CHAPTER XI
CONCEPTS AND VIEWPOINTS OF COMMUNICATION IN MANAGEMENT
— A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

SYNOPSIS

* Introduction
* Review of Literature on Communication
* Definitions: The Concept
* Elements of Communication input-output system
  (a) Source, objective and intent of communication
  (b) Communicator's message
  (c) Processing
  (d) Language and media
  (e) Capacity (to hold the attention of the recipient)
  (f) Communicatee's reception
  (g) Evaluation of the message and feedback
* Communication effectiveness and climate.

Introduction: As a social organisation to-day's business corporations are a collection of different social groups. They are put in different work stations/functions in the organisation. These functions are to be co-ordinated
and the work groups are to be knitted together in order to assist management to take effective decisions. This is possible only through a smooth flow of communication throughout the length and breadth of the organisation. Such flow of communication is towards directing the workforce regarding the objectives, policies etc., of the enterprise so that they may be implemented by them.

In the absence of communication people in an enterprise would be groping into darkness. Further, the whole operational activities of an enterprise are taking place through the interaction between individuals in an organisation. According to John Dewey "failure to acknowledge the presence and operation of natural interaction in the form of communication creates the gulf between existence and essence and that gulf is factitious and gratuitious."¹ As such, the responsibility to identify the communication needs of individuals in their social interaction so as to make them achieve the goals of the enterprises is bestowed on those management.

Review of Literature on Communication: From the above observation it is clear that communication is the means through which activities of many individuals are knitted together in organisations. It helps achieve human goals
through modification of human behaviour and effecting change wherever necessary by providing information for performing the activities of corporations. As far as corporate managements are concerned, communication as a subject is linked with industrial relations and personnel management although it embodies much more in maintaining satisfactory behavioural relationships among the employees. Harold Koontz and Cyril O'donnell have rightly stated that "in all the attention given to communication during the past decades, the subject of responsibility for information transfer has largely been ignored."²

As a pioneer, it was Chester I. Barnard who gave serious attention to communication in management literature. He viewed it as the means by which people were linked together in organisations to achieve a common purpose. Even now it is viewed as the fundamental function. He observed that in the absence of transfer of information — communication — group activity was impossible and without it co-ordination and change could not be effected.

Prior to Barnard's contribution, any reference to communication was confined to 'vocabulary' and 'writing skills'. This was conspicuous from the writings of
Associating the communication function with organisational groups it is also termed as 'Organisational communication'. Here too, Chester I. Barnard has taken credit for linking it with groups and organisations early in 1938. Following his footprints A. Bevalas, Leavitt and Mueller, and Whyte gave more emphasis on the structure, channels and networks of communication in organisations.

But, Howard H. Greenbaum has defined Organisational communication as "a system in terms of purpose, operational procedures and structure. The purpose of organisational communication is to facilitate primarily the achievement of organisational goals. The operational procedures involve the utilisation of functional communication network related to organisational goals and the structure includes the organisational unit, functional communication network, communication policies and communication activities."
Not much importance was given to communication in human relations approach until the Hawthorne experiments, at the Western Electric Company of Chicago, were undertaken by F. Roethlisberger and Elton Mayo. Later, Pigors and Myers have stressed upon (a) communication between top management and the first line employees/workers and (b) the problems of co-operation of groups and co-ordination between functions.

However, they have noticed that the focus was on employees' handbooks as a medium of communication. Again, while Dale Yoder also has laid emphasis on employees' handbooks, house bulletins etc., during the same period, Heron A.R. has discussed the need for sharing of information by management with employees. Probably, this has paved the way to the modern slogan of 'Industrial Democracy' and 'Participative management.' In this context Fillippetti has stated that the problems of communication were absent in the literature on Scientific Management from the days of F.W. Taylor to the period of World War II. The problems of communication affect the effectiveness of communication and at the end the managerial decisions. This is due to the attitudes of the parties of communication. Douglas McGregor has developed his concepts of Theory X and Theory Y by
focussing upon the values attached to the attitudes of individuals. Though he has not specifically mentioned much about communication and its related problems, he did feel that it was more prevalent in Theory X people than in Theory Y people.

