

**The Roles of Internal Communication in Driving Corporate Volunteering among
Chinese Employees: An Integrated Approach of Social Influence and Volunteering
Motivations**

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Abstract

Corporate volunteering (CV), or employee volunteering, is conceptualized as an employee's voluntary participation in social activities initiated or supported by their organization, through contributing his/her time and skills to help the community. CV is a popular and essential form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practice among organizations. While the literature has suggested that CV simultaneously benefits the charity/NGO, the corporation, and the employee, it is a challenge for corporations to engage employees in CV participation, especially in mainland China. This book chapter aims to explicate the roles of internal communication in driving employees' CV participation in mainland China by first proposing a framework that integrates social influence theory, motivation-based theory of volunteerism, and levels of internal communication. It then conducts a case study on Tencent (a 2020 Fortune 200 Chinese corporation) using mixed methods of interviewing and content analysis, to validate the framework. Implications of the findings are proposed.

Keywords: Corporate volunteering participation, internal communication, Chinese employee, corporate social responsibility (CSR)

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Corporate volunteering (CV) has been found to generate significant benefits to the charity/NGO, the corporation, and the employee (Caligiuri et al., 2013). In the United States, 90% of corporations have initiated a CV program (Cook & Geldenhuys, 2018). However, only about 50% of their counterparts in mainland China (hereinafter China) have done so (Hu et al., 2016). Additionally, employee volunteer recruitment and retention seem to be a challenge in China. More importantly, the literature has suggested that Chinese employees, especially the younger generation, have distinct social and cultural characteristics, and they are taking a more leading role in planning their firms' CV activities than before (HCVCChina, 2019). This book chapter explicates the role of internal communication in driving employees' CV participation in China by first proposing a framework that integrates social influence theory, motivation-based theory of volunteerism, and internal communication matrix. It then conducts a case study on Tencent (a 2020 Fortune 200 Chinese corporation), using mixed methods of interviewing and content analysis, to validate the framework. Implications of the findings are also proposed for academics and managers who seek to understand or implement CV in China.

Literature Review

Internal CV Communication: Definition and Levels

Internal communication is understood as the structured, strategic communication of an organization to advance its missions and goals by managing interactions and relationships at all levels of the organization (Malouf et al., 2016; Verčič et al., 2012; Welch & Jackson, 2007). As taking part in volunteering is an individual employee's decision, moving beyond business and job responsibilities, internal communication related to CV (i.e., internal CV communication) is often conducted formally and informally. Internal CV communication is defined, in this chapter, as all forms of communication about CV conducted at all levels of an organization. Guided by

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Welch and Jackson's (2007) internal communication matrix, this chapter analyzes an organization's internal CV communication on three levels: (1) management-employee CV communication, (2) supervisor-subordinate CV communication, and (3) peer-peer CV communication.

Management-Employee CV Communication

Adapted from Welch and Jackson's (2007) matrix, management-employee CV communication refers to the CV communication between an organization's top management (e.g., Chief Executive Officers (CEO) or the Chief Communication Officers) and its entire body of employees (as a stakeholder). Top management engages in CV communication with employees to deliver transparent and clear information about the organization's CV goals and policies to employees, to give employees a voice in decision-making, to foster awareness and favorable attributions toward CV activities, and to engage employee in CV (Chen & Hung-Baesecke, 2004; Du et al., 2010; Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). Management-employee CV communication is *often* one-way, top-down communication from the centralized source (e.g., the top management) to the employees via the organization's own channels (e.g., internal social media platforms, Intranet, emails, newsletters, and public speeches) (Potoski & Callery, 2018).

Existing literature has suggested that to motivate employees' CV participation effectively, management-employee CV communication should not only contain sufficient information about the CV activity (Malouf et al., 2016) but also signify how the activity aligns with the organization's purpose, values, CSR strategy, core know-hows and competitive advantages (Aguilera et al., 2007; D'Amato et al., 2010; Malouf et al., 2016; Opoku-Dakwa et al., 2018). Furthermore, top leaders' advocacy and recognition (e.g., giving awards or compliments to employee volunteers in official events) are critical for employees to sustain their

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CV participation and to maintain a positive self-concept and self-assessment (Grant, 2012, Hu et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2017).

