SOME ASPECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION IN INDIA : AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study, being essentially empirical in nature, is based on primary data relating to Indian organizations. The primary data has been collected through a sample survey based on a questionnaire focusing on the following aspects of organizational communication:

(a)   Nature of Communication, focusing on the proportion of working time spent in talking and listening and also the perceived extent of non-verbal communication.

(b)   Communication Content, focusing on the communication of compliments and criticism across levels.

(c)   Communication Outcomes, focusing on the communication goof-ups and the degree of satisfaction with one's communication dealings within the organization.

An attempt has been made in the study to try and examine communication dealings by differentiating between the people working in the Corporate & Academic organizations; and Males & Females.

The study highlights significant differences between males and females in terms of several aspects of organizational communication. There are a few differences in some aspects of organizational communication between the people working in the corporate and academic organizations. In most cases, the differences in the given aspects of organizational communication across categories and levels observed in this study seem to corroborate the broad conceptual patterns emerging from the available literature on organizational communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication plays a crucial role in the functioning of organisations. In fact, just about everything an organization does requires communication. It is an inseparable, essential and continuous process just like the circulatory system in the human body. As a result, communication effectiveness becomes a very vital factor in determining the efficiency with which an organization performs as a whole.

According to Deborah Tannen, communication isn't as simple as saying what you mean. How you say what you mean is crucial, and it generally differs from one person to another, because using language is learned social behaviour: How we talk and listen are deeply influenced by cultural experience. Although we might think that our ways of saying what we mean are natural, we can run into trouble if we interpret and evaluate others as if they necessarily felt the same way we'd feel if we spoke the way we did.

Just as a person's background can influence his or her communication dealings so also the person's sex or occupation can create barriers to effective downward, upward or lateral communication in an organization. While such barriers do not shut communication off completely within an organization; they do affect the nature, content and effectiveness of communication. Thus, the question is one of communication quality – that is, whether the communication occurring in an organization will foster effective performance, satisfaction and development. Organizations need to understand and act upon the barriers that block or distort an effective and smooth flow of communication at various levels in the organisation.

It would be interesting to examine in this context whether the nature and content of communication within an organisation is actually influenced by factors such as the nature of organizational tasks and the gender. The main purpose of this preliminary study is to empirically

examine this aspect of organizational communication. This preliminary study makes an attempt to explore whether there is any difference in the nature and content of organisational communication with respect to the following broad parameters :

1. Nature of the Organisation indicating the occupation and tasks of its employees ; and
2. The Gender of the Communicator.

With respect to the nature of organisation, the two broad categories considered are : the Corporate Organisations and the Academic Organisations. Thus, the study tries to examine communication dealings of the following broad categories of communicators :

(a) People working in the Corporate & Academic organizations; and
(b) Males & Females.

2. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The literature on organizational communication provides a rich conceptual background on issues relating to the influence of gender, and organizational hierarchy on the nature and content of organizational communication.

Each society views and values the roles of men and women in different ways. Conflict occurs when these perspectives clash. According to Fisher, although work of almost all types is much more open to women now than it was even three decades ago, many people still maintain traditional stereotypes about the sexes. According to such stereotypes, women lack, among other things, aggression, independence, decisiveness and ambition; they compensate with high degrees of emotionality, talkativeness, tact, gentleness and sensitivity to others. The male stereotype runs toward the opposite on each trait. Survey findings have revealed that male and female managers are expected to behave differently. Findings of studies by Deborah Tannen and also by

Hair, Friedrich and Shaver corroborate such gender-based differences, which affect organizational communication.

Hair, Friedrich and Shaver have argued that as a result of the differences in role expectations, women are perceived as poor mangers if they do not display the expected female role behaviour, which includes smiling, friendliness, hospitality and nurturing. An outcome of these different perceptions is the phenomenon described as the glass ceiling – a barrier that is not visible but is real enough to keep women from top management positions in many businesses and professions. Many people still feel that many organizational roles, including managerial positions, are more appropriate for men than for women. However, attitudes about women managers have become more favourable in recent years. Nevertheless, gender stereotypes still persist, and most people still view management in largely masculine terms and this in turn influences organizational communication. While this observation is based on the empirical research in the context of developed industrialized nations, it is actually more applicable to similar situations in the less developed countries.

