

# TRANSFERRING MARKETING EXPERIENCES FROM THE MILITARY SECTOR INTO THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Marija Gombar<sup>1, \*</sup> and Marija Boban<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Croatian Defense Academy “Dr Franjo Tuđman”  
Zagreb, Croatia

<sup>2</sup>University of Split Faculty of Law  
Split, Croatia

DOI: 10.7906/indecs.23.5.6  
Regular article

*Received:* 22 April 2025.  
*Accepted:* 16 October 2025.

## ABSTRACT

This article proposes a strategic communication model for the public sector, drawing inspiration from military marketing experiences, including segmentation, storytelling, and adaptive feedback loops. The background of the study lies in the growing need for civic legitimacy in fragmented trust environments, where traditional public messaging struggles to maintain credibility. The aim is to explore how emotionally resonant narratives and psychographic segmentation, which have been proven effective in defence and security communication, can enhance public engagement and resilience to disinformation. The research draws on secondary data from defence communication campaigns, including policy reports, social media analytics, and recent public campaigns. Methodologically, the article integrates simulated metrics with insights from defence-based messaging strategies such as the U.S. Army’s “What is Your Warrior?” and the UK’s “Snowflake Generation”. These cases are used to illustrate the model’s applicability. Findings suggest that strategic messaging, supported by real-time analytics, increases the perceived relevance and trustworthiness. Simulated scenarios involving vaccine awareness and environmental campaigns show how narrative alignment fosters stronger engagement, particularly among younger audiences. The model is conceptual and normative but offers a scalable framework for empirical testing. It emphasises ethical constraints, transparency, and accountability as prerequisites for legitimate strategic communication in complex democratic settings.

## KEY WORDS

conceptual framework, knowledge transfer, marketing approaches, organizational learning, public sector

## CLASSIFICATION

ACM: I.2.0, I.2.1, K.4.2

APA: 2710, 2720, 2800, 3000, 3610

JEL: O33

\*Corresponding author, *η*: [magombar@unin.hr](mailto:magombar@unin.hr); +385 98 970 9793; -;

## **INTRODUCTION**

Effective communication is essential for public governance, particularly in fostering trust and citizen engagement. Digital platforms have transformed government–citizen interactions, introducing opportunities and challenges, such as fragmented attention and the rapid spread of misinformation. In Central and Southeast Europe, these issues are amplified by historical mistrust, linguistic diversity, and varying levels of digital literacy [1, 2]. This is illustrated by the inconsistent uptake of COVID-19 vaccination campaigns in Croatia, Serbia, and Romania, where segmented trust levels and language diversity influenced message receptiveness despite uniform public health policies [3, 4]. Addressing such complexity requires innovative, citizen-centric communication strategies. Public communication efforts in complex environments must surpass generic transparency goals. They should consider scepticism’s deep-rooted cognitive and emotional drivers, including institutional fatigue and algorithmic overload. In this context, fragmented trust refers to declining confidence and a dynamic and adaptive public perception shaped by selective engagement, media distrust, and perceived message irrelevance. According to framing theory, tailored messaging can influence audience perception by emphasizing selected aspects of communication [5].

This study conceptualises fragmented trust as an adaptive socio-technical system and introduces a military-inspired communication model as a system-level intervention. The approach emphasises strategic storytelling to reframe public sector messages – for example, positioning vaccination campaigns as expressions of civic responsibility and social care. This narrative approach draws from affective design experiences and strategic empathy models, which have proven effective in overcoming resistance in emotionally polarised audiences. Public messaging can generate resonance even in highly fragmented attention ecosystems when aligned with individual values and cultural codes. Defence-sector communication campaigns such as “What is Your Warrior?” and “Snowflake Generation” demonstrate how segmentation, analytics, and emotionally resonant storytelling enhance engagement [6, 7]. The Croatian defence sector further illustrates how knowledge networks within defence clusters can inspire innovation transferable to the public sector [8]. Moreover, big data and psychographic profiling enable real-time personalisation and increased message relevance [9, 10].

The term public sector strategic communication in this article refers to a set of strategies, tactics, and communication approaches originating from the military sector [5], aimed at building reputation, attracting and retaining personnel, and strengthening public support. These practices, while rooted in the context of defense institutions, have gradually expanded into other areas of the public sector, echoing earlier analyses of e-democracy and digital participation. As a result, the adaptation of marketing experiences from the military sector has influenced government institutions, health systems, education, and emergency services, particularly in the fields of recruitment, image management, and crisis response. In this process, social media platforms such as Twitter have increasingly served as arenas of institutional communication [3], where official narratives interact with citizen-driven discourse. By examining how strategic communication has transitioned from the military sector into broader public use, this article highlights the hybrid nature of contemporary public sector communication, where techniques of persuasion, branding, and legitimacy-building merge with practices of public accountability and civic engagement, in line with the emphasis on transparency and trust as fundamental conditions of democratic governance [4].

This study proposes a scalable and ethically grounded communication model that applies public sector strategic communication experiences to foster trust, engagement, and transparency in emerging European public governance. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature from communication, marketing, and public administration, the proposed framework focuses on three key components: 1) audience segmentation, 2) storytelling, and 3) adaptive feedback

mechanisms. These elements are embedded within a sociopolitical context marked by low institutional trust and fragmented media ecologies. The main aim of this article is to propose a strategic communication model for the public sector that recalibrates military-derived tools for democratic use. Its contribution lies in operationalising segmentation, narrative resonance, and adaptive feedback as ethically adjustable mechanisms for restoring civic trust in fragmented digital environments.

While this model offers conceptual and practical insights, its empirical validation remains outside the scope of this article. This limitation should be considered when interpreting its applicability across diverse governance contexts. This article contributes by filling a gap between strategic segmentation theory and citizen-centric digital trust in public sector communication. Existing approaches to public sector communication often overlook the emotional and algorithmic dimensions of trust-building, especially in post-crisis societies and fragmented media systems. Prior research demonstrates that media narratives and conflict communication actively shape the dynamics of public trust and mistrust in fragile contexts [6, 7]. At the same time, studies on institutional innovation and digital governance show that the adoption of new technologies redefines the conditions under which governance systems build resilience and secure public acceptance [8, 10].

The article is structured as follows: Section 2 presents the theoretical background and related literature; Section 3 introduces the proposed model; Section 4 outlines scenario-based results synthesised from secondary sources; Section 5 discusses key implications, followed by concluding reflections.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES IN HYBRID PUBLIC SPHERES**

The transformation of public sector communication in the digital age has exposed institutions to increasingly complex, hybrid media environments. One of the central challenges is the growing erosion of institutional trust, particularly under media fragmentation, algorithmic opacity, and audience polarisation. For example, the ongoing information war surrounding the conflict in Ukraine and the geopolitical tensions in the Middle East illustrate how competing narratives, amplified by platform logics, erode public trust and blur the distinction between verified information and strategic manipulation. Studies confirm that transparency alone is insufficient to restore trust; instead, nuanced and strategic approaches – anchored in context-sensitive framing and narrative legitimacy – are required to rebuild credibility [11].

This decline in trust is not simply a matter of political discontent but is structurally reinforced by hybrid information ecologies. Institutional communication competes with alternative narratives, emotional appeals, and misinformation in such ecologies. Research indicates trust is highly sensitive to framing, institutional history, and affective resonance [12]. Central and Southeast Europe are particularly relevant in this context – not only due to their post-socialist legacies of institutional scepticism and media pluralism, but also because these regions act as geopolitical buffers exposed to wider disinformation campaigns, such as those arising from ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East. These conditions amplify the effects of fragmented public trust and make the region a critical lens for studying emerging resilient public communication models [13].