The CV literature shows that 62 percent of the programs are employee-led (Wainwright, 2005; Malouf et al., 2016). Management-employee CV communication, therefore, could be bottom-up when the top management empowers the employee in planning and decision-making about CV programs or CV policies (Malouf et al., 2016; Gammons, 2018).

Supervisor-Subordinate CV Communication

Superior-subordinate CV communication refers to supervisors' CV-related information behaviors (i.e., information sharing, seeking, and exchanges) with subordinates collectively (as an entire group) or individually (one-to-one) (Welch & Jackson, 2007; Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1992). This CV communication occurs between a department/unit responsible for CV and (whole or individual) employees or between a mid- or low-level line manager and his or her immediate subordinates. Guided by Welch and Jackson (2007), the content of superior-subordinate CV communication includes: assigning employee roles (e.g., a CV program leader), setting program targets, assigning work for effective and successful CV implementation (Potoski & Callery, 2018), and clarifying organizational policies about CV (e.g., performance expectations, official responsibilities, and benefits; Nifadkar et al., 2019). In Wang et al.'s (2017) study, employees in China reported their line managers' incompetence in implementing CV on-site as a critical obstacle to their CV participation. Hence, superior-subordinate CV communication should also consider how supervisors' support is provided and seek feedback from the employee volunteers to optimize future CV programs.

Peer-Peer CV Communication

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Combining Welch and Jackson's (2007) internal team peer communication and internal project peer communication categories, peer-peer CV communication refers to CV-related communication among employees (within a unit or across units). Employees may talk about CV programs with a colleague with whom they interact for work assignments as a conversation topic or with whom they collaborate in a CV program as a task-related topic. Compared to the previous two levels of internal CV communication, peer-peer communication is more effective in driving employees' participation in the programs (Potoski & Callery, 2018; Miller & Fyke, 2020) for two reasons. Firstly, Wang et al. (2017) found that Chinese employees are eager to exchange their CV experience, stories, and the intrinsic rewards (e.g., happiness and peace of mind) with colleagues through the organization's internal and public social media platforms or in face-to-face communication. Consequently, more than 42 percent of Chinese employees obtain CV-related information from their colleagues (Wang et al., 2017). Secondly, value-based and emotional information sharing about CV by coworkers is seen as more credible than the traditional hierarchical communication from the top management or supervisors whose motivations might be questionable (Potoski & Callery, 2018). Indeed, Cao et al. (2021) found that an employee's sharing of stories about CV experiences is essential to drive CV participation among other employees.

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory posits how behavioral changes occur through social influence (Kelman, 1958)—the influence from the real or implied presence of significant others (Hogg & Vaughan, 2011, p. 236). In the CV context, the top management and coworkers are two sources of social influence in motivating the employee's CV participation (e.g., Chen & Hung-Baesecke, 2014; Hu et al., 2016) because of their respective power over the employee.

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The social power approach posits that people who possess power (e.g., valued resources) can influence others towards behavioral change (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). In this vein, Kelman (1958) proposed three types of social power (i.e., means-control, attractiveness, and credibility) an agent possesses to make others change their behavior through the mechanisms of compliance, identification, and internalization, respectively. According to Kelman (1958), the *compliance* mechanism occurs when the influencer uses his/her control of specific resources (e.g., rewards or punishments) to gain the target's acceptance by threatening to withdraw the resources if the target fails to comply. The *identification* mechanism takes place when the influencer gains acceptance by his/her attractiveness and the representativeness of his/her group. To be attractive, one must construct "a positive identity as virtuous and held in high regard" (Maclean et al., 2015, p. 1627). Furthermore, being liked, respected, and affiliated are the keys to exercising the identification route of social influence (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). The target, in this context, complies to maintain a relationship with the influencer or the influencer's group (Kelman, 1958). By sharing their CV experiences and enthusiasm with their peers, employee volunteers may build a positive identity to attract their peer colleagues to participate in CV activities or be a part of the CV teams (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Hu et al., 2016). The *internalization* mechanism happens when the influencer's recommendation, driven by his/her credibility or expertise, is consistent with the target's value system toward the issue. Scholars further reorganized Kelman's influence mechanisms as normative social influence versus informational social influence (Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975; Lord et al., 2001). The former (including the compliance and identification) refers to behavioral change implemented to fit the expectation of other individuals or groups, while the latter (internalization) refers to the credible information and value agreement that underpins the behavioral change.

