CHAPTER VI

COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION
# CHAPTER VI

COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Importance of an Effective Evaluation system</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Communication Audit</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
<td>History of Communication Process</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
<td>Sub Process of Communication</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.3</td>
<td>Nature of Communication Audit Assessments</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Characteristics of Communication Assessment</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Communication and Organization Strategies</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Benefits of Communication Audit</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Development of Questionnaire by Cal Downs</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Objectives of the Current Study</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>Questionnaire for the current study</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>Communication Satisfaction</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>Communication Satisfaction Relationships</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11.1</td>
<td>Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11.2</td>
<td>Relationship with Supervisors</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11.3</td>
<td>Relationship with Management</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>Satisfaction and Organizational outcomes</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12.1</td>
<td>Communication and satisfaction</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12.2</td>
<td>Communication and Productivity</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12.3</td>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

Communication is the essential vascular system, which supports the modern virtual enterprise—supporting seamless interactivity within an enterprise and across the extended enterprise. If an organization were truly efficient in all aspects, quality attributes would naturally extend to its communication system as well. It is critical to define the scope of an organization’s communication system. This involves a variety of elements, including employee communication skills, communication channels, information management and communication policies and procedures. The critical issue is how these elements are integrated to meet organizational goals. At every level—interpersonal, organizational, and international—people depend on effective communication for solving his or her problems. But Communication is generally taken for granted till a problem arises. Though Organizational members are aware of the importance of communication, many of them do not attach much attention to communication until something goes awry. To concentrate primarily on problems may be typical of human nature, but such an approach cannot be the basis for excellence and organizational development.

Organization communication processes need periodic monitoring to avoid a situation where the problem is entirely due to a communication gap. Organizational members need a realistic determination of which organizational processes are operating effectively as well as where potential problems are developing. Even though lack of communication is not the only reason for organization problems, at the most fundamental level, organizations need to monitor how well employees communicate
because the organization's very survival often depends on workers' abilities to exchange and coordinate information.

Various studies in organizational communication have been directed towards relationship amongst people, levels of information, attitudes towards communication and use of technology. The overall thrust seems to follow a certain pattern though the actual focus varies. Communication's exact function in an organization is hard to delineate because it is a pervasive factor throughout organizations. A new concept, which has been gaining attention, is the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. The objective of the researcher is to explore the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction of teachers.

6.2 IMPORTANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION EVALUATION SYSTEM IN AN ORGANIZATION

Figure 6.1 - Communication evaluation system

![Communication evaluation system diagram]
The dynamic environment in today’s competitive world in which organizations try to survive and prosper has created an awareness of the tremendous importance of internal organizational communication towards the organization’s attempts to remain effective. Based on the concerns of management and communication research, the five pillars of a corporate communication system are as described in the succeeding heads. Since these are the cornerstones of the corporate structure, their effectiveness would then have to be evaluated from time – to time in order to retain all its elements.

6.2.1 Strategic Commitment

1. There should be a strategic commitment from top management to promote and practice effective communication.

2. There should be commitment by management and employees to uphold ethical standards for communication.

6.2.2 Skills

1. Top management must have the ability, desire and means to inspire a vision of corporate values in the employees.

2. Employees must develop superior communication skills.

3. Employees should know how they are performing against recognized standards of performance.

6.2.3 Channels

1. The organization needs to develop an effective infrastructure of channels to meet key communication challenges.
2. Channels used must be compatible with employee needs.

6.2.4 Policies & Procedures

1. Employees need to be told how they fit into the "big picture" and they must believe they are empowered to carry out the organizational mission.

2. Dynamic programs should be in place to make sure employee concerns are heard and acted on.

3. Departments need to interact with one another effectively.

4. The communication system should be routinely evaluated.

6.2.5 Information Management

1. Employees should have relatively easy access to all information they deem necessary, with some minor exceptions.

2. Active measures must be in place to ensure that employees receive relevant and timely information, but not more than necessary.

3. There should be "safety valves" built into the communication system to circumvent any communication breakdowns.

Well-constructed measures are valuable tools for investigating organizational communication. Audits of organizational communication have been viewed as an efficient means for collecting data, diagnosing common problems, and for comparing organizations. In addition, communication audits provide a means for organizational members to engage in reflective learning and to build on existing strengths. Recently,
there has been renewed attention paid to communication audits to examine the relevance of communication assessment methods for organizations today.

**Figure 6.2 - Shannon and Weaver model of communication**

![Shannon and Weaver model of communication](image)


### 6.3 COMMUNICATION AUDIT

Communication is one of the most interesting organization phenomena to investigate due to its complex and multifaceted nature. An understanding of this complexity forms the basis for a practical communication audit. Communication is always considered as an ongoing, dynamic process and not a linear, finite phenomenon.
6.3.1 The History of Communication Process

Popularized in the communication literature by Berlo\textsuperscript{179} in 1960, the term "process" refers to the following:

1. Many components that interact together or with each other

2. The outcomes of these interactions are determined by some unspecified contingencies

3. These interactions do not have a finite beginning or end.

In other words, every communication is rooted in both a historical and a current situational context. To understand any current communication interaction, it is imperative that its history and the impact of non-communication variables need to be understood.

One of the earliest models was developed by Lasswell \textsuperscript{180}(1948/1971) who described the communication process as "who says what through what channels to whom and with what impact". Another popular model around the same period was by Shannon and Weaver \textsuperscript{181}(1949). Berlo (1960) emphasized many of the same concepts in his famous SMCR model, in which sources encoded messages and sent them through channels to be decoded by receivers, who then responded with feedback to the sources. Building on Berlo, the Downs\textsuperscript{182} model of communication pictured in Figure 6.3 below visually depicts two people maintaining an ongoing interaction as both a sender and a receiver.

