

" IMPROVING MANAGERIAL COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY IN
THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE, KENYA. "

by

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DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

This Management Project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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This Management Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out if there was need for improving managerial communication in the Ministry of Finance, Nairobi, Kenya. All thirteen heads of departments were interviewed.

The conclusion reached after analysing the data was that there was a great need for improving managerial communication in the Ministry of Finance. In order to improve the present poor level of managerial communication in the Ministry of Finance three steps were recommended.

The first step was to introduce auditing which would be helpful in identifying weaknesses and strengths of the present level of communication.

The second step was to adopt communication improvement programme so that the present poor level of managerial communication could be improved.

The third step was to set a clear communication policy which should facilitate easy communication with the level of organization-wide policies.

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter has examined the need of the study and the research methodology applied.

The second chapter has focussed on literature review relevant to the study.

The third chapter has presented the findings of the primary data of the research.

The fourth chapter has analysed the data of the findings of the primary data.

The last chapter has presented the summary of the study, its results, conclusion and recommendation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Effective Communication at all levels within an enterprise is essential to the achievement of efficiency and morale among the personnel of an organization. It is therefore of primary importance that every employee understands his/her duties and the manner in which the duties are to be accomplished. Further, it is important that he understands why he is doing something and how well he is doing it otherwise his motivation may decline with the result that grievances, accidents, waste, and other organizational problems are likely to arise.

The successful operation of a business is dependent not only upon the contributions of its individual members but also upon the co-operation and teamwork that exists among them. Thus the role of Communication in the development and functioning of the group structure deserves careful attention by management. At all levels in the organization among and between executives, managers, staff personnel, supervisors and foremen, and employees the Communication process is continuously in action conveying information, ideas, attitudes, and feelings among individuals and among groups. Communication is, therefore, often referred to as a network that binds all the members of an organization.

Communication is defined in this Project as "the process by which human beings transmit and receive information."¹

1 - Sanford C. Aubrey, et.al., "Communication Behaviour in Organizations," Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., Ohio, 1976, p. 4

Communication is a required skill at every level of organizational functioning for organization of all types. The effectiveness with which a person will be able to perform in almost any organization, whether social, governmental, or commercial, will depend in large measure upon the ability to communicate effectively.

Through Communication it is possible to share knowledge, combine efforts, and form organizations. Communication is a basic factor in organizations. There is hardly an aspect of organization that does not involve Communication. In a study carried out by Dale, it was found that, "top and middle level executives typically devote 60 to 80 percent of their total working hours to communicating."² Although many of the working hours in organizations are spent in Communication, organizations typically devote very little time to the development of Communication skills.

Organizations require interaction or Communication for existence. Therefore, it is logical that a better understanding of Communication will improve organizations. Further, it will be helpful to identify the most common malfunctions of communications and indicate how communication can be improved.

2 Dale, S. Beach, "Personnel: The Management of People at Work," Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1970, p. 580.

The importance of the study is as follows:-

- I. Communication is so important that it must be planned, controlled, and supported within and between members of working groups in ways that make sense to those individual members.
- II. This study will help managers in the Ministry of Finance to understand ways of improving managerial Communication.
- III. It may also help other interested public or private organizations to learn from the experience of managerial Communication of the Ministry of Finance.
- IV. This study will provide intellectuals with "food for thought" to appreciate and/or criticize improving managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance and incite their minds to come up with innovative ideas of managerial Communication.
- V. Communication can also serve as a source of guideline and point of reference for further research in the area.

Therefore, it is quite evident that there is a great need to find out means and ways of improving managerial Communication.

1.2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study are:-

- a. To evaluate the need for a new approach to managerial Communication.
- b. To investigate the methods of auditing Communications.
- c. To identify problems confronted by managers in improving Communication and forward solutions to those problems.

- d. To suggest guides for policy Communication to ensure that managers obtain the benefits such a system offers.

The study is limited to managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance. This study tries to show why and how Communication should be audited and then planned and controlled in such a way that it can be both efficient and effective.

1.3. METHOD OF STUDY AND ANALYSIS

The method of study that has been used in this research is that the relevant literature has been reviewed and primary data has been collected using an administered questionnaire.

The respondents are all the thirteen heads of departments of the Ministry of Finance in Nairobi, Kenya.

The method of analysis that is used in this study is the percentage which is a form of an "average".

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter has reviewed the relevant books, journals, and magazines on managerial communication in an organization. The chapter is divided into eight parts. The first section is on communication process which includes steps in Communication, avenues to understanding, models of organizational communication, information theory, interpersonal communication, and intra-personal communication.

The second section has reviewed Communication and organizational structure. This section has considered both the formal and the informal communication in an organization.

The third section has discussed the media of communication, which are classified under face-to-face communication and written communication.

The fourth section has dealt with the potential barriers to Communication, which consist of environmental factors, perception differences, status relationships, psychological climate of the organization, special groups and their effect, lack of definite plans, lack of clarity, and other mechanical barriers.

The fifth section has reviewed auditing communication, which includes aims of the communication audit, who will take the role of the communication auditor, determining membership and the size of the audit group, and assessing communication efficiency.

The sixth section has dealt on improving managerial communication, which includes a compulsory Management programme,

voluntary management programme, and planning the process of a communication Improvement programme.

The seventh section has discussed on Communication policy, which consists of who will have responsibility for specifying the appropriate contents within the data-base? Who will have the permission to analyse the contents of the data-base? Who will have responsibility to deal with conflict in respect of the contents of the data-base?, and who will provide planning advice?

Finally, the last section has analysed the secondary data with a conclusive remark.

2.1. THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The Communication process is one of the primary tools of management. Without the transmission of information, ideas, attitudes, and feelings - upward, downward and lateral - productivity and morale would soon suffer. It is essential, therefore, that managers at all levels understand the principles of effective communication and learn the skills that will enable them to communicate effectively. It should be recognized, however, that communication is the responsibility of managers in the organization. One's effectiveness as a manager, regardless of the job, is determined to some degree by his effectiveness in communicating with his superior, fellow managers, customers, subordinates, and others.

2.1.1. STEPS IN COMMUNICATION:- An analysis of the Communication process reveals that there are several steps. The first step is ideation by the sender. It represents the content of his message and is determined by his abilities and his objectives in the situation.

In the next step (encoding) the sender organizes his ideas into a series of symbols designed to communicate to his intended receiver(s). The sender selects suitable words or phrases that can be understood by the receiver and he also selects the appropriate medium to be used such as a memorandum or a conference.

The third step is transmission of the message as encoded through selected channels in the organizational structure.

The fourth step is where the receiver enters the process. The receiver tunes to receive his message. If it is oral he must be a good listener. If the receiver does not function, however, the message is lost. The fifth step is decoding, as for example, changing words into ideas. In this step the decoding may not agree with the idea that the sender originally encoded because of the difference in perceptions between the receiver and the sender as to the meaning of words or semantics. Finally, the receiver acts or responds. The sender may file the information, ask for more information, or take any other action.

There can be no assurance, however, that communication has taken place unless there is some type of feedback to the sender in the form of an acknowledgement that the message was received. It is desirable, therefore, that feedback be

considered as an essential step in planning communications in business. Similarly, common frame of reference which provides a common point of view for understanding improves the quality of Communication.³

On a typical working day the process described above occurs many times. The process is found in person-to-person communication, person-to-group communication, group-to-group communication, and organization-to-organization communication. A tally of all the attempts to communicate during a single working day would be almost incomprehensible in size if humanly possible to make. Such a tally would include every order given by a superior to a subordinate, all information passed back and forth between individuals whether written or spoken, as well as simple gestures conveying some type of message or understanding.

2.1.2. AVENUES TO UNDERSTANDING:- There are not only many items to be communicated in the typical business day but also several ways in which they may be communicated. Language, both oral and written, is what first comes to mind when one thinks about means of communication. However, the total process of communication reaches beyond language. It includes other avenues by which understandings or misunderstandings may occur and in most situations a combination of these avenues is operating.

- a) Speaking:- Oral communication is the most frequently used avenue of communication in business. This method has the advantage of speed and it provides an opportunity for immediate feedback that assures the sender that one is

communicating with the other party. Speech also involves less work than written communication, but the fact that one should attempt to organize what he is going to say and give some thought to how he is going to say it should not be overlooked. The wise speaker will also convey to his listeners that he is willing to listen to them.

The drawbacks of oral communication are that it does not always save time as any manager knows who has attended meetings in which no results were achieved. Committees may also be costly in terms of time and money.

b) Writing:- One of the important tools that a manager must possess is an effective skill of putting ideas into words. What the communicator is doing through the written word is getting across thoughts and making sure the recipient understands the message and accepts the intent of the message. The great difference between oral communication and the written communication is that there is no opportunity for the receiver of the letter to immediately ask questions, to look at the communicator, or to have the writer give an explanation of the meaning of the words in the letter.

The advantage of written communication is providing records, references and legal defences. The letter can be read by a large audience through distribution of mass mailings, can promote uniformity in policy and procedures.