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The top management controls organizational and social resources desired by employees and the leaders in an organization often possess some level of credibility and charisma through authority and strong delivery (Gardner, 2003). As a result, the more resources a leader can award an employee and the more credible and charismatic the leader is, the more powerful he or she can be in shaping employees' CV behaviors through compliance, identification, and internalization. Indeed, by providing recognition, presenting awards, making positive assessments, and giving promotional opportunities to employee volunteers, leaders can exert a compliance route of social influence on employees' CV participation (Kelman, 1958). Furthermore, leaders' modeling behavior of CV participation not only enhances the awareness of CV among the employees (D'Amato et al., 2010) but also signifies the organization's expectation for employees to participate in CV (Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Therefore, top managers can perform CV with advocacy to drive employees' CV participation through the mechanisms of identification and internalization (Chen & Hung-Baesecke, 2014; Hu et al., 2016; Peloza & Hassay, 2006). However, it is crucial to align leaders' CV behavior with CV advocacy for the leaders to exert the above-mentioned influences (Chen & Hung-Baesecke, 2014; D'Amato et al., 2010).

Theoretically, supervisors (mid- or low-level managers) play a similar role to that played by leaders but are less powerful in driving employee CV participation. It is because compared to leaders, they control fewer resources and usually have less authority or charisma, thereby they are less likely to be effective role models in CV to employees. Practically, supervisors mobilize their subordinates' CV engagement when their top managers prioritize CV as a strategic goal or when they have a personal value in CV (Vlachos et al., 2014). The extant CSR/CV literature thus neglects the role of middle managers in CSR strategy and communication (Vlachos et al., 2014).

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Furthermore, a corporation's CV is often overseen by a supporting department (e.g., public relations, public affairs, community outreach, or human resources; Wang et al., 2017) and thus, mid- or low-level line managers are seldom involved in CV management. Regarding the head of the supporting department, he or she has little social influence on individual employees other than his or her subordinates in the department unless the head is in the corporation's dominant coalition.

Coworkers do not obtain resources from fellow employees, but they frequently interact with them at work and in their lives and thus they significantly affect the employee's emotions and experiences (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). This frequent interaction generates a high demand for acceptance and fit within the workgroup. As a result, coworkers aggregately exercise normative influence on a fellow employee's behavior, including his/her CV participation through identification and internalization (Cao et al., 2021; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Hu et al., 2016).

Volunteering Motivations of Employees

The existing literature has frequently suggested that employee volunteerism could have mixed motives – altruistic (the desire to help and to do good deeds) and egoistic (employees looking to progress their careers) (Burns et al., 2006). Pelozo and Hassey (2006), and Pelozo et al. (2009) contended that the third motive, the desire to be a good corporate citizen, should be part of the motives contributing to a more effective corporate volunteer program. An analysis by Pelozo et al. (2009) revealed that egoistic and organizational citizenship motives were the most important drivers for employees participating in volunteering programs.

More detailed categorizations of volunteering motivations can be found in Clary et al.'s (1998) research. Using a functional approach, six motivations have been identified when discussing employee volunteering. These motivations include values (altruistic and humanitarian

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concerns about others), understanding (acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competences), enhancement (personal growth/self-esteem and psychological development), social (strengthening relationships with others), protective (minimizing the guilt of feeling more fortunate than others or solving problems), and career (career benefits resulting from participating in volunteering activities). Houle et al. (2005) found that employees take part in different volunteering tasks based on their own motives, and the benefits coming from the tasks.