\textsuperscript{179} Assessing organization communications, Cal w Downs, The Guilford press, New York, 2004,4
\textsuperscript{180} Assessing organizational communications, Cal W Downs, Guilford press, New York, 2004, 5
\textsuperscript{181} ibid
\textsuperscript{182} ibid,5
Figure 6.3 Downs total environment communication model.

Political  job  security  perceptual  differences  position
power  laws  Organizational

Context

Message  (B)  Channel

(A)  (C)

Sender  Receiver

(G)  Other  (H)  Other

Person 1  Person 2

(E)  Message

Channel  (D)

Senders  Recipients

Other  Other

However the basic model shown in the center of the figure has been criticized for the following flaws:

1. Communication is rarely limited to the exchange between just two people and a total environmental context is very important.

2. The Downs model tries to show the general dynamic context in which any given message exchange may be viewed but communication will be seriously affected if we put them in an organizational context where person 1 is the boss of the other.

3. Furthermore, persons 1 and 2 are receiving and sending messages to lots of other people as well.

Interactions are shaped by other variables such as cultural determinants, legal requirements, economic conditions, and the necessity to compete with other organizations. This has been superimposed around the basic model to give a total model shown in fig 6.3.

Thus in the study of organizational communication, we could easily substitute “Unit 1” and “Unit 2” for “Person 1” and “Person 2” and highlight the fact that organizational coordination is also affected by the total environmental context.

6.3.2 Sub process of communication:

6.3.2.1 Filtering Information:

The messages sent throughout organizations are not necessarily the ones received, because the original messages are filtered through the motivations, listening habits, and perceptions of their receivers. This filtering phenomenon is not merely a capricious notion by which a person or unit decides what to pay attention to or how to
interpret a message. The filter is the essence of a person's total frame of reference. During a conduct of a communication audits it is imperative to probe how key managers filter information to understand how choices are made about communicating.

Probing the filtering phenomenon also reveals how communication is related to non-communication variables such as costs, competitors, goals, and images of organizational values. Sometimes communication is linked inside a person's head to some very unexpected variables. Filtering of information can occur at an organizational level as well and this too should be audited. Since different levels of management and different units have access to different messages, these differences often have profound ramifications for the coordination and control of the organization.

6.3.2.2 Feedback

The second sub process of communication is feedback, which refers to the behavioral responses to messages. In the model presented in Figure 6.3, the letters A and D refer to times when people monitor their own messages. They hear what they say and read what they write, often correcting them. The D-E-F continuum represents responses to messages by other people and creates a feedback loop that develops two-way communication, which has been demonstrated to be more effective and more satisfying than one-way communication. The letters G and H refer to the fact that most organizational communication takes place among many people in some kind of organizational network. Therefore, filtering involves many different interpretations. One does not receive just one feedback message, but many feedback messages, some of which will not be in agreement making organizational communication a challenge.
6.3.3 Meaning and Nature of Communication Audit Assessments

According to Kopec (1982) Communication Audit can be defined as "A complete analysis of an organizational communication, both internal and external - to take a picture of communication needs, policies, practices and capabilities to uncover necessary data to allow top management to make informed economical decisions about future objectives of the organizational communication and lead to a series of recommendations."

The scope of an audit may be broad and as deep as the size and complexity of the organization demands. The audit can measure the effectiveness of communication programs throughout an entire organization, in a single division or department or within a specific employee group. It can examine communication as a particular subject or communication via individual media and has the benefit of uncovering misunderstandings, information barriers, bottlenecks as well as opportunities.

A communication audit is designed on flexible model to use any quantitative data of an organization to fill the gaps and add qualitative assessment. It provides an unique platform to develop communication infrastructure designed to deliver not only efficiency and effectiveness but also business benefits. Successful communication relies on a blend of processes, channels, tools behaviors and results in an aligned organization with a high level of cross functional co-operation as well as selection of appropriate technology.

The communication audit looks at the broad communication spectrum within an organization and uses a variety of tools including:

---

Figure 6.4 - Communication audit tools

1. Review of key business process and communication methods.
2. Research of communication options
3. Quantitative survey where appropriate
4. Review of current communication infrastructure
5. Identifying process improvement and benefits

Communication Audit also commonly pay attention to how communication processes can be linked to organizational results such as commitment to the organization, job satisfaction among employees, productivity, the effectiveness of implementing a change, and financial stability.

An audit is merely a process of exploring, examining, monitoring and evaluating something. The idea of conducting a communication audit may be new to many
organizations, but it follows a long tradition of management trying to obtain feedback about the current state of the organization. Organizations of today are now eager to improve their internal communication and have understood the importance of the need to conduct regular communication audits.

A communication audit takes a communication perspective on the organization. It puts people's tasks and interactions into the context of a complex set of exchanges that the participants may perceive differently. Communication provides the framework for getting things done, rather than being just a side concern. Therefore, communication audits differ from other assessments only in that they focus primarily on communication.

6.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENTS

A communication assessment, like all others, should possess the following characteristics: (1) Autonomy (2) Professionalism (3) Investigative thoroughness (4) Expert appraisal (5) Personalized design, and (6) Current time frame.

