

Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety Among Platform Users

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Abstract—Digital communication has become an essential component of interactions among users of digital platforms. Effective communication not only facilitates information exchange but also contributes to the development of psychological safety, which enables individuals to express ideas, opinions, and concerns without fear of negative consequences. This study examines the effect of Digital Communication Quality on Psychological Safety through the mediating role of Feedback Quality among digital platform users. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey of 115 respondents selected through convenience sampling. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that Digital Communication Quality has a significant positive effect on Feedback Quality ($\beta = 0.897$; $p < 0.001$), while Feedback Quality significantly influences Psychological Safety ($\beta = 0.906$; $p < 0.001$). The indirect effect of Digital Communication Quality on Psychological Safety through Feedback Quality was also significant ($\beta = 0.813$; 95% CI [0.726–0.882]). The model explains 80.5% of the variance in Feedback Quality and 82.0% of the variance in Psychological Safety. Reliability and convergent validity requirements were fulfilled with Composite Reliability values ranging from 0.944 to 0.961 and AVE values ranging from 0.771 to 0.832. These findings suggest that high-quality digital communication and constructive feedback play an important role in fostering psychological safety among digital platform users.

Keywords: Digital Communication Quality; Feedback Quality; Psychological Safety; Digital Platform Users; PLS-SEM

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed the way individuals communicate, collaborate, and exchange information. Digital platforms such as social media, online learning systems, collaboration applications, and virtual communities have become primary channels for interaction in both professional and personal contexts. As communication increasingly shifts to digital environments, the quality of communication becomes a critical factor influencing users' experiences and perceptions.

Digital Communication Quality refers to the extent to which communication through digital channels is clear, accurate, timely, relevant, and understandable. High-quality communication allows users to effectively share information, reduce misunderstandings, and improve interaction outcomes. Conversely, poor communication quality may lead to confusion, information overload, conflict, and reduced engagement among users.

One important outcome associated with communication quality is Psychological Safety. Psychological Safety refers to an individual's perception that they can express opinions, ask questions, provide suggestions, and admit mistakes without fear of embarrassment, rejection, or punishment. In digital environments, psychological safety is particularly important because users often interact without face-to-face contact, increasing the possibility of misinterpretation and uncertainty.

Previous studies have demonstrated that effective communication contributes positively to trust, collaboration, employee engagement, and knowledge sharing. However, the mechanism through which Digital Communication Quality influences Psychological Safety remains insufficiently explored, particularly in the context of digital platform users. Most prior studies have focused on direct relationships between communication and organizational outcomes, while limited attention has been given to the mediating role of communication-related variables.

One variable that may explain this relationship is Feedback Quality. Feedback Quality refers to the extent to which feedback is constructive, specific, useful, timely, and actionable. Effective feedback enables users to understand expectations, improve performance, and strengthen interpersonal relationships. In digital environments, feedback serves as an essential communication mechanism that supports learning, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

The importance of Feedback Quality is supported by communication and social exchange theories, which suggest that meaningful feedback enhances understanding, trust, and mutual respect among individuals. When users receive high-quality feedback, they are more likely to perceive interactions as supportive and fair, thereby increasing their sense of psychological safety. Conversely, unclear or inappropriate feedback may reduce confidence and discourage participation.

Although previous studies have independently examined communication quality, feedback effectiveness, and psychological safety, empirical evidence integrating these variables within a single framework remains limited. Furthermore, the increasing reliance on digital platforms has created a need to understand how communication processes influence users' psychological experiences in virtual environments.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of Digital Communication Quality on Psychological Safety through the mediating role of Feedback Quality among digital platform users. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions, Does Digital Communication Quality significantly affect Feedback Quality?, Does

Feedback Quality significantly affect Psychological Safety?, Does Feedback Quality mediate the relationship between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety?

The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on digital communication and psychological safety while providing practical implications for organizations, educational institutions, and platform managers seeking to create supportive digital communication environments.

Digital Communication Quality plays an important role in shaping communication outcomes. Communication that is clear, timely, and relevant facilitates understanding and promotes constructive interactions. High-quality communication enables individuals to provide more accurate and meaningful feedback. Therefore, users who experience better communication quality are expected to perceive higher feedback quality.

H1: Digital Communication Quality positively affects Feedback Quality.

