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Studies on Socio-Academic Factors Influencing Communication and Attitude of Employees in the Organization

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Abstract:

Present study was conducted among 112 employees of three different types of organizations, to assess the influence of age, sex, qualification and working experience on organizational communication and attitude of employees. Significant difference was observed between government and non-government organizations with lower values in government organizations for both communication and attitude. No significant difference was recorded between NGO and corporate with regard to communication. However, the employees in corporate had better attitude than the counterparts under NGO sector. Sex had no significant effect on either communication or attitude. The employees possessing technical qualification were having poor attitude and found to be less communicative than other non-technical persons. Younger employees showed significantly lower scores in communication, but higher estimates of attitude than older ones in all sectors. Significantly the highest positive attitude was observed among employees with 6 to 10 years of experience followed by the junior most ones. As age advanced, the attitude got lowed among employees under study.

Keywords: Attitude, Communication, Experience, Qualification.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is vital for organizational development. Two-way communication is effective and it leads to greater job satisfaction and happiness in an organization. This type of communication allows managers to assign duties to employees more effectively, build up strategies for overall growth and development of organization. Managers are better communicators as they spend most of their time in communicating and listening, which improves

attitude and enhances the office culture. It is observed that the employees who are informed and included in decision making process enjoy greater job satisfaction, have a higher self-esteem, and feel valued at work. Creating opportunities and an enabling environment for social interaction in workplace often lead to positive attitude and increased productivity of the employees. Suggestions, recommendations and feedback from the staff should be given due importance and necessary steps may be taken for their happiness (Proctor,2014).

Communication is the key factor in the success of any organization. When it comes to effective communication, there are certain barriers that every organization faces. People often feel that communication is as easy and simple as it sounds. No doubt, but what makes it complex, difficult and frustrating are the barriers that come in its way. Therefore, overcoming communication barriers in organizations is very important. Communication is much more than just trading words. It also encompasses the emotions and intentions of the people involved. Overcoming communication barriers can be achieved through proper training interventions. However, before thinking to improve organizational communication, it becomes essential to assess the factors that make the employees heterogeneous triggering unequal communication.

Most organizations today have a healthy mix of employees from all ages, qualification, races and both the sex. Hence, it is very important to ensure they all work together harmoniously and contribute to organizational success with optimum organizational communication. Diversity and inclusive trainings help organizations groom their employees by embracing their inherent differences to build efficiencies. These training programs may be designed keeping the diversity in background.

Attitude describes the way an employee feels inside, his feelings towards the mandate of the organization, his/her coworkers and his/her position within the organization. Every employee has an attitude towards the environment -- either good or bad. This attitude can also influence how he/she performs. As attitude is an inward feeling, it always remains hidden. The individual should be careful otherwise his/her bad attitude might show in his actions.

The employee attitudes and behaviors impact a lot on organizational change. Accepting the change in any organization is vital for growth and development. The organization must develop a new vision and mission in the workforce before it can adopt the organizational change process. Employers should focus on building mutual trust and relationship with its stake holders. There should be positive attitude and open communication between individuals, involvement of all the stake holders in participatory decision making process, adoption to new improved technology for better output and teamwork in problem etc.(Singh and Gupta,2016)

Attitudes and behaviors shown in the workplace can directly affect the atmosphere and productivity within an organization. Basic need of any institution is to create an environment that's professional and safe. This keeps the employees motivated, wherein they are likely to work hard and successfully complete each assignment. But if the

employees begin to develop a negative or bad attitude, this might translate into poor behavior and malfunction of the institutional mandate.

Organizational commitment and internal satisfaction of the employees are necessary for organizational development. Internal satisfaction helps in accomplishing individual duties and responsibilities in effective manner. Satisfaction leads to commitment towards achieving project objective and goals. Individuals' satisfaction with the existing communication structure in an organisation also affects their success in their business lives. The employees gradually develop a sense of belonging, ownership and commitment towards the organization and make efforts to remain in the organization for long (Elif and Eker, 2013).

Most organizations in their own perspective, adopt diversity with respect to age, sex, qualification and experience at their workplace or organization to become more creative and open to change. Increasing and improving workplace diversity has become an important issue for management in the recent years. Since managing diversity still remains a challenge in organizations, it becomes essential to assess the differences that arise due to such diversity.