Figure 6.5 - Salient features of Communication Assessments
6.4.1 Autonomy

Independent assessors with training that qualifies them to make the investigation should conduct the investigation. In other words, neither organizations nor individuals should be allowed to review themselves because they could have such a vested interest in the results that the results would be suspect. The audit can be conducted either by outside professionals or by in-house experts, but the element of professional independence is critical to its success, failing which, during the data collection period workers will repeatedly express worry that someone from the organization might see their answers. Independence gives credibility because they promise confidentiality.

6.4.2 Professionalism

To be credible and accurate, the investigation needs to be conducted by professionals who understand the intricacies of organizational dynamics and who also have expertise both in the analysis of communication and in the general processes of consultation. A good consultant is one who has the following characteristics:

(1) The ability to diagnose problems accurately

(2) The ability to serve as a facilitator or catalyst

(3) The knowledge of and skill with the consulting processes

(4) Sensitivity in using change processes

(5) The ability to give people the experience of success

(6) A willingness to grow and learn from the experience
(7) A dedication to the critical review of one’s own theories. To this end the auditors must continually fight against a dogmatic attitude despite evidence to the contrary.

6.4.3 Investigative Thoroughness

An assessment is a diagnostic process that collects important data to be used in constructing a realistic description of the actual organization. Skill in diagnosis is critical to obtaining a realistic, usable view of the organization’s strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, unless the auditor makes a skilled diagnosis, his or her proposals for change will undoubtedly be inappropriate. Because a common tendency for many researchers and consultants is to define problems according to the solutions that they have available, it is imperative that the initial diagnosis is not bound just by whatever solutions an auditor would like to implement. If the auditors allow themselves to be limited in this manner, their whole effort may become biased and consequently unrealistic. Their judgments should be conceptually sound, precise, accurate, and relevant to the purpose of the audit.

6.4.4 Expert Appraisal

The objective behind the conduct of a diagnosis is to determine judgments about communication within an organization. Implied in every assessment is a comparison of what is to what ought to be, and what are your criteria for judging whether or not a particular organization is effective. Hence evaluation requires the identification of some criteria, such as standards earlier set to use in judging the adequacy of current communication.

Though information can be collected by any individual about communication in the organization, it takes persons with special expertise and insight to determine what
kind of information will be helpful and then to derive practical, usable and tangible information so as to be able to identify strengths and weaknesses. Finally observations must always be put into some context historically, organizationally, industrially, or economically.

6.4.5 Personalized Design

Both the audit methodologies and the criteria for evaluation must be tailored or adapted to suit the specific organization. The audit should be tailored in the form of new or different questions or wording, or perhaps there must be adaptation of audit procedures. Furthermore in small organizations, an auditor may rely on interviews more than is possible in larger organizations. For example assessment of governmental service organization should be conducted differently from its private sector counterparts as the organizational dynamics are often different and there exists some key differences in the way communication works in those different types of organizations.

Communications auditors use methodological triangulation to get a more complete picture of the organization. “Triangulation” refers to the collecting of data about the same phenomena using several different methods or approaches to data collection.

6.4.6 Current Time Frame

Due to the dynamic environment in an organization the, generalizations made from an assessment will be limited to that particular time frame An assessment is made only after such changes are kept in mind. Just like how financial records are checked periodically even communication requires assessment, as the communication patterns
in organizations are not static. They too need to be audited periodically to keep the information current.

6.5 COMMUNICATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

In the past, organizations have often seen communication restructuring as a kind of Band-Aid to apply after a problem is encountered. Auditors can add value to their clients by introducing a strategic review of communication. Communication Strategy is a process that enables managers to evaluate the communication consequences of the decision making process, and which integrates this into the normal business planning cycle and psyche of the organization. In other words this strategy emphasizes pushing decision making down to the grassroots level. In order to facilitate this there is a need for a formal communication policy to make all requisite information accessible internally. Therein the lowest level field employee has access to the same information that the CEO has on the relevant aspects and finds no need to go through 'official channels' to ask a question or obtain relevant information.

The focus on strategy requires a paradigm shift for some auditors if their focus tends to be primarily on organizational operations. Strategy bridges the organization with its external environment and it drives all operation variables such as, forms of leadership, forms of organizing and communication roles. Hence it is important to view communication as an integral part of achieving the organizational objective rather than as a separate function. To conduct the audit effectively, the top management should convey its strategic objectives to the auditors.
6.6 BENEFITS OF COMMUNICATION AUDIT

If comprehensive communication audits possess the characteristics described above, the assessments provide the following functional benefits:-

1. Facilitation of Strategic planning.
2. Promotion of realistic appraisals.
3. Generation of New data.
4. Development of unique feedback loop.
5. Benchmarking allows effective comparisons.
6. Organizational members are sensitized to communication.
7. Training is enhanced.
8. Member participation fulfills a need to influence their organizations.

Figure 6.6 - Benefits of Communication Audit
These functional benefits have a real impact on the organizational outcomes of degree of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, productivity and even finances.

6.6.1 The Benefits of Strategic Planning

"Strategic planning" normally refers to the processes by which organizational goals and the special tactics for achieving those goals are formulated by management and implemented throughout the organization. Strategy is the basic positioning that guides the structuring and tactical operations of the organization.

Communication audits provide both:

1. A picture of how employees view the organization.

2. A picture of how the organizational management relates its goals and strategic vision to its employees.

Participants in the audit procedure estimate whether the current communication culture at the organization is consistent with their perceptions of where the organization plans to go in the future which leads to the formation of a powerful feedback to finally result in the integration of a strategic plan. Since organizational strategies need to be communicated in the organization, the success with which strategic information is communicated can be pinpointed by an audit. One of the most strategic benefits of any communication assessment is to develop an awareness of paradigm shifts that are molding the organizational culture.