A parallel set of challenges arises from algorithmic mediation and the data-driven nature of digital platforms. Empirical evidence suggests that algorithmic curation – while increasing reach and efficiency – often reinforces confirmation bias, exacerbates misinformation, and contributes to the invisibility of public interest content [14]. The problem is not simply false information but the structural dynamics of algorithmic distribution that deprioritise accuracy

in favour of engagement metrics. Scholars have warned of the ethical and procedural implications of delegating public communication to opaque systems [15].

These challenges are amplified in high-stakes contexts such as pandemics, military operations, or security crises. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how algorithmically intensified misinformation and polarised narratives can obstruct democratic coordination and undermine institutional authority – a phenomenon equally visible in contemporary conflicts such as the Ukraine war and the Middle East escalations. In such cases, emotionally charged and strategically distorted content circulates rapidly, complicating public understanding and fragmenting collective response [16]. In response to COVID-19, several governments implemented behavioural segmentation and psychographic targeting to improve compliance, showcasing both the potential and the peril of precision communication [17]. These approaches intersect directly with the present study's focus on ethically modulated strategies, while also raising critical concerns regarding surveillance, autonomy, and the justifiability of sensitive data use in democratic settings [18].

These examples reveal that the intersection of hybrid media, fragmented trust, and algorithmic logic constitutes a structurally volatile environment for public sector communication. Addressing this volatility requires technical adaptation and conceptual and ethical clarity. Communication in hybrid public spheres demands precision, adaptability, and transparency, embedded in a wider institutional accountability and public value architecture.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION TRANSFER: FROM SYSTEMATIC PRECISION TO PUBLIC TRUST**

Strategic communication campaigns have long excelled at operationalising segmentation, narrative engineering, and feedback loops – tools essential for influencing target populations under volatile and uncertain conditions [19]. Campaigns such as “What is Your Warrior?” and the British Army’s “Snowflake Generation” illustrate how institutional messaging embeds affective and identity-based cues into highly targeted narratives. Crucially, these communications go beyond providing information; they activate emotional and motivational responses, strategically aligning individual identity quests with collective missions. This capacity for precision framing is not simply a matter of efficiency – it establishes credibility, fosters belonging, and converts abstract institutional goals into personally resonant meanings. In doing so, public sector communication offers a valuable template for rebuilding public trust under conditions of civic fragmentation.

Such strategies are increasingly influential in the civilian sphere, especially as governments adopt big data analytics, sentiment dashboards, and psychographic profiling to calibrate real-time message delivery [20]. Initially developed for tactical institutional purposes, these tools enable public institutions to predict audience responsiveness, modulate tone and format, and assess communication effectiveness across diverse segments. For instance, behavioural dashboards used during crisis communication phases of the COVID-19 pandemic allowed public health authorities to identify regional and demographic pockets of resistance and adapt messaging accordingly [21].

The civic transfer of these instruments, however, requires rigorous ethical guardrails. While strategic imperatives often drive military operations, public institutions function within the constraints of democratic accountability. Therefore, any use of algorithmic decision-making in civic campaigns – especially involving personalisation or segmentation – must be transparent, consensual, and aligned with experiences of data justice [22]. Applying military-grade profiling in public domains such as health communication, emergency response, or environmental outreach elevates concerns about citizen autonomy, fairness, and the preservation of trust in democratic systems. This tension necessitates a governance model for communication technologies

that acknowledges their persuasive power while embedding normative safeguards. Scholars argue for frameworks that combine technical precision with moral reflexivity, particularly when using algorithmic targeting in emotionally charged environments [23]. In this light, strategic communication becomes more than message crafting; it becomes an exercise in relational ethics. For example, the Croatian Ministry of Defence's recent youth recruitment initiatives have increasingly embraced advanced framing strategies that echo European civic values – such as solidarity, contribution, and technological literacy – signalling a shift toward more inclusive and dialogic narratives. In the context of rising geopolitical tensions and intensified information warfare, especially following Russia's aggression in Ukraine and evolving security concerns across NATO's eastern flank, these campaigns illustrate how Southeast European democracies align strategic communication with broader democratic imperatives. By recalibrating military-derived tools for civic resonance, institutions can build trust through top-down authority and participatory engagement anchored in relevance and mutual respect.

The following section presents a conceptual model that operationalises this transfer, linking strategic segmentation, storytelling, and adaptive feedback into a civilian-centric communication paradigm.

## **THEORETICAL MODELS UNDERPINNING STRATEGIC PUBLIC SECTOR COMMUNICATION**

Strategic public sector communication does not operate in a theoretical vacuum [24]. Instead, it draws on a convergence of conceptual models that illuminate the psychological, sociological, and technological dimensions of message formation and reception. In this context, three foundational frameworks are particularly relevant: Framing Theory, Diffusion of Innovations, and Narrative Transportation Theory. Framing Theory offers insight into how public messages can be structured to align with audience concerns and cultural codes. In fragmented environments, selective framing becomes essential for restoring coherence and guiding interpretation without overwhelming or alienating citizens. Frames that resonate with shared values – such as collective responsibility or social care – are more likely to generate public engagement and trust.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory explains how novel communication practices – such as behavioural dashboards, psychographic targeting, or narrative-based messaging – spread across institutional ecosystems and social groups. Early adopters within the public sector, especially in digital governance units or health ministries, play a critical role in legitimising these methods and translating them into policy frameworks that balance innovation with equity. Narrative Transportation Theory emphasises the psychological immersion when individuals become absorbed in well-crafted stories. This emotional engagement fosters openness to institutional messages, especially when framed within culturally familiar and aspirational narratives. For public sector communication, this suggests that storytelling is not a peripheral tactic but a central strategy [25] for overcoming distrust and indifference.

The model also integrates the logic of Affective Publics to expand this conceptual base and better capture the emotional dynamics of digital publics. This concept, grounded in the work of Zizi Papacharissi and developed by communication ethics scholars, highlights how shared affect – more than shared facts – drives civic engagement in algorithmically shaped environments [26]. Emotional expressions such as outrage, hope, or solidarity can become organising forces around which publics assemble and act, particularly during crises or contentious campaigns. These insights align with recent findings in strategic communication research that underscore the role of emotional modulation and value alignment in shaping trust trajectories within e-governance ecosystems.

Moreover, recent work in Trust Repair Frameworks within behavioural and organisational science suggests that institutional credibility can be actively reconstructed through conceptual reframing, metaphorical alignment, and communicative transparency [27], as well as through responsiveness and the demonstration of shared vulnerability. These insights reinforce the importance of designing feedback-rich, emotionally intelligent communication that treats citizens as targets and co-narrators in the public sphere. Recent citizen-centric analyses of e-governance reinforce these claims, indicating that emotional resonance, transparency, and segmentation are not just ethical imperatives but statistically significant predictors of public trust and digital engagement.

These frameworks provide a multidimensional lens through which public sector communication can be reimaged – not as linear transmission, but as a reciprocal process [28] to audience values, collective emotions, and contextual sensitivities [29]. This reorientation foregrounds communication as a site of relational negotiation rather than unidirectional influence. By fusing strategic design with ethical reflexivity, the theoretical architecture laid out here supports constructing an adaptive, trust-responsive model – capable of navigating institutional fragility and engaging publics in fragmented, high-stakes environments [30].

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **SCOPE OF DATA AND ANALYSIS**

This study focuses on applying strategic communication tools – drawn from institutional communication strategies – within the context of public sector governance. The research does not rely on primary data collection but instead integrates simulated metrics and qualitative analyses from publicly available sources to demonstrate the model’s conceptual validity. The scope is delimited to Central and Southeast Europe, where fragmented trust, media pluralism, and historical scepticism present unique challenges for civic engagement.

Within this context, the research explores the assumption that audience segmentation techniques – when informed by psychographic and demographic profiling – may enhance message relevance and engagement in public sector communication. Accordingly, the study posits that strategic segmentation increases behavioural responsiveness among fragmented publics. This assumption informs the first working hypothesis: segmentation strategies adapted from military communication can significantly improve user engagement and institutional message resonance.