Inspired by Clary et al.'s (1998) work, Pajo and Lee (2010) further identified the following motives: altruism (a desire to help, to give back, to assist those who are less fortunate), meaningfulness, (a desire driven by the meaningfulness, impact, worth or significance of the volunteer activity), organizational citizenship (a desire to reciprocate positive treatment from the employer, to support the company or to present a favorable image of the enterprise), role variety (driven by the opportunity to do something different from 'normal' work), relational and social task characteristics (driven by positive affective judgment about the activity and the relational and/or social aspects of the tasks), networking (driven by the opportunity to get to know others in the organization and/or build their own profile), and personal (driven by individual and personalized reasons for volunteering). The research also reported that to have a satisfying employee volunteering experience, it is critical to enhance perceptions of task significance and meaningfulness and to incorporate relational elements into the volunteer programs. In terms of the motives relative to age differences, Briggs et al.'s (2010) found that young adults are more likely to be motivated by personal factors (e.g., peer pressure, concerns about self-image, and the need for personal development), while older adults are more likely to be motivated by other reasons and values (sense of responsibility toward the community and the motivation to contribute to the well-being of others).

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The Integrative Framework

Based on the literature review, we proposed a theoretical framework (Figure 1) that integrates the motivation-based theory of volunteerism with social influence theory (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Kelman, 1958) and internal communication dimensions (Welch & Jackson, 2007) to examine the roles of internal communication in driving CV behaviors.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

The literature has suggested that leaders (e.g., CEO of an organization) and coworkers can motivate employees' participation in CV through communicating to the employees. However, their communication has different effects in driving employee motivations. The framework explicates the two communication mechanisms respectively. As the organization's top decision-maker, the CEO sets its vision and leads it to perform. Employees are highly aware of the CEO's words and actions and thus, they affect them. For example, the CEO can initiate and implement organizational policies (e.g., paid leaves for CV or CV as a performance criterion) to encourage CV participation. Thus, the CEO is a single powerful source of influence on employees' CV behavior (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). As the top authority figure who controls the organization's resources at large, the CEO's plea for CV participation may elicit employee compliance to gain rewards, such as recognition, awards, positive assessments, or career advancement (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). When the CEO is a charismatic figure or especially liked by employees, the employee may comply with the CEO's plea for CV participation to mimic the CEO or to build a relationship with him/her. When the CEO advocates CV by linking it to the organization's values and/or his/her actual volunteering, the employee may imitate the CEO's CV behavior by treating the CEO as a role model. In summary, the CEO's communication to the employees (in a type of one to many) can be used for the purposes

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of advocacy CV, recognizing employees' CV behaviors, co-creating meaning and value of CV with employees, and engaging employees with decision-making about CV practice. Such communication can trigger the prosocial value motivation, reward motivation, and career motivation of the employees' CV participation.

As non-authority figures who usually control little or no resources over others in the organization, coworkers influence the employees' CV participation through identification and internalization. An employee's feelings and experiences at work are directly impacted by the employee's relationship with his/her coworkers. Thus, an employee is likely to perform CV to be socially accepted, especially when many of his/her coworkers are doing so (i.e., identification). Coworkers often share their experiences in CV activities with one another, including what they witnessed about the problem/people they serve, and how they feel after volunteering, on their networks, and thereby drive their colleagues' CV participation via value congruence (i.e., internalization). In addition to advocacy and experience sharing, coworker communication (peer-peer communication) about CV often occurs in order to plan and execute CV programs. As a result, coworker communication can trigger the employees' CV motivations of prosocial value, understanding (knowledge, skills, and leadership), enhancement (self-growth and self-esteem), socializing, reward (reputation), and protection.

As previously discussed, supervisors in general exert weaker social influences on employees in their CV participation. Supervisors have a similar role as top managers in inducing employee CV participation because they are a low-level leader. Like their coworkers, employees have a desire to be socially accepted by supervisors because they directly work with and are evaluated by their supervisors. As a result, the framework suggests that supervisors can utilize a

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combination of influence means and communication tactics that are exclusive to leaders and coworkers to enhance a wide range of motivations of employees for CV.

