CHAPTER I
RESEARCH DESIGN

1. A HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE OF MILK PRODUCTS INDUSTRY IN MAHARASHTRA

Traditionally, milk has enjoyed enormous prestige and acceptability. It is perceived as having a high 'health' value. Apart from its great popularity and acceptability, milk is recognized as a nutritive food *par excellence* in India. Various milk and milk products like skimmed milk powder, whole milk powder and infant milk foods of Western origin are being produced in India. A variety of cheeses, milk drinks, icecreams, pasteurized butter, etc., which were not so common about twenty years ago, are available in many cities today. The production of butter, cheese, infant milk, milk powder and malted milk food increased several fold in India after their imports were banned in 1975-76, The capacity utilization of the milk processing industry is currently 80 per cent - one of the highest in the food processing sector.

Maharashtra is a leading State in White Revolution in India, the main factor behind this leadership status is the well-developed cooperative movement in the State. In the dairy sector, it has been experienced many times that the milk processing capacity in the State has the problem of absorption of extra quantity of milk produced. The basic reason behind this surplus is the positive approach of the farmers towards the implementation of crossbreeding programme. The second the more important reason is the 'permanent pricing policy' adopted by the Government of Maharashtra, which helps to create confidence among the producers. It has led to a tremendous increase in milk production in the State. The third reason is the network of efficiently functioning cooperatives, leading to easy procurement, proper processing and efficient distribution of milk. The network also ensures an assured milk market to the milk producer.

As in 2000 A.D., in Maharashtra, there were over 10,000 primary dairy cooperatives and their affiliated unions and federations. The cooperatives and
the government milk schemes together have capacities of 15.45 lakh litres per day for milk chilling, 44.80 lakh for milk pasteurizing and 86 metric tonnes for milk drying.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Information is the engine that drives organizations. Information about the organization, its environment, its products and services, and its people is essential both to the management and to the employees. This universal need for information is met through the organization's communication system, which provides formal and informal methods to move information across the organization so that appropriate decisions can be made.

‘Communication’ is defined as "the process by which people seek to share meaning via the transmission of symbolic messages". In organizational setting, communication is a two-way exchange of ideas between the employees and the management. Effective communication, therefore, is the lifeblood of any sound organization. It is also a management tool, which, when used judiciously, enhances the productivity and profitability of the organization. The core management functions such as planning, organizing, controlling, directing and coordinating are essentially the functions of the intra-organizational communication process. Thus, the management functions and communication process are so interlinked that without effective communication, neither the organizational objectives could be accomplished nor the management functions could be fulfilled.

3. COMMUNICATION PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO HUMAN RESOURCES OF AN ORGANIZATION

Communication strategies like conducting meetings, organizing group discussions, conducting personal interviews and written communication like correspondence, reports, etc., are required for planning the human resources and also their recruitment and selection;
Secondly, imparting education and training and rendering guidance is a major domain of communicative activities. These communicative activities are required to impart instructions and guidance for the desired development of the human resources of the organization;

Thirdly, communication of the performance assessment and appreciation of the human resources' performance is an important process in the organization;

Fourthly, communicative strategies used for raising the morale of the human resources and for motivating them lie in the domain of managerial communication;

Fifthly, effective vertical and horizontal communication is required for the transmission and reception of the messages through the organizational hierarchy;

Sixthly, in all the above mentioned areas of communicative strategies, semantic noise, hierarchical and organizational constraints, physical and socio-psychological obstacles create communication problems that inevitably lead to the problems in the functioning of the organization.

These would be the thrust areas of the proposed study aimed at investigating the processes and problems of communication in relation to the human resource of the organization.

4. **Organizational Communication and Human Resources**

All organizations have human resource communication systems. Most organizations use a blend of formal, systematically designed communication procedures and informal, *ad hoc*, arrangements. For convenience, most of these approaches can be divided into downward communication systems for transmitting information to human resources, and upward communication systems for obtaining information from them. In fact, all organizations rely on effective downward and upward communication for securing optimum results from the employees; hence, it is imperative that the problems regarding the
effectiveness of the organizational human resource communication processes be identified and appropriate remedies suggested.

5. **KOLHAPUR DISTRICT: THE STUDY AREA**

The District of Kolhapur is a southern district in Maharashtra State and is one of the constituent districts of the Deccan fertile belt in the Krishna-Panchaganga basin on the Deccan plateau in the rainshadow region of the Sahyadri mountain ranges. It is located between 15°43' and 17°10' North latitude and 73°43' and 74°42' East longitude and covers an area of 8,047 sq.km. For administrative purposes, the district is divided into 12 talukas.

According to Census, the district had a population of 29,74,352, inhabiting in two cities, 12 towns and 1203 villages. Sex ratio of the population is 966 females: 1000 males and the average literacy is 66.90%. The district is well-serviced by a good network of intra- and inter-district roads and rail (43 kms.). Kolhapur City is the headquarters of Kolhapur district.

Perennial availability of water from 12 rivers and an efficiently harnessed irrigation potential have made agriculture the dominant economic activity in the district; and in its wake, several agro-industrial activities have prospered, e.g. sugar manufacture, agriculture produce processing, milk and food processing. Kolhapur City, being the district headquarters, is a large commercial and financial centre.

6. **THE STUDY ORGANIZATIONS**

The following two have been pre-identified as the study organizations:

(1) Kolhapur Zilla Sahakari Dudh Utpadak Sangh Limited, Gokul-Shirgaon, Taluka Karveer, Dist.Kolhapur;


Both these organizations are in cooperative sector, have nearly similar turnover volume (approx. Rs.35 crore per annum), manufacture identical milk products (pasteurized and skimmed milk, milk powder,
butter oil, white and table butter and Shrikand) and also have nearly similar functional departments and employee strengths (around 50 managers and 1,500 employees).