Feedback Quality contributes to individuals' perceptions of support and fairness. Constructive feedback helps users identify areas for improvement while maintaining confidence and motivation. As a result, users are more likely to feel comfortable expressing opinions and participating in discussions.

H2: Feedback Quality positively affects Psychological Safety.

Digital Communication Quality may not directly influence Psychological Safety without the presence of effective feedback mechanisms. High-quality communication facilitates meaningful feedback, which in turn promotes psychological safety. Thus, Feedback Quality is expected to mediate the relationship between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety.

H3: Feedback Quality mediates the relationship between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety among digital platform users. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to test hypothesized relationships among latent variables and evaluate the mediating role of Feedback Quality using statistical analysis. The cross-sectional design enabled the researchers to collect data from respondents at a single point in time and assess their perceptions regarding communication experiences in digital environments.

2.2 Population and Sample

The target population consisted of individuals who actively use digital platforms for communication, collaboration, information exchange, and feedback activities. These platforms include social media applications, online collaboration tools, learning management systems, messaging applications, and other digital communication channels. Since the exact size of the population was unknown and difficult to determine, non-probability sampling was employed.

A total of 115 respondents participated in this study. The respondents were selected using a convenience sampling technique due to accessibility considerations and the exploratory nature of the research. Although convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of findings, it is commonly applied in behavioral and technology-related studies where access to respondents is restricted. The inclusion criteria for participation were as follows:

- a. Respondents must be at least 18 years old.
- b. Respondents must actively use digital communication platforms.
- c. Respondents must have experience receiving and providing feedback through digital platforms.
- d. Respondents must voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

The exclusion criteria included incomplete questionnaire responses and respondents who reported limited or no experience using digital communication platforms.

2.3 Instrument Development

The research instrument was developed based on established theoretical constructs and previous empirical studies related to digital communication, feedback processes, and psychological safety. The questionnaire consisted of three constructs: Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety.

Digital Communication Quality was measured using indicators related to communication clarity, timeliness, accuracy, relevance, and effectiveness. Feedback Quality was measured through indicators reflecting feedback usefulness, specificity, constructiveness, timeliness, and clarity. Psychological Safety was measured using indicators assessing respondents' comfort in expressing opinions, asking questions, sharing ideas, and participating in discussions without fear of negative consequences.

All measurement items were adapted from relevant literature and modified to suit the context of digital platform users. Before distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity and readability.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through an online survey using a structured questionnaire. The survey link was distributed through various digital channels, including social media platforms, online communities, messaging

applications, and professional networks. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential.

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The use of a Likert scale enabled respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each statement and facilitated quantitative analysis.

2.5 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for exploratory and predictive research, can handle relatively small sample sizes, and does not require strict assumptions regarding data normality.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved evaluation of the measurement model to assess reliability and validity. Reliability was examined using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable. Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where values exceeding 0.50 indicated satisfactory validity.

The second stage involved evaluation of the structural model. This stage included assessment of coefficient of determination (R^2), collinearity diagnostics using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping procedures. The significance of path coefficients was determined using t-statistics and p-values. Indirect effects were also examined to assess the mediating role of Feedback Quality in the relationship between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety.

- a. Feedback usefulness
- b. Feedback accuracy
- c. Feedback specificity
- d. Feedback timeliness
- e. Feedback constructiveness

Psychological Safety was measured using five indicators representing:

- a. Freedom to express opinions
- b. Comfort in asking questions
- c. Confidence in sharing ideas
- d. Willingness to admit mistakes
- e. Absence of fear regarding negative consequences

2.6 Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS was selected because it is suitable for predictive research involving latent variables and complex structural relationships. The analysis was conducted in two stages.

The outer model assessment examined:

- a. Indicator reliability
- b. Convergent validity
- c. Composite reliability
- d. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Indicators were considered valid when outer loading values exceeded 0.70. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 indicated satisfactory reliability.

2.7 Structural Model (Inner Model)

The inner model assessment examined:

- a. Path coefficients
- b. Coefficient of determination (R^2)
- c. Predictive capability of the model
- d. Hypothesis testing

The significance of relationships among variables was assessed using bootstrapping procedures. Positive and statistically significant path coefficients supported the proposed hypotheses. The results of these analyses provide empirical evidence regarding the influence of Digital Communication Quality on Feedback Quality and the subsequent effect of Feedback Quality on Psychological Safety.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 115 respondents who actively use digital communication platforms for communication, collaboration, information exchange, and feedback activities. The respondents were selected using a convenience sampling technique and met the established inclusion criteria, including active engagement with digital platforms and

experience in receiving or providing feedback through digital communication channels. The sample size was considered adequate for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis because it exceeded the minimum sample requirements recommended for predictive and exploratory research.

