

The Impact of Logical Fallacies in Business Communication: Exploring their Impact on Decision Making and Interpersonal Relationships in the Professional World

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of logical fallacies in business communication on decision-making and interpersonal relationships in Indonesian professional organizations. Using a qualitative approach based on literature analysis and conceptual synthesis, the research identified four main types of fallacies namely ad hominem, false dilemma, slippery slope and overgeneralization, which significantly affect the quality of decision-making and the dynamics of relationships between individuals. The findings show that such logical fallacies lead to biased, limited and irrational decisions, as well as create tension and decreased trust in organizational interpersonal relationships. The uniqueness of this research lies in emphasizing the Indonesian cultural context that influences the manifestation and impact of logical fallacies in business communication, an aspect that has received less attention in previous studies. The practical implications of this research confirm the importance of critical thinking training as a strategy to improve communication quality and decision-making effectiveness in organizations. Thus, the contribution of this research is twofold, expanding academic understanding of the role of logical fallacies in business communication as well as providing a conceptual basis for organizational interventions in the Indonesian cultural context. This research provides an important foundation for professional organizations in managing more rational communication and building productive and harmonious relationships.

Keywords:

Logical fallacies, Business communication, Decision making, Interpersonal relationships, Critical thinking.



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INTRODUCTION

Effective business communication is one of the key factors in organizational success and decision-making. In the context of professional organizations, clear and logical communication can increase efficiency, reduce conflict and speed up the decision-making process. However, in practice, communication is often hampered by logical fallacies that can affect the quality and effectiveness of the message conveyed. Logical fallacies are thinking errors that often appear in argumentation, even though they appear convincing but are not logically valid. The use of these logical fallacies can damage interpersonal relationships in organizations, as the messages conveyed become irrational and can cause misunderstandings between individuals. Moreover, in business decision-making, the use of cognitive biases stemming from logical fallacies can lead to irrational decisions that are detrimental to the organization (Baron, 2004). Therefore, it is

important to understand the impact of these logical fallacies on business communication, particularly in organizational decision-making and inter-individual relationships.

Logical and effective communication is a key foundation in the operation of modern organizations. In Indonesian business practices, communication is often influenced by cultural factors such as social hierarchy and the tendency to avoid open confrontation, which indirectly encourages the use of logical fallacies. While this phenomenon is important, research on its impact in the local context is limited. This research aims to critically analyze how logical fallacies affect business communication, decision-making and interpersonal relationships in Indonesian organizations.

The following literature review is contained in this study, namely: 1). Logical fallacies in business communication: in the existing literature, many studies identify logical fallacies as one of the factors that damage the quality of communication in various contexts, including business communication. (Walton, 2008) explains that fallacies are often used in communication to avoid rational discussion and to frame the opponent's argument in a way that is easier to attack. For example, in business discourse, *ad hominem* (personal attack) is often used to undermine an opponent's credibility without substantially considering his or her argument (Stark, 2000). This can disrupt constructive dialog and lead to decision-making that is not based on logical considerations. 2). The effect of logical fallacies on decision-making: the use of logical fallacies in business communication can greatly influence the decision-making process. In this context, fallacies such as slippery slope or false dilemma are often used to scare audiences or make very limited decisions, when there should be more alternatives to consider (Baron, 2004). Research by (Busenitz & Barney, 1997) shows that entrepreneurs and managers in large organizations use cognitive biases in their decision-making, often creating logical fallacies that affect the effectiveness of those decisions. 3). Interpersonal relationships in organizations: besides affecting decision-making, logical fallacies can also damage relationships between individuals in organizations. For example, the use of the straw man fallacy (transforming an opponent's argument into a more attackable form) can cause tension in professional relationships and hinder teamwork (Friedman, 2024). This is often due to communication errors caused by incomprehension or the intention to demean the opponent in the debate. This is consistent with research (Paulus et al., 2018), which shows that logical fallacies in communication not only interfere with decision-making, but also undermine trust in interpersonal relationships in the professional world. 4). The importance of critical thinking training: In response to these issues, critical thinking training is considered important to improve the quality of communication and decision-making in organizations. It can help individuals identify and avoid logical fallacies that often arise in business conversations and decisions (Fross, 2017). This can improve the quality of decisions made, as well as create a more open and constructive work atmosphere. Research by (Calma & Davies, 2021) confirms that critical thinking skills can improve communication in organizations, as well as increase efficiency in decision-making.