7. **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

A cursory review of research literature on the organizational communication revealed that none of these studies have been conducted against the perspective of intra-organizational communication processes and problems. Such a perspective would provide feedback, through upward communication, on the perception of the employee-recipients of policy statements, directives, orders, notices and instructions and other information issued by the management, so that it is possible to identify bottlenecks, distortion causing agents and such other weaknesses in the intra-organizational communication process and make it more effective vis-a-vis the implementation of human resource policies of the organization. Accordingly, the statement of the problem is: A STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO HUMAN RESOURCES IN MILK PRODUCTS INDUSTRY IN KOLHAPUR DISTRICT.

8. **OBJECTIVES:**

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To take a historic overview of the milk products industry in Kolhapur District (the study area);
2. To comparatively evaluate the intra-organizational communication processes in the study organizations;
3. To examine the communication strategies adopted by the study organizations as regards human resource planning, recruitment and selection;
4. To examine the communication strategies adopted by the study organizations as regards training and development;
5. To examine the communication strategies adopted by the study organizations as regards performance and potential appraisal;

6. To examine the communication strategies adopted by the study organizations as regards morale building and motivation;

7. To examine the overall effectiveness of organizational communication in the study organizations;

8. To offer such meaningful suggestions, as may be appropriate.

9. **Hypotheses of the Study**

   The hypothesis "The Selected organizations are adopting strategies of effective communication" would be tested under the proposed work.

10. **Methodology Adopted**

    For fulfilling the above objectives and testing of the hypotheses, both primary and secondary data was collected. For collecting primary data, *Survey Method* is adopted, whereby data was collected by administering an interview schedule to two sets of respondents, that is, the study organization's managerial and non-managerial staff. The sample respondent is selected by using *Stratified Quota Accidental Sampling Technique*. For cross-verifying the data gathered through the survey method, *Non-Participatory Observation Method* also be adopted. Secondary data is compiled through the *Library Research Method*.

11. **Sample Design**

    In the *Stratified Quota Accidental Sampling Technique* to be adopted for the study, 'stratified' means the two staff levels, namely, managers and non-managers; 'quota' means the predetermined sample size of 25 managerial staff from each unit (being approx. 50%) and 150 non-managerial staff from each unit (being approx.10%); and 'accidental' means those individual respondents that are willingly participated in the survey.

    Accordingly, a total of 50 managerial staff and 300 non-managerial staff from two study organizations were identified as sample-respondents.
The following tables will give clear idea about the sample size selected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Staff Levels</th>
<th>Population in study organizations</th>
<th>Proportion (%) for sample selection</th>
<th>Number of sample selected</th>
<th>Total sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Warana</td>
<td>Gokul</td>
<td></td>
<td>Warana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Managerial staff</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Non-managerial staff</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II) Appropriate Break-up of non-managerial staff level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of the organizations</th>
<th>Sample selected from the population</th>
<th>Selected sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Warana</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Gokul</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. DATA COLLECTION - PRIMARY DATA

12.1 Interview Schedules

Primary data is collected through an interview schedule administered to a total of 350 individual respondent-employees in the study organizations. The interview schedule, besides containing questions useful for drawing the profiles of the units, would also contain questions relating to the perception of the respondents about the information given out by the organization as regards its human resource management practices.

12.2 Unstructured Interviews

The data for extricating both the history and the contemporary scenario of the milk products industry in the study area, as also for ascertaining the intricacies of its working is collected through interview guides from concerned government authorities, industry professionals and academicians.

13. DATA COLLECTION - SECONDARY DATA

13.1 Library Sources
Secondary data in the form of archival information is collected from government offices, concerned institutions and organizations. For discussing the theoretical aspects, published sources in various libraries, archives and collections would be used.

13.2 Informal Discussions

Verbatim data in the form of interview transcripts would be collected to provide background information for gaining deeper insights into the research topic from the persons knowledgeable in the related areas through informal discussions.

14. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The primary data so collected is processed on a computer under expert supervision, analyzed and suitably interpreted to derive the findings that, in turn, would be juxtaposed against the theoretical background/secondary data for drawing conclusions there from and presenting meaningful suggestions.

15. Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of the proposed study would be confined to the boundaries of Kolhapur District. The topical scope would focus on the intra-organizational communication processes in relation to the human resource management practices in the study organizations. The analytical scope would cover fulfillment of the objectives set out and testing of the hypotheses. The functional scope would be confined to offering a set of meaningful suggestions aimed at improving the efficiency of the communication processes in relation to the human resource management practices in the milk products industry.

16. Significance of the Study

Milk products industry in India is already playing an important role as an agro-ancillary industry and has a very large potential in both the domestic markets and the exports. On the other hand, the high degree of automation in the industry and the expectations about the quality of the products, the industry
needs to attract, maintain and retain highly-qualified and talented human resources. It is, therefore, imperative that industry's human resources policies and practices ought to be based on sound footing of effective communication. To that extent, the work would attempt to offer meaningful suggestions.

17. **CHAPTER SCHEME**

The Thesis is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter-1: Research Design
Chapter-2: Review of Literature & Conceptual and Theoretical Foundation
Chapter-3: Profiles of the Study Organizations
Chapter-4: Data Analysis and Interpretation
Chapter-5: Findings and Conclusions.