The increasing use of digital platforms in various contexts, including education, work, and social interaction, provides a relevant setting for examining the relationships among Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety. Understanding these relationships is important because digital communication has become a dominant mode of interaction in contemporary society. Consequently, communication quality and feedback mechanisms play an increasingly important role in shaping users' experiences and perceptions within digital environments.

3.2 Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was evaluated by assessing indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and collinearity. These assessments ensure that the measurement instruments adequately represent the latent constructs and provide reliable results for subsequent structural model analysis.

3.2.1 Indicator Reliability

Indicator reliability was examined using outer loading values. The results showed that all indicators achieved loading values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.844 to 0.924. These findings indicate that all measurement items adequately represent their respective constructs. High loading values suggest that the indicators have strong explanatory power and contribute significantly to the measurement of Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety.

The statistical significance of the indicator loadings further supports the reliability of the measurement model. Since all indicators demonstrated satisfactory loading values, no items were removed from the analysis. This result confirms that the measurement items are appropriate for assessing the constructs investigated in this study.

3.2.2 Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values. Convergent validity was evaluated through Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Digital Communication Quality	0.926	0.929	0.944	0.771
Feedback Quality	0.949	0.950	0.961	0.832
Psychological Safety	0.949	0.949	0.961	0.830

The results indicate that all constructs achieved Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency. Similarly, Composite Reliability values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability. Furthermore, AVE values ranged from 0.771 to 0.832, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.50. Therefore, all constructs demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity.

These findings suggest that the indicators consistently measure the intended constructs and explain a substantial proportion of the variance in their respective latent variables. Consequently, the measurement model satisfies the reliability and convergent validity requirements for further analysis.

3.2.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio). The Fornell-Larcker results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	DCQ	FQ	PS
Digital Communication Quality	0.878		
Feedback Quality	0.897	0.912	
Psychological Safety	0.934	0.906	0.911

The diagonal values represent the square roots of AVE for each construct. Although the values are relatively high, the correlations among constructs are also substantial. Specifically, the correlation between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety (0.934) exceeds the square root of AVE for both constructs. This finding suggests potential concerns regarding discriminant validity and indicates that the constructs may share overlapping dimensions.

The HTMT analysis further revealed values approaching the upper recommended threshold, indicating strong relationships among the constructs. While the results support the theoretical association among the variables, they also suggest that Digital Communication Quality, Feedback Quality, and Psychological Safety may possess closely related

conceptual characteristics. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution, and future studies should further refine measurement instruments to enhance construct distinctiveness.

3.2.4 Collinearity Assessment

Collinearity was examined using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. Most indicators produced VIF values below the recommended threshold of 5.0. However, one indicator of Psychological Safety (PS3) demonstrated a VIF value slightly above the recommended level (5.919), suggesting a potential multicollinearity issue.

Although most VIF values remained within acceptable limits, the elevated VIF value indicates that certain indicators may share substantial variance. This observation is consistent with the high correlations observed among the constructs and provides additional evidence supporting the reviewers’ concerns regarding conceptual overlap and potential common method bias.

3.3 Structural Model Evaluation

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R²), path coefficients, and mediation analysis.

3.3.1 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The coefficient of determination was used to assess the explanatory power of the model. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination

Endogenous Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Feedback Quality	0.805	0.804
Psychological Safety	0.820	0.819

The results indicate that Digital Communication Quality explains 80.5% of the variance in Feedback Quality. In addition, the model explains 82.0% of the variance in Psychological Safety. These values indicate substantial explanatory power and suggest that the proposed model effectively predicts the endogenous constructs.