6.6.2 Verification Benefit

The employees in an organization have perceptions about the way the firm works and keep judging about its operational efficiency. An audit verifies such perceptions and
instills valid information thus providing accurate information to employees and higher management. Generally perceptions or views of different people about the same organization differs and play a key role in shaping the way people communicate in organizations even though they may be oriented to validate one's own vested interests and experiences. Furthermore, perceptions of how people communicate are often inadequate. The organizational chart may be static in many organizations and generally identifies authority and communication lines but practical audits have proved otherwise. In the absence of reliable or substantiated information, employees tend to make assumptions about the organization and the challenge facing the assessor is to determine how the various differences in perceptions should be interpreted in order to capture the more accurate portrayal of the organization thus helping the management integrate the results into a consideration of basic strategies in the organization.

6.6.3 Data-Generating Benefit.

Communication audits generate new information, which facilitates the diagnostic function giving management the new information it needs for planning organizational development. Assessments forecast problems and highlight strengths thus paving the way for identifying strengths that need to be reinforced and weaknesses that must be corrected. Furthermore audits also diagnose those areas in which aspects of communication need some repair before they actually breakdown or create serious problems.

Assessments also yield information that explains or predicts critical organizational events such as dissatisfaction, lapses in productivity, breakdowns in inter-unit coordination, union activity, turnover, poor teamwork and lack of commitment. An
early detection of employee dissatisfaction with company policies could facilitate a
careful evaluation and restructuring of these policies in hope of having a constructive
impact on employees. If an audit identifies important employee concerns at a
relatively early stage, the results allow management to work toward maintaining
organizational “welfare” rather than later fighting to remove “sickness”.

6.6.4 Feedback Benefit

Communication (input) is designed to produce certain effects (outputs). Thus audits
generate new information in the feedback loop to verify perceptions and apply to the
development of organizational strategies. This also facilitates adjustments if the
output is not exactly what was wanted. The audit can offer a comprehensive review
of many general patterns of communication in the organization or it may examine
only specific programs of interest to management. Thus audits lead to the following:

1. To develop new communication training programs.

2. To assess how changes in telephone equipment and usage could save money.

3. To test the impact of a new performance review system as a communication
   vehicle.

4. To provide information about the structure of an organization that could be used
to restructure it.

5. To determine the effectiveness of printed communications so they could be
   improved.
6. To detect employee support for strategic thrusts by management. Such feedback about communication effectiveness can have important ramifications for developing the communication systems in the organization.

6.6.5 Benchmark Benefit

The evaluative process offers a benchmark for the progress and future of corporate programs of the organization. The results of initial assessments are often used as benchmarks against which later assessments will be compared. Organizations like to be able to plot out where they are going and the best way to gauge their effectiveness is to be able to compare their progress with what existed earlier.

6.6.6 Communication Benefit

The conduct of an assessment communicates to the workforce that the organization has a strong commitment to effective communication, which leads to building goodwill and further sensitizes people to good organizational and communication practices. The entire audit process is an important communication vehicle in itself, particularly for upward communication as it indicates that the organization is determined to make communication more effective. Thus like the Hawthorne effect the attention focused on them leads to positive response from the employees.

Further an assessment becomes a motivator for improved communication performance even during the conduct of audit because ideas come not only from the auditors, but also suggestions are enlisted from those being reviewed and create a direct communication link between managers and other employees.
6.6.7 Training Benefit

Not withstanding the above benefits an audit can reap an inherent training benefit, which happens in three ways. These are:

1. The conduct of an assessment increases the awareness of communication and provides an insight into the entire communication process and leads to sensitization of managers to interact with others more thoughtfully.

2. The knowledge attained from an audit regarding the strengths and weakness of the process in turn trains others in how to perform better and integrates the units as part of a cohesive force.

Audit reports often become a needs analysis for training. The very data reported from the audit offers exceptional substance for developing formal training programs.

6.6.8 Participation Benefit

In many modern Western societies, a communication audit is a useful forum for employee participation to make a difference in their organization. Suggestions from the subordinates are considered. Organizational members often say things to the auditors that they would not say to their bosses. Thus employees have opportunities to be heard and to shape their organizations. Therefore, a receptive management can be influenced when employees are given a confidential voice through an audit.

Every organization is different, and there are challenges and opportunities for growth, though it requires planning and a lot of hard work. Every assessment operates a little differently, varying with the type of organization, the focus wanted by the management, the tools available to the auditor, the size of the organization and of
course the time and money available for the audit. There are essentially six phases to an audit, namely:-

1. Initiation – It provides a general orientation

2. Planning – It provides the general orientation for the success of process

3. Diagnosis – It points out the important areas that need to be investigated

4. Analysis- This refers to the methodology

5. Evaluation – At this stage the analytical data is made meaningful

6. Feedback. - This is the goal of audit. Information is provided to launch whatever adaptations the organization needs in order to make improvements.

Finally, auditors have a tremendous opportunity to make practical contributions to the development of any organization. When the proper cultural adjustments are made, communication assessments provide unique insights into management in the era of globalization.

