of crisis. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *22*, 331–356. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2022.2123038

Houston, J., & Buzzanell, P. (2020). Communication and resilience: introduction to the Journal of Applied Communication Research special issue. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *48*, 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2020.1711956

Huang, W., Chen, S., & Nguyen, L. (2020). Corporate Social Responsibility and Organizational Resilience to COVID-19 Crisis: An Empirical Study of Chinese Firms. *Sustainability*. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12218970

IATA. (2022). Jet fuel demand hit by Omicron; recovery delayed until 2023/2024. In *Oil and Energy Trends* (Vol. 47, pp. 3–5). https://doi.org/10.1111/oet.12904

Ignatowicz, A., Tarrant, C., Mannion, R., El-Sawy, D., Conroy, S., & Lasserson, D. (2023). Organizational resilience in healthcare: a review and descriptive narrative synthesis of approaches to resilience measurement and assessment in empirical studies. *BMC Health Services Research*, *23*. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09242-9

Ivanović, N., De Vries, T., Van Der Vegt, G., & Van Donk, D. P. (2025). Handling Disruption Concurrence: The Importance of Inter- and Intra-Departmental Communication for Critical Infrastructure Resilience. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*. https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12346

Jessica, A., Valdomero Elleazar, C., Salim, N., Dahesihsari, R., & Kartikawangi, D. (2023). Peran Strategi Dan Praktik Komunikasi Internal Perusahaan Xyz Pada Masa Sebelum Dan Sesudah Pandemi. *Jurnal Serina Sosial Humaniora*, *1*(3), 277–287.

Jin, X., Yang, D., Sun, W., & Xu, L. (2025). Building a Resilient Organization Through Informal Networks: Examining the Role of Individual, Structural, and Attitudinal Factors in Advice-Seeking Tie Formation. In *Systems* (Vol. 13, Issue 4). https://doi.org/10.3390/systems13040245

Kähkönen, A.-K., Evangelista, P., Hallikas, J., Immonen, M., & Lintukangas, K. (2021). COVID-19 as a trigger for dynamic capability development and supply chain resilience improvement. *International Journal of Production Research*, *61*, 2696–2715. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207543.2021.2009588

Kartikawangi, D., & Dahesihsari, R. (2020). *IKATAN SARJANA KOMUNIKASI INDONESIA*. *5*(2), 189–198.

Kim, Y. (2021). Building organizational resilience through strategic internal communication and organization–employee relationships. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *49*(5), 589–608. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2021.1910856

Lee, J. Y. H., Chou, C. Y., Chang, H. L., & Hsu, C. (2024). Building digital resilience against crises: The case of Taiwan's COVID-19 pandemic management. *Information Systems*

Journal, *34*(1), 39–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12471

Lee, Y., & Dong, E. (2023). How Transparent Internal Communication From CEO, Supervisors, and Peers Leads to Employee Advocacy. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *37*, 878–912. https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189231153869

Li, J.-Y., Sun, R., Tao, W., & Lee, Y. (2021). Employee coping with organizational change in the face of a pandemic: The role of transparent internal communication. *Public Relations Review*, *47*(1), 101984. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101984

Li, T. (2020). A SWOT analysis of China's air cargo sector in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *88*, 101875. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2020.101875

Liang, F.-M., & Cao, L. (2021). Linking Employee Resilience with Organizational Resilience: The Roles of Coping Mechanism and Managerial Resilience. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, *14*, 1063–1075. https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S318632

Mao, Y., Kang, X., Lai, Y., Yu, J., Deng, X., Zhai, Y., Kong, F., Jianhong, & Bonaiuto, F. (2023). Authentic leadership and employee resilience during the COVID-19: The role of flow, organizational identification, and trust. *Current Psychology (New Brunswick, N.J.)*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-04148-x

Men, L., Qin, Y., Fitzsimmons, A., DiStaso, M., & Heffron, E. (2024). An Integrated Framework for Exploring the Impact of Leadership Communication on Employee Trust During Disruptive Crisis Times. *International Journal of Business Communication*. https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884241226567

Men, L., & Yue, C. (2019). Creating a positive emotional culture: Effect of internal communication and impact on employee supportive behaviors. *Public Relations Review*. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PUBREV.2019.03.001

Miles, M., Huberman, A., & Saldaña, J. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. https://consensus.app/papers/qualitative-data-analysis-a-methods-sourcebook-huberman-saldaña/f415fb2fe90f5beabad87846f96f96de/

Mwandembo, F. (2024). Navigating the Storm; Effective Crisis Communication Strategies. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology (IJISRT)*. https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/ijisrt24mar2080

Neill, M. S., & Kang, M. (2024). Guest editorial: Shifting role and challenges of internal communication in an age of workplace turbulence/disruption. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, *29*(3), 285–290. https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-05-2024-182

Nugroho, B. F., Nazaruddin, L. O., Syamil, A., Nurhasan, H. M., Fatma, E., Noor, M., Soeharsono, I. P. F. M., Sarasi, V., Fekete-Farkas, M., & Gyengye, B. (2024). A Pattern of Collaborative Logistics during Multiple Crises. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2024.104499