Keeping the above facts in backdrop, the present study is envisaged at assessing the socio-academic factors those govern the organizational communication and attitude of employees.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The present study was conducted at Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Odisha. Socio-academic data on 112 employees of three different types of organizations, taken at random were included in the present study.

Data on communication and attitude were collected directly from the respondents through a scheduled questionnaire having 20 questions with close ended multiple choice answers and further grouped according to age, sex, qualification, experience as employee and type of their organization. The highest and lowest score with regard to organizational communication through the questionnaire was estimated as 32 and 16, respectively. Corresponding scores on attitude was estimated as 12 and 4, respectively. The age of respondents was operationalized based on the numbers of years completed as on the date of interview as expressed by them. The respondents were categorized into following three categories on the basis of their distribution over the age. A1 for the age group <30, A2 (31 to 40), A3 (41 to 50) and A4 was assigned for age group of 51 to 60 years. Sex was categorized as S1 for males and S2 for females. Qualification was taken as Q1 (up to graduation), Q2 (post graduation), Q3 (graduate with technical background) and Q4 (Ph.D.), irrespective of discipline of study. Experience was grouped as E1 for experience of <5 years, E2 for 6 to 10, E3 for 11 to 15 and E4 for >15 years of job. Organization was categorized as O1, O2 and O3 for government, NGO and corporate, respectively.

Since the data was distributed unequally over the above subclasses and it was non orthogonal the least squares analysis for 3 way classification without interaction was followed. The statistical model assumed was

$$Y_{ijklm} = \mu + O_i + Q_j + E_k + e_{ijkl} \quad \text{Where,}$$

Y_{ijkl} = 1th observation of the respondent working in Oth organisation possessing Qth qualification and having Eth job experience.

μ = Population mean common to all observations

O_i = Effect of ith organization

Q_j = Effect of jth qualification of the employee

E_k = Effect of kth experience of the employee

e_{ijkl} = Error associated with the measurements which varied with a mean 0 and variance σ^2

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication and attitude scores of employees, influenced by type of organization, age, sex, qualification and experience of employees are presented in Table 1.

Communication

Mean scores on communication of employees were estimated as 22.33±0.75, 25.89±0.76 and 27.26±0.40 for government (O1), NGO (O2) and corporate (O3) employees, respectively against the total average of 25.21±0.42. Further, significant difference was observed between government and non-government organisations with lower values in government organizations. However, no significant difference was recorded between NGO and corporate with regard to communication.

The average scores on communication of employees with age group A1, A2, A3 and A4 were estimated as 21.86±0.74, 23.53±0.75, 26.33±0.77 and 29.13±0.34, respectively. Younger employees showed significantly lower communication values than older ones. Communication scores of employees remained unaffected within 40 years of age. However, getting older, the communication scores significantly improved with age as significant difference was marked between last two age groups. Similar findings were reported by Zenger and Lawrence (1989). This might be due to the fact that, senior employees must have felt ownership with the organization through adaptation with working environment. In contrary, younger employees might have been in the process of trying to shift the organization for better perspective. Employees under similar age group produce a common language and encourage communication within organisation (Triandis, 1960).

In the present study, male and female employees had the communication score as 25.38±0.53 and 24.95±0.71, respectively with no significant difference between the sexes, which corroborates with Dickenson (1993) and Eddleston *et al.* (2006).

Mean communication score of male and female employees with respect to age in different organisations are presented in Fig 1 and Fig 2, respectively indicating better

understanding of the working procedures in organization with higher than lower age group, irrespective of sex and type of organization. But it is also evident that, non-government institutions had better communication than government organisations. Communication scores were found to be 25.57 ± 1.30 , 25.58 ± 0.48 , 22.57 ± 1.19 and 26.00 ± 2.31 for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 qualifications, respectively. The employees possessing technical qualification were proved to be less communicative than other non-technical persons in any organization. The cause might be due to the fact that, this group always tries to find a better scope in changing their organizations, hence, stays little behind in working heartily and lacks the feeling of ownership in any organization till a threshold age, where the scope of change is more or less closed. Further, it is evident from present findings that, degree of qualification does not affect the communication score as the employees had different assignments with regard to their qualifications and the messages on differential responsibility were passed on effectively.