6.7HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORIGINAL COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE BY CAL W DOWNS

For many years, people have been working within very structured/vertical organizations that do not delve too much into the feelings of its employees. The downward communication channel leads to limited feedback and creates an environment where employees feel that they are not so important. But for the past several decades there have been organizations that do take into consideration the employees’ feelings and thoughts, thereby resulting in the employees reciprocation in
their actions by working harder and increasing profits. Further employees might like the job more because of the organization's concern towards their individual thoughts and ideas which in turn increases their innovativeness and drive leading to fulfillment and job satisfaction. Interestingly, satisfaction is a concept that has been examined by organizational communication scholars for the past twenty years because being satisfied is something people strive for within this society. A study on the relationship between employee's communication satisfaction vis-à-vis job satisfaction gains importance, since, organizations have to illustrate that they are concerned about their employees within the work environment. This concern can in turn help the organization in retention of the good employees and making it an organization that everyone wants to work for.

A number of researchers have already generated some data about the relationships between communication and job satisfaction. One of the earliest was Herzberg. 'Communication' was one of ten original factors that he later synthesized into the two-factor theory. Cal W. Downs studied a public utility company and discovered that satisfaction with communication was linked with employee position in the organization.

The study of communication satisfaction in organizations gained importance due to the outcome of poor organizational communication such as reduced employee commitment, greater absenteeism etc. At an individual level, poor communication can result in increased uncertainty about situations, the self, others, relationships, increased occupational stress and burnout. Therefore, communication audits and

---

185 ibid
assessments of communication satisfaction were developed to gather data on strengths and weaknesses of organizational communication and provide a foundation for communication strategies. This helps to develop positive working relationships, improve the transmission of information and finally to improve organizational effectiveness.

Communication satisfaction has received considerable attention in the research literature in the past 20 years. When employees are exposed to appropriate communication (e.g. receiving timely information on changes, feedback etc.) favorable organizational outcomes can be expected. Thus measuring communication satisfaction should be useful to gauge the climate and ‘health’ of the organization. Such examinations of the communication-satisfaction relationship have produced an area of study with the nomenclature ‘Communication Satisfaction’, which is becoming a common reference in organizational literature. So far this term has apparently represented a one-dimensional, generalized feeling, which an employee has toward his total communication environment.

The evaluation of employee communication satisfaction has been an important component of organizational communication audits to assess communication effectiveness. Although communication that provides information and clarifies work tasks/roles may partly contribute to employee communication satisfaction, the employees seek higher communication interactions with coworkers and superiors to satisfy interpersonal needs of pleasure and inclusion. According to Rubin186 (1993), when the employee’s needs are met through satisfying communication, employees are more likely to build effective work relationships. Thus, employee communication

---

satisfaction is important because it highlights a key issue for employees who play a central role in determining organizational effectiveness.

Though several instruments have been developed to assess communication satisfaction the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) (Downs & Hazen, 1977) is one of the most comprehensive instruments available. This is because it assesses the direction of information flow, the formal and informal channels of communication flow, and relationships with various members of the organization, and the forms of communication. Downs and Hazen\(^{187}\) (1979) stated that it is possible that the various dimensions of communication satisfaction can provide a barometer of organizational functioning, and the concept of communication satisfaction can be an useful tool in an audit or organizational communication. Apart from Downs, Hecht developed the other communication satisfaction questionnaire.

The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (ComSat) was developed with discussions with other ICA members. Though it is considered as less comprehensive it offers both an efficient and a comprehensive approach to auditing the communication practices of organizations. The questions on the ComSat were selected on the basis of factor analysis out of an original pool of many questions. Factor analysis is a statistical technique that combines into clusters those questions that seem to be measuring the same phenomena. Composed of only 60 items, the ComSat has proved to be easy and quick to administer while being remarkably thorough in covering a variety of communication practices that range from personal feedback to corporate-wide communications.

\(^{187}\) Downs cal w& Hazen MD, 1977, A factor analytical study of communication satisfaction, Journal of Business communication
Hecht\textsuperscript{188} (1978) another popular researcher in the area of communication reviewed various instruments used to assess communication satisfaction and was quite critical of most approaches used to measure communication satisfaction. Downs and Hazen\textsuperscript{189} (1977) developed an instrument with which they have identified eight factors of communication satisfaction, viz. Communication Climate, Communication with Superiors, Organizational Integration, Media Quality, Horizontal Informal Communication, General Organizational Perspective, Communication with Subordinates and Personal feedback

**Satisfaction with Communication Climate**

This factor reveals data on both the organizational and personal level. In an organizational context, it reflects satisfaction with such items as the extent to which communication in the organization motivates and stimulates workers to meet organizational goals and the extent to which attitudes toward communication are perceived to be basically healthy. In the personal front, it includes items such as the extent to which superiors know and understand the problems faced by subordinates.

**Satisfaction with Superiors**

This factor collects information on upward and downward dimensions of communication with superiors. Three of the principle items include the extent to

---

\textsuperscript{188} Downs CW, 1977. The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, Readings in interpersonal and organizational communication, Holbrook press, Boston

\textsuperscript{189} Assessing organizational communications, Cal W Downs, Guilford press, New York, 2004
which a superior listens and pays attention when an employee talks, and the extent to which a supervisor offers guidance for solving job related problems.

6.7.3 Satisfaction with Organizational Integration

Under this factor information is generated about the satisfaction of individuals in an organization with the news that they receive about the organization such as departmental policies and plans, requirements of one's job, personnel news and the immediate work environment.

Satisfaction with Media Quality

The factors studied here reflect the degree to which employees perceive major forms of company media such as meetings, written directives, organizational publications and the amount of communication in the organization that are functioning effectively.