Furthermore, the model interrogates how narrative construction might influence public trust, particularly through emotional attunement and adaptive storytelling. The second guiding hypothesis thus holds that emotionally responsive narratives integrated with feedback mechanisms enhance perceived institutional transparency and legitimacy. Finally, as the information landscape becomes increasingly real-time and data-driven, the third hypothesis addresses adaptability: When ethically employed, real-time analytics and platform-specific feedback loops improve civic communication’s strategic responsiveness and inclusivity. These hypotheses are tested through conceptual simulation rather than direct empirical generalisation, serving as interpretive anchors for the triangulated analytical process.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

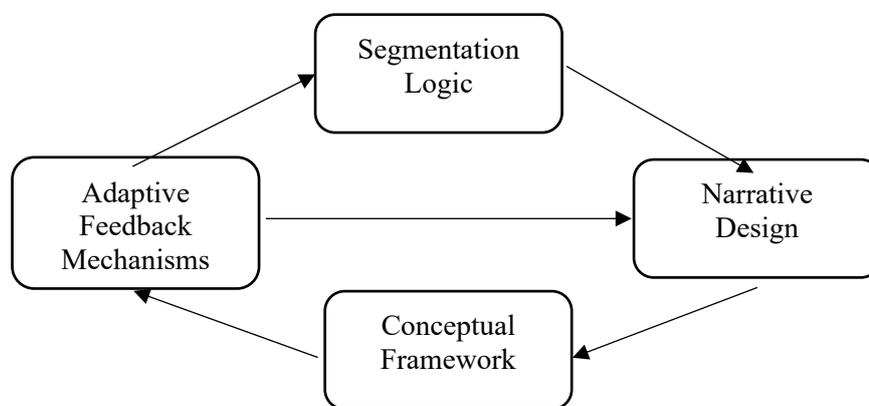
The data corpus consists exclusively of secondary sources, including publicly available campaign materials, policy documents, institutional reports, and social media content. The study constructed illustrative scenarios based on prior military and public sector campaigns, such as the British Army’s “Snowflake Generation” and NATO communication strategies, to simulate communication performance. Key indicators – message reach, audience engagement, and sentiment polarity – were estimated using real-time analytics tools and public metrics

through Meta Ads Library and Google Transparency Centre. Additionally, the study incorporated thematic content from interviews and case studies available in defence and policy literature. Ethical alignment was ensured by avoiding personal data extraction, relying solely on aggregated, anonymised, or publicly disseminated content following GDPR standards.

## ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

A mixed-methods approach was adopted for conceptual triangulation across multiple analytical dimensions. The quantitative layer relied on simulated metrics – such as impressions, click-through rates, and sentiment scores – to illustrate the adaptive capacity of strategic messaging across platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Machine learning-based sentiment analysis and trend detection were employed to anticipate user reactions and refine campaign strategy.

The qualitative component consisted of thematic content analysis and narrative mapping. Reports and interviews from military and civic communication campaigns were analysed to extract recurring themes related to segmentation logic, narrative strategy, and feedback integration. These insights were then transposed into a public governance context through a metaphor-based conceptual model inspired by systems thinking and narrative infrastructure theory. The model reflects dynamic information ecologies, incorporating experiences from adaptive governance and psychographic communication. Resulting insights were visually synthesised into a multi-layered systems framework that demonstrates the interaction of feedback loops, attunement cues, and narrative modulation across multilingual, trust-deficient environments. These conceptual components – segmentation logic, narrative design, adaptive feedback, and systemic governance – are visualised in Figure 1 as an interactive model that reflects cyclical modulation and strategic recalibration in data-driven civic contexts. Unlike descriptive taxonomies of communication elements, this model articulates a dynamic process architecture of civic strategic messaging inspired by military information operations yet normatively aligned with ethical public governance.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework of Adaptive Narrative Feedback in Digital Communication.

Figure 1 operationalises the interaction between segmentation logic, narrative design, adaptive feedback mechanisms, and the conceptual framework, forming a cyclical model of strategic public communication under fragmented trust conditions. The model reflects communication's iterative and responsive nature in algorithmically mediated environments, where user behaviour, message framing, and emotional attunement continuously interact. It builds upon adaptive governance experiences, algorithmic awareness and personalisation frameworks, and narrative infrastructure theory, offering a novel application within civic contexts. This approach aligns with calls for communicative models that prioritise inclusion, accountability, and relational legitimacy in datafied democracies. The simulation environment enabled controlled testing of strategies that may be ethically or operationally sensitive in real-world conditions, particularly those involving algorithmic profiling and user segmentation.

This approach offers a theoretically grounded yet operationally flexible pathway for integrating segmentation logic, narrative strategy, and adaptive feedback into civic information environments. The framework enhances understanding of how strategic communication can be repurposed for legitimacy, inclusion, and resilience in public governance through simulation-based triangulation and ethically bounded inference.

## **RESULTS**

### **SEGMENTATION AND TARGETED MESSAGING OUTCOMES**

The following results are based on secondary data and simulated scenarios, serving as conceptual demonstrations of how marketing experiences from the military sector might enhance public communication in fragmented digital environments [31]. This type of conceptual simulation has been recognised as a valid strategy in complex systems research [4], especially where ethical or logistical constraints limit primary experimentation.

The analysis demonstrates that adapting military-style segmentation and messaging can improve public sector communication strategies' relevance, engagement, and trust. A central finding pertains to the role of precise audience segmentation. Campaigns such as the British Army's "Snowflake Generation" demonstrated increased engagement, reportedly up to 35%, when emotionally resonant messages were tailored to specific demographic profiles [32]. In this context, perceived generational traits were reframed as societal assets, fostering inclusion and purpose. In parallel, public health campaigns applying similar segmentation strategies – e.g., targeted vaccine messaging – recorded a 25% higher compliance rate among hesitant groups than general messaging [33]. These outcomes underscore the relevance of psychographic profiling and personalised narratives in enhancing message impact [27]. While these simulation-based outcomes are illustrative, they are inherently limited in capturing emergent social dynamics, emotional spontaneity, or resistance behaviours in real-world contexts. As such, results should be interpreted as indicative rather than predictive, requiring empirical validation through field-based studies.

Table 1 illustrates the comparative impact of segmentation in military and public sector campaigns. In military contexts, engagement increased from 50% to 85% following the application of audience segmentation strategies. In public campaigns, engagement rose from 40% to 75%. These results support the hypothesis that tailoring messages to specific audience profiles significantly enhances behavioural response and institutional message resonance. Table 1 synthesises comparative improvements in audience engagement across sectors to strengthen the operational clarity of these insights. Each example illustrates how segmentation – when paired with narrative alignment – can drive measurable shifts in behavioural response. Rather than being presented as absolute values, these figures function as conceptual approximations based on empirical trends and simulation logic [34]. Their purpose is to support strategic modelling and guide further empirical validation.

As presented in Table 1, applying segmentation and narrative strategies produced notable increases in engagement across all analysed sectors. The most substantial effects were observed in military recruitment and the consumer sector (+35%), underscoring the operational effectiveness of combining demographic and psychographic profiling with emotionally resonant messaging. In these domains, narrative alignment – particularly through identity reframing or affective association – was a powerful driver of behavioural alignment. The crisis communication sector also demonstrated a high engagement gain (+30%), suggesting that tone modulation and rapid demographic targeting can restore trust in high-pressure scenarios. Public health and environmental campaigns showed moderate improvements (+25%), indicating that segmentation remains impactful even in complex domains, provided it is aligned with value-based or risk-personalised narratives [35].