The drawbacks of written communication are that letters create mountains of papers, the letters may be poorly expressed and they provide no immediate feedback.

c) Listening:- The most neglected avenue of communication is listening. Most of us feel that we are good listeners, but this usually means that we can remain passive and silent while the other fellow talks. Listening, however, is not a passive process; it requires action.

Literally, too many of us sit back and listen. This attitude may work well for music but one needs to take part in communication. A good listener's mind is alert. His face and posture usually reflect this fact. One may further show his interest by questions and comments which encourage the speaker to express his ideas fully.

It is only through this type of listening that understanding, the purpose of all communication may be achieved. Unfortunately, however, most people are not good listeners. One test using a fairly simple spoken message lasting only a few minutes and containing only two major points proved difficult for businessmen who were tested. The average could summarize only a third of the content. It is suggested that among the reasons for this poor showing is that few people have been trained to listen. Even with the recent trend toward instruction in the language arts or in communication skills, listening has not received the attention that is devoted to reading, writing, and speaking. However, several companies are attempting to improve listening by offering programmed instruction on listening.⁴

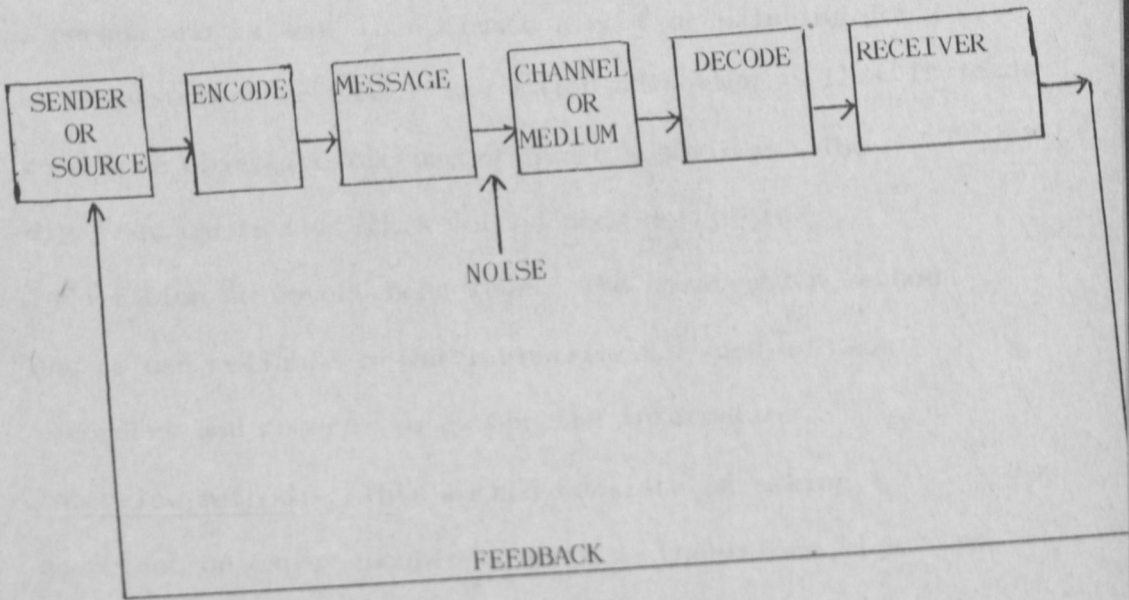
4 Lydia Strong, "Do you know how to listen", Effective Communication on the Job, (New York: American Management Ass., 1956) p. 26.

d). Non-verbal:- Speaking, writing, and listening are recognized as the common ways in which communication takes place. Equally important, however, is action or inaction. That is, employees are primarily influenced not by what management says but by what it does. In fact every behaviour of a superior has some influences on the subordinates who observe it. The interpretation that is given to the behaviour will vary according to the individual viewers. Nevertheless, there will be meaning attached to whatever action a superior takes, even if it be nothing more than a smile, closing his office door, or patting an employee on the back. Similarly, the superior assigns meaning to the non-verbal behaviour of his subordinates. When he perceives them working diligently, day-dreaming, or wasting time in talking with other employees he is interpreting their behaviour.

2.1.3. A MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Figure 1

COMMUNICATION MODEL



SOURCE 5

- a) INFORMATION SOURCE:- is defined as the party sending the message to another party. This is the beginning of the communication process.
- The basic sources of information can be broken down into original sources, secondary sources, and tertiary sources.

5 Koontz, H. et. al., (McGraw-Hill Int. Book Co., 7th ed., p. 694).

1) Original sources:- Methods and techniques for obtaining information from original sources include the following:-

i) Observation: - The observation can be objectively planned, as in the case of a person who is making a real estate appraisal on the basis of a standardized form. It can also be subjectively planned, as through the use of the trained eye, and can include experience, as in the case of a person who is sent to estimate a roof or painting job or some such other task. Its major advantage is that it leads to a more objective picture of overt behaviour. The disadvantage is that this method does not yield information on covert behaviour. The observation method has to use reliable research instruments such as tape recorders and cameras to gather the information.

ii) Interview method:- This method consists of asking competent or expert people to provide the information. The interview may be patterned that is, it may follow a very definite form, or it may be unrehearsed. This phase of information gathering is used frequently in both informal and formal report writing. On the informal level it means just asking the person how it happened. On the formal level the interviewer notes the most important questions which he wants answered at the interview. In this way the line of conversation can be directed to the specific objectives which one is trying to achieve.

- iii) Letter technique:- The use of the letter technique is a phase of the interview technique for obtaining information. The advantage is that it may be the best way to reach persons who might be biased by interviewers, while the disadvantage is that the return rate is usually low.
- iv) Telephone interview:- This method involves telephoning the expert or the one believed to have the answer and ask questions over the phone. This method is widely used by business and industrial firms who need information very quickly. The advantage of this method is that it is the best method for gathering information quickly. The disadvantage is that only people with telephone can be interviewed.
- 2) Secondary sources:- are sources of information which exist in an accessible form and merely have to be found. They might be present in the organizations' internal records, professional associations; in government, commercial publications. If the data are found in existing sources, the researcher has saved time and expense. Secondary data must however be checked for impartiality, validity and reliability.
3. Tertiary source:- is a source of the third order, for example in advertisement the speaker or actor is considered as a tertiary source.

b. Transmitter:- The transmitter encodes the data into a message and sends it on to the receiver. The major form of encoding is symbols which can be defined as any systematic pattern of signs, languages, or signals. The raw data from the source are encoded into a meaningful language. For example, the accounting, statistics, and computer data are translated into a message. This message is then transmitted by means of sound waves, electrical impulses, light waves, or pieces of paper.

c. Noise:- Noise is any interference that takes place between transmission and reception. It can be electrical static, semantic, problems with the language or deliberate distortion of the message. Any communication problem that cannot be fully explained can be categorised as noise.

d. Receiver:- is the party receiving the message sent by another party. Under this step of the model, the communication has passed from the sender to the receiver. Decoding of the message has not taken place. That is, an interpretation must be made and understanding must be gained of the accounting, statistical or computer information. Besides knowledge requirements, perception and listening enter the reception phase of the process model.

e. Destination:- Just as the information source is a requirement for the communication process to begin, a destination is necessary in order for the process to be completed. In the organization, the accounting, statistical, or computer information is most likely destined to go to line managers to assist them in accomplishing their unit's objectives or to top managers for the use in evaluating performance.⁶

⁶ Luthans Fred, Organizational Behaviour, McGraw-Hill Co. Ltd., Kogakusha, pp. 214-215.

f. Feedback:- is the part of the receiver's response that the receiver communicates back to the sender. In order to check the effectiveness of Communication, feedback is essential. One can never be sure whether or not a message has been effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded, and understood unless it is confirmed by feedback. Similarly, feedback indicates whether individual or organizational change has taken place as a result of communication.

2.1.4. INFORMATION THEORY

Information theory is a strict, scientific approach to the study of communication. Deeply involved with the probability theory of mathematics, it is concerned primarily with the transmission aspects of the communication process. Specifically, the transmission concepts of sending and receiving, in terms of both their functional roles and their contribution to the achievement of a given level of performance, are the distinguishing characteristics of information theory.

The goal of information theory is to send messages by taking advantage of their statistical nature and to use electrical signals to transmit messages over a given channel with minimum error.

Robert G. Gallager, an information theorist has noted that "In the past 20 years, information theory has been made more precise, has been extended, and has been brought to the point where it is being applied in practical communication systems."⁷

⁷ Gallager, G. Robert, Information Theory and Reliable Communication, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1968, p. 2

Shannon E. Claude and Weaver Warren wrote about information theory as follows "In fact, two messages, one of which is heavily loaded with meaning and the other of which is pure nonsense, can be exactly equivalent from the present viewpoint, as regards information. To be sure, this word information in communication theory relates not so much to what you do say, as to what you could say. That is, information is a measure of one's freedom of choice when one selects a message."⁸

A great impetus to this development has come from the computer technology and organizational systems analysis. Computers and systems go hand in hand with information theory and cybernetics. The impact that information theory has had on the study, analysis and practice of organizational communication is somewhat analogous to the tremendous influence that quantitative techniques have had on management decision making.