METHOD

This research is a critical conceptual analysis study that examines the phenomenon of logical fallacies in business communication with a literature-based qualitative approach. This article does not use primary field data, but rather synthesizes academic literature and previous studies, both in global and regional contexts, that are relevant to organizational dynamics in Indonesia. The main objective is to identify the most impactful patterns of logical fallacies in business communication and construct a conceptual framework as a scholarly contribution. The analysis was conducted using thematic synthesis techniques on quality academic sources (e.g. Walton, 2008; Baron, 2004; Paulus et al., 2018; Friedman, 2024). This process included: 1) selection of relevant literature, 2) thematic clustering based on fallacy types and their impact, 3) critical analysis of interrelationships between concepts and 4) formulation of a new framework called the Indonesian Communication Fallacy Framework (KFKI). The illustrative case studies included in this article are structured based on empirical patterns reported in previous research and public organization reports. With this approach, the article addresses the critique of the lack of attention to the Indonesian context in business logic studies, while offering a conceptual contribution through a framework that can be applied to diagnose and address communication

problems in Indonesian organizations. The following are the stages of conceptual synthesis used in this research method, namely:

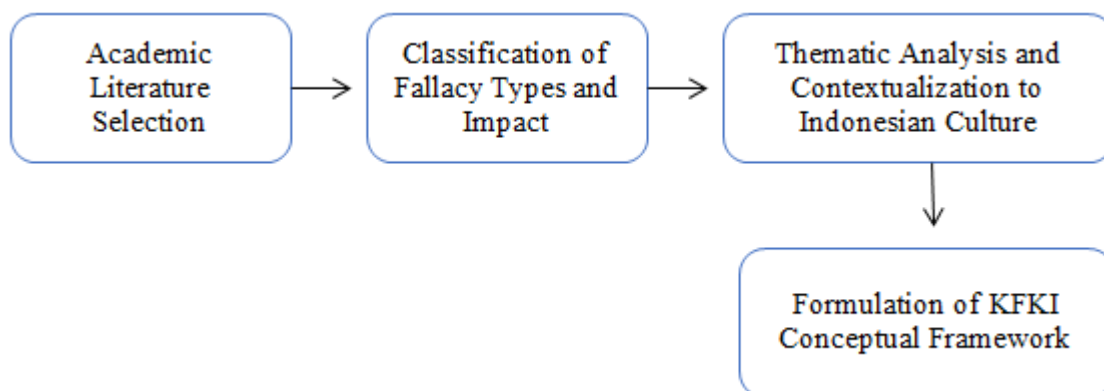


Figure 1: Stages of Conceptual Synthesis

This diagram shows the workflow in developing a conceptual model from academic literature that is systematically reviewed and contextualized into the dynamics of organizational communication in Indonesia. The explanation of each stage in the diagram is as follows: 1). Selection of Academic Literature: This stage involves identifying and selecting relevant theoretical sources from reputable journals, academic books, and scientific reports that discuss logical fallacies, organizational communication, and decision making. 2). Classification of Fallacy Types and Impact: The selected literature was analyzed to identify different types of logical fallacies and their impact on organizational dynamics. Each fallacy was classified based on its dimension of impact: on decision-making or interpersonal relationships. 3). Thematic Analysis and Contextualization to Indonesian Culture: At this stage, the classification results are compared and critiqued in the context of Indonesian organizational culture, taking into account the hierarchical norms, indirect communication style, and confrontation-avoidance tendencies that characterize the local culture. 4). Formulation of the KFKI Conceptual Framework: The information and thematic patterns found were then formulated in the form of a conceptual model called the Indonesian Fallacy-Communication Framework (KFKI), which maps the relationship between fallacy sources, manifestation forms, and their impact in Indonesian organizational settings. With this elaboration, the methodology not only explains the process of theoretical analysis, but also demonstrates how a conceptual approach can produce scientific contributions that are contextual and applicable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identification and Classification of Logical Fallacies

Based on the results of the literature synthesis, the four most dominant types of logical fallacies found in the context of business communication are: ad hominem, false dilemma, slippery slope, and overgeneralization. These four were chosen because of their consistency in the cases studied by Walton (2008), Baron (2004), and empirical reports from organizations in Southeast Asia.

Manifestations in the Indonesian Organizational Context

In Indonesian organizational culture, which emphasizes harmony, respect for authority, and indirect communication, logical fallacies often appear not as explicit mistakes, but rather discursive strategies that are considered safe. For example: 1). False dilemmas are often used in leadership meetings to simplify complex issues and suppress discussion of alternatives. 2). Overgeneralization appears in evaluation reports that are based on a single individual's perception. 3). Ad hominem is conveyed implicitly, usually through negative framing of the speaker's background. 4). Slippery slope is used to resist organizational change by fearing unproven extreme consequences.