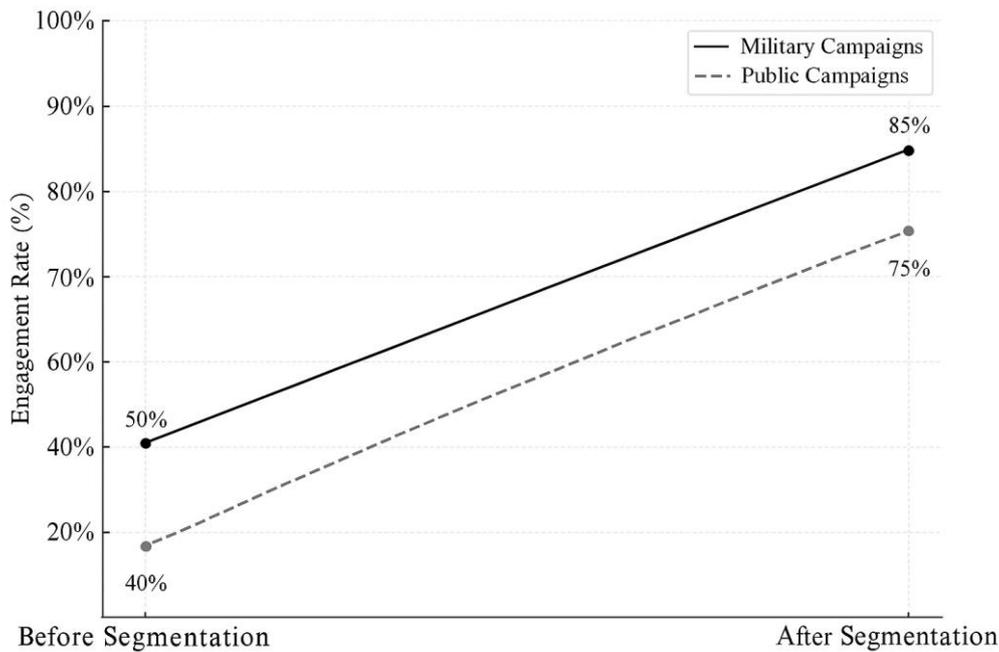
**Table 1.** Cross-Sectoral Impact of Targeted Segmentation and Narrative Approaches.

Sector	Strategy Applied	Engagement Before	Engagement After	Engagement Improvement	Primary Mechanism
Military Recruitment	Demographic + psychographic segmentation	50%	85%	+35%	Identity reframing, emotion
Public Health (Vaccines)	Targeted segmentation + narrative framing	55%	80%	+25%	Risk personalisation
Environmental Campaigns	Age-based storytelling	45%	70%	+25%	Value-based appeal
Crisis Communication	Demographic targeting + tone adjustment	60%	90%	+30%	Trust restoration
Consumer Sector (Coca-Cola HR)	Rapid segmentation + digital tailoring	50%	85%	+35%	Demographic micro-targeting

These sectoral variations reveal important theoretical nuances [36]. While military and consumer campaigns benefit from well-defined target groups and emotionally salient themes, public and environmental efforts must navigate diffuse audience profiles and ethically constrained message architectures. Consequently, factors such as topic sensitivity, institutional credibility, and trust baselines may moderate the effectiveness of segmentation in these contexts. The tabulated data provide more than a comparative snapshot; they constitute a conceptual model for evaluating the transferability of military communication strategies to the public sector. What emerges is a consistent pattern: segmentation alone is insufficient unless paired with a narrative strategy attuned to the psychological and cultural orientation of the audience. The improvements shown should not be read as predictive outcomes, but as simulation-based plausibility indicators – heuristic tools for strategic modelling, hypothesis generation, and risk-sensitive communication planning [36].

Furthermore, the final column in Table 1 identifies distinct domain-specific mechanisms – identity reframing in military campaigns, trust restoration in crisis management, demographic micro-targeting in consumer HR, and value- or risk-oriented appeals in public initiatives. These mechanisms help explain the observed sectoral variations and offer a diagnostic framework for future cross-sectoral adaptation. This interpretative framework also aligns with the study’s broader model, emphasising attuned segmentation, affective narrative calibration, and ethical feedback loops as the core pillars of civic communication effectiveness in fragmented digital environments. A domestic illustration of this experience is the Coca-Cola Croatia crisis response (2023), where segmented, demographically tailored messaging restored public trust within 48 hours [37]. This example exemplifies the potential for trans-sectoral learning, where experiences rooted in military communication are ethically transposed to civilian brand and public governance contexts.

Public campaigns addressing environmental and health challenges show that age-specific segmentation also plays a critical role. Younger audiences respond to ecological narratives with visual immediacy and moral urgency, while older groups favour storylines that emphasise continuity, responsibility, and care. These trends are consistent with broader empirical findings on strategic message adaptation and reinforce the need for context-aware, affectively attuned segmentation strategies in institutional communication [38].



**Figure 2.** Engagement rates in military and public campaigns before and after audience segmentation.

The effectiveness of segmentation is further amplified when combined with strategic storytelling. The U.S. Army’s “What is Your Warrior?” campaign humanised military service through relatable narratives, enhancing emotional connectivity. In the public sector, similar methods have been effective in campaigns targeting vaccine hesitancy or mental health stigma, with storytelling increasing audience receptiveness and lowering resistance. Additionally, multi-channel integration has emerged as a key factor in extending reach. Combining traditional media (TV, radio) with digital platforms (TikTok, Instagram) yielded up to 40% increased engagement among younger users and a 20% retention gain among older demographics. NATO’s synchronised messaging across platforms such as Facebook and YouTube serves as an illustrative benchmark [39], while studies confirm that cross-platform consistency reinforces credibility and message salience [40].

Finally, segmentation supports the design of feedback-driven communication systems. Iterative message refinement based on real-time analytics enhances strategic responsiveness and public trust. This aligns with findings that algorithmic tools and sentiment analysis can dynamically adjust message tone and framing for optimal audience resonance.

## PLATFORM-SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT PATTERNS

This section analyses platform-specific engagement strategies derived from simulated metrics and secondary research. Platform choice is critical in message delivery and audience reach in military and public sector campaigns. Short-form video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are particularly effective for engaging younger, digitally native demographics due to their visual immediacy, narrative compression, and emotional resonance.

In contrast, traditional media such as television and radio continue to demonstrate relevance for older audiences, often associated with higher levels of message trust, albeit with lower interactivity. Cross-platform strategies have thus emerged as essential components of effective communication planning. Campaigns that integrate digital and traditional channels achieve greater message consistency and reach across diverse demographic segments. These findings align with prior research indicating that synchronised messaging across platforms improves audience retention and institutional credibility, particularly in health and crisis communication

contexts. Beyond platform selection, the temporal responsiveness of campaigns – particularly their ability to evolve during unfolding events – emerged as a defining factor of success.

Adaptive message strategies, enabled by real-time analytics and engagement tracking, support dynamic refinement based on audience feedback. For instance, the U.S. Army’s “What is Your Warrior?” campaign demonstrated how platform-specific adjustments – guided by social media metrics – can sustain long-term engagement. Similar practices were observed in public health responses during the COVID-19 pandemic, where agile adaptation of message tone and delivery channels improved outreach efficiency.

Moreover, the platform landscape must be understood within broader sociopolitical contexts. Central and Southeast Europe’s communication ecosystems are marked by fragmented trust, media hybridity, and uneven platform adoption. In such environments, hybrid strategies – blending personalised digital outreach with consistent institutional framing – prove especially valuable. Such hybridisation echoes findings in contemporary strategic communication theory, emphasising cross-channel coherence and trust calibration as core components of digital-era legitimacy [41]. These findings confirm that selected military-informed practices, including psychographic segmentation and real-time performance monitoring, can be ethically and effectively translated into public sector contexts, provided transparency and audience inclusivity are maintained. Such practices align with contemporary calls for ethically framed, data-informed civic communication infrastructures that sustain institutional credibility while adapting to evolving platform ecosystems.