2.1.5. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:- The opposite extreme to information theory is the interpersonal approach to communication. Whereas information theory is very mathematically oriented, interpersonal communication is very behaviorally oriented. In the interpersonal approach, the major emphasis is on transferring information from one person to another. Communication is looked upon as a basic method of effecting behaviour change, and it incorporates the psychological processes (perception, learning and motivation) on the one hand and language on the other.

⁸ Shannon E. Claude, and Weaver Warren, "The Mathematical Theory of Communication," University of Illinois Press, 1971, p. 8

Listening sensitivity and nonverbal communications are also closely associated with this approach.

The often posed riddle that asks, "Is there a noise in the forest if a tree crashes to the ground but no one is there to hear it?"⁹ demonstrates some of the important aspects of interpersonal communication. From a communication perspective the answer to the riddle is no. There are sound waves but no sound because no one perceives it. There must be both a sender and a receiver in order for interpersonal communication to take place. The sender is obviously important to communication, but so is the neglected receiver who gives feedback to the sender. The importance of feedback cannot be overemphasized because effective interpersonal communication is highly dependent on it.

Sigband comments on the interpersonal process and the important role of feedback thus, "It permits expressive action on the part of one or more persons and the conscious and unconscious perception of such action. Perhaps one of the most important factors in this network is....feedback (which) is vital if the originator and receiver are to secure some level of effectiveness in the communication process."¹⁰

Besides feedback, other variables, such as trust, expectations, values, status, and compatibility, greatly influence the interpersonal aspects of communication. There are many research studies

9 Drucker F. Peter, "Management", Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1974, p. 483

10 Sigband B. Norman, "Communication for Management," Scott Foresman and Company, Glenview, Ill., 1969, p. 8.

which show that people who do not trust one another do not communicate. Let us see the example of Wofford C. Jerry et. al., "It can begin with a lack of trust by person A for person B. Since A does not trust B, the communication of B to A tends to be guarded and/or deceptive. A probably responds by being less personal, more negative in his or her feelings for B, and less supportive of B. B responds by having less trust for A and by being less open, more cautious, and more deceptive. This results in a continuing response of less support and less effective communication."¹¹ The same is true of the other variables mentioned above. People perceive only what they expect to perceive; the unexpected may not be received at all. Giving attention to and doing something about these interpersonal variables can spell the difference between effective and ineffective communication.

1) The External System and Interpersonal Communication:-

The exact specification of the activities of the external system is impossible. The problematic situations that an organization may face cannot be completely anticipated. Consequently, policies, plans, and procedures cannot be established to cover all situations. In problematic situations, someone (or group of people) must decide what to do, decide how to do it, and monitor the quality of the effort. All these processes involve communication and often involve two-person (interpersonal) communication.

In addition to the interpersonal communication situations which arise because of the incomplete specification of organizational

¹¹ Wofford C. Jerry, et. al., "Organizational Communication, The Keystone to Managerial Effectiveness," McGraw-Hill Book Co., N.Y., 1977 p. 184

Some specific areas where breakdowns occur at both the intra-personal and interpersonal levels are:-

a) A person may be unaware of his or her motives:- That is looking forward to the successful procurement of the contract which will gain him/her recognition. The individual is dimly aware of other individual's ideas, questions, and feeling represent an obstacle to his own personal goal.

b) The second area in which Communication break-down originates is in the encoding of motives:- This encoding also occurs at the intra-personal level. Fear of retaliation and lack of self-confidence are among the intra-personal factors which restrain the expression of one's true wants and needs.

c) The third area of break-down results from interpersonal Perception:-One tends to see the actions of another person in the context of a general impression that one has formed.

d) Finally, Communication break-downs often occur as a result of failure to recognize and deal with the intra-personal factor of emotion:- When people are unaware of their own feelings, their interpersonal perceptions and their interpersonal communications will be influenced by their feelings indirectly. Thus, the manager who has been disciplined by his/her boss may react angrily without realizing it. Thus, he/she may express his/her anger indirectly by being unnecessarily harsh with his/her subordinates. If this manager becomes aware of his/her feelings and express them appropriately, his/her interpersonal perception and communication are likely to be less irrational. That is by becoming aware of and by expressing feelings, the individual is more apt to act rationally.

After a general understanding of how break-downs in communication occur, one is in a position to state some general guidelines to avoid such break-downs and to increase the effectiveness of interpersonal communication. These guidelines are aimed at increasing self-awareness, self-disclosure, and the accuracy of interpersonal perception.

a) Increasing Self-Awareness:- The major block to increasing self-awareness is that it is psychologically painful and every one is afraid of pain. The reason that is painful lies basically with our need to hold a positive self-image. The protection of self-image keeps us from recognizing the "true" self.

b) Awareness of Feeling:- The most obvious way to develop awareness of one's feeling is to pay attention to them. A helpful notion to be aware of in this regard is that physical feeling is closely related to emotional feeling. For many people, increasing the awareness of body sensations is the place to begin.

c) Self Disclosure of Feelings:- The expression of feelings, attitudes, and motives is termed self-disclosure. Basically, self-disclosure increases interpersonal competence by increasing self-awareness and by increasing the likelihood of being perceived accurately by others. The major block to self-disclosure is fear.

When one becomes aware of feelings, it is important to express them. In order to strengthen the awareness of feelings, it is important to exaggerate the expression of feeling. Here, the person is likely to encounter fear. This happens for two reasons. First, one is on unfamiliar ground and is therefore

afraid that one might look silly. Second, the expression of feeling carried with it the fear of self discovery. That is awareness of one's feelings, especially one's repressed feelings, is likely to lead one to confront one's self-image.

d) Self-Disclosure of Interpersonal Motives:- Self-awareness and interpersonal perception may be increased through disclosing one's interpersonal motives. One must begin by paying attention to one's own motives. What is it that one wants? Verbalize it. Tell others what one wants from them. This eliminates the guessing game and establishes a basis for understanding.

e) Clarifying Interpersonal Motives:- One may be unclear of what our own motives are. Lack of awareness concerning our own motivational tends to be a safe retreat for us.

For increasing interpersonal competence by increasing self-awareness can now be stated in how to form. As one becomes aware of feelings, express them. Pay attention to the thoughts, perceptions, and feelings which arise following the expression of emotion, pay attention to and verbalize what one wants. In addition, ask for and listen to feedback given to us by others.

f) Increasing the Accuracy of Interpersonal Perceptions:- One way of increasing the accuracy of interpersonal perception is by self-disclosure of feelings and interpersonal motives. If one knows what a person feels and wants, one is less likely to mis-interpret that person's actions. Another way to increase the accuracy of interpersonal perception is to pay attention to the process, that is observe oneself interpreting the actions of others. Finally, the most straightforward way of increasing the accuracy of interpersonal perception is by noting what observations lead one to a

particular conclusion and then checking whether or not the conclusion is accurate.

2.1.6. INTRA-PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Intrapersonal factors are the human attributes such as motivation and emotion which influence all of us.

Compatibility of such intra-personal variables as motives, values, attitudes, and interests is an important foundation for a positive interpersonal relationship. Within an organization, we are often required by the external system to enter an interpersonal relationship in which we do not find compatibility. To accomplish a required organizational objective, we may be forced to interact with a person with whom we have little or no compatibility. As a consequence, the interpersonal communication is severely hampered.

a) Self-Confidence as an Essential Intra-personal Variable for Effective Communication:- Openness in interpersonal communication requires self-confidence. The more confident one is intra-personally, the easier it is to express one's feelings and opinions, and the more receptive one becomes to feedback from others. As people increase their self-confidence, they are more likely to take the risks associated with exposure of themselves and others' opinions about them.

2.2. COMMUNICATION AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Communication even between friends often can be difficult and at times almost impossible. It may be expected, therefore, that where hierarchical relationships exist, as in an organization, the communication process will require even more attention and effort if it is to yield the level of understanding necessary for efficient operations. In spite of the complexity of the process, there are some fundamentals which, if heeded, can make communication more effective. While it is generally agreed that there is need for an organizational structure, the development of the structure must necessarily be based on some consideration of the communication problems that may arise as a result of the pattern of interpersonal relationships established by the structure. In some instances it is possible to correct the problems, but in other situations communication is blocked and travels by other means such as through informal channels. In examining the communication process in relation to the organization structure, it is thus necessary to consider both formal and informal types of communication.

2.2.1. FORMAL COMMUNICATION

Formal communication takes place between personnel according to established lines of authority or on a basis of established procedural relationships. A superior giving instructions to a subordinate is engaging in formal communication based on the lines of authority; whereas, the office secretary who discusses a correspondence problem with the mailing department is following procedural lines of communication.

Barnard Chester, said, the first executive function is to develop and maintain a system of communication.¹² That system will exist to promote the goals of the organization, to sell, to reduce costs and to make a profit. The dependency of many complex firms on effective co-ordination as the first executive function.

The primary objective of organizational communication, then is to achieve action. Curiously and frustratingly the planned hoped-for results do not always occur. Ineffective communication is often a main reason for the failure.

Poor communication often lead to low morale has become a cliché of good management. When men do not understand the reasons for policies or actions, they often respond with fear, suspicion anxiety and aggression. This can result in strikes or in management sabotage.