Satisfaction with Horizontal and Informal Communication

This factor reflects items relating to horizontal communication and informal communication, viz. the extent to which the grapevine is active. In other words it is to assess the extent to which horizontal communication and informal communication is accurate and free flowing.

6.7.6 Satisfaction with General Organizational Perspective

Items loading on this dimension reflect information relating to the overall functioning of the organization. Specific items reflect whether or not employees get information about government action affecting the organization, changes in the organization, company's financial standing, organizational policies and goals.
6.7.7 Satisfaction with Communication with Subordinates

It focuses on both upward and downward communication with subordinates. Items reflect such aspects such as the extent to which subordinates are responsive to downward communication, the extent to which they feel responsible for initiating upward communication and the degree to which the manager feels he has a communication overload.

6.7.8 Satisfaction with Personal Feedback

It is one of the strongest dimensions because workers in general have a need to know how they are being judged and how their performance is being appraised.

However the CSQ is not without criticism. The following are some of them:

1. Most of the questions have conceptual bend toward the communication behaviors of others. However, the relatively few items that ask for self-evaluation of communication tend to have an upward bias. Having a data bank available for comparison can to some extent alleviate this difficulty.

2. The original survey did not contain any specific items about interdepartmental communication. Analyses of the open-ended questions have revealed this to be a prevalent problem in many organizations.
6.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRENT STUDY

Research consistently supports the link between communication and job satisfaction and Cal W Downs\textsuperscript{190} had found that the benefits of good internal communication included greater productivity, less absenteeism, increased levels of innovation and supportive positive organizational change.

Administrative decisions can be effectively made if an organization has information on perceived satisfaction and importance of selected aspects of tasks. Further information on relationships among employees and tasks performed may provide an excellent data-base in the decision making process.

For example, such information may identify educational needs of personnel, areas of conflict to be resolved and changes needed in areas considered important to the personnel. Further a study of communication satisfaction can also reveal areas of success defined by the organization per-se, such as, excellence in comparative performance, which may be appropriately recognized and rewarded. This in turn may help an employee to become a limited achiever for the role defined. There is some evidence that job satisfaction and successful communications have been associated with labor management relations, productivity, and profit; all are desirable management goals in most organizations.

In the context of job satisfaction among teachers, communication is the bye-word. Therein, the system generally being a closely defined organization, this aspect of the importance of communication satisfaction need not be underscored as has been

\textsuperscript{190} Assessing organizational communications, Cal W Downs, Guilford press, New York. 2004
Downs CW, 1977, The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, Readings in interpersonal and organizational communication, Hohbrook press, Boston
defined for in the foregoing paragraphs for any organization at large. In the educational context, these concepts have been related to teacher’s satisfaction in the job, turnover and retention.

The purpose of this communication satisfaction study is to determine the degree to which employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with the communication and interpersonal relationships existing among peers, supervisors, administrators and others. It also provides information about the degree of importance the personnel attach to these factors, thus identifying and prioritizing areas needing attention.

6.9 DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CURRENT STUDY

The Questionnaire used in this study consists of 10 items which respondents are asked to rate on Likert scales on their degree of perceived satisfaction-dissatisfaction and importance-unimportance about communication related issues. The questionnaire was derived from the initial efforts of Downs and Hazen (1977).

6.10 COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION

There is an emerging trend in developing comprehensive procedures for auditing communication in organizations, which takes into account different communication variables and strategies for contributing towards achievement of organizational goals. Likert,\(^{191}\) for example, conceptualized a causal sequence in which he studied three dimensions namely causal, intervening and end result. Communication in this chain

\(^{191}\) Downs CW, 1977. The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, Readings in interpersonal and organizational communication, Holbrook press, Boston
was seen as an intervening variable that leads to any of the following four end results:

1. Productivity
2. Satisfaction
3. Labor-management relations
4. Profit.

The causal variables refer to independent variables, which determine the course of developments within the organization and the results achieved by the organization. These variables are alterable variables such as management policies, skills, behavior etc. The intervening variables reflect the internal state and health of the organization. Finally the end result variables are the dependent variables, which reflect the achievement of the organization, such as, production, image, sales etc. This particular study is designed to explore the relationships between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has been a matter of concern in the field of communication for quite some time. Communication scholars as well as practitioners have this interest because higher quality performance and the greater satisfaction of employees can lead to a better corporate culture and greater success in the organization. Each particular area is considered individually because when each different definition is crystallized, more significant conclusions can be drawn. Focusing on job satisfaction is desired because examining this concept is important in understanding how employees act and feel in the workplace. Organizations give importance to good communication skills and feel
they are essential for all employees. This relationship between communication and 
satisfaction has made employers concentrate more on communication aspects related 
to the employees in the workplace for achieving greater success in their enterprise.

Communication satisfaction in the organizational setting has gained importance in 
research because employers want employees to be efficient communicators so they 
can perform their job well, and it enables employers to know whether employees are 
satisfied while working making the organization a more optimal workplace. 
Organizational communication scholars have analyzed the theory of communication 
satisfaction to reflect on employees' attitudes.

Thayer\textsuperscript{192} defined communication satisfaction as 'The personal satisfaction inherent in 
successfully communicating to someone or in successfully being communicated 
with'. While some of the scholars have included both the components such as 
message-receiving and message-initiating activities; others considered only one of 
these. The summary of amalgamated aspects of communication satisfaction collated 
from these researches is as enumerated below:-

1. Explanation of policies, in answer to employee queries.

2. Understanding of what is expected of one with regard to job performance.

3. Advance notice of changes, through official sources.

4. Freedom to make suggestions to superiors.

\textsuperscript{192} Downs CW, 1977, The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, 
Readings in interpersonal and organizational communication, Holbrook press, Boston
5. Adequacy of information on those company matters regarded by the receiver as relevant to him.