Impact on Decision Making and Interpersonal Relationships

The impact of this fallacy falls into two main dimensions: 1). Organizational decisions become biased, rushed, and do not consider the complexity of business realities. 2). Relationships between individuals are disrupted by decreased trust, miscommunication, and resistance to collaboration.

Table 1. Impact of Logical Fallacies in the Indonesian Organizational Context

Type Fallacy	Impact on Decision Making	Impact on Interpersonal Relationships
Ad Hominem	Straying from substance, shutting down rational arguments.	Damage credibility, cause personal conflict.
False Dilemma	Reduces decision alternatives, encourages extreme choices.	Encourages polarization in team discussions.
Slippery Slope	Promotes defensive decisions and maintaining the status quo.	Leads to emotional tension and resistance to change.
Overgeneralization	Ignores relevant data and evidence, reinforcing false assumptions.	Decreases appreciation of diverse perspectives and team contributions.

The table above summarizes the main findings from the literature synthesis and conceptual analysis on the impact of the four types of logical fallacies in the Indonesian organizational context. Each fallacy is directly associated with two impact categories: decision-making and interpersonal relationships. The table also makes it clear that logical fallacies are not just semantic or rhetorical issues, but also have real impacts on organizational effectiveness. For example, the ad hominem fallacy is not just a personal attack in a debate, but in a work environment it can trigger conflict between individuals and weaken the legitimacy of the decision-making process. The same goes for the false dilemma, which is often misused in managerial contexts to simplify complex situations, thereby limiting innovation and inhibiting open dialogue. The use of fallacies also reinforces communication gaps between organizational levels. When overgeneralization dominates in the evaluation process, narrow perceptions and false assumptions can undermine team inclusiveness and trust. Therefore, understanding the impact of each fallacy in a structured manner as in this table can provide a basis for organizations to design more rational and ethical communication interventions.

Path Diagram of the Effect of Logical Fallacies

The following diagram systemically illustrates the relationship between the sources of logical fallacies, their manifestations, and their impact on decision-making and interpersonal relationships in organizations. The sources of fallacies include factors such as individual cognitive biases, organizational pressures that encourage quick decision-making without in-depth analysis, and cultural norms of communication that promote harmony and avoid open conflict. Manifestations include various types of logical fallacies, such as ad hominem, false dilemma, slippery slope, and overgeneralization, which simultaneously affect two crucial aspects of organizations: the quality of decision-making and the dynamics of relationships between individuals. If not managed properly, these impacts have the potential to reduce overall organizational effectiveness. Therefore, an understanding of these pathways of influence is important as a basis for designing effective and strategic communication interventions in organizational contexts, particularly those operating within Indonesian culture.