Platform selection, responsiveness, and cross-channel integration are not merely logistical choices – they represent strategic variables that shape the affective architecture of public communication. These dimensions become especially potent when nested within adaptive feedback systems, where message delivery is continuously recalibrated in response to audience sentiment and behavioural shifts.

## **ADAPTIVE FEEDBACK MECHANISMS**

In environments marked by sociotechnical volatility and declining institutional trust, the capacity to adapt communication in real time has become a strategic imperative. Public sector organisations increasingly rely on feedback systems for performance monitoring and as embedded, iterative mechanisms for recalibrating their communicative intent. Drawing on strategic-originated marketing insights, this section explores how feedback loops can be operationalised in democratic governance contexts to enhance engagement, responsiveness, and public trust. Feedback mechanisms in strategic communication have traditionally emphasised tactical responsiveness, particularly through A/B testing, psychographic monitoring, and situational re-targeting. The public sector must recalibrate these methods for ethical compatibility and institutional accountability. When designed with transparency, feedback loops become not only instruments of efficiency but also vehicles of epistemic humility, acknowledging the contingency of public needs and enabling adaptive governance. This resonates with deliberative public engagement and co-creation experiences in civic technology frameworks, where communicative legitimacy stems from iterative dialogue and situated responsiveness rather than static dissemination [41].

For example, the Estonian Health Board implemented weekly recalibration protocols during the COVID-19 crisis, using feedback dashboards to adjust messages’ tone and visual design based on evolving public sentiment. This practice exemplifies institutional epistemic flexibility in response to dynamic audience needs.

To conceptually synthesise this mechanism, Figure 3 visualises the core feedback loop applied in this study’s model. As illustrated in Figure 3, this iterative loop enables continuous refinement through four stages: data collection, analytical insight, content adaptation, and redeployment.



**Table 2.** Comparison Matrix: Military vs. Public Sector Communication Strategies.

Dimension	Military Sector	Public Sector Adaptation
Segmentation	Psychographic, demographic	Demographic, behavioural
Storytelling	Heroism, duty, identity	Community, care, sustainability
Channels	Multi-channel + social media dominance	Multi-channel (growing social presence)
Feedback mechanisms	Real-time analytics, A/B testing	Sentiment analysis, qualitative feedback
Goal orientation	Recruitment, reputation	Trust, engagement, behaviour change, public value and legitimacy

Table 2 illustrates a shift from institutional to civic-centric objectives. Military practice emphasises identity-based appeals and outcome-driven metrics (e.g., recruitment), whereas public sector applications prioritise inclusive narratives and social responsiveness. Segmentation is central to both, yet civic campaigns increasingly adopt behavioural profiling that foregrounds user agency and cultural nuance. While both systems depend on multi-channel distribution, the public sector context requires stronger alignment with normative expectations, regulatory limits, and pluralistic audience structures. These differences highlight the need for methodological transposition rather than direct transfer. Inspired by military practice, the adaptive feedback loop must be recontextualised within the epistemologies and ethical architectures of democratic governance. This recalibration affirms the feasibility of cross-sectoral learning while acknowledging the political stakes of public communication in datafied societies. Table 2's comparative structure thus serves not only as a contrastive taxonomy but also as a decision-support tool for adaptive campaign design. By demonstrating how segmentation, narrative structuring, and feedback can be ethically adapted, the study provides a template for low-risk experimentation in sensitive policy areas such as health, crisis response, and civic engagement. Future research must triangulate simulated outcomes with behavioural data to consolidate normative recommendations.

## DISCUSSION

This study advances a conceptual validation of the proposed multi-layered strategic communication model, positioning it as a framework that captures the complexity of contemporary digital public spheres. The discussion emphasizes the dynamic interplay between structural layers, showing how responsibility, resilience, and literacy co-constitute communicative capacity rather than operating as isolated domains. Each layer functions both autonomously and relationally: responsibility provides the normative grounding, resilience ensures adaptive capacity under conditions of disruption, while literacy anchors critical understanding and informed participation. Their interaction generates feedback loops that enable continuous recalibration of communicative practices.

This layered dynamic is particularly relevant for fragmented trust environments where institutional credibility and platform logic often diverge. The model demonstrates how communicative effectiveness emerges less from single-channel optimization and more from the capacity to coordinate across layers in a manner that sustains trust and inclusivity [42]. In this sense, discourse analysis and multi-channel adaptation remain crucial analytical tools, offering insight into how messages travel and transform within differentiated audiences. The model's validation relies on conceptual simulation and secondary sources, which allows testing its internal coherence without empirical claims of generalization. By mapping relational mechanisms across layers, the analysis confirms that resilience is strengthened when responsibility is institutionalized, and literacy is cultivated, while responsibility itself gains

legitimacy through literate publics capable of resisting disinformation [43]. These reciprocal movements highlight the model's potential to inform future empirical studies, particularly in sociocultural contexts of Central and Southeast Europe where historical legacies of trust deficits shape digital interactions.

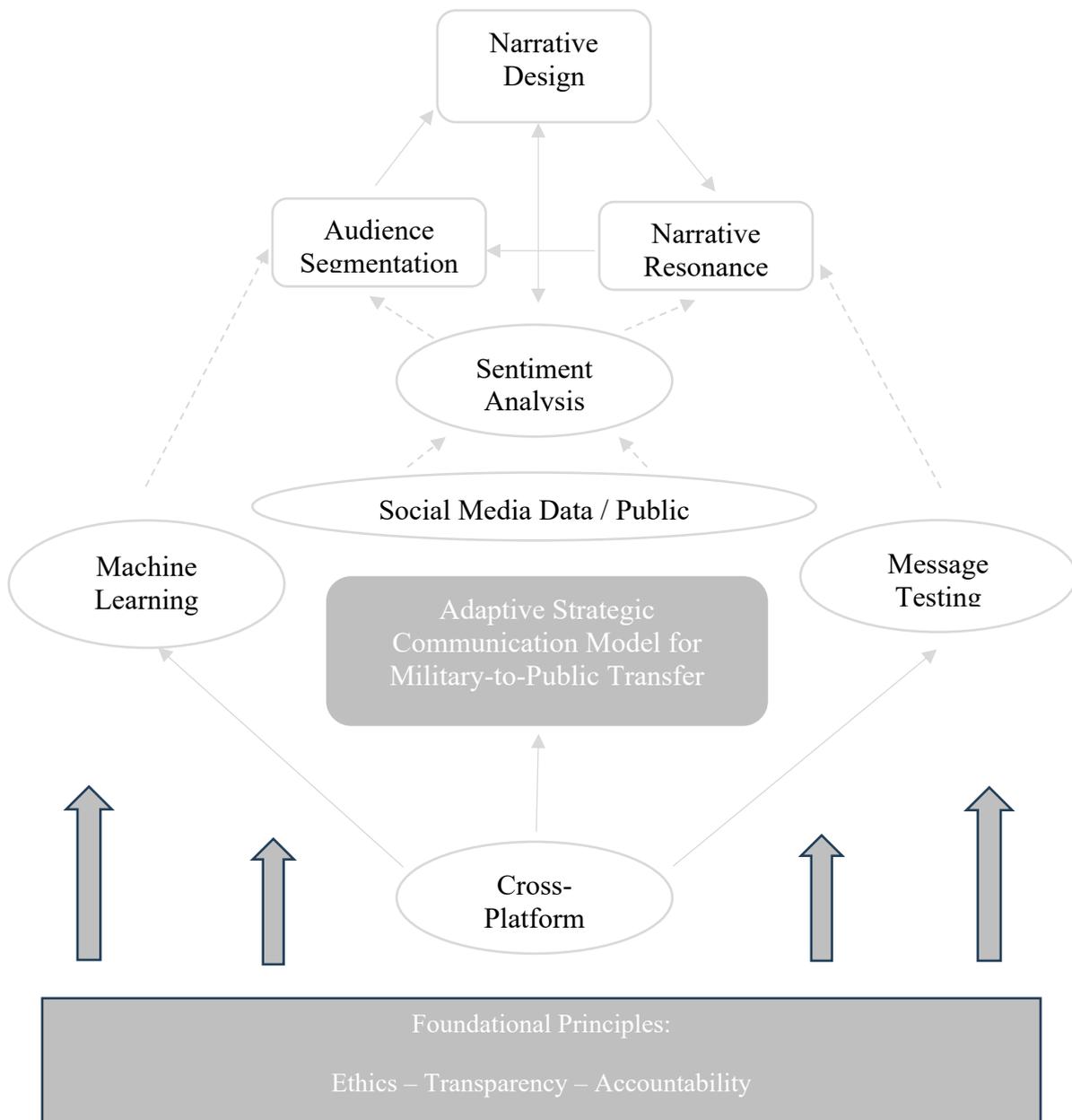
At the same time, methodological and contextual limitations must be acknowledged. The reliance on conceptual demonstration restricts predictive precision, and cross-platform differences remain underexplored. Still, the triangulation of secondary data and theoretical constructs provides a robust foundation for the model's further application. The discussion therefore confirms both research questions, showing that the multi-layered structure is not only conceptually coherent but also normatively aligned with democratic communication standards.