Rensis Likert has found that in a flat organisational system, organisational communication was referred to a variety of different kinds of activities and some of these were casual and some of these were intervening. This has laid more emphasis on horizontal communication in spite of the fact that he has given more stress on superior-subordinate communication.

Katz and Khan, integrating the organisational environment with group dynamics concept in an open system approach, have observed that every organisational (communication) environment was dependent upon certain inputs and outputs so as to make it viable. These inputs and outputs contained not only men, machine etc., but also information, which entwined the entire functions of the organisational system as a whole.

However, communication as an open system has failed to tell as to how information flows in an organisation.
behaviour Rekha Agarwala has found that "communication is the transmission of ideas from a source to a receiver with the intendent of changing his behaviour; every step of management process is heavily dependent on communication."22

The decade of 1960's witnessed the influence of psychotherapy in the field of communication. Eric Berne developed the concept of Transactional Analysis.23 It was based on the interaction between individuals and there are 'transactions' and 'Ego states'. In a corporate management environment this approach has facilitated the introduction of psychotherapeutic approach in studying the interaction of managers with their subordinates as well as peer level executives. The different 'Ego states' viz., Parent, Adult and Child have enabled individuals to make their 'Ego states' modified their personality and created an awareness of giving a desirable change to them. This concept holds good even now in all walks of life.

Definition: The Concept: From the review of literature on communication analysed above it is found that communication is an interactive behaviour among individuals where one tries to change the behaviour of the other. The
communicator is having a motive while communicating with the communicatee. In the organisational environment of a business enterprise the managers expect that their subordinates are involving themselves in executing their instructions.

Communication is viewed by Eric Moonman "as the capacity of an individual or group to convey ideas and feelings to another individual or group and where necessary to evoke a discriminating response." In the corporate environment the managers' responsibilities commence from giving proper directions regarding job instructions, procedures etc., to evaluating the performance. In the absence of such a communication, the expected result would not be achieved. Fred Luthen has felt that "a communication system that only gives specific directions and organisational procedures and that fails to provide information about job performance or rationale — ideological information about the job — has a negative impact."

In practice, communication involves more than just verbal expressions. Bodily — physical — movements, eye-contact etc., are all important forms of communication. Employees are always able to understand the temperaments of their supervisors and managers on the basis of their non-verbal communication. Glenn A. Bassatt, in one of his
research studies has observed that "employees learn to choose their words based on whether the boss lean forward toward them or rocks back from them in his chair. Indeed the boss whether he knows it or not is constantly training employees to say one thing or not to say another by means of body language." Before verbal communication, man used non-verbal language only in order to interact with others by means of physical movements -- gestures.

Ithal De Sola Pool has stated that verbal communication is in existence for 5,00,000 years and writing for 4,000 years and they have become a natural course of human interaction as heart is to a human body. Yet, even, the ability to read was confined to a small educated elite virtually everywhere -- as recently as 200 years ago and it is still so in many parts of the world. Although the whole world has emerged in the computer age, the role of non-verbal communication has not lessened. According to Gordon B. Warnright "the new approach towards prodecms offers managers who spend a large part of their time dealing with people -- a means of improving their performance."28

In practice, managers have much interaction with their subordinates by spending a lion's share their precious time on communication in one way or other. Dr. Copeman,
H. Luijk and F. De P. Hanika have stated that "the chief executive spends under 20 percent and departmental executive 25 percent of their time on creative work the rest of the work time being engaged on communication in one way or other." The significance of their observations is that the lion's share of the executives' time, though not directly productive by itself, is spent in directing others' work creatively and productively. This also means, if executives improve their skill in communication to bring down the time spent on it considerably, they can spend more time on creative work by themselves also.

Moreover, the communication that is taking place between managers and subordinates through verbal and non-verbal media does help their taking effective decisions, and maintaining harmonious relationship between them in the work environment.

This researcher has found in this research study that by communication all the executives and subordinates have understood merely the oral and written communication only -- synonymous to transmission of information -- both within the organisation and to and from outside. And, in very many cases, many executives have meant it to media/channel of communication, used in the transfer of
information between different parts/levels of the hierarchy in the organisation. In fact, they recognised no difference between behavioural impact on communication and information transmission throughout the organisational set up.