Case Study: Tencent

Tencent Volunteer Association

Founded in 1998 and listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in 2004, Tencent Holdings (hereinafter Tencent) is one of China's technology conglomerates providing Internet services to individuals and companies. Tencent Foundation and Tencent Volunteer Association (TVA) were set up in 2007 to oversee the company's volunteering practice. Following the company's newly issued vision and mission – *Value for Users, Tech for Good* – the company merged Tencent Foundation with Tencent charity and CSR practices to form a new division, titled Tencent Sustainable Social Value Organization (SSVO) in April 2021. SSVO is responsible for producing the company's shared value projects that aim to leverage the company's core technologies and business capabilities to innovatively conduct charitable activities (Tencent, 2021). TVA is now the sole unit that oversees Tencent's CV function.

TVA is a virtual unit under the Department of Tencent Culture. It has only one staff member (with a title of association chair) responsible for the company's internal and external volunteering programs and activities. For example, when SSVO needs employee volunteers to support its events, TVA will recruit volunteers and (co-)manage their volunteering assignments for SSVO. According to the TVA Chair, TVA currently has more than 7,000 volunteers in 28 branches. It has appointed 200 Tencent employee volunteers (hereinafter Tencent volunteers) in various departments of the company as CV directors, who lead in organizing CV programs (Interpersonal Communication, July 3, 2021).

Methodology

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This case study used mixed methods of interviewing and content analysis to examine the internal CV communication at Tencent and the effects of that communication on the employees' CV participation. Eight telephone interviews were conducted in July 2021 with the TVA Chair and seven active Tencent volunteers. The content for analysis included the top management's two letters to employees and media reports about Tencent's volunteering activities on the company's website, as well as the 19 CV postings on the TVA WeChat account (i.e., TVA's official communication platform) issued after the new corporate vision and mission were announced. The two letters were sent to the employees on the date of SSVO's launch and Tencent's 99 Giving Day Campaign, respectively, and were identified by the interviewees as being very important communication pieces about CV. Three of the WeChat postings were about the top management's speeches at Tencent's annual Volunteer Conference, a significant event for the Tencent volunteers.

Results

Tencent's Management-Employee CV Communication

This level of internal CV communication at Tencent takes a top-down approach: communication is initiated by its 18-member Executive Committee (e.g., the CEO Pony Ma and the Executive Director and President Martin Lau) to the employees via emails and speeches given at the company's mega events (i.e., Tencent's launch of the SSVO, annual Volunteer Conference, and annual 99 Giving Day Campaign). Management-employee CV communication not only draws much attention from the employees but also makes them understand how CV links to the company's corporate culture and values. For example, the interviewees associated integrity (a value of Tencent) and "Tech for Good" (Tencent's mission) with the company's general CV direction: CV through technologies. Six Tencent volunteer interviewees recognized

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the launch of SSVO as signaling the determination of Tencent to upgrade its charity efforts, including CV. As the programmer interviewee put it, “[Hearing about the news of the establishment of SSVO] deeply touched me because it meant that the company wishes to be more professional in CV execution, or to push [its CV function] to a higher level.” And the TVA Chair further explained:

This action [establishing SSVO] signifies the company’s increasing investment in philanthropy and social responsibility to the public. As for CV, although it is not a KPI of the company, we will make greater investments in this area, which is indicated by our organizational restructure.

Compliance-Directed Social Influence of the Top Management

To encourage CV behaviors via rewards (i.e., resource control), Tencent’s top management publicly recognizes devoted Tencent volunteers by paying them compliments and bestowing awards at the company’s annual Volunteer Conference. The awards include Excellent Volunteers, Outstanding Director of Volunteer Branch, Excellent Volunteer Team, and Tencent Light Innovation Challenge Winners. The social influence is effective for compliance when the targets believe their activities are noticed and recognized by others (Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975). Tencent employees at large view the Volunteer Conference as a high-profile company event. As the TVA Chair put it, “[the Conference] is akin to a festival to the Tencent volunteers who are excited to attend it.” Indeed, the interviewee in customer service mentioned: “Our Volunteer Conference is specially designed for all employee volunteers to receive extensive publicity, encouragement, and recognition in the company to motivate more employees to participate in CV activities.” A product-manager interviewee further claimed that many employee volunteers attend the Conference to shine among other employees by actively sharing

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their volunteering experiences in front of the Conference participants, including the top management.