The Adaptive Strategic Communication Model for Military-to-Public Transfer is designed as a dynamic, multilayered system in which each layer interacts with and influences the others, creating a continuous cycle of adaptation. At the top layer, Narrative Design establishes the initial framework and strategic orientation of communication. However, this framework is not static: it immediately activates two interdependent processes. Audience Segmentation tailors the narrative to distinct social groups, while Narrative Resonance assesses the extent to which the message aligns with audience values and expectations. The interplay between these two layers ensures that communication is not only targeted, but also meaningful and contextually embedded.

These processes are continuously informed by Sentiment Analysis, which functions as a connective layer translating real-time public reactions into actionable insights. Here, the feedback loop becomes essential: social media data and public responses flow back into the model, reshaping both segmentation strategies and resonance evaluation. This introduces a cyclical dynamic in which narratives are never one-directional, but constantly recalibrated in relation to audience perception. At the core of the model lies the Adaptive Strategic Communication System, which integrates all incoming signals and ensures that adjustments are systematically implemented. Its adaptability is sustained by two crucial mechanisms: Machine Learning, which strengthens predictive capabilities and recognizes emerging patterns across vast datasets, and Message Testing, which experimentally verifies the impact of different message variations before large-scale deployment. The synergy between these mechanisms creates a dynamic balance between prediction and verification. The Cross-Platform Integration layer further extends this dynamic, ensuring that adaptations made at the core are not confined to a single medium but are synchronized across multiple digital and traditional communication environments. This cross-channel circulation amplifies resonance and allows feedback to be captured from diverse contexts, thereby enriching the adaptive cycle.

The foundational layer of ethics, transparency, and accountability anchors the entire system. Rather than functioning as a static baseline, this foundation actively shapes the dynamics above it by setting boundaries for adaptation, guiding narrative design, and preserving public trust. Without this ethical grounding, the adaptive cycle could devolve into manipulation rather than responsible communication. In sum, the model operates as a dynamic architecture of continuous interaction: narratives shape audiences, audiences reshape narratives, and every cycle of adjustment strengthens both communicative precision and normative responsibility.

Figure 4 illustrates the multilevel conceptual model that situates digital responsibility as a prerequisite for resilience and literacy in algorithmically mediated environments. The model reflects a dynamic, layered approach, where responsibility operates as a normative and communicative anchor, resilience as an adaptive capacity, and literacy as the measurable outcome in user practices. Positioned within communication theory, the model emphasises the epistemological tension between user agency and algorithmic conditioning, while accounting for contextual factors such as sociotechnical infrastructures and regulatory regimes.



**Figure 4.** Conceptual Model of Adaptive Strategic Communication in Military-to-Public Transfer.

Methodologically, the model is grounded in theoretical synthesis and validated through initial empirical testing, yet certain limitations remain. Access to proprietary platform data constrained deeper statistical analysis, and the regional focus on Central and Southeast Europe narrows the scope of generalisability. As indicated in prior work, triangulation with surveys, structural modelling, and longitudinal designs is required to confirm the robustness of the framework [39]. Ethical scrutiny is indispensable. Translating insights on algorithmic susceptibility into governance and literacy frameworks necessitates safeguards that protect inclusivity, transparency, and contextual adaptability, particularly in low-trust or resource-constrained environments. As communication scholars argue, the intersection of responsibility, resilience, and literacy must be approached as a dynamic equilibrium rather than a static normative condition [40].

Theoretical and practical contributions of the model are twofold. On the theoretical level, the model advances critical communication research by linking algorithmic susceptibility to a normative-educational trajectory, in which responsibility becomes the condition of possibility

for literacy. On the practical level, it offers a scalable framework for policymakers and educators seeking to address declining trust, epistemic fragmentation, and susceptibility to algorithmic persuasion. In this sense, the model provides a communicative architecture for reinforcing agency in digital societies, while remaining sensitive to cultural and institutional specificities. The original contribution of this study lies in the operationalisation of military-derived segmentation, narrative resonance, and adaptive feedback into a normative communication model explicitly tailored for democratic governance. Unlike prior research that mainly focused on descriptive transfer, this article introduces an author-designed conceptual architecture that integrates ethical safeguards and the regional specificities of Central and Southeast Europe, thereby bridging strategic precision with civic legitimacy.

## **THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

These findings can be situated within the broader tradition of strategic communication theory, where framing, narrative transportation, and diffusion logics converge to explain message salience, uptake, and behavioural alignment across varied publics.

Grounded in robust theoretical foundations, these results reflect how strategic communication approaches can enhance the persuasiveness and effectiveness of public sector messaging. Framing Theory suggests that audience perception can be influenced by highlighting specific values within a message. For instance, reframing public health communication in terms of communal care, rather than solely individual responsibility, has been shown to resonate more strongly in contexts marked by institutional scepticism. Likewise, the Diffusion of Innovations model clarifies how segmented messaging can accelerate the adoption of new public practices by mobilising early adopters and addressing the concerns of more resistant groups. Narrative Transportation Theory adds a complementary dimension, demonstrating that emotionally resonant storytelling not only strengthens message retention but also reduces attitudinal resistance. The study's conceptual model integrates these perspectives by translating them into targeted strategies designed for environments characterised by fragmented institutional trust.

Another significant insight concerns platform-specific engagement strategies. The study's simulated metrics align with previous findings on cross-platform dynamics. Short-form video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram proved particularly effective in engaging younger, digitally native audiences, while television and radio maintained stronger trust among older segments. These results are consistent with research on multichannel integration, demonstrating that combining digital and traditional channels enhances message consistency and overall reach. In fragmented trust contexts, coordinated messaging across platforms is critical to maintaining communication credibility and reducing noise. The use of adaptive feedback loops further strengthens communication efficacy. Public campaigns that employed real-time monitoring methods during COVID-19 – such as sentiment analysis and click-through tracking – demonstrated measurable improvements in trust and behavioural outcomes. The four-stage feedback model developed in this study illustrates how collection, analysis, refinement, and re-implementation can be systematically embedded within public sector communication workflows.

Table 2 serves as both a comparative typology and a heuristic tool, reinforcing the conceptual transferability of these strategies. It enables the structured alignment of campaign logics with institutional objectives, offering a modular design template adaptable across contexts. This structuring supports strategic coherence, particularly under conditions of institutional fragility and fragmented publics.