Formal communication may follow in downward, upward, and horizontal directions.

a) Downward Communication:- This is communication that originates at any management level and is directed toward subordinate personnel. Basically, there are five types of communication down the line.

1. Specific task direction: job instructions
2. Information designed to product understanding of the task and its relation to other organizational tasks:
job rationale
3. Information about organizational procedures and practices.

12 Barnard, Chester: The Functions of the Executive, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1938.

4. Feedback to the subordinate about his performance.
5. Information of an ideological character to inculcate a sense of mission."¹³

Emphasis in the use of these different types of downward communication will vary from one organization to another and from one manager or supervisor to another. However, for effective employee performance, job satisfaction, and team work among the members of an organization, it is essential that there be effective communication from superiors to subordinates in all of the five areas listed above.

b) Upward Communication:- Communication up the line is primarily concerned with the expression of a subordinate's ideas, attitudes, and feelings of himself, his job, his performance, and his problems; about others, concerning organizational policies and practices, and similar matters that he perceives as being acceptable material to communicate to management. The subordinate typically communicates directly with his superior either orally or in writing. The major exception is the submission of an idea or plan through the suggestion system and writing.

c) Horizontal Communication:- In addition to improving upward communication, management should also develop the type of conditions, including the social climate that facilitates horizontal communication among personnel at the same levels in the organizational structure. Supervisors and the subordinates in different departments, for example should be encouraged and feel free to communicate with one another about common problems. Subordinates, however, should recognize the responsibility that they have for

13 Katz, D., and Kahn, R.L., "The Social Psychology of Organizations," 2nd ed., (N.Y. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1978) p. 45

keeping their supervisors advised of the general content of their communication with personnel in other departments.

Effective lateral communication is essential to co-ordination, and to the pursuit by different departments of the same objective.

The effects of poor downward or upward communication: resentment and resistance by staff, and senior management failing to understand the real situation at lower levels of the company are well known.

Poor sideways communication is equally expensive in terms of inefficiency and frustration, though less discussed. Co-operation at board level will depend to some extent on co-operation at lower levels. If departments are working at loggerheads or in glorious isolation the difficulties will very often appear at Board discussions.

However, no matter how highly motivated are all members of the organization to achieve the general objective, and no matter how efficient are the procedures, a firm will not be efficient unless the efforts of all staff are co-ordinated, and unless there is effective lateral communication.

To achieve this, a firm needs what Likert Rensis terms, "an efficient interaction or mutual influence system." The character of a firm's organization must therefore allow:-

- "1. Full and effective communications up, down and across the organization.

2. An opportunity for all members of the organization to influence others, based on their knowledge, experience and information.
3. Methods of decision-making, "Which use fully and intelligently all the information available in the organization, and which are designed in such a way that the members of the organization are highly motivated to carry out these decisions."¹⁴

2.2.2. INFORMAL COMMUNICATION:

The informal communication structure has been defined as "those aspects of face-to-face relations which are not recognized by the participants as, nor preconceived for the purpose of, achieving simply a particular objective."¹⁵

Those fact-to-face relations may be based upon the fact that men work together, that they are friends, or that they are members of a profession, a union or a political party. The ties - and the communications - may arise because workers have shared a common experience, or come from the same neighbourhood.

One can see the informal communication system come into play when major decisions are taken. A board of directors meet and consider some important recommendations. They agree that to implement these recommendations will increase sales, increase their share of the market, reduce costs, add to their profits and to their firms' reputation. They decide to go ahead. The plan

14 Likert, Rensis: A Motivational Approach to a Modified Theory of Organization and Management, "Modern Organization Theory, N.Y. John Wiley and Sons, 1959.

15 Scott, W.H., et. al., "Technical Change and Industrial Relations," Liverpool University Press, 1956.

and the objects, they consider, are so clear and worthy that there cannot possibly be any doubt or resistance.

How often the picture changes as we move down the line! The interests and lives of many men and women may be affected by this new decision. Some may be promoted and receive higher pay and status. Others will have to work harder or find life easier. Some will discover that their hopes of promotion were illusory and that other men have been preferred and moved past them.

Soon managers will be getting together to talk about, analyse and criticize the new changes. At shop floor level workers will discuss the changes as they affect work, wages, tempo, overtime, supervision, and interest of job. Rumours will begin to circulate about the factory; sometimes these rumours and speculations will be pessimistic, sometimes extremely optimistic.

In most instances it provides for a rapid transmission of information and misinformation and, therefore, presents a challenge to the planned communication. However, there are some controls that can be used to minimize the number and severity of rumours that are passed from one person to another over the grapevine.

These are:-

1. Keep the channels of communication open. There is no substitute for good supervisor-to-subordinate communication down line.

2. Positive and truthful presentation of facts about a topic is more effective than defensive attempts to disprove the logic or a rumour.

3. Guarding against idleness and monotony among the troops has been a military technique to prevent rumours and it is just as applicable to any other organization.

assurance that there is or not a meeting of minds. Face-to-face communication includes:-

- person-to-person communication,
- committees,
- brainstorming,
- conferences,
- interviews, etc.

Before seeing how face-to-face communication can be improved, there are four important points to be emphasized.

" 1. People respond to us as individuals and not as communicators. What they think we are and represent is even more important than how to put over our message.

2. People's responses are determined to a great extent by their memories, previous experiences and attitudes.

3. Our communication will be judged in the light of the total situation.

4. In the long run, it is what we do, and have done and are expected to do, that is important - and not just what we say.

Therefore, a realistic approach to improving face-to-face communication will involve:-

" 1. An attempt to aid managers, foremen, staff and worker to understand some of the complexities of human relations. It is reasonable to assume that the emphasis of this type of training will be directed at managers, foremen, and shop-stewards

2. Actual or simulated experience in face-to-face situations. This includes role playing, case studies, group discussion, public speaking and so on.

3. An awareness by managers of the implications of major

social research.

4. An early step must be to assist managers and supervisors to understand the concept of communication, and to relate it to their own responsibilities, as well as to the purpose of their organization.

5. Training in order to provide a critical approach to language whether written or spoken, and an awareness that words are used and interpreted accordingly to the knowledge, attitudes, background and history of those speaking.

6. An awareness by managers, that the ability to listen is an important key to effective communication."¹⁸

2.3.2. Written Communication:- In achieving its purposes, organization makes great use of written forms of communication. Decisions are often taken largely on the basis of reports and recommendations, and these decisions are translated into action by means of instructions. The quality of written communication to customers, suppliers and Government departments also determines the ensuing action and relationships.

While oral communication provides for speedy feedback, it is slow and is subject to too much distortion for top management to use when it desires to cover the broader and more complex aspect of the business. Because written communication generally carries greater weight and authority, special attention should be given to the style and quality of writing. It should be dignified without being pompous, consider the reader's needs, and possess such a high degree

18 Ivens, Michael: cited above, p. 112

of clarity that it cannot be misinterpreted. While there is a wide variety of written media used in business, only a few will be considered here.

a) Job Descriptions and Procedural Manuals:- One of the most important media for communication with the employee is the job description. It enumerates in detail the duties that the employee is expected to perform, the equipment that he will use, and other important information necessary to his success on the job. Manuals in which operating procedures and rules and regulations are prescribed and proscribed are often made available to employees in order that a reasonable degree of uniformity, efficiency, and safety may be achieved.

b) HANDBOOK:- Handbooks are often used to convey information of immediate concern to the employee. Employee services, sick leave provisions, insurance coverage, stock ownership plans, and other benefits are usually described in detail.

c) The House Organ:- One of the most widely used media for downward communication within a company and for reaching the families of employees is the newspaper or magazine, commonly referred to as the house organ.

d) The Suggestion Programme:- The written media discussed above represent examples of downward communication: the suggestions programme is an example of upward communication. The suggestion programme is designed to encourage participation of the employee in the larger and

more important aspects of the company's operations by rewarding him for suggestions that may be used to benefit the company. The suggestions may cover such areas as work methods and procedures, equipment design, safety devices, and other matters not related directly to production.

e) Sincerity:- In planning communications with subordinates, managers should recognize that their sincerity or insincerity soon will become apparent. If management has a record of fair and honest dealings with employees, its communication is more likely to be accepted.

f) Bulleting Board:- Perhaps the most widely used medium for downward written communication is the bulletin board.

f) Understanding Human Needs:- There is close relationship between motivation and communication that must always be considered. It is human nature to listen to someone who has something to say about those things in which we are interested. Therefore, management's attention to employees' needs, interests, and attitudes can go a long way toward facilitating employee receptivity.

2.4. BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

While there are several avenues by which understanding may pass from one person to another as well as many media for promoting understanding, these avenues and media do not necessarily lead to the desired goal. The groupings of people into a complex organization impose additional

conditions and factors affecting human relationships which may constitute potential barriers to communication. In order for communication to be effective, it is essential for the manager to recognize these potential barriers and to plan communication so that these barriers may be overcome or at least minimized.

In a survey of over 750 company members, the National Industrial Conference Board (NICB) asked, "What are the barriers to communication within a company? The barriers cited fell into three major groups:-

- " 1. Barriers arising from the fact that individuals differ. These are barriers that a company inherits because they are common to society.
2. Barriers arising from company's psychological climate which tend to satisfy communication.
3. Barriers that are largely mechanical in the sense that they stem from lack of proper facilities or means of communication."¹⁹

Some of the major barriers in each of these groups are examined below for purposes of illustrating the problems that arise in attempts to communicate with others.