However, the exceptionally high R² values are uncommon in behavioral research and may indicate that the constructs share closely related dimensions. Therefore, although the results demonstrate strong predictive capability, they should be interpreted carefully.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Direct Effects

Relationship	β	T Statistics	P Values
Digital Communication Quality → Feedback Quality	0.897	39.153	0.000
Feedback Quality → Psychological Safety	0.906	34.957	0.000

The results demonstrate that Digital Communication Quality has a significant positive effect on Feedback Quality (β = 0.897, t = 39.153, p < 0.001). Therefore, H1 is supported. This finding indicates that higher-quality communication through digital platforms contributes to more effective and meaningful feedback experiences.

Similarly, Feedback Quality significantly influences Psychological Safety (β = 0.906, t = 34.957, p < 0.001). Thus, H2 is supported. The result suggests that constructive, timely, and useful feedback creates an environment in which users feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, opinions, and concerns.

3.5 Mediation Analysis

The mediating role of Feedback Quality was examined through indirect effect analysis. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Indirect Effect

Relationship	β	95% Confidence Interval
Digital Communication Quality → Feedback Quality → Psychological Safety	0.813	[0.726, 0.882]

The indirect effect was statistically significant because the confidence interval did not include zero. Therefore, H3 is supported. The findings indicate that Feedback Quality serves as a significant mediator between Digital Communication Quality and Psychological Safety.

This result suggests that the influence of communication quality on psychological safety occurs primarily through the quality of feedback exchanged among users. In other words, effective digital communication enhances feedback processes, which subsequently strengthen perceptions of psychological safety.

3.6 Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the role of communication and feedback processes in digital environments. First, the significant relationship between Digital Communication Quality and Feedback Quality supports the view that effective communication serves as a foundation for constructive feedback exchanges. When communication is clear, timely, accurate, and relevant, users are better able to understand information and provide meaningful responses. This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of communication quality in facilitating collaboration and information sharing in digital settings.

Second, the strong positive relationship between Feedback Quality and Psychological Safety highlights the importance of feedback as a social and psychological mechanism. Constructive feedback allows users to feel recognized, supported, and respected. As a result, individuals become more willing to express ideas, ask questions, and participate in discussions. This finding aligns with the concept of psychological safety proposed by Edmondson, which emphasizes the importance of supportive interpersonal interactions in creating environments where individuals feel safe to take interpersonal risks.

Third, the mediation analysis demonstrates that Feedback Quality plays a central role in translating communication quality into psychological safety. Although communication quality is important, its influence appears to operate largely through the feedback process. High-quality communication facilitates the delivery of useful and constructive feedback, which subsequently promotes feelings of trust, openness, and safety among users. This finding contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence that feedback quality functions as a key mechanism linking communication practices to psychological outcomes in digital environments.

From a theoretical perspective, the study extends existing research on digital communication by integrating communication quality, feedback quality, and psychological safety into a single conceptual framework. The results suggest that communication outcomes should not be evaluated solely in terms of information transmission but also in terms of their ability to foster supportive and psychologically safe interactions.

From a practical perspective, the findings imply that organizations, educational institutions, and digital platform managers should invest in communication strategies that promote clarity, responsiveness, and constructive feedback. Training programs focused on digital communication skills and feedback practices may help create more supportive communication environments and enhance users' psychological well-being.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The use of convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the high correlations among constructs and the elevated VIF value for one indicator suggest potential overlap among variables. Future studies should employ larger and more diverse samples, incorporate longitudinal designs, and examine additional variables such as trust, digital literacy, organizational support, and user engagement to provide a more comprehensive understanding of psychological safety in digital communication contexts.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of Digital Communication Quality on Psychological Safety through the mediating role of Feedback Quality among digital platform users. The findings provide empirical evidence that Digital Communication Quality significantly enhances Feedback Quality, indicating that clear, accurate, timely, and relevant communication contributes to more effective feedback exchanges in digital environments. In addition, Feedback Quality was found to have a significant positive effect on Psychological Safety, suggesting that constructive and meaningful feedback helps individuals feel more comfortable expressing ideas, sharing opinions, asking questions, and participating in discussions without fear of negative consequences. The mediation analysis further demonstrated that Feedback Quality plays a crucial role in explaining how Digital Communication Quality contributes to Psychological Safety. This finding implies that communication quality alone may not be sufficient to foster psychological safety unless it is accompanied by feedback that is supportive, actionable, and beneficial to users. Therefore, organizations, educational institutions, and digital platform managers should focus not only on improving communication channels but also on establishing effective feedback mechanisms that encourage openness, trust, and collaboration.

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