Hierarchy plays an important role in organizational communication. This has been corroborated by the work of Hair, Friedrich and Shaver and also of Fisher. Messages within an organization can be exchanged in three directions: downward, upward and horizontally. Downward communication is the flow of information from superiors to subordinates in the organizational hierarchy. Here the real problem may lie in the differing communication priorities of managers and employees. Upward communication refers to the messages subordinates send to superiors. Here the danger is that employees might generally report only the good news as people are often afraid to admit their own mistakes or to report data that suggest their boss was wrong. Lateral communication is the horizontal flow of messages among peers. Each is essential to effective organizational functioning. The amount of

horizontal communication that occurs through formal channels depends on the degree of interdependence among departments. If the business requires coordinated action by its organizational units, horizontal communication may be frequent and intense. But if each department operates independently, official communication between departments is minimal. Thus, Downward communication commands and instructs; upward communication informs; lateral communication coordinates.

Although formal communication channels are essential in large organizations, they have certain drawbacks for both the company and the individual. Bovee and Thill argue that from the standpoint of the individual, formal communication is often frustrating because it limits access to decision-makers; while from the company's standpoint, the biggest problem with formal communication channels is the opportunity for distortion. Every link in the communication chain opens up a chance for misunderstanding. By the time a message makes its way all the way up or down the chain, it may bear little resemblance to the original idea. As a result lower levels may have only a vague idea of what top management expects of them and executives may get an imperfect picture of what's happening lower down. Apart from being vulnerable to distortion, the formal communication chain has another potential disadvantage: information may become fragmented.

An organization that is less hierarchy oriented is likely to encourage horizontal communication and also diligently practice downward communication. As against this in an organization based on strong hierarchical considerations, the flow of both upward and downward communication would suffer from severe limitations. In the light of the above considerations, it would be interesting to compare the corporate organizations with the academic organizations to explore the kind of differences which may exist with regard to the nature and content of their organizational communication.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study, being essentially empirical in nature, is based on primary data relating to Indian organizations. The primary data has been collected through a sample survey based on a structured questionnaire focusing on the aspects of organizational communication discussed above.

Purposive sampling was used for identifying the respondents. The respondents were drawn from the Corporate and Academic sectors. They were participants in various Management Development Programmes conducted at the Indian Institute of Management during the academic year 2000-2001.

The questionnaires were administered to a total of sixty-five respondents. However, on a detailed scrutiny of the filled in questionnaires, it was found that five of them had given incomplete information and hence these responses could not be used for further analysis. Thus, this study is based on sixty responses obtained from senior personnel of Indian corporate and academic organizations.

The questionnaire (Annexture-1) consists of specific questions relating to the nature, content and outcome of organizational communication. The questionnaire also makes an attempt to understand the hierarchy-related dynamics involved in organizational communication.

The broad category-wise break-up of the sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 : Classification of Sample by Main Categories			
Category	FEMALES	MALES	TOTAL
CORPORATE	8	22	*30*
ACADEMICS	18	12	*30*
TOTAL	*26*	*34*	**60**

Being a purposive sample, an attempt has been made to select a more or less equal number of respondents belonging to the two broad categories. Thus, the sample consists of (a) thirty corporate executives and thirty academicians; and (b) thirty-four males and twenty-six females. The broad age profile of the sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Broad Age Profile of the Sample				
	Below 30	30 to 40	Above 40	Total
MALES :				
Corporate	2	7	13	22
Academics	1	8	3	12
Sub - Total	*3*	*15*	*16*	*34*
FEMALES :				
Corporate	1	6	1	8
Academics	3	9	6	18
Sub - Total	*4*	*15*	*7*	*26*
Corporate - Total	3	13	14	30
Academics - Total	4	17	9	30
GRAND TOTAL	7	30	23	60

It is interesting to observe that the overall age profile of respondents belonging to different categories has turned out to be broadly similar.

In what follows, I present the analysis of the sample responses classified into three parts :

(d)   Nature of Communication, focusing on the proportion of working time spent in talking and listening and also the perceived extent of non-verbal communication.

(e)   Communication Content, focusing on the communication of compliments and criticism across levels.

(f)   Communication Outcomes, focusing on the communication goof-ups, degree of satisfaction with one's communication dealings within the organization.

4.   FINDINGS

The findings of the sample survey are presented below in a tabular form for each of the three broad fields of inquiry. The figures given in each of the tables indicate the category-wise distribution of the sample responses in percentage terms so as to facilitate comparisons across the given categories.