2.4.1. Environmental Factors:- One of the major problems in communicating with large numbers of individuals, as in a company, is the simple fact that no two individuals are alike.

19 NICB, "Barriers to Communication, "Management Record, National Industrial Conference Board, 1958.

Individuals are born with different potentialities, they have had different experiences during their childhood and youth, and as adults they have had employers and supervisors who have exerted a variety of influence upon them.

2.4.2. Perception Differ:- One result of prior experiences is that each employee brings with him to the his own unique way of looking at things, or in other words, his frame of reference. This frame of reference determines the manner in which he will interpret or perceive whatever he sees or hears. If the supervisor is viewed as a father figure, the employee may accept or reject everything the supervisor says, depending upon the type of relationship that he had with his father. Similarly if the employee has been let down by previous supervisors, he is likely to view the new supervisor as someone not to be trusted.

2.4.3. Semantics:- Words, like gestures can be interpreted in various ways thus creating a barrier to communication. Since there is not necessarily a connection between the symbol and what is being symbolized (the meaning), the communication may be received quite differently than was intended. The word profit, for example, to the executive may represent a measure of success and a return deserved by company; whereas, to the employee it may represent some of the funds that he should have received in the form of higher wages. In selecting words

the communicator should consider his audience and its likely interpretation of the words he uses.

2.4.4. Status Relationships:- The position of the individual in the organization structure will also influence the quality of communication that takes place. Persons of equal status, such as two supervisors, will probably find it easier to share information and feelings than a supervisor and a subordinate.

2.4.5. Psychological Climate of the Organization:-

One organization may encourage individuals to express themselves and to participate in important activities. Another organization may be autocratic and discourage participation and freedom of expression. Members of top and middle management can have a considerable influence on communication. Their perception of their own roles and their attitudes and sensitivity toward subordinates are important factors in their own ability to communicate.

2.4.6. Special Groups and Their Effect:- Within an organization there may be special groups or subgroups composed of individuals of various professions or occupations who have different value systems. Their differing values create barriers to communication that are frequently impossible to overcome. The accountants, for example, may not understand the attitude that the research people have toward fiscal matters, just as lawyers may not be able to understand the executive's attitudes toward government regulation of business. Difference in background

and in the developing of occupational personalities may thus have profound effects on communication within the organization.

The barriers to communication that are discussed above represent those that are usually more difficult to overcome because they involve surmounting the complex inter-relationships of people in groups. Following we will see the mechanical barriers to communication.

2.4.7. Lack of Definite Plans:- In spite of the fact that the formal structure of the organization should be followed in communication orders and information it is fairly common for confusion to arise over the simple mechanics of who will do it.

2.4.8. Lack of Clarity:- Regardless of the educational or intellectual levels of the person with whom one is attempting to communicate, understanding is less likely to occur if the material presented is not clear. Both the spoken and the written work may be misunderstood if the communicator uses complex sentences. This type of speaking or writing should be eliminated through training and experience in plain talk and writing.

2.4.9. Other Mechanical Barriers:- The choice of media is often a barrier to communication. If persons are not readily reached through one type of medium communication may suffer.

The format for written communication may also be a barrier. Some persons, unless instructed, may assume that a mimeographed document is not as important as one that is individually typed; whereas in many instances the reverse is true.

Similarly, the misuse or overuse of a medium may cause people to ignore what comes over it, for they may come to have attitudes such as it's not important or just more of the same. The barriers mentioned above need to be avoided if communication is to be effective.

2.5. AUDITING COMMUNICATION

The best and simplest approach to auditing communication is to start by a one-stage communication audit in order to help to assess the efficiency of communication at the present level, and unsatisfactory communication can be identified for corrective action.

Communication process is so important that it should be planned. Planning a single-stage communication audit the planner needs to consider the following three points:-

1. The purpose of the audit of communication?
2. Who will take the role of the communication auditor?
3. What will be the size and membership of the audit group?"²⁰

2.5.1. Aim of the Communication Audit:- If the aim of the communication audit is more clearly set down in an organization, the higher will be the commitment of the employees participating and the more useful will be the results. The most frequently stated aims for carrying communication audit are:-

a) Feedback:- Efficient communication is one of the most important facts in achieving effective management. Based on this fact many people think that their ability to

²⁰ Machin, J.L., and Tai S.H. Charles, "Senior Managers Audit Their own Communication, "Journal of Management Studies, 2,1, pp. 75, 1979

communicate with others is good but the evidence to justify this claim and confidence will depend on feedback of the result of their communication.

b) Self-Awareness:- In a one-stage communication audit participants obtain a certain amount of reassurance on their own ability to communicate, as well as feedback on their ability to perceive and understand clearly what others expect of them, thus creating self-awareness to communicate effectively.

c) Identification of Management Development Needs:- When organizations expect their line managers to be involved with the development of their subordinates, auditing communication would be of help in identifying the need for development.

d) Measurement:- Assessing the level of inter-managerial communication using one-stage communication audit as a means of establishing the current level of efficiency of communication within the organization. Thereafter, the results were to be used as a yardstick of communication efficiency and subsequent one-stage communication audits, would show whether the efficiency of communication was improving or falling.

e) Recommended Aims:- The assessment and, if necessary, the improvement of managerial communication needs a systematic approach. A single stage communication audit will bring no more than temporary benefits to an organization if it is not seen by the managers involved to have a clear purpose

which makes sense to them as well as to their senior management. In particular the audit should be designed to answer the following questions:-

1. How good is communication currently? Are there important links which are broken? Is transmission at an acceptable level of accuracy?
2. Are there any areas where communication is appreciably above average? What can one learn from these areas which could help areas where communication is below average?
3. Where, if at all, are there particular difficulties in achieving acceptable levels of communication, and is it possible, desirable, and cost beneficial to work at overcoming or minimizing some of those difficulties?²¹

2.5.2. Who will take the role of Communication Auditor?

When members of an organization decide to audit communication for the first time, it is essential that those organizing the audit should discuss, and make explicit, the decision about who is going to do the auditing.

There are three main choices open to an organization carrying out an audit for the first time.

- a) One Person (Senior) Auditing the Communication of Others:- The logic of this choice is usually that, because the communication audit is seen as some form of individual appraisal, the person doing the appraising should be senior to those taking part, that is, someone who knows precisely and specifically what forms of communication in terms of content, quantity,

21 Machin, J.L., and Tai S.H. Charles, Cited above p. 78

quality, timing, ect., should exist between the managers taking part if the working group is to be effective.

b) Each Person Auditing his own Communication:-

This choice of auditing communication is that the communication patterns and contents of each job are so diverse and complex, and so affected by the individual ability of the role holder to articulate and listen, that the only person who can make a realistic judgement about the efficiency of communication shown in an initial communication report is the person to whom it relates. Only he can tell whether it was oversight, or lack of knowledge, that has given rise to any unreciprocated channels found within the report.

c) Audit by Working Groups:- The logic of this choice is that an individual managers is affected in the way he communicates by the relationships which exist within the working group. In addition, some of the errors of omission and commission found within a first communication audit will include the direction of expectations to the members of the working group.

The decision as to how the auditing will be done will almost certainly affect the contents of the expectation data-base because it will affect the participants commitment to, and interest in the auditing process. It may also affect their level of apprehension and concern about the process itself.

2.5.3. Determining Membership and the Size of the Audit Group:-

Sometimes, the particular purpose of a communication audit itself determines the number of people who should be involved and occasionally it determines the number of people who should be involved.

There is no doubt that communication is usually poorest where there are many-to-many communication relationships among managers, or where there is a considerable volume of interdepartmental communication relationships among managers, or where there is a considerable volume of interdepartmental communication. In these situations it is obviously desirable to draw the boundary of those taking part in the communication audit so that it includes the majority of people who communicate with each other.

a) Size of Audit Group:- It must be apparent that there is no ideal group size for a communication audit, nor is there a single rationale for deciding who should be involved.

The critical elements that determine size of the audit group are:-

1. The purpose of the audit
2. The auditor
3. The resources available to support the audit
4. The commitment and enthusiasm which exist to maintain the momentum of communication audit.
5. The experience which members of the organization have of using new techniques and their consequential attitude of trying something new."²²

2.5.4. Assessing Communication Efficiency:- When the role of auditor is held by the individual in respect of his own communication report, it is important for those who initiated the communication audit to use a structured questionnaire to ascertain from each participant precisely how he rates the level of efficiency of his own communication and that of others, and the relative frequency with which he has discovered situations where direction, volume or content or communication is unsatisfactory.

Even in a relatively small department, there are a large number of potential communication links. If an individual is to make relationale decisions about the quality of his communication, it is extremely helpful to have commentary and discussion with his colleageues. Equally, when looking at the total communication report for a department it is often possible to see quite clearly where there is unnecessary duplication of communication links, or where breaks in communication are more likely to be amended as a result of group discussion. One of the obvious behavioural advantages of enabling a group to audit its own communication is that this prevents individual managers feeling that they must be the worst communicators in the entire group.