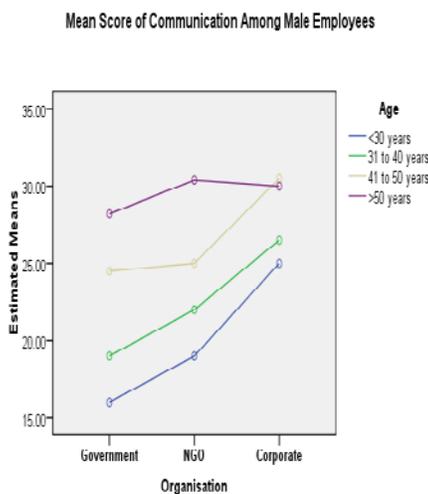


Fig 1. Mean score of communication among male employees

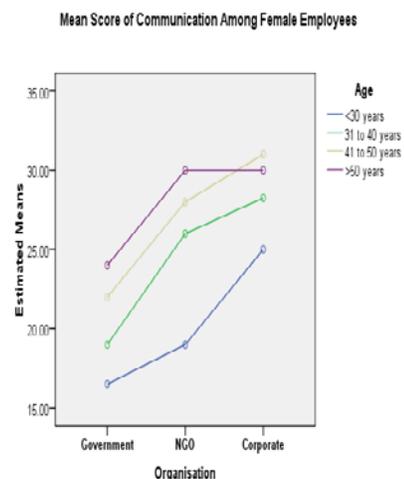


Fig 2. Mean score of female employees

Communication score showed an increasing trend with gain in experience showing average values of 20.57 ± 1.18 , 23.85 ± 0.73 , 24.63 ± 0.69 and 28.82 ± 0.37 for E1, E2, E3 and E4 group, respectively. Significant difference was observed between employees with less than 5 years of experience and other senior groups. No difference was observed among employees having 6 to 15 years of experience. However, employees with more than 15 years of experience recorded highly significant difference with other 3 less experience groups with respect to communication score. Sometimes the project groups became increasingly isolated and keep themselves aloof from inside and outside project activities with increased stability in project membership with increase in experience. Higher stability result in lower communication between

the groups. This reduction in communication affects adversely the overall technical performance of the group as well as the organisation (Katz, 1982)

Attitude

Mean scores on attitude of employees were estimated as $5.39^a \pm 0.19$, $6.94^b \pm 0.16$ and $9.21^c \pm 0.26$ for government (O1), NGO (O2) and corporate (O3) employees, respectively against the total average of 7.21 ± 0.19 . Significant difference was observed between government and non-government organisations with significantly lower values in government organizations. Further, significant difference was recorded between NGO and corporate with regard to communication with higher values in corporate. The style of working and administration in non government sectors might have influenced the attitude of employees in a positive manner.

Table 1. Mean ± SE of scores on communication and attitude of employees in the organization.

Factor	Sub-group	N	Communication	Attitude
	Overall (μ)	112	25.21±0.42	7.21±0.19
Organisatio n	O1	36	22.33 ^a ±0.75	5.39 ^a ±0.19
	O2	38	25.89 ^b ±0.76	6.94 ^b ±0.16
	O3	38	27.26 ^b ±0.40	9.21 ^c ±0.26
Age	A1	28	21.86 ^a ±0.74	8.57 ^a ±0.42
	A2	30	23.53 ^a ±0.75	7.27 ^{ab} ±0.43
	A3	24	26.33 ^b ±0.77	6.42 ^b ±0.28
	A4	30	29.13 ^c ±0.34	7.06 ^{ab} ±0.24
Sex	S1	68	25.38±0.53	7.45±0.30
	S2	44	24.95±0.71	7.05±0.24
Qualification	Q1	14	25.57 ^b ±1.30	6.29 ^a ±0.32
	Q2	80	25.58 ^b ±0.48	7.58 ^b ±0.23
	Q3	14	22.57 ^a ±1.19	6.14 ^a ±0.52
	Q4	4	26.00 ^b ±2.31	7.00 ^b ±0.58
Experience	E1	14	20.57 ^a ±1.18	7.86 ^b ±0.72
	E2	26	23.85 ^b ±0.73	9.00 ^c ±0.36
	E3	38	24.63 ^b ±0.69	6.32 ^a ±0.26
	E4	34	28.82 ^c ±0.37	6.59 ^a ±0.19

*Different superscripts along the column (for a factor) indicate significantly ($P < 0.05$) different values