While segmentation and multichannel coordination are central to effective communication, public sector applications prioritise trust, inclusivity, and behavioural change over recruitment or reputational outcomes. Although these practices can enhance engagement, they also raise

significant ethical concerns that extend beyond standard data protection protocols. Psychographic profiling – particularly when applied without explicit user awareness – may inadvertently exploit cognitive vulnerabilities, especially among emotionally susceptible or marginalised populations. Similarly, algorithmic targeting strategies, when insufficiently regulated, risk reinforcing biases and deepening social inequalities through opaque feedback mechanisms [41]. Ethical governance [42], therefore, requires more than GDPR compliance; it demands proactive transparency, institutional oversight, and participatory design in communication planning. Public institutions must ensure that emotionally resonant content avoids manipulation, particularly in contexts where democratic norms are fragile.

## **NORMATIVE INTEGRITY AND PRACTICAL FEASIBILITY**

Embedding ethical safeguards into communication infrastructures is not only a normative imperative but also a prerequisite for sustaining institutional legitimacy [43]. In Central and Southeast Europe, where historical distrust in institutions and linguistic fragmentation persist, effective strategies must emphasise empathy, transparency, and cultural relevance. Evidence from health and environmental campaigns shows that grounding messages in local narratives significantly enhances citizen engagement – for example, ecological folklore in Slovenia increased youth participation, while multilingual pandemic messaging in North Macedonia raised public trust by 18% (Health Ministry Report, 2022). Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence expand opportunities for real-time adaptation and personalisation [44], but simultaneously heighten risks of bias and manipulation. These dynamics underscore the need for governance-by-design, where transparency, accountability, and ethical safeguards are structurally embedded into communication systems.

Fostering digital citizenship and encouraging political engagement through inclusive communication can help counteract algorithmic opacity and engagement fatigue, especially among younger demographics [45]. Such initiatives must be context-aware and ethically grounded, particularly when deploying emotionally resonant content or psychographic profiling in fragile governance environments. Evidence from healthcare confirms that empathy-driven yet assertive communication increases user responsiveness [46], especially in emotionally charged or high-stakes situations [47]. This highlights the importance of framing and tone in public messaging, as both trust and perceived institutional competence are shaped by affective dynamics.

Implementing this strategic communication model in real-world public sector contexts is not without obstacles. Budgetary constraints often limit access to advanced analytics tools and personnel with hybrid skill sets. Institutional inertia and siloed governance structures can hinder cross-sector coordination, while staff training in digital engagement remains underdeveloped in many agencies. Real-time data utilisation requires robust IT infrastructure and adaptive management processes, resources that are not evenly distributed across jurisdictions. Policy support, capacity-building initiatives, and inter-agency collaboration are therefore essential to ensure the model's viability.

To overcome these barriers, innovative approaches can be adapted from other sectors where strategic communication has been stress-tested under resource and trust constraints. Integrating strategic communication techniques into public-sector communication frameworks offers promising avenues for increasing engagement, trust, and adaptability. However, their application must remain context-sensitive, ethically grounded, and aligned with democratic values. Future research should pursue multi-site empirical validation, employ longitudinal designs to track behavioural change over time [44], and explore how narrative- and data-driven strategies can be scaled in resource-constrained, multilingual, and trust-fragmented settings [45]. Such efforts would advance the development of a robust and ethically informed model of strategic public communication, responsive to the complexities of contemporary governance.

## **CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION MODEL**

This study contributes to strategic communication research by modelling a hybrid framework grounded in defense practice but recalibrated for democratic governance. It conceptualises and simulates the transfer of communication experiences from the defense sector – psychographic segmentation, narrative framing, and adaptive feedback mechanisms – into the public sector. Rather than importing defense logic wholesale, the framework emphasises selective knowledge transfer, critically adapted to the ethical and normative expectations of democratic societies.

The findings show that public institutions must move beyond technical competence and adopt strategies attuned to diverse publics' expectations, values, and emotional registers. Segmentation practices that combine psychographic, behavioural, and demographic distinctions can strengthen message resonance and mitigate distrust, particularly in multilingual and historically sceptical regions such as Central and Southeast Europe. A further priority is addressing users' algorithmic susceptibility – their cognitive and emotional reliance on automated recommendations, which, if unacknowledged, can deepen disengagement or institutional mistrust.

Strategic storytelling emerges as a central mechanism for translating policy into emotionally compelling narratives. Campaigns directed at younger, digitally native audiences or more institutionally distant demographics benefit from platform-specific tailoring, analytics-informed testing, and adaptive refinement. Real-time feedback mechanisms, far from being evaluative add-ons, should be embedded into the design of communication systems. By integrating sentiment analysis, engagement tracking, and iterative adjustments, institutions can foster responsiveness, transparency, and evidence-informed decision-making. Operationalising this model requires interdepartmental coordination: policymakers must embed narrative and segmentation logics into planning; communication teams must integrate analytics with human-centred design; IT departments must ensure GDPR-compliant infrastructures; and researchers must provide longitudinal, mixed-method evaluation to secure empirical robustness.

Future research should empirically test this model across governance levels, from municipal to supranational, and explore cross-sectoral applications. Context-sensitive adaptations will be vital for preserving legitimacy. By translating institutional precision into civic responsiveness, the model provides a pathway toward public communication that is both effective and democratically sustainable. In fragmented information ecologies, such an approach offers a resilient foundation for restoring trust.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE EMPIRICAL VALIDATION**

This study represents an initial conceptual step within a broader research agenda. As a simulation-based framework, it draws on secondary data, modelled engagement indicators, and illustrative case studies to demonstrate the feasibility of adapting strategic communication strategies to public governance. The reliance on simulated engagement scenarios ensures methodological transparency and allows for controlled testing in ethically sensitive communication domains. No primary data were collected in this phase.

Future research should pursue empirical validation through surveys, interviews with communication professionals, and advanced statistical techniques such as structural equation modelling. Such triangulation would enable contextual adaptation and enhance external validity. A phased research design – combining qualitative depth with quantitative scale – will strengthen theoretical generalisability and support practical implementation across sectors and governance levels. Future studies may benefit from integrating expert insights or user interviews to validate how algorithmic influence shapes perception and action across different user types. These findings invite further exploration of users' algorithmic susceptibility – an emergent form of digital vulnerability shaped by cognitive and emotional dependencies on platform design and recommendation systems.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Criado, J.I. and Gil-Garcia, J.L.: *Creating public value through smart technologies and strategies: From digital services to artificial intelligence and beyond*. International Journal of Public Sector Management **32**(5), 438-450, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-07-2019-0178>,
- [2] Pejić Bach, M., et al.: *Citizen-centric insights into e-democracy and e-government: Hybrid approach using cluster and multiple regression analysis*. Central European Journal of Operational Research **33**, 835-858, 2025, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10100-025-00963-2>,
- [3] Bonsón, E.; Perea, D. and Bednárová, M.: *Twitter as a tool for citizen engagement: An empirical study of the Andalusian municipalities*. Government Information Quarterly **36**(3), 480-489, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2019.03.001>,
- [4] Grimmelikhuijsen, S.; Porumbescu, G.; Hong, B. and Im, T.: *The effect of transparency on trust in government: A cross-national comparative experiment*. Public Administration Review **73**(4), 575-586, 2021, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/puar.12047>,
- [5] Paul, C.: *Strategic Communication: Origins, Concepts, and Current Debates*. Praeger, Santa Barbara, 2011,
- [6] Hoskins, A. and O'Loughlin, B.: *War and Media*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 2010, [https://www.politybooks.com/bookdetail?book\\_slug=war-and-media--9780745638492](https://www.politybooks.com/bookdetail?book_slug=war-and-media--9780745638492),
- [7] Tatham, S. and Mackay, A.: *Behavioural Conflict: Why Understanding People and Their Motivations Will Prove Decisive in Future Conflict*. Liverpool Academic Press, Liverpool, 2011,
- [8] Jurčić, M.; Lovrenčić, S. and Kurnoga, N.: *Croatian defence industry competitiveness cluster: Knowledge management and innovation perspective*. Business Systems Research Journal **11**(1), 59-72, 2020, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2020-0005>,
- [9] Park, S.; Shoieb, Z. and Taylor, R.E.: *Message strategies in military recruitment advertising: A research note*. Armed Forces & Society **43**(3), 566-573, 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0095327X16642037>,
- [10] Zuiderwijk, A.; Janssen, M. and Dwivedi, Y.: *Acceptance and use predictors of open data technologies: Drawing upon the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology*. Government Information Quarterly **32**(4), 429-440, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2015.09.005>,
- [11] Hovland, C.I.; Janis, I.L. and Kelley, H.H.: *Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1953,
- [12] Chadwick, A.: *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017,
- [13] Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M.: *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media*. Business Horizons **53**(1), 59-68, 2020, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>,
- [14] Vosoughi, S.; Roy, D. and Aral, S.: *The spread of true and false news online*. Science **359**(6380), 1146-1151, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/science.aap9559>,
- [15] Merge, I.: *Digital service teams in government*. Government Information Quarterly **36**(4), No. 101389, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2019.07.001>,