2.6. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

A communication audit serves to present to those who are interested in the effectiveness of a working roup, a snapshot of the current level of the efficiency of job-related communication within the group. It also provides a

data base which individuals can use for dyadic discussions about problems highlighted by the initial communication audit reports. Most communication audits cause some improvement in communication but this is unlikely to be sustained unless there is definite programme designed to improve first the efficiency and then the effectiveness of job related communication.

The purpose of the communication improvement programme can be simply stated:-

"1. To audit the efficiency of individual communication within a working group in such a way that:-

2. Each individual can use the results in a systematic, supported, multi-stage programme to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of his/her own communication in such that:-

3. The effectiveness of the working group can be shown to have been improved.²³

Many organizations, because of inadequate planning, undertake communication improvement programmes only after some large and particularly costly or embarrassing discovered crisis, and then through short-term time constraints, concentrate their analytical attention only on the bad bits, i.e. why it went wrong. Greater medium and long term benefits almost invariably stem from an equally good bits.

Since the particular needs of a working group only become identified as the programme proceeds, the precise content of a communication improvement programme can rarely be

23 Machin, J.L. John: "A Contingent Methodology for Management Control," Journal of Management Studies, 16, 1, p.1 Feb. 1979

satisfactorily defined in advance. What can be defined, however, is the way in which the process of improvement will be handled and supported, and the resources which will be available to those participating in the programme. Key to the success of such a programme is a clear statement of the nature of the programme, and an equally clear statement of where the responsibility lies for making it work successfully.

The nature of the programme can be distinguished between a management programme and a management development programme. Most managers regard communication as so fundamental to the managerial task that a communication improvement must be compulsory for all managers and must be planned and controlled by managers themselves.

Some managers still regard communication as an ancillary subject to management, like behavioural science, and feel that improvement of communication is a training and education activity best handled on a voluntary basis under the control of training staff.

2.6.1. A Compulsory Management Programme:- Those organizations which have made involvement in the communication improvement programme compulsory have done so because they see it as a management programme which is directly and specifically relevant to improving the effectiveness of the organization, just like a budget, for example.

The compulsory communication improvement programme can look very much like a communication control system, though more often than not the control can, and will, be exercised by the manager rather than by an accountant or an outside analyst. As with any compulsory programme, there are bound to be many different behavioural attitudes towards its use. The prime argument for making a communication improvement programme compulsory is that communication is a key variable in organizational effectiveness. If a compulsory communication, improvement programme attracts little interest or generates hostility, then that is what the attitude towards communication is really like within the organization, and the sooner it is faced up to and dealt with the better from the point of view of organizational effectiveness.

2.6.2. A Voluntary Management Development Programme:- There are obvious advantages in making any managerial development programme voluntary. Initially only those who are particularly interested in improving their communication in connection with their jobs will volunteer to take part. With volunteers who are actively concerned to increase their effectiveness taking part in a programme, that programme is almost certain to produce more immediate, noticeable, and worthwhile results.

The benefits which arise from a voluntary communication improvement programme are offset only by the disadvantages of potentially patchy communication whenever individuals decide not to take part.

2.6.3. Planning the Process of a Communication Improvement

Programme:- Once the nature of the programme has been agreed a number of planning decisions have to be made before the programme can start. The most important questions which have to be answered are:-

- "1. Is there going to be a pilot programme or is it planned to start with a large group straight away?
2. If the programme is to involve a large number of people is it planned to handle everybody at once or starting with a small central group and then gradually pursuing communication outwards and including progressively more people as the communication links meet them?
3. What kinds of expectation should be included in the communication improvement programme?
4. What types of activity are going to be offered within the communication improvement programme?
5. Where does the responsibility lie for initiating and using the various activities?
6. What resources are necessary to enable these activities to be reasonably freely available to

those participating in the communication programme?"²⁵

2.7. COMMUNICATION POLICY

Senior management must develop a policy for communication within the organization and its environment. When deciding on policy in respect of the content of communication carried by formal organizational systems, senior management needs to consider a number of quite specific points.

2.7.1. Who will have Responsibility for Specifying the Appropriate Contents Within the Data-Base? A communication policy for an organization needs to specify the degree of personal freedom which individuals have to express expectations within the data-base.

There is no doubt that allowing individuals the absolute freedom to use their own words in their own say adds cost to the data-base system. It also adds personality, real life, and commitment. Restricting individuals to a limited number of expectations undoubtedly means a lower cost in the maintenance of the data-base, less scope for initiative, almost certainly greater scope for ultimate misunderstanding, and much lower commitment to the process of actually maintaining effective communication, as opposed to going through the motions of maintaining an information system.

25 Machin L. J. John, cited above p. 18

2.7.2. Who will have the Permission to Analyse the Contents of the Data-Base?

The contents of the data-base form a fertile soil for analysis of managerial style, attitudes, and potential. Analysing the data-base can be done by virtually any one. The sophisticated programmes are such that the user needs no knowledge of computing whatsoever.

2.7.3. Who will have Responsibility to Deal with Conflict in Respect of the Contents of the Data-Base? - Once an

organization possesses a communication data-base capable of supporting effective communication, it seems sensible for the senior management to consider whether they wish to assign specific responsibility for dealing with disagreements in respect of the contents of communications. Such responsibility is unlikely to include the authority to resolve all disagreements, but should include the responsibility for maintaining an up-to-date record of where such authority actually lies, thus ensuring a much more rapid resolution of disagreement than can be achieved by a simple, iterative, dyadic process.

Lawrence and Lorsch in their study make frequent reference to the role of 'integrator' as one that is reactive to conflict. When disagreement is discovered, the integrator is called to work with those in conflict to try to lead them to resolve their conflict in ways that are at least broadly in line with organizational purpose. They argued that such an individual has to have special

skills and has to be regarded highly as a person rather than an authority figure, within the organization.²⁶

The more experience that an integrator acquires, the better he is able to identify and understand factors that give rise to conflict in the contents of communication. The Analytical computer programmes now available to such a person enable him to review the data-base from the point of view of channels, or content, or volume of communication, and thus to identify in every situation into which he is called, the factors that were present prior to conflict arising.²⁷

2.7.4. Who will provide planning advice? Planning can be split into two quite distinct activities:-

- "1. Planning for effectiveness and
2. Planning for efficiency."²⁸

1. Planning for effectiveness is primarily to do with coordination and integration throughout an entire working group and between the group and its environment; although effectiveness planning must start at the level of the individual it must not end before the level of the environment. A group of completely effective individuals does not necessarily produce an effective group. Advice required in respect of

26 Lawrence, P., and Lorsch, J., "New Management job: the Integrator," Harvard Business Review, 45, 6, pp. 142-151, Nov-Dec. 1967

27 Ibid, p. 145

28 Ibid, p. 147

planning effectiveness must be based on a perspective and an understanding of the purposes of individual groups within the total working organization.

In this connection the integrator's contribution can be critically beneficial. If the integrator's job description includes working to improve the overall integration of activity within the working group, and between the working group and the environment, then that responsibility extends towards each individual's effectiveness planning, as well as planning for effectiveness by groups within the organization.

2. Planning for efficiency, however, is primarily concerned with individual skills, knowledge, experience, and the balance that is appropriate between the inputs and the outputs for particular people or groups. Efficiency planning is, therefore, very much to do with management development and the maintenance and improvement of the resources available to the organization. Planning for effectiveness is primarily concerned with co-ordinating those resources once obtained.²⁹

In essence, therefore, the communication policy that an organization adopts must seek to maximize the potential benefits to the working group as a whole of having efficient and effective communication available to every member of it as part of the normal working environment.

29 Lawrence, P., and Lorsch, J. cited above, p. 149

2.7.5. Group-to-group Communication:- Efficient

communication between groups is usually harder to achieve than efficient communication within groups. There is greater scope for communication to be lost in transmission either because the subject manager is unsure of the appropriate person to whom to direct communication or because an object manager is unaware of the person from whom a message has come. Each group must, therefore, include one person with the clearly defined responsibility for monitoring, maintaining, and where appropriate improving communication between that group and others.

Traditionally much of the responsibility for communication between groups has resided either with the head of each particular group or with their share boss. Communication audits have consistently shown that this provides volume overload on such individuals and that, as a result, subordinates develop their own informal communication patterns to supplement the inadequate ones directed through their own bosses. This problem is widespread in current organizations. Because efficient communication is not available there is unnecessary duplication and, in some cases, triplication of communication channels, developed to safeguard availability of information. Now that efficient communication is an achievable, practical possibility, the need for duplication and triplication becomes openly questionable. Where duplication is unnecessary it must

be eliminated and communication plans developed to ensure that efficient communication travels in the most efficient manner. In some organizations this may still mean a requirement that all group communications directed at another group should go through the heads of department.

Traditionally there were some sound reasons for this.

There may still be in the future, but there are bound to be fewer. As individuals learn more about how to be efficient in an environment of efficient communication, direct interpersonal communication, regularly monitorable from the data-base, is likely to become the norm more frequently in the future than it has been in the past.