4.1   NATURE OF COMMUNICATION

Table 3 : Proportion of Working Time Spent in Talking & Listening				
Category	*Proportion of working time spent in Talking*			
	Below 40 %	**40 – 60 %**	**60 – 80 %**	**Above 80 %**
Males	35 %	38 %	21 %	6 %
Females	19 %	35 %	31 %	15 %
Corporate	30 %	40 %	23 %	7 %
Academic	27 %	33 %	27 %	13 %
TOTAL	28 %	37 %	25 %	10 %
	Proportion of working time spent in Listening			
Males	62 %	32 %	3 %	3 %
Females	35%	38 %	23 %	4 %
Corporate	57 %	33 %	10 %	-
Academic	43 %	37 %	13 %	7 %
TOTAL	50 %	35 %	12 %	3 %

It is evident from *Table 3* that the sample respondents are spending comparatively more time in talking than listening. Interestingly, this applies to all categories, i.e. males as well as females and corporates as well as academics. However, in the context of listening, female respondents turned out to be better listeners as compared to their male counterparts. In fact, the males working in the corporate sector do not seem to be devoting enough time to listening. This finding is quite noteworthy in the context of the significance of listening as an essential ingredient of organizational communication as brought out by various well-recognized research studies.

Another significant aspect of the nature of communication is non-verbal communication, especially with respect to different levels.

Table 4 (A) : Non-Verbal Communication With the Boss					
Category	*Receiving more than words*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	9 %	6 %	44 %	32 %	9 %
Females	-	15 %	27 %	42 %	15 %
Corporate	-	3 %	34 %	40 %	23 %
Academic	10 %	17 %	40 %	33 %	-
TOTAL	5 %	10 %	37 %	37 %	11 %
	Communicating more than words				
Males	3 %	24 %	38 %	29 %	6 %
Females	4 %	23 %	46 %	27 %	-
Corporate	3 %	23 %	37 %	30 %	7 %
Academic	3 %	23 %	47 %	27 %	-
TOTAL	3 %	23 %	42 %	28 %	3 %

Table 4 (B) : Non-Verbal Communication With the Colleagues					
Category	*Receiving more than words*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	6 %	18 %	44 %	26 %	6 %
Females	4 %	15 %	31 %	46 %	4 %
Corporate	3 %	20 %	43 %	27 %	7 %
Academic	7 %	13 %	33 %	44 %	3 %
TOTAL	5 %	17 %	38 %	35 %	5 %
	Communicating more than words				
Males	6 %	21 %	52 %	12 %	9 %
Females	-	8 %	38 %	50 %	4 %
Corporate	3 %	13 %	54 %	23 %	7 %
Academic	3 %	17 %	40 %	33 %	7 %
TOTAL	3 %	15 %	47 %	28 %	7 %

Table 4 (C) : Non-Verbal Communication With the Subordinates					
Category	Receiving more than words				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	3 %	12 %	50 %	26 %	9 %
Females	8 %	12 %	34 %	38 %	8 %
Corporate	3 %	14 %	60 %	20 %	3 %
Academic	7 %	10 %	27 %	43 %	13 %
TOTAL	5 %	12 %	43 %	32 %	8 %
	Communicating more than words				
Males	6 %	21 %	43 %	21 %	9 %
Females	4 %	27 %	31 %	38 %	-
Corporate	7 %	30 %	43 %	17 %	3 %
Academic	3 %	17 %	33 %	40 %	7 %
TOTAL	5 %	24 %	38 %	28 %	5 %

It is evident from *Tables 4 (A), (B) and (C)* that 90% or more of the respondents in each category use non-verbal communication at all levels. In the context of communication with the boss, non-verbal communication seems to be playing a greater role in receiving messages as compared to sending messages, whereas the same does not apply to the communication with colleagues. Moreover, regardless of the level, non-verbal communication seems to be playing a greater role in the communication dealings of females as compared to males. Also, while receiving messages from the boss, non-verbal communication seems to play a much greater role in the case of corporates as compared to the academics. As against this, non-verbal communication plays a greater role in the case of academics as far as downward and lateral communication is concerned. These findings can be viewed in the context of extensive research in this field indicating that non-verbal communication is often more reliable and more efficient than verbal communication.

4.2   *COMMUNICATION CONTENT*

A major component of messages communicated at various levels in an organization is the communication of compliments and criticisms. Such communication not only affects employee morale but also plays an important role in determining the overall effectiveness of organizational communication.

An important managerial quality is to see the employees and other business associates as individuals and to recognize their contributions. Research on behavioural aspects has shown that people often value praise and compliments more than monetary rewards. Hence, communication of compliments becomes an important tool in effective organizational communication. While compliments can act as motivators, criticisms can become demotivators especially if they are not communicated with due care and proper planning. The basic rules of communicating criticism, identified in the available literature are: (a) don't be guided by hearsay or rumors, (b) don't act in haste, (c) phrase the remarks impersonally, (d) don't criticize in an offhand manner, (e) don't ridicule or use sarcasm, (f) share responsibility, (g) preface the criticism with kind words, (h) while telling what went wrong try and explain how to do it right, and finally (i) end on a friendly note. However, apart from these basic aspects of communication, when, where and how such communication takes place assumes significance.