Page, T., Zhou, A., & Capizzo, L. (2023). Finding the path beyond reputation repair: A structural topic modeling analysis of the crisis communication paradigm in public relations. *Public Relations Review*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2023.102349

Paraschi, E. P., Panagopoulos, A., & Fragkogianni, M. (2024). COVID-19 crisis management in Greek airlines. *Journal of the Air Transport Research Society*, *3*, 100032. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jatrs.2024.100032

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. https://consensus.app/papers/qualitative-research-evaluation-methods-patton/6a06e789474b55609be11c0aeb4fc6fe/

Pereira, D., & De Mello, J. S. (2020). Efficiency evaluation of Brazilian airlines operations considering the Covid-19 outbreak. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *91*, 101976. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2020.101976

Prados-Peña, M., Crespo-Almendros, E., & Porcu, L. (2022). COVID-19 and social media communication strategies: A comparative study of the effectiveness of Facebook posts during the lockdown and the "new normal" in the airline industry. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *103*, 102255. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2022.102255

Prayag, G., Muskat, B., & Dassanayake, C. (2023). Leading for Resilience: Fostering Employee and Organizational Resilience in Tourism Firms. *Journal of Travel Research*, *63*, 659–680. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231164984

Qin, Y., & Men, L. (2022). Exploring the Impact of Internal Communication on Employee Psychological Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Mediating Role of Employee Organizational Trust. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *60*, 1197–1219. https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884221081838

Rahman, S. N. A., & Ahmad, N. S. (2024). INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE CRISIS RESILIENCE: A PRISMA-BASED SYSTEMATIC REVIEW. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication*. https://doi.org/10.35631/ijlgc.937034

Rai, S., Rai, S., & Singh, N. (2021). Organizational resilience and social-economic sustainability: COVID-19 perspective. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, *23*, 12006–12023. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-020-01154-6

Samra, Y., Zhang, H., Lynn, G., & Reilly, R. (2019). Crisis management in new product development: A tale of two stories. *Technovation*, *88*, 102038. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TECHNOVATION.2018.06.001

Santoso, N., Sulistyaningtyas, I.-D., & Pratama, B.-P. (2023). Employee engagement and trust relationships during COVID-19 pandemic: the expanded role of internal communication. *Communication & Society*, *36*, 187–204. https://doi.org/10.15581/003.36.2.187-204

Scheiwiller, S., & Zizka, L. (2021). Strategic responses by European airlines to the Covid-19 pandemic: A soft landing or a turbulent ride? *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *95*, 102103. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2021.102103

Suau-Sanchez, P., Voltes-Dorta, A., & Cugueró-Escofet, N. (2020). An early assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on air transport: Just another crisis or the end of aviation as we know it? *Journal of Transport Geography*, *86*, 102749. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2020.102749

Sun, Ruoyu, Li, Jo-Yun Queenie, Lee, Yeunjae, & Tao, Weiting. (2021). The Role of Symmetrical Internal Communication in Improving Employee Experiences and Organizational Identification During COVID-19 Pandemic-Induced Organizational Change. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *60*(4), 1398–1426. https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884211050628

Susetyo, A. S. A., Abrar, A., Darwin, M., & Djunaedi, A. (2024). Strategic renewal through digital transformation: Insights from Indonesia's telecom industry. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*, *8*, 7253. https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i10.7253

Sutrisno, T. F. C. W. (2024). *Achieving Supply Chain Resilience : and Supply Chain Process*. *22*(4), 1252–1266.

Tachkova, E. R., & Brannon, G. E. (2025). Psychological resilience and crisis READINESS: connecting employee well-being and internal crisis communication. *Journal of*

Communication Management. https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-12-2024-0267

Tei, S., Fujino, J., & Murai, T. (2025). Navigating the self online. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *16*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1499039

Tkalac Verčič, A. (2021). The impact of employee engagement, organisational support and employer branding on internal communication satisfaction. *Public Relations Review*, *47*(1), 102009. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102009

Wahl, I., Wolfgruber, D., & Einwiller, S. (2024). Mitigating teleworkers' perceived technological complexity and work strains through supportive team communication. *Corporate Communications*, *29*(3), 329–345. https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-05-2023-0061

Wajahat, A. (2024). Role of Effective Communication in Crisis Management. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*. https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i03.21450

Wang, W., Liu, S., & Guo, B. (2025). Impact of national health city campaign on public health in China. *Frontiers in Public Health*, *13*(May), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1594104

Williams, E., Linvill, J., Ojeda-Hecht, E., Cosgrove, M., Buzzetta, A., & Konkel, A. (2024). The Structuration of Positive Communication Experiences: The Case of the Great Resignation. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *61*, 805–830. https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884241263553

Zalewska-Turzyńska, M., & Pamuła, A. (2024). (In)formal communication satisfaction of it tools as an element of organizational resiliences. *Scientific Papers of Silesian University of Technology. Organization and Management Series*. https://doi.org/10.29119/1641-3466.2024.214.20