The responsibility for monitoring inter-group communication can be delegated to any member of the group who has both the aptitude and interest to perform that task. Such responsibility would provide an effective means of helping a new member of a group to understand and appreciate exactly what functions the group performs for other parts of the organization.

2.8. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing literature review a number of points stand out clearly.

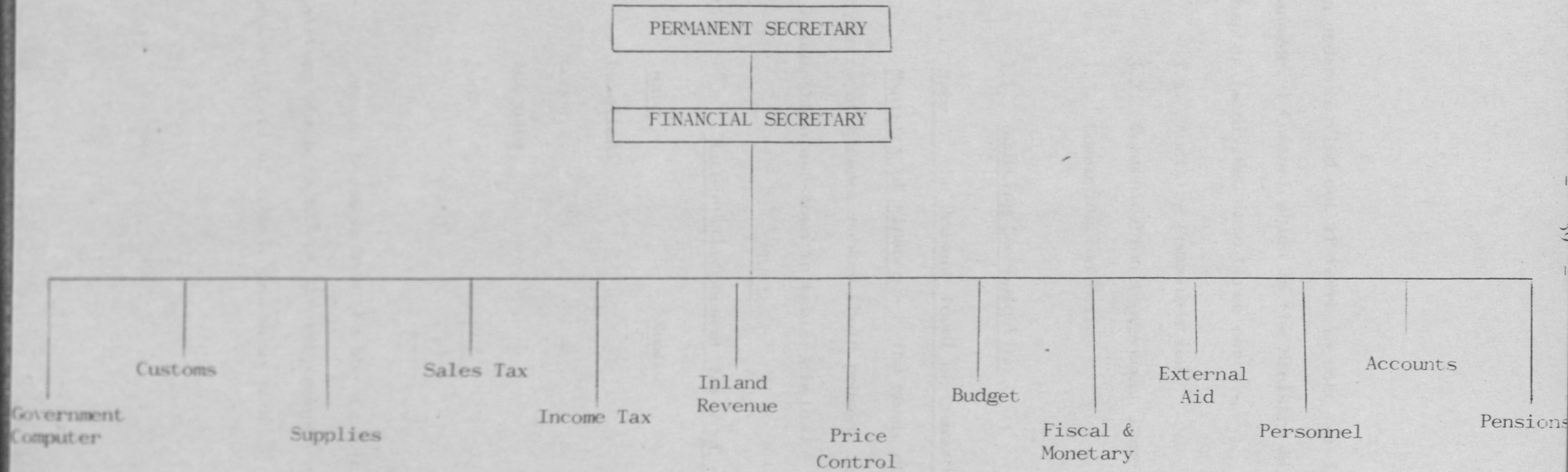
1. The life of an organization is found in the people who occupy the positions and in the communication that they have with one another. If there is free flow of information

and attitudes from one person to another and from one level to another in the organizational hierarchy, the organization will most likely be strong and productive. If, on the other hand, communication is blocked at many points and information and attitudes fall on deaf ears, the whole structure may be nothing more than a hollow shell pictured by names in boxes on an organizational chart. The chart has meaning only when the persons occupying the positions are able to interact successfully with one another in the accomplishment of the organizational objectives.

2. Many benefits will accrue to the organization which has an enlightened understanding of the communication process and which makes a continuing effort to improve the effectiveness of its modes of communication. The efforts of all members of the organization to improve communication with those persons with whom they have a formal organizational relationship can be most effective in strengthening the organization. Thus, this study highlights the responsibility of managers to set the stage for improving communication by auditing their communication in order to improve it. Communication is so important that it should be planned, improved and adopted as a policy.

3. Many organizations because of inadequate planning, undertake communication improvement programme only after some large and particularly costly or embarrassing discovered crisis, and then through short-term constraints,

Figure 2: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE



SOURCE: 30 SABARI, J.T.N., Head of Personnel Department in the Ministry of Finance, Nairobi, Kenya.

In order to find out if there is need for improving managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance this chapter is divided into three parts:-

- 3.1. Auditing Communication
- 3.2. Communication Improvement Programme
- 3.3. Communication Policy

3.1. Auditing Communication

3.1.1. Rate of the Present level of communication in the

Ministry of Finance:- The heads of departments in the Ministry of Finance ranked their present level of communication as shown in table 3 below.

Table 1

Rate of the present level of communication

<u>Rate</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Excellent	-	-
Good	2	15%
Adequate	3	23%
Poor	<u>8</u>	<u>62%</u>
Total	<u>13</u>	<u>100%</u>

As can be seen from the above table eight out of thirteen which is 62% of the respondents ranked their present level of communication as poor.

3.1.2. Assessing Communication Efficiency:- The method of assessing Communication efficiency in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table four below.

Table 2

Assessing Communication Efficiency in the
Ministry of Finance

<u>Method</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Auditing	-	-
Other Method	3	23%
No Method	10	77%
	13	100%

As can be seen from table four above the heads of departments in the Ministry of Finance, 10 out of 13 which is 77% have no method of assessing communication efficiency in their departments.

3.2. Communication Improvement Programme

3.2.1. Communication Improvement Programme:- The Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table five below.

Table 3 - Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Heads of Departments</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
With Communication Improvement Programme	3	23%
With No Communication Improvement Programme	10	77%
Total	13	100%

As is shown in table five above, 77% of the respondents answered that they do not have any communication improvement programme. Reasons given for not having Communication Improvement Programmes were as follows:-

Table 4: Reasons for not Having Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Lack of necessary training in Communication	6	46%
Unaware of the Possibility of Communication Improvement Programme	4	30%
Communication as of now is adequate	3	23%
Total	13	100%

As can be seen from table six above the majority of respondents have indicated that they do not have communication improvement programme due to lack of necessary training in Communication.

3.2.2. The Role of Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance:- The role of Communication

Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table seven below:-

Table 5 - The Role of Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
One individual	2	67%
Group	1	33%
Total	3	100%

As can be seen from table seven above 67% which is the majority indicated that the role of Communication Improvement Programme is taken by some individual which is the head of the department.

3.2.3. Critical elements that are considered in determining the size (number of individuals) of the Communication Improvement Programme:- The critical elements that are considered in determining the size (number of individuals) of the Communication improvement programme in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table number eight below:-

Table 6 Critical Elements that are considered in Determining the size (number of individuals) of the Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Elements</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Number of departments	2	67%
Budget of the department	1	33%
Total	3	100%

As is shown in table eight above the majority of respondents which is 67% have indicated that the critical element that determine the size (number of individuals) of the Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance is the number of departments.

3.2.4. Purpose of the Communication Improvement Programme:-

The purpose of the Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table nine below:-

Table 7: Purpose of the Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Effectiveness and Efficiency	1	33%
Keeping all employees informed in current procedures	2	67%
Total	3	100%

As is shown in table nine above the majority of heads of departments which is 67% have responded that the purpose of Communication Improvement Programme is to keep all employees informed in current procedures.

3.2.5. Type of Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance:- The type of Communication

Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table number 10 below.

Table 8: Type of Communication Improvement Programme

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Compulsory Management Programme	2	67%
Voluntary Management Programme	1	33%
Total	3	100%

As can be seen from table 10 above 67% of the respondents indicated that the type of Communication Improvement Programme is the compulsory management programme.

The reasons given for choosing the compulsory management programme were as follows:-

1. Because of the limitations of resources and skilled manpower.
- 2.. No one would be willing to participate unless forced.

And the reasons given for choosing the voluntary management programme were as follows:-

1. The Officers concerned are responsible officers.
2. To have proper follow-up of output of officers.
3. The case of improvement and human relations.

3.2.6. Method of Identifying Improvement in Communication in the Ministry of Finance:- The methods of

identifying improvement in Communication in the Ministry of Finance is as show in table 11 below:

Table 9 : Method of Identifying Improvement in Communication

<u>Method</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Auditing	-	-
Other	3	23%
No method	<u>10</u>	<u>77%</u>
Total	<u>13</u>	<u>100%</u>

As is shown in table 11 above 77% of the respondents have answered there is no method of identifying improvement in Communication in the Ministry of Finance.

3.3. COMMUNICATION POLICY

3.3.1. The Communication Policy in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table 12 below.

Table 10: Communication Policy in the Ministry of Finance

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Communication Policy	8	62%
No Communication Policy	5	38%
Total	13	100%

As can be seen from table 12 above, 62% of the respondents have indicated that they have communication policy in their departments.

3.3.2. Policy that deals with Conflict in data-base of Communication in the Ministry of Finance:-

The policy that deals with conflict in data-base in the Ministry of Finance is as shown in table 13 below:-

Table 11: Policy for dealing with Conflict in data-base Communication Policy

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
With policy	6	46%
No policy	7	54%
Total	13	100%

As is shown in table number 13 above, 54% of the respondents have said there is no policy that deals with conflict in respect of the contents of the data base of Communication.

3.3.3. The Communication Policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance seeks to Maximize:- The Communication Policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance seeks to maximize as is shown below in table 14.

Table 12: Communication Policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance Maximizes

<u>Maximize</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Effectiveness	3	37.5%
Efficiency	3	37.5%
Output	2	25%
Total	8	100%

As can be seen from table 14 above the majority of the respondents which is 37.5% have indicated that the Communication Policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance seeks to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.