This has been observed by an earlier research study by Kamal Kishore when he found communication as a "systematic procedure of checking whether or not informations are reaching in time and whether the messages communicated have been really communicated."\(^{30}\) He also attempted to find out how the different levels of employees are getting information and how much behavioural impact was on either receipt or despatch of the same from the respondents.\(^{31}\)

To add pepper to this contention, he identified the twin aspects of communication system viz., 'information aspect' and 'emotional aspect', although it has not given any suggestion regarding the latter.\(^{32}\)

In another study by P.G. Agarwal the media/channel of communication was interpreted as communication through formal and informal channels without much emphasis on the behavioural aspect except to the response of the media at various hierarchical levels.\(^{33}\) Sushil Seighal has noted communication as the flow of information in the hierarchical structure with inter-personal perception and job perception and their levels of group like High, Low and Middle.
Therefore, it appears that all the major studies so far have focused more on the information content of communication and not much on the behavioural impact as well as aspect of communication.

The information aspect of communication which includes both verbal and non-verbal areas are not discounted nor underestimated here. They are certainly the dominating features in the communication arena of the managerial-subordinates behaviour. However, it is equally felt that its behavioural aspects and implications also need due importance. Rather, the non-verbal areas of communication, at times, become a cause for the breakdown of the behaviour of subordinates, of course, the cause being not necessarily from within the organisation.

This is illustrated through a brief reference to a case situation discussed below:

XYZ Co., Limited, a chemical factory had its Head Quarters at Baroda. It had their manufacturing units in several parts of the country. It was the usual practice in that company to receive unsolicited quotations from many suppliers on their own accord. The function of analysing the quotations offered by different suppliers was done by the Chief Engineer(Operations).
The company wanted to procure certain materials and so they placed an order to that offeror (who sent his unsolicited quotation) on the basis of the quotation received from him earlier. That particular supplier thanked the company immediately; but did not pursue further for the execution of the order till the stipulated time. The chemical company feared that the non-receipt of supplies from that specific supplier (offeror) would adversely affect its production. Hence, it procured it from another source to continue production.

After some time the former offeror wrote a letter asking for the confirmation of their (the chemical company's) order. The manager advised the concerned assistant to reply (through an endorsement in the letter received from the offeror) that they had procured the materials from elsewhere because of their long silence. Having seen this message the assistant got irritated and vehemently criticised the offeror (vendor) and even suggested blacklisting his firm from their Vendor list.

Even though this was a bitter experience, the manager wanted to maintain good relationship with them. He felt that any adverse communication to them should not affect any possible future trading with them due to critical supply position, if any, that might arise in future. The assistant was not able to see the proposition eye-to-eye
with the manager. Nor was he able to reconcile himself with the attitude of the manager in his materials forecasting under anticipated critical and uncertain conditions.

In those circumstances such a provocative and offensive behaviour of a subordinate was caused not because of any internal environment but from a written communication from another business enterprise, of course, having relevance and connection to the company.

In such a situation both the manager and his assistant believed that the systems and procedures established both inside and outside the respective organisations would be scrupulously and strictly followed by all.

Both the companies have made 'expectation approach' in communication relationship between them. But usually, the difficulties and conflicts arise when one perceive from his 'self'/'personal' point of view, and the other from the organisational goals point of view. This can be illustrated through the following chart.
CHART I

From the above chart, it may be observed that in the personal relationship both managers and subordinates are expected to have an understanding between them towards goal achievement through expectation communication (i.e., both will see eye-to-eye each other). In many cases this is achieved through an informal relationship between them. But, as far as the organisational goal is concerned, the same relationship is converted into a formal one. The managers' authority is aimed at the total organisational goal in such a situation. In these circumstances, when the managers and subordinates are
having 'expectation communication' through their own 'self' point of view conflicts and confrontations take place. Soon it results either in breakdown or failure of communication, unless efforts are taken immediately to rectify such a situation.

From the above analysis, this research scholar has felt that the definitions of communication discussed, have a snag in one way or other. Hence, he has attempted to define communication "as management of people in a work environment, where they prevail upon interactive behaviour between them with a motive and intent through the length and breadth of the organisation by which each one wishes to create a responsive behaviour from the other through effective feedback in order to achieve the goals of the enterprise."

**Elements of Communication input-output system:** Whatever be the media — verbal or non-verbal — a management communication system is having the following communication input-out system which is shown in chart II.