The average scores on attitude of employees with age group A1, A2, A3 and A4 were estimated as 8.57 ± 0.42 , 7.27 ± 0.43 , 6.42 ± 0.28 and 7.06 ± 0.24 , respectively. However, the employees having 41 to 50 years of age showed significantly lower estimate of attitude than all other age groups. In contrary, the young employees with less than 30 years of age had significantly higher estimates of attitude than all other employees. The depression in attitude after attaining 40 years might be due to the fact that, the employees almost settled in the organization with almost no scope to change the institution for career development. Further after 50 years the ownership concept was in force and the employees might have achieved better attitude. Lawrence (1997) emphasized on how age demography influences organizational outcomes not because of the characteristics of actual age, but because age acquires meaning when people evaluate themselves and others. Zenger *et al.*, 1989 and Rhodes, 1983 suggested that, employees of similar age, regardless of their expertise, status, or tenure in an organization, tend to have common non-work-related experiences. These common experiences outside the workplace produce shared attitudes, interests and beliefs among employees of similar age inside the workplace. Although age similarity may produce similarity in general attitudes about work that facilitate communication, such attitudinal similarity is unlikely to have much direct bearing on conversations about technical work.

Attitude score of male and female employees were estimated as 7.45 ± 0.30 and 7.05 ± 0.24 , respectively with no significant difference between the sexes, which corroborates with Dickenson (1993) and Eddleston *et al.* (2006).

Mean attitude score of male and female employees with respect to age in different organizations are presented in Fig 3 and Fig 4, respectively depicting better and positive attitude among juniors than seniors in non government sectors. In contrary, the juniors are poor in attitude in government organizations. This might be attributed to the fixed hierarchy with possession of authority among seniors. However, the employees between age group of 41 to 50 years showed little poor attitude than other age groups, irrespective of sex in corporate sector. It is also evident that, employees in non-government institutions had better attitude than their counterparts in government organizations.

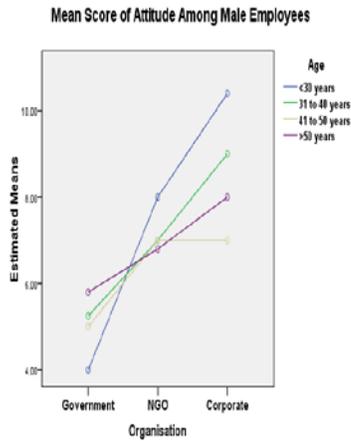


Fig 3. Mean score of attitude among male female employees

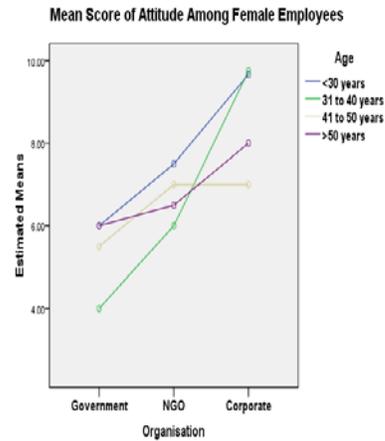


Fig 4. Mean score of attitude among employees

Estimates on attitude were found to be 6.29 ± 0.32 , 7.58 ± 0.23 , 6.14 ± 0.52 and 7.00 ± 0.58 for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 qualifications, respectively. General conception of better attitude among more qualified persons failed here with employees possessing technical qualification in particular. The cause might be explained with nature of technical professionals searching for better career options under different organizations along with such scope under present scenario.

Attitude score showed an increasing trend with gain in experience showing average values of 7.86 ± 0.72 , 9.00 ± 0.36 , 6.32 ± 0.26 and 6.59 ± 0.19 for E1, E2, E3 and E4 group, respectively. Significantly the highest positive attitude was observed among employees with 6 to 10 years of experience followed by the junior most ones. This might be due to the fact that, the fresh recruited employees were selected on the basis of their attitude, which got enriched under working atmosphere of the organization. As age advanced, the attitude got lowed in all organizations, which is somehow in accordance with the findings of Wiyadi (2010).

CONCLUSION

Significant difference was observed between government and non-government organizations with lower values in government organizations for both communication and attitude. Sex had no significant effect on either communication or attitude. The employees possessing technical qualification were found to have poor attitude and found to be less communicative than other non technical persons. Younger employees showed significantly lower scores in communication, but higher estimates of attitude than older ones in all sectors. It was also evident from the study that people in higher age group communicate more often than younger employees. Keeping the above findings in the present study, segmentation of the employees may help designing training modules with an objective of enhancing organizational communication and attitude of employees under human resource development programme.

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