Identification-Directed Social Influence of the Top Management

To exercise identification influence, the top management communicated with the employees via the two letters to remind them of the ways Tencent builds a positive identity through its CV efforts. The contents of the letters focused on three attributes of Tencent – leadership, meaningfulness, and advocacy. The letters argued that Tencent, as an industry leader in China and worldwide, should commit to charity (i.e., being “the first charity organization of the Internet industry”) to generate meaningful, positive impacts. For instance, the letters addressed Tencent’s 99 Giving Day Campaign as a “one of a kind” charity initiative for businesses and organizations in China to make a positive impact by helping re-distribute resources and wealth among people in society through CV behaviors and donations.

Internalization-Directed Social Influence of the Top Management

The top management’s letters to employees and speeches at the Volunteer Conference aim to deliver an internalization route of social influence, which supplies credible information to indicate the congruence between the company’s behavior and its value system, thereby advocating for the employees’ behavior to achieve a value congruence with the company (Kelman, 1958; Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). The speeches and letters illustrated how Tencent establishes its value of “Tech for Good” through commitment, strategic thinking, persistence, and outcomes with facts and statistics, so as to encourage internalization in its employees. For example, Tencent’s 99 Giving Day Campaign attracted 48 million donors. Tencent also set up a Chinese Renminbi 1.5 billion (approximately 0.235 million US dollars) anti-pandemic fund and mobilized 12,000 Tencent volunteers to fight against COVID-19 as well as developing 14

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businesses to deliver its “Tech for Good” value to consumers. The speeches and letters also repeated the terms “digitalized public welfare,” “technological public welfare,” and “Tech for Good” throughout the content.

Tencent’s Supervisor-Subordinate CV Communication

The interview data suggested that this level of CV communication only occurs between the TVA Chair and the employees (volunteers and non-volunteers), the TVA Chair and the CV directors, and the CV directors and Tencent volunteers. Line managers did not engage in CV communication with their subordinates. CV Communication content included promoting CV programs, assigning CV roles, providing CV support, planning and managing CV activities, and seeking feedback on CV activities. Communication for CV promotion mainly took a top-down approach, while communication for CV execution took a dialogic approach. For example, the product manager interviewee reported that the TVA Chair issues all calls for Tencent’s CV participants. Additionally, the TVA Chair received feedback on Tencent volunteers’ CV participation experiences through their informal chats. For instance, the programmer interviewee mentioned his dialogue with the TVA Chair where he suggested how to better execute a CV program after participating in a CV activity by saying that “[the TVA Chair] usually accepted my suggestions for actions when implementing the follow-up CV activities.”

In addition, the TVA Chair strategically utilized various communication platforms to promote CV programs to the employees at large, including the official TVA WeChat account, company email systems, Tencent KM (the company’s intranet), and new staff orientation. The interviewees indicated emails as their most preferred communication channel with the TVA. Each of the 28 branches and existing CV programs had formed a group chat on WeChat. Communication between the TVA Chair and the directors and the directors and Tencent

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volunteers was predominantly through the group chats on WeChat because of convenience and promptness.

Compliance-Directed Social Influence of the TVA

As a virtual unit with one full-time staff member, the TVA aimed to drive CV participation by publicly *recognizing* the contribution of Tencent volunteers to society and the company via frequently expressing the company's gratitude to them and sharing their CV stories to others on its official WeChat account to boost their positive image and reputation. However, it should be noted that none of the six volunteer interviewees indicated that their CV participation is fostered by this means. An exemplar of the TVA WeChat post reads:

On June 1, the International Children's Day this year, Tencent employee volunteers delivered gifts to the long-term child patients at the Shenzhen City Children's Hospital and the children in Daliangshan [*an impoverished mountainous area in Sichuan Province*]. It is the best Children's Day gift and the nicest surprise for them. Thanks to all our loving Tencent volunteers who participated in this June 1 Children's Day activity.