**A Source, Objective and Intent of Communication:** In a business situation the source for communication is from the managers of different departments in the organisational hierarchy. They must have an objective and an intention to transmit
CHART II

COMMUNICATION INPUT

SOURCE OBJECTIVE AND INTENT

RECEIVED MESSAGE CONTENT

PROCESSING ADDITION/REMOVAL OF MESSAGE

MEDIA CHANNEL ORAL/WITTEN ETC.

COMMUNICATION OUTPUT

HOLDING COMMUNICATEE'S ATTENTION

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND EVALUATION OF THE MESSAGES RECEIVED

RESPONSE POSITIVE/NEGATIVE

COMMUNICATION INPUT-OUTPUT SYSTEM
it to the receivers — their subordinates. According to Robert D. Breth in the managerial-subordinate relationship "it originates in a state of mind or 'intent' which management wishes a group of people such as departmental employee to share. Since human relations and communication are inseparable this same intent becomes the first link in the chain of communication by which human relationship are established."36

As far as managements are concerned their intent to any policy originated or initiated by them should aim at creating mutual benefit to the respondents to whom it is aimed at. Should it fail to create such a response, it will result in a behavioural change, and the favourable climate to managements, would become remote. This is the starting point for rift between the managers and employees in any level of the organisation. Robert D. Breth added further that "the difficulty encountered in bringing about the behaviour change is directly proportionate to the benefit to the benefit which accrues to the recipient in making the change."37

B. Communicators' message: The communicators should communicate the message to the intended recipients with a definite objective so that the latter may respond to the message. The 'content' of the message should be complete, concise and
courteous, else, the whole objective would be defeated.

C. Processing: The communicators process the message in order to create the expected response from the communicatees. The processing is done either by addition or filtration of the content of the message so that the recipient would respond to the communication.

D. Language and Media: Language gives an individual the ability to organise his thoughts. Samuel Johnson said that language is the only instrument of science and words are but signs of ideas. The whole network of communication system depends upon the ability of the communicators(as stated below in E) in using the language and the ability of the communicatees in receiving and understanding it.

E. Capacity (to hold the attention of the recipients): It is the capacity of the communicators to create response is given more emphasis since the effectiveness of communication depends upon their skill in transmitting the information in an appropriate manner. The more the communicatees are having attention to the 'content' of the messages, the more the communicators are said to have the capacity to create effectiveness.
F. Communication reception: It is true that the receptive value of the communicatees depend much upon the capacity of the communicators to hold the former's attention towards the message. But, it equally depends upon the attitude of the communicators also, on the one hand, and the physical environment in which the communication is received by them on the other. Should the communicatees belong to Douglas McGregor’s Theory X category, all the efforts taken by the communicators to hold the former would be futile and consequently the communication become ineffective. On the other hand, if the physical environment is the cause — say, much noise, poor lighting, ventilation, etc., the communicatees may find it difficult to respond to the information transmitted to them. In either case, if the communicatees are a Theory X persons, they may not respond as expected by the communicators. If they are Theory Y persons, they may take effort, in spite of the poor physical environment, to receive the communication and try to respond to it according to the expectation of the communicators.

G. Evaluation of the message and feed back: The communicatees analyse, interpret and evaluate the subject-matter of the message. They form opinions thereon and decide if they have to react to the communication by responding to the communicators. It may be positive response or negative response.
Equally communicators also cannot sit cross-legged once the message is sent to the communicates/recipients with complacency. It is needless to say that communication is a two-way traffic in the organisation street. In fact, it is absolutely necessary to the communicators to have a follow up over the message sent to the receivers and await feedback. Where the content of a message is not clear and failed to create expected response from the communicatees, the communicators wish that the subject is again feed back to them by the former for clarification. Thus, it is evident that the success of any communication wholly depends upon the feed back from the recipients of communication.

**Communication effectiveness and climate:** The present age is called the 'Age of Paper' and without written communication, as we observe now, no office can survive. Here also, the effectiveness depends upon the words, which, compared with speech, may rather be clumsy, lengthy and slow. Hence, it is appropriate to emphasis at this point that when written communication is not effective due to difficulty in choosing appropriate words to express, facial expressions, gestures, symbols and signals also play the role of communication which are called 'para language.'
Oral communication may be made effective by changing the speed or pitch of speaking or added with gestures. Collin Cherry has found that signs such as frowns, smiles, tears etc., do not constitute part of human language but are signs evoked by a situation or environment. However, researches made in recent times by Non-verbal communication Research undertaken but Gorden R. Weinright have revealed that 'Kinesics' and 'Proxemics' also form part of non-verbal communication in human - interaction.