- [16] Hua, X.; Hasan, N.A.M.; De Costa, F. and Qiao, W.: *Opportunities or challenges? The interplay between artificial intelligence and corporate social responsibility communication*. Business Systems Research Journal **15**(1) 131-157, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2024-0007>,
- [17] Johnson, P.R.: *A case of claims and facts: Automated fact-checking the future of journalism's authority*. Digital Journalism **12**(10), 1461-1484, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2174564>,
- [18] Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M.: *The increasing importance of public marketing: Explanations, applications, and limits of marketing within public administration*. European Management Journal **27**(3) 197-212, 2009, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2008.10.003>,
- [19] Snow, N. and Taylor, P.M.: *The revival of the propaganda state: US propaganda at home and abroad since 9/11*. International Communication Gazette **68**(5-6), 389-407, 2006, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1748048506068717>,
- [20] Noar, S.; Benac, C. and Harris, M.: *Does tailoring matter? Meta-analytic review of tailored print health behaviour change interventions*. Psychological Bulletin **133**(4), 673-693, 2007, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.133.4.673>,
- [21] Lock, I. and Jacobs, S.: *Drivers of reputation and legitimacy of an obvious public sector organisation: Surveying citizens' perceptions*. Corporate Reputation Review, 2025, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/s41299-025-00230-9>,
- [22] King, B.G. and Whetten, D.A.: *Rethinking the relationship between reputation and legitimacy: A social actor conceptualization*. Corporate Reputation Review **11**(3), 192-207, 2008, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/crr.2008.16>,
- [23] Mergel, I.: *Social media adoption and resulting tactics in the U.S. federal government*. Government Information Quarterly **30**(2), 123-130, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2012.12.004>,
- [24] Mmutle, T.; Molale, T.B.; Akinola, O.O. and Selebi, O., eds.: *Strategic Communication Management for Development and Social Change: Perspectives from the African Region*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41401-5>,
- [25] Binns, S.; Veale, M.; Van Kleek, M. and Shadbolt, N.: *It is reducing a human being to a percentage: Perceptions of justice in algorithmic decisions*. In: *Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM, Montréal, pp.1-14, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/3173574.3173951>,
- [26] Pasquier, M. and Villeneuve, J.-P.: *Marketing Management and Communications in the Public Sector*. Routledge, Abingdon, 2018,
- [27] Pejić Bach, M.; Kamenjarska, T.; Khawaja, S.; Qureshi, F.H. and Roblek, V.: *Conceptual metaphors in linguistics and information science and their role in the Great Reset*. In: Vătămănescu, E.M. and Dominici, G., eds.: *Great Reset – Opportunity or Threat?* Springer, Cham, pp.53-74, 2024, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76406-6\\_3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-76406-6_3),
- [28] Dencik, L.; Hintz, A.; Redden, J. and Treré, E.: *Collectivity in data governance and data justice*. Information, Communication & Society **28**(6), 943-950, 2025, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2025.2478096>,

- [29] Nissenbaum, H.: *Stewardship of privacy or private capture of a public value – a note*. SSRN Scholarly Paper, 2022, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4154535>,
- [30] Cath, C.: *Governing artificial intelligence: Ethical, legal and technical opportunities and challenges*. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A **376**(2133), No. 20180080, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2018.0080>,
- [31] Sun, Y and Qu, Q.: *Platform Governance, Institutional Distance, and Seller Trust in Cross-Border E-Commerce*. Behavioral Sciences **15**(2), No. 183, 2025, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/bs15020183>,
- [32] Šimić, S. and Kolić Stanić, M.: *Crisis communication: Coca-Cola Croatia and the case of drink poisoning*. In: Pejić Bach, M., ed.: *Proceedings of the ENTRENOVA Conference*. IRENET, Zagreb, pp.11-12, 2024,
- [33] Acquisti, A.; John, L. and Loewenstein, G.: *What is privacy worth?* The Journal of Legal Studies **42**(2), 249-274, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/671754>,
- [34] Mittelstadt, B.D.; Allo, P.; Taddeo, M.; Wachter, S. and Floridi, L.: *The ethics of algorithms: Mapping the debate*. Big Data & Society **3**(2), 1-21, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2053951716679679>,
- [35] Winfield, T. and Jirotko, M.: *Ethical governance is essential to building trust in robotics and artificial intelligence systems*. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A **376**(2133), No. 20180085, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2018.0085>,
- [36] Ziewitz, M.: *Governing algorithms: Myth, mess, and methods*. Science, Technology & Human Values **41**(1), 3-16, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0162243915608948>,
- [37] Eubanks, V.: *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor*. St. Martin's Press, New York, 2018,
- [38] Beldad, A.; De Jong, M. and Steehouder, M.: *How shall I trust the faceless?* Computers in Human Behavior **26**(5), 857-869, 2010, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.03.013>,
- [39] Cooper, A.F.; Moss, E.; Laufer, B. and Nissenbaum, H.: *Accountability in an algorithmic society: Relationality, responsibility, and robustness in machine learning*. In: *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT)*. pp.864-876, 2022, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/3531146.3533150>,
- [40] Varona Silva, F.J.; Cruz Aguilera, N.; Ávilas Hernández, J.R.; Moreno Pino, M.R. and Borlinič Gačnik, M.: *Integrated communications management in organisations: Bibliometric insight into past and future*. Business Systems Research **15**(1), 226-252, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/bsrj-2024-0011>,
- [41] Zuboff, Z.: *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. PublicAffairs, New York, 2019,
- [42] Introna, L.D.: *Algorithms, governance, and governmentality: On governing academic writing*. Social Studies of Science **41**(1), 77-100, 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0162243915587360>,

- [43] Prats, M.; Phillips, E. and Smid, S.: *Insights from the 2021 OECD Trust Survey: How people evaluate the trustworthiness of government institutions & implications for policymakers*. Behavioral Science & Policy **9**(2), 9-20, 2023, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bsp.2023.0012>,
- [44] Mergel, A.; Edelman, J. and Haug, N.: *Defining digital transformation: Results from expert interviews*. Government Information Quarterly **36**(4), No. 101385, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2019.06.002>,
- [45] Antić, M.; Globočnik Žunac, A. and Križanec Cvitković, M.: *Exploring the link between empathy and assertive communication in healthcare settings*. ENTRENOVA – ENTERprise REsearch InNOVation **10**(1), pp.44-52, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.54820/entrenova-2024-0005>,
- [46] Mišić, J.; van Est, R. and Kool, L.: *Good governance of public sector AI: A combined value framework for good order and a good society*. AI Ethics, May 2025, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s43681-025-00751-3>,
- [47] Albu, O.B. and Christensen, L.T.: *Shadows in the spotlight: Navigating organizational transparency in digital contexts*. Schmalenbach Journal of Business Research **76**, 641-659, 2024, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s41471-024-00190-6>.