6. Extent to which important information is obtained from sources or media preferred by the receiver.

7. Freedom to make complaints, to "sound off."

8. Accessibility or approachability of superiors.

9. Degree to which supervisor makes an effort to understand feelings and problems of subordinates.

10. Degree to which supervisors express appreciation of good performance by subordinates.

11. Degree to which higher officers or managements are open and willing to initiate communication.

From the above discussions, the researcher can confidently define communication satisfaction as 'The organizational members' perceived level of satisfaction with respect to communicating with their superiors, peers and subordinates'.

**6.11 THE COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION RELATIONSHIPS**

The message exchange in an organization takes place in an affiliation milieu. This interaction among the members of an organization gains importance in the study of communication satisfaction since positive relationships strengthen communication while negative relationships inhibit communication. The type of the relationship
between members can affect the response to any message. Hence the communication satisfaction study has to be subdivided for various types/strata of relationships. These are as elaborated below:

6.11.1 Relationship with Colleagues

Teamwork forms an integral part of an organization. Colleagues are the co-members or equal counterparts of an organization with whom an employee must interact with on a daily basis for clearing his doubts or concerns before approaching their supervisors. Research has proved that this relationship can affect job satisfaction. Further strained relationships are a cause of concern and leads to an unhealthy organization. On the personal front employees spend most of their work time only with their colleagues thus making this as an important variable in the study of communication satisfaction to explore whether the co-workers help or hinder job and communication satisfaction. Therefore, if it is required to improve organizational communication in a school setting, it is essential to assess the relationships among teachers in a school.

The communication satisfaction questionnaire used in this study measures the teacher’s perception about the communication occurring within the school. The analytic test exemplifies an individual’s satisfaction with information flow and relationship variables.

6.11.2 Relationship with Supervisors

Satisfaction of the employee in communicating with the supervisor is a crucial point in deciding how satisfied the employee is with the job because it makes their job much smoother. An inattentive supervisor can make the employee’s job insignificant.
For most employees, their supervisors are structurally the most important communication links in the organization and therefore, relationships between supervisors and subordinates is a key issue in any audit.

Such interaction can be analyzed from three broad contexts. These are:

6.11.2.1 Interpersonal trust

This variable influences the quality, level, content and directionality of communication and determines the level of credibility the employee has on his supervisor. Lack of trust is invariably rooted in some difficulties with communication. The level of trust forms a key indicator of communication effectiveness and identifies the communication strengths and weaknesses of the organization.

6.11.2.2 Upward communication

The supervisor-employee relationship determines the standard of upward communication. An open climate promotes upward communication while a closed one limits it.

6.11.2.3 Communication style

Communication style or the way by which the supervisor communicates affects his or her relationship with employees. While a few supervisors believe in providing only the broad framework and omit all the details; others value the details and rarely make connections between those details and larger issues. Some supervisors place an emphasis on presenting information with all the supporting evidence while others are particularly sensitive to the human issues
that arise from any communication. The relevance of these styles comes in the interaction of people at work with different styles. Hence it is imperative that the communication satisfaction study must measure the response of each style since what is effective with one group of subordinates may not be effective with a different group.

6.11.3 Upper Management or the Principal

The upper management or in the context of this study the Principal of the school can play an influential role in deciding policies for the workplace making it a crucial variable in the study of communication satisfaction. A communication audit will not be complete without evaluating the perceived communication satisfaction of employees with their job as a whole and with his or her upper management.

The goal of achieving communication satisfaction can be met only by developing a balance between the correct amount of communication and the quality of communication. The relationships between the upper management and employees profoundly affect the organization's communicative health and these relationships often set the tone for the rest of the organization. Upper management need to focus more precisely on what forms of communication can actually be more effective as both the supervisor and the upper management influence the communication satisfaction of employees.

More significantly organizations succeed by a coordinated approach. This is possible when both employees and upper management equally appreciate the importance of interdepartmental communication. One of the highest priorities of an organization must be to improve interdepartmental communication for the sake of remaining
competitive and effective. It is absolutely essential that the members of an organization have knowledge of what others are doing or capable of doing in order to innovate or create something new to improve upon current standards.

6.12 COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

Organizations exist to accomplish specific outcomes and the role that communication plays in this context is significant. The specific outcomes are satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. The degree of achievement of each one of them is an important standard for judging the adequacy of the communication system.

6.12.1 Communication and Satisfaction.

In the context of education, the school management would place great value in satisfaction because a dissatisfied teacher is a highly negative influence all over. Further he or she may tend to leave, and replacing them can be expensive. Hence, the upper management would wish to maintain a general level of satisfaction and morale, at least among efficient teachers. The communication satisfaction study can proactively discover potential problems by discovering what satisfies people and what does not, though employees may become dissatisfied with procedures that enhance productivity. The communication satisfaction questionnaire has sought to relate communication to job satisfaction. According to Downs\textsuperscript{193} though different techniques have been used, three communication factors seem strongly related to

\textsuperscript{193} Downs CW, 1977, The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, Readings in interpersonal and organizational communication, Holbrook press, Boston
satisfaction: personal feedback, communication climate and supervisory communication.