3.3.4. Time spent in Communicating by Managers in the Ministry of Finance:- The time spent by the heads of departments in the Ministry of Finance is about as shown in table 15 below.

Table 13: Time spent in Communicating by Heads of Departments in the Ministry of Finance

<u>Percentage of Time</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
80%	6	46%
90%	5	39%
70%	2	15%
Total	13	100%

As is shown in table 15 above the majority which is 46% of the respondents spend 80% of their time in Communicating.

3.3.5. Particular Problems Confronted in achieving the Acceptable Levels of Communication in the Ministry of Finance:-

The particular problems confronted by heads of departments in the Ministry of Finance were as shown in table 16 below:-

Table 14 Particular Problems Confronted in Achieving the Acceptable Levels of Communication

<u>Problems</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Lack of training in Communication	6	46%
Lack of sufficient funds invested in Improving Communication	1	8%
The largeness of the Ministry in terms of employees	3	23%
Supervision	3	23%
Total	13	100%

As can be seen from table 16 below the majority which is 46% of the heads of departments of the Ministry of Finance particular problem confronted in achieving the acceptable levels of Communication in the Ministry is lack of training in Communication.

3.3.6. All 100% of the respondents have agreed that it is cost beneficial and desirable to work at overcoming the particular problems confronted in achieving the acceptable levels of Communication.

3.3.7. Adopting the Improvement of Managerial Communication by the Ministry of Finance:- If the Ministry of Finance were to adopt the improvement of managerial Communication the heads of departments have indicated that its usefulness would lie as shown in table 17 below:-

Table 15: Usefulness of Adopting Improvement of Managerial Communication by the Ministry of Finance

<u>Usefulness</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
a) In agreeing individual manager's objectives at the same time as financial budgets are set?	1	8%
b) In assessment of individual managerial performance?	2	15%
c) In assessing effectiveness of current organization structure?	1	8%
d) In helping to implement changes in organizational structure?	2	15%
e) In team building activities?	2	15%
f) Improving Communication and understanding	5	39%
Total	13	100%

As is shown in table 17 above, the majority, 5 out of 13 which is 39% have indicated that the usefulness of adopting improvement of managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance is Improving Communication and understanding.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF THE PRIMARY DATA

The analysis of the primary data in the Ministry of Finance is divided into three sections:

- 4.1. Present level of Communication
- 4.2. Communication Improvement Programme
- 4.3. Communication Policy

4.1.1. Present Level of Communication:- As is shown in table 3 of the findings, 62% of the heads of departments have answered that the present level of managerial Communication is poor, which clearly indicates that there is need for improving managerial communication in the Ministry of Finance.

4.1.2. Assessing Communication Efficiency:- In the Ministry of Finance 10 out of 13 which is 77% of the heads of departments have stated that they have no method of assessing communication efficiency which is the second indication that there is need for improving managerial communication.

4.2. Communication Improvement Programme

4.2.1. Out of the 100% respondents 23% have indicated that they do not have managerial communication improvement programme. As we have seen previously the present level of Communication in the Ministry of Finance is poor, thus the introduction of managerial communication improvement programme would help to raise the present level of communication.

4.2.2. Out of those who said they have Communication Improvement Programme in the Ministry of Finance the role of Communication improvement programme is taken by one individual which is the head of the department. But the senior individual who should take the role of Communication improvement programme should not necessarily be the head of the department, but a senior individual who knows precisely the form of communication of the Ministry.

4.2.3. Identifying Improvement in Communication:- The method of identifying improvement in Communication in the Ministry of Finance is not the ideal method which is helpful in identifying improvement in Communication.

The method that should be used in order to identify the improvement in Communication is Auditing Communication, otherwise the other methods that are employed in identifying improvement in Communication could not serve the desired purpose.

4.3. Communication Policy

4.3.1. As we have seen in the previous chapter, 8 out of 13 which is 62% of the respondents have answered that they have communication policy. The policy of Communication in the Ministry of Finance lacks the specific points that should be considered in developing the communication policy in an organization. It thus becomes clear that any policy

All 100% of the respondents have answered that it is cost beneficial and desirable to work at overcoming or minimizing the particular problems confronted in achieving the acceptable levels of Communication.

4.3.6. The majority of heads of departments in the Ministry of Finance suggested that if their Ministry were to adopt the improvement of managerial Communication its usefulness lies in Improving Communication and understanding, which shows to us there is need for improving managerial Communication in the Ministry.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND ITS RESULTS

Communication is the process whereby information is transferred and received. This is accomplished in a Communication process in which the source encodes a thought into a message which is transmitted through a channel to a receiver who decodes the message.

Throughout this process there are numerous barriers for Communication break-down, thus the source should obtain feed-back to check the accuracy of the message.

It is one of the most important tools upon which all other managerial activities will be determined by the effectiveness of Communication. Through Communication, we are able to share knowledge, combine efforts, and form organizations, and this had led to our present system of organized life style. However, effective Communication is not a natural human function but skill that has to be learned.

There is hardly an aspect of organizations that does not involve Communication. Although many of the working hours in organizations are spent in Communication, organizations typically devote very little time to the development of Communication skills.

In order to be able to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of managerial Communication in an organization one has to audit, introduce communication

improvement programme, and set a clear communication policy.

This study has found out that the present level of managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance is poor. This being the case, there is even not set out programme for improving Communication.

This study has further found out that presently in the Ministry of Finance there is no clear policy in Communication. As is the case in most organizations this is also taken for granted in this Ministry.

5.2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As has been demonstrated above the poor present level of managerial Communication in the Ministry of Finance should be improved. In order to improve this level of Communication, it is hereby recommended that a new approach to managerial Communication should be introduced.

First, Auditing Communication should be introduced so that the weaknesses and strengths of the present level of Communication will be identified.

Second, Communication Improvement Programme should be launched in order to improve the present level of Communication.

Third, clear stated policy in Communication should be developed. Such a policy will be useful in making it easy to communicate at the level of organization-wide policies. A policy system should reflect agreed-upon principles and be consistent with implementing procedures. Single policy of Communication is not enough. There must be a comprehensive system of policies - one which outlines a consistent managerial philosophy. Consistency of decisions throughout the management hierarchy requires that all policies reinforce the same general principles. Moreover, in an organization, policies need to be implemented by procedures and rules which are compatible with those same general ideas.

5.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has taken into account the opinions of the heads of departments of the Ministry of Finance, Nairobi, Kenya. Communication analysis from the point of view of employees in the Ministry of Finance, Nairobi, Kenya, has not been undertaken. I feel the study would have been more conclusive if this latter side has been considered. However, because of time limitations, I was not able to include it in my study.

A P P E N D I X

QUESTIONNAIRE

University of Nairobi

Faculty of Commerce

RESEARCH PROJECT

This research project seeks to investigate views on managerial Communication, in the Ministry of Finance, Nairobi, Kenya.

I will, therefore, be pleased if you would please answer the following questions on this topic. The information you provide will be kept in strict confidence.

1. How do you rate your present level of Communication?

(tick where appropriate)

Excellent _____ Good _____ Adequate _____ Poor _____

2. State the method of assessing communication efficiency in your department in the Ministry of Finance

3. Do you have Communication Improvement Programme in your department? (tick where appropriate)

Yes _____ No _____

4. If your answer to question 3 above is "Yes" state the method you follow in Communication improvement programme

5. If your answer to question 3 above is "No" state the reason for not having Communication Improvement Programme

6. Who takes the role of Communication Improvement Programme in your department?

7. State the critical elements you consider in determining the number of individuals of the Communication Improvement group in your department.

8. What is the purpose of Communication Improvement Programme in your department? _____

9. Which type of Communication improvement programme do you follow? (tick where appropriate)

a) The Compulsory Management Programme? _____

b) The Voluntary Management Programme? _____

10. State the reason for choosing the type of Communication improvement programme? _____

11. What method do you follow in identifying if there is need for improvement in Communication in your Ministry?

12. Do you have policy for Communication in your Ministry?
(tick where appropriate)

Yes _____ No _____

13. If your answer to question number 12 above is "yes" what specific points do you consider in developing your policy?

14. If your answer to question number 12 above is "no" what is the reason for not having policy for Communication in your Ministry?

15. What is your policy in dealing with conflict in respect of the contents of the data-base of Communication?

16. What does the Communication policy adopted by your Ministry seek to maximize?

17. About how many hours do you spend in Communication in a day? _____ hours.

18. State the particular problems confronted in achieving the acceptable levels of Communication in your Ministry?

19. Is it cost beneficial to work at overcoming or minimizing the particular problems at question number 18 above?

20. Is it desirable to work at minimizing or overcoming the particular problems stated at question number 18 above?

21. If your Ministry were to adopt the Improvement of managerial Communication where do you think its usefulness would lie? (Tick where appropriate)

a) In agreeing individual manager's objectives at the same time as financial budgets are set? _____

b) In assessment of individual managerial performance? _____

c) In assessing effectiveness of current organization structure? _____

d) In helping to implement changes in organizational structure? _____

e) In team building activities? _____

f) Other, specify? _____

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