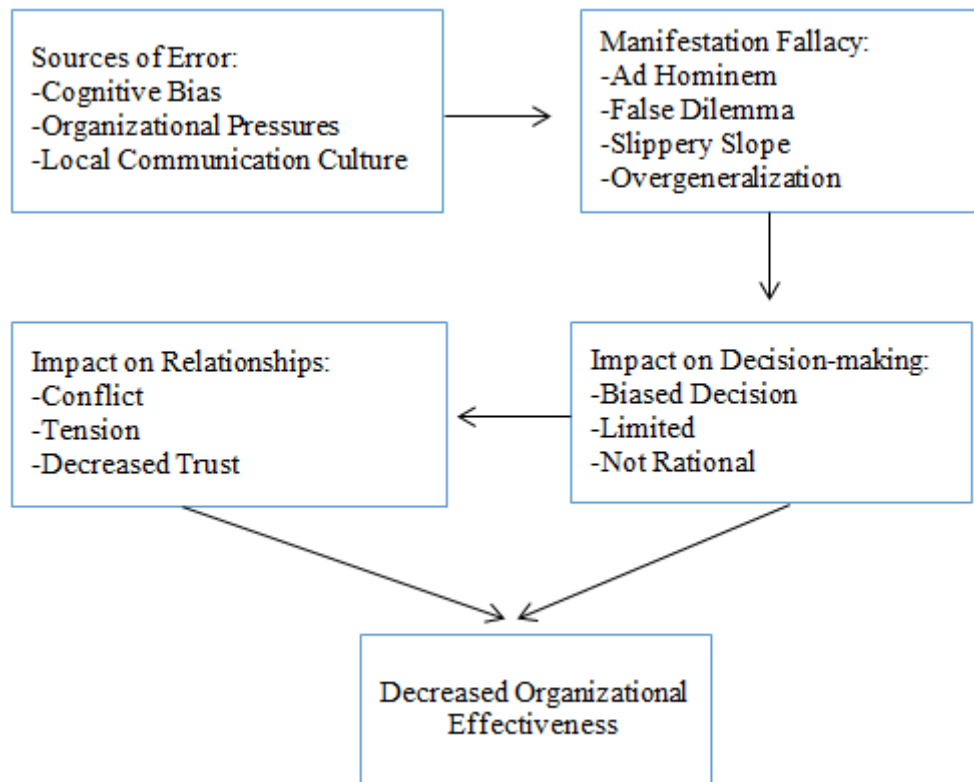


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

The figure above shows that logical fallacies are not just individual mistakes, but a product of the social structure and culture of the organization. If not recognized and addressed, fallacies can systemically decrease organizational effectiveness. Each element in the diagram reflects a mutually reinforcing causal relationship. Sources of fallacies such as cognitive biases, organizational pressures and cultural norms (such as respect for hierarchy) give rise to the use of certain fallacies. For example, in an environment that resists confrontation, ad hominem may be used to discredit arguments without directly conveying disagreement. These manifestations of fallacy further affect organizational thought processes and communication: decisions become irrational, relationships between individuals become strained, and accumulatively decrease the collective effectiveness of the organization. This model makes it clear that organizational interventions cannot be purely technical, but must also touch on aspects of culture and established communication patterns.

Conceptual Contributions and Implications

In response to gaps in the literature, this study proposes the Indonesian Fallacy-Communication Framework (KFKI) as a conceptual model that describes the relationship between fallacy sources, manifestation forms, organizational impact, and intervention strategies. KFKI can be used as a communication diagnosis tool in organizational audits, managerial training, and critical thinking culture development. By aligning logical communication theory with the Indonesian cultural context, this article makes theoretical and practical contributions to the development of more rational, open, and collaborative organizations.

CONCLUSION

This research comprehensively demonstrates that logical fallacies have a significant impact on business communication, especially in the context of decision-making and interpersonal relationships in Indonesian professional organizations. Logical fallacies such as ad hominem, false dilemma, slippery slope, and overgeneralization are proven to not only hinder communication quality, but also lead to biased, limited, and irrational decisions. Decisions resulting from communication containing such fallacies are potentially detrimental to the organization because they do not consider the complexity of the situation and are based on invalid data or arguments. In addition, the interpersonal

impact is also serious, where the use of fallacies causes tension, conflict, and decreased levels of trust between organizational members. This phenomenon is reinforced by the characteristics of Indonesian culture that prioritizes harmony, respect for hierarchy, and indirect communication, so fallacies often appear as discursive strategies that are considered safe but actually damage communication effectiveness. This research confirms that addressing the negative impact of fallacies is essential to improve the quality of decision-making and working relationships in organizations. One solution identified is critical thinking training that focuses on the ability to recognize and avoid logical fallacies. With this training, it is expected that business communication will become more rational, objective, and encourage a more open and collaborative working atmosphere.

Therefore, this research not only provides a conceptual contribution through the development of the Indonesian Fallacy-Communication Framework (KFKI), but also emphasizes the importance of practical application to build a more effective and productive organization in the midst of local cultural dynamics. The following are some of the implications that the author did, namely: 1). Theoretical Implications: This research enriches business communication and argumentation theory by highlighting the critical role of logical fallacies in undermining the quality of organizational communication and decision-making. The proposed Indonesian Fallacy-Communication Framework (KFKI) concept offers a new perspective that integrates the influence of Indonesian culture on the manifestation and impact of fallacies in organizations. This study also expands the scope of stakeholder theory by showing that the use of fallacies can affect an organization's perceptions and relationships with stakeholders, and lead to decision-making that is not based on valid data. 2). Practical Implications: Organizations need to be aware that the presence of logical fallacies can hinder effective communication and objective decision-making. Therefore, critical thinking training must be implemented to equip employees and managers to recognize and avoid fallacies, while encouraging logic-based decision evaluation. This approach is believed to improve the quality of internal communication, strengthen teamwork, and produce more rational and comprehensive decisions. 3). Managerial Implications: Managers need to oversee and ensure that communication and decision-making in teams and organizations are based on logical arguments and free from fallacies. This can be achieved through organizing regular critical thinking training, as well as implementing decision evaluation mechanisms that avoid bias and logical fallacies. Managers also play a role in building an organizational culture that supports transparent, open and trusting communication so that organizational productivity and sustainability can be optimally maintained.

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