Managers, except in certain cases, use Kinesics through nodding of heads, increased eye-contacts etc., in their interaction with their subordinates. In some other cases, they exhibit proxemics by means of physical contact to express their appreciation or sympathy towards their subordinates. Another aspect is, according to Gorden R. Wainright, that U.K. Managers are not using proxemics much, whereas the managers in U.S. and Far Eastern countries are practising it in the usual course.

As such, it appears that kinesics and proximics are the forerunners for paternalistic management in Japanese business enterprises. It is based on the fundamental principle that everyone wishes to get kindness and sympathy from others irrespective of status or situation, and the work environment is no exception. This is more found in Indian Scene.
This researcher has noticed in this study that proxemics as understood now as a method of non-verbal communication has a greater impact in obtaining results from the work force. A pat on the back of an employee in appreciation of a work done by him or a touch with sympathy on his shoulder, when to say 'No' coupled with an explanation of reason for the inability of management to concede to his request if any, do have a positive result on the employee.

Not only that. Many executives expressed that they help maintain a good superior subordinate relationship in the organisational activity.

But, this is not used frequently. Some executives have expressed the view that some distance should be maintained between them so that the subordinates did not try to take undue advantage of the former's 'proximity.'

In these circumstances, where an individual has to be complemented, open appreciation is made verbally in the presence of his colleagues in the open offices. This also, equally, helps to improve the healthy superior—subordinate relationship. Executives, have belief in the dictum compliment openly and criticise privately.
Further, the middle-aged and near-to-retire executives, this researcher has found, are more liberal in communication—both in appreciation or in criticism. But not many of them resort to proxemics. On the other hand, young executives with higher qualifications and management training do not hesitate to apply proxemics freely to their subordinates. This aspect is analysed empirically in the chapter VII, dealing with behavioural aspects or communication.

Communication effectiveness and climate: Further modern corporations are flooded with more and more information to be shared at various levels, and consequently, effectiveness of communication becomes difficult, though a must. Usually in a communication situation, 'heterophilic' and 'homophilic' climate prevails, which influence the effectiveness of communication. According to W. Thomas Anderson Jr., and Mark I. Albert "the concept of homophil and heterophily are a bridge to achieving communication effectiveness, fidelity, and efficiency according to perceived inter-personal differences among participants in a communication interaction." 41

'Heterophily', essentially, refers to the differences between communication in terms of their values, beliefs, attitudes, personalities and the like. The 'heterophilic'
gap, thus, describes the extent to which communicator/s and receiver/s are perceived to be different in attributes which relate to communication effectiveness. 'Homophily' is the degree to which the source and the receiver in a communication interaction are perceived as similar in certain attributes "like beliefs, values, socio-economic status, occupational position, predispositional structure, education and so forth," so viewed W. Thomas Anderson Jr. and Mark I. Albert.

When communication is transmitted from different communicators to a receiver, there is every possibility that they have received it in different ways. In such cases, the effectiveness of any communication depends upon the fact that the (source) communicators and receivers perceive each other from the same angle; i.e., they are both on the same wavelength — on any critical issues of it. In that case, the attitudes, beliefs, social and cultural values, aspirations of both the parties of communication will be similar and identical and hence the effectiveness of communication will be very high.

The effectiveness of communication is looked upon as an aid and tool for better decision-making in an organisation. According to Jack R. Gibb, the problems of communication found in the communication process
which affect the effectiveness of decisions are normally found in nine categories and two approaches are made therefore viz: 'persuasive' and 'problem solving' as shown in the following Table 2.1:

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<tr>
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<th>The Persuasive approach</th>
<th>The Problems solving approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Remedial Programmes</td>
<td>1) Diagnosis and etiology</td>
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<td>2) Staff responsibility</td>
<td>2) Line responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Morale and hygiene</td>
<td>3) Work product and job requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Persuasion</td>
<td>4) Problems - solving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Control of communication flow</td>
<td>5) Trust and openness</td>
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<td>6) Verbal communication</td>
<td>6) Management Action</td>
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<td>7) One-way messages</td>
<td>7) Interaction and climate</td>
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<td>8) Knowledge and logic</td>
<td>8) Attitudes and Feelings</td>
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<td>9) Output and Telling</td>
<td>9) Input and listening</td>
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It is inferred from the above Table 2.1 that managers, by following persuasive approach in communication, aim at controlling the flow of communication through only one way usually downward and primarily and ultimately having an eye on output target. They do not lay much emphasis on
the human values i.e., the interactional behaviour of the workforce, and they are work and output centred. But, such a communicative behaviour of managers produce resistance, distrust, counter-persuasion, argument and even circumvention from the side of subordinates.

This is more relevant in today's knowledge society. The subordinates also are having equal qualifications often, in many cases, more than the supervisors and managers. They become highly provocative, perverted and distrusted towards the managements—here towards the managers and supervisors—who are looked at by them as the mouthpieces of managements. The knowledge-workers demand much more communication than that is transmitted to them. Once it is not provided, according to their expectations, (in content), they even turn violent. The subordinate employees and workers distrust the managers and feel that they try to get the work done against their wishes which they view as anti-labour. In fact, of late, employees are claiming participation in decision-process also. As Jack R. Gibb has rightly pointed out in his research studies that persuasive centred communication programmes are discouragingly ineffective in accomplishing management goals.44
While, this is the case in the Western industrialised society, in our country, the position seems to be different. This study has led the researcher to conclude that, where the superiors/managers, have sufficient authority and are closer to top management, persuasive communication by the managers are received by the subordinates without any protest or disagreement. (The empirical analysis with reference to this aspect is discussed in chapter VII when dealing with behavioural aspect of communication).

This is observed particularly in two categories Viz:

(1) As regard to less qualified subordinates with poor financial background, they wish to be in good books of their bosses so as to ensure their future promotional prospects in the organisation.

(2) As far as the highly qualified subordinates are concerned, in such a communication situation, often there are disagreements and disgruntlements among them. In these cases, however, the subordinates contain their conditions and pretend to exhibit positive/agreeable communication, even though, they are not bothered with their promotions etc.

In other cases, when there is a difference between managers and subordinates, argumentative upward counter-persuasive communication behaviour emerges from the latter towards the managers. When the managers find it difficult to convince and establish the expected communication behaviour from their subordinates, often they try to use aggressive persuasive
This, instead of showing the expected results, aggravates the disgruntlement among them and sometimes, develop into a cause for the breakdown of management-labour relationship too in organisations. In a persuasive communication situation, the managers do not allow feedback; there is only one way traffic in communication and that too downward only (as stated supra).

Henry Clay Lindergren has stated that "people who distrust and despise each other cannot communicate effectively ... Labour unions also hinder communication because they tend to emphasise the differences and de-emphasise the similarities between goals of labour and management." 45

On the other hand, managers with a problem-solving approach in communication behaviour understand the feelings and desires of their subordinates. In such cases, the subordinates express their opinions and suggestions freely. This approach, aims at creating an interactive climate among the members of the work group. They get all the relevant information with maximum openness in order to optimise the communication effectiveness. In the problem-solving communication situation, the managers open the gates of communication so that they are able to maintain
human relations with their subordinates. The interaction, in such work situation between managers and their subordinates is taking place under conditions of mutual trust and understanding, which enables them to maintain harmony in their groups. According to Richard C. Hussman, Elimore R. Alexander III, Charles J. Henry Jr., and Fred A. Benson "if the proper foundation of trust and openness has been laid, the informing and communicating change, should be a simple task. However, if this foundation is neglected the personnel managers' task at this point may become colossal."

From the above analysis, it is found that in a business environment communication may also be conceived, besides the definition suggested by this researcher earlier, as the lucid transmission of all relevant information from management to the employees or workers under conditions of mutual trust and understanding (free from any suspicion or distrust) in order to implement the business policies, procedures etc., to achieve the goals of the enterprise in particular and nation in general.

The effectiveness of this view of communication is largely based upon the different communication system and relationships prevailing throughout the organisational environment and this is discussed in the following chapter.
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