Identification-Directed Social Influence of the CV Directors

Tencent volunteers admired their CV directors for their excellent CV organization competence and citizenship. As the interviewees pointed out, the directors are not only capable but also highly committed to conducting CV activities that deliver good experiences to Tencent volunteers. The directors use their communication and behaviors to convey their passion and enthusiasm for CV activities. As a result, the directors drive the CV participation of Tencent volunteers (e.g., to continue their CV participation or to take the role in organizing a CV program) by means of the volunteers' desire to cultivate their relationship with them. As the interviewee in online gaming design described a CV director with whom he worked:

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I like the director very much because I think he/she is very kind, and secondly, he/she has been doing CV for so many years on a regular basis. Whenever there is a problem, he/she will go the extra mile to solve it. Although we never have any interactions at work, I think this person must have good communication skills. And I think I would like to become a good friend with him/her.

Tencent's Peer-Peer CV Communication

The interview data revealed that the Tencent volunteers are extremely self-driven in launching and organizing the CV programs. For instance, the interviewee from the Corporate Culture Department mentioned:

We have many CV programs initiated and developed by Tencent volunteers from a small idea into a large-scale program project utilizing their organizational and leadership skills. Some good examples are the Planting in Tenggeli Program and Starry Color Autistic Children Care Program.

The interview data also showed that coworkers have a stronger impact on driving employee CV participation at Tencent than the top management do. Tencent volunteers generated identification and internalization influence on their peers' CV participation by sharing their CV stories on their personal WeChat moment (equivalent to Facebook wall) and the TVA WeChat account and through face-to-face communication. For instance, the interviewee from the Corporate Culture Department claimed that his coworkers' CV stories shared at the Volunteer Conference emotionally motivate him to sustain his CV participation.

Identification-Directed and Internalization-Directed Social Influence of Peers

The interview data revealed identification-directed and internalization-directed social influence of Tencent volunteers on their fellow employees through perceived positive identity

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towards the Tencent volunteers and the value congruence between the Tencent volunteers and their coworkers, respectively. When explaining the identification-directed social influence through peer-peer CV communication, the interviewees suggested that Tencent volunteers' communication about their CV experience on WeChat and in-person motivates not only the employees to participate in CV programs but also the volunteers to sustain their CV participation by delivering a positive identity and showing attractiveness to their peers. For instance, all the interviewees reported that as Tencent volunteers, they often share their CV experiences and thoughts with people in their networks on WeChat moment. The sharing usually gained positive responses from their coworkers, such as praise and the creation of positive images as "virtuous and excellent people with good time management skills," as suggested by the senior manager interviewee. Furthermore, the TVA WeChat account also published Tencent volunteers' stories and experiences, which further built the volunteers' fame and reputation among their coworkers. The product manager interviewee claimed that she was praised by her coworkers when they found out she was a member of the TVA and her coworkers further asked her how to join the TVA to practice CV.

Tencent volunteers' sharing of their CV stories or beliefs also drive other employees' CV participation when the stories and beliefs align with the value system of the other employees (i.e., internalization-directed social influence). For example, three interviewees reported that they become active Tencent volunteers because of another Tencent volunteer who is dedicated to CV and devotes his time to CV participation on a regular basis. The interviewees agreed with the value of CV devotion, thereby modeling the behavior of the Tencent volunteer.

Conclusion and Discussion

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CV has become an increasingly important aspect of CSR because of its positive impact on the organization, the employee, the collaborating NGOs, and society. This chapter advances the body of knowledge of CSR and internal communication by using a case study to validate the proposed integrative framework that explicates what and how the motives of employees towards CV are driven by leaders' and coworkers respectively, through their communication within an organization to increase/sustain CV.

Theoretical Contributions

The case study demonstrates the applicability of the proposed framework to analyze how internal CV communication can foster employee CV participation through the mechanisms suggested by social influence theory. It is also evident that internal CV communication by leaders and coworkers functions differently in enhancing the motivations to induce employees' CV participation while the direct impacts of CV communication by supervisors on CV participation are limited. Therefore, future research should move from treating internal CV communication as a whole to communication-level analysis when examining its function(s) in driving employee CV participation. To refine the proposed framework, researchers should further examine how CV communication by mid- or low-level supervisors who are active in CV affect employee CV participation in their corporations. In addition, future research should examine how to use internal CV communication to drive other outcomes for employees, such as employee engagement, well-being, and productivity. For example, it is worth examining if involving employees to co-create the values and purposes of an organization, using leader-employee communication in a dialogic mode, enhances the level of affective and behavioral engagement of the employee volunteers in the CV activities derived from these co-created values and purposes. This inquiry is especially relevant to Chinese

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organizations with large numbers of Generation Z employees, who seek opportunities that offer intrinsic meaning (Kelly, 2021 January 4).