6.12.2 Communication and Productivity

The relationship between communication and productivity seems evident though the research in this area has been limited and there have been contradictory reports that have suggested that increasing job satisfaction does not always produce a related increase in productivity. Indeed, in some cases productivity can actually decrease.

According to the data collected by Cal W Down, employees perceive each of the communication satisfaction factors to have an impact on productivity, though there are certain factors that have greater impact than the others. The personal feedback dimension had a significant effect on productivity in both companies studied; whereas horizontal communication, media quality, and corporate information had a relatively lower impact on productivity. In sum, the data seems to suggest that the perceived relationship between communication and productivity is strong and concrete.

The implication of research trends is fairly clear and various communication satisfaction dimensions are related to job satisfaction and productivity in different ways. A tactic designed to increase employee satisfaction may have no perceived impact on productivity. When a plan is made to primarily support productivity it may create problems with job satisfaction variables. Hence when an organization uses communication satisfaction to make amends it should carefully focus on the end product variables with which the organization is most concerned.

Though the link is sometimes hard to measure, there is considerable evidence that communication can be directly related to productivity. Some times the relationship
may seem less obvious and more indirect because so many complex variables affect productivity. The management has often described ineffective communication as an important reason for lagging productivity. An organizational emphasis on communication has been credited with increasing productivity, increasing worker responsibility, and permitting even a struggling company to survive. Several case studies actually demonstrate how effective communication can improve productivity.

A communication satisfaction study must be cautious to avoid formulating cause and effect relations too rigidly. Work processes depend on complex interrelations of communication, employee motivation and performance, availability of raw materials, organizational design as well as the economic climate. Because communication is just one of many variables affecting productivity, one needs to be careful before claiming that a given communication phenomenon always affects productivity in a certain manner.

6.12.3 Organizational Commitment

A major thrust has been made in recent years to determine how the dimensions of communication satisfaction relate to organizational commitment. An era of seemingly constant change, reorganization, downsizing and redesigning by organizations may be resulting in an “erosion of corporate loyalty”. Organizations are concerned about this problem. Integrative communication function plays a strong role in whether employees remain at work. Some people might infer that it is this strong informal connection that fosters commitment. Past studies have shown positive relationship between organizational commitment and communication satisfaction through
correlation and regression analysis. But all theses analysis has suggested that understanding individual differences in an organization is more important.

Producing important organizational outcomes is the primary task of management. Understanding how an organization's internal processes relate to those outcomes has been a challenge for managers and for organizational scientists. Indeed, communication from top management plays the strongest role in determining commitment. On one level, that result might seem counterintuitive. After all, communication from top management sounds removed from the daily work lives of most employees. Still, top management communicates the organization's identity and vision; it affects how people visualize the organization and what it stands for. It is not surprising, then, that such communication could affect whether or not people internalize the organization's values and choose to commit to it.

While many investigations have focused on the ways that organizational processes relate either to organizational productivity or job satisfaction (Downs, Clampitt, & Laird, 1985)194, a growing emphasis focuses on the organizational commitment of employees. Commitment is important because loyal employees who identify closely with the organization are seen as an organization's most important resources.

Committed employees do not leave their jobs thus increasing productivity and reduced costs. Becker (1960) and Etzioni 195(1961) pioneered research on commitment and attempted to identify its dimensions.

The studies were designed to explore two questions:-

195 Assessing organizational communications, Cal W Downs, Guilford press, New York, 2004
1. What is the relationship between communication satisfaction and organizational commitment?, and

2. How do those links vary across organizations in different countries?

The results of these studies give us a clearer answer to the first question than the second one.

First, satisfaction with dimensions of communication is significantly related to organizational commitment. Second, the regressions reveal that the links between communication and commitment vary considerably. Third, despite the variability among organizations, results across the organizations show that the most frequent communication of commitment are Satisfaction with Relationship with Supervisor, Horizontal Communication, Communication Climate, and Top Management Communication.

Just as there are multiple measures of productivity, there are also multiple measures of organizational commitment. Most definitions include some sense that employees are involved and loyal to the organization. Barge and Schlueter\(^{196}\) (1988) evaluated four instruments that researchers have used to measure commitment. Choosing one of these common instruments has the advantage of allowing auditors to make comparisons with findings in other organizations.

Because each instrument defines commitment differently, the survey instrument choice has an impact on auditors' findings. For instance, communication's relationship with the commitment component labeled 'internalization' may be different than it is with the component part labeled 'normative commitment'. Choices

\(^{196}\) Assessing organizational communications, Cal W Downs, Guilford press, New York, 2004
should be made carefully as auditors keep in mind the organizational questions they are exploring.

6.13 CONCLUSION

To summarize, Communication has many roles and functions, and its different characteristics – for example, frequency, quality, and so on - which can be measured. The requirement is however a through analysis of communication effectiveness in general. Therefore what is required here is a comprehensive impression of the organization and such a general overview is described in terms of a communication climate or an organizational culture. The concepts above reflect an attempt to discover those stable communicative characteristics of the environment, whether or not created purposefully by the organization.

There is a strong need for clear and effective communication in an organizational situation. Communication Audits have a significant heritage. In the context of this research, enhancement of teacher’s satisfaction is of high priority for every school because working cannot be perceived as a negative environment and higher communication satisfaction leads to greater job satisfaction. Communication satisfaction has deep roots in a firm developmental process and is to be utilized in different organizational settings. Every organization needs to understand the importance of communication satisfaction and the specific variables that increase or decrease the creation of a better organizational environment.