Practical Implications

Drawing on the findings of the case study, several implications are presented below for both academics and managers concerning CV in China. First, since the COVID-19 outbreak in 2019, there have been increasing expectations of purpose-led businesses from various stakeholders, including employees (Palsule & Chavez, 2020). Corporate leaders in China have communicated internally about CV using a more strategic communication approach than before, by linking CV with the firm's values and mission. However, the leaders' internal communication still centers on CV advocacy and promotion of the firm's CV success through publicizing the activities of the employees at large, with little or no sharing of their own CV experiences. This might explain why only 8% of Tencent's employees have participated in CV, as reported by the TVA chair. Leaders' actual CV behavior plays a pivotal role in sustaining employees' CV participation.

Secondly, CSR/CV managers (mid-level supervisors) should organize an internal communication structure that optimizes the integration of communication efforts by leaders and coworkers to employees via their end-to-end volunteering journey. For example, a crowdsourcing platform that allows leaders and employee volunteers to share with others the knowledge and skills necessary for improving the performance of CV activities could be part of the structure. Such a platform could not only increase volunteer satisfaction by means of pre-volunteering self-training and post-volunteering sharing but also motivate CV participation through the manifested benefits of self-enhancement and social interaction with leaders and coworkers. The organization of such a structure, also driven by technologies, should be explored

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in detail in future studies. Last but not least, the internal CV communication, initiated by the supervisor who is the head of the supporting department or unit that oversees the corporation's CV function, must be more strategically planned than leader communication or coworker communication to achieve its objective. It is because the supervisor as the source of communication has weaker social influence than the leader or the coworker do in general.

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Learning Outcomes

1. Identify how internal communication at different levels in a corporation engage in CV communication and its effects on CV participation.
2. Describe how social influence theory can inform internal CV communication practices.
3. Understand why and how top managers and coworkers are social agents within a corporation who can significantly influence the employees' CV participation by considering employee CV motivations.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the similarities and differences between internal CV communication in China and the United States?
2. How can CSR/CV managers apply the integrative framework to develop the internal CV communication strategy for their organization?
3. What is an effective means for CSR/CV managers to persuade the top management to participate in CV activities?
4. What are the data necessary for organizing an organization's internal communication structure in order to optimize the integration of communication efforts by leaders and coworkers to employees via their end-to-end volunteering journey?

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Figure 1

The Integrative Framework for Internal Communication Roles in Driving Corporate

Volunteering Motivations

	Leader (e.g., CEO) Communication	Supervisor Communication	Coworker Communication
Communication source	Leaders	Mid- or low-level line managers or the manager responsible for the corporation's CV function	Employees (who are usually volunteers)
Means of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy (one-to-many communication) ● Compensations & other tangible supports ● Actual volunteering: sending a strong value/mission signal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy (one-on-one or one-to-many communication) ● Limited tangible & intangible supports ● Actual volunteering: sending a strong value/mission & expectation signal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy (one-on-one or group communication) ● Actual volunteering: sending a strong expectation signal
Sources of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having great influence attempts and impacts on employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having a wide range of influence attempts and impacts on subordinates (depending on the supervisor's valuation of CV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facing the same situation (e.g., CV) – competition or comparison ● Daily close interaction – social acceptance
Form of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a single source of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a single source of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In an aggregate form of influence
Communication usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy ● Public recognition ● Value co-creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy ● Public recognition ● Experience sharing ● Project planning & execution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocacy ● Experience sharing ● Project planning & execution

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision-making 		
Motivations triggered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Value ● Reward (recognition/awards & positive assessments) ● Career (promotions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Value ● Reward (recognition & positive assessments) ● Career (promotions) ● Socializing (relationship cultivation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Value ● Understanding (knowledge, skills) ● Enhancement (self-growth, self-esteem) ● Socializing ● Reward (reputation) ● Protective (escaping from negative feelings about work)