Thus, in addition to the basic content of communication dealings involving compliments and criticisms, the main aspects of this kind of communication that need to be examined are its frequency, timing, method and place of communication. The findings of the sample survey relating to these aspects are presented in Table 5 (A), (B), (C); Table 6 (A), (B), (C); Table 7 (A), (B), (C); and Table 8.

Table 5 (A) : Frequency of Complimenting & Criticizing the Boss					
Category	*Frequency of Complimenting*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	6 %	12 %	50 %	29 %	3 %
Females	19 %	15 %	24 %	38 %	4 %
Corporate	7 %	13 %	50 %	30 %	-
Academic	17 %	13 %	27 %	36 %	7 %
TOTAL	12 %	13 %	38 %	34 %	3 %
	Frequency of Criticizing				
Males	9 %	35 %	41 %	15 %	-
Females	15 %	15 %	38 %	28 %	4 %
Corporate	13 %	40 %	34 %	10 %	3 %
Academic	10 %	13 %	47 %	30 %	-
TOTAL	12 %	26 %	40 %	20 %	2 %

Table 5 (B) : Frequency of Complimenting & Criticizing Colleagues					
Category	*Frequency of Complimenting*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	6 %	6 %	47 %	35 %	6 %
Females	8 %	4 %	23 %	65 %	-
Corporate	3 %	7 %	50 %	33 %	7 %
Academic	10 %	3 %	23 %	63 %	-
TOTAL	7 %	5 %	37 %	48 %	3 %
	Frequency of Criticizing				
Males	-	26 %	62 %	9 %	3 %
Females	8 %	42 %	38 %	12 %	-
Corporate	3 %	37 %	54 %	3 %	3 %
Academic	3 %	30 %	50 %	17 %	-
TOTAL	3 %	33 %	52 %	10 %	2 %

Table 5 (C) : Frequency of Complimenting & Criticizing Subordinates					
Category	*Frequency of Complimenting*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	6 %	3 %	32 %	50 %	9 %
Females	8 %	4 %	15 %	73 %	-
Corporate	-	3 %	30 %	57 %	10 %
Academic	13 %	3 %	20 %	64 %	-
TOTAL	7 %	3 %	25 %	60 %	5 %
	Frequency of Criticizing				
Males	3 %	21 %	56 %	18 %	3 %
Females	8 %	23 %	58 %	11 %	-
Corporate	3 %	17 %	67 %	10 %	3 %
Academic	6 %	27 %	47 %	20 %	-
TOTAL	5 %	23 %	56 %	15 %	1 %

It is evident from *Table 5 (A)* that with respect to the boss, the frequency of complimenting is higher than that of criticizing for all categories. However, when it comes to communication of criticism, the frequency seems to be higher in the case of females as compared to males and among academics as compared to corporates.

Tables 5 (B) and (C) show that in the case of colleagues as well as subordinates, the frequency of complimenting is higher than that of criticizing across all categories. However, females seem to be more generous in complimenting colleagues as well as subordinates as compared to males. Moreover, academics seem to be more generous in complimenting colleagues as compared to corporates, whereas in the case of subordinates, it is the corporates who seem to be more generous in complimenting.

Table 6 (A) : Timing of Complimenting & Criticizing the Boss			
Category	Timing of Complimenting		
	Immediately	Later	Much Later
Males	38 %	47 %	15 %
Females	38 %	35 %	27 %
Corporate	30 %	53 %	17 %
Academic	47 %	30 %	23 %
TOTAL	38 %	42 %	20 %
	Timing of Criticizing		
Males	21 %	56 %	23 %
Females	30 %	35 %	35 %
Corporate	13 %	57 %	30 %
Academic	37 %	37 %	26 %
TOTAL	25 %	47 %	28 %

Table 6 (B) : Timing of Complimenting & Criticizing Colleagues			
Category	Timing of Complimenting		
	Immediately	Later	Much Later
Males	74 %	20 %	6 %
Females	81 %	15 %	4 %
Corporate	73 %	24 %	3 %
Academic	80 %	13 %	7 %
TOTAL	77 %	18 %	5 %
	Timing of Criticizing		
Males	35 %	65 %	-
Females	46 %	35 %	19 %
Corporate	30 %	63 %	7 %
Academic	50 %	40 %	10 %
TOTAL	40 %	52 %	8 %

Table 6 (C) : Timing of Complimenting & Criticizing Subordinates			
Category	*Timing of Complimenting*		
	Immediately	Later	Much Later
Males	82 %	9 %	9 %
Females	88 %	8 %	4 %
Corporate	97 %	-	3 %
Academic	73 %	17 %	10 %
TOTAL	85 %	8 %	7 %
	Timing of Criticizing		
Males	56 %	35 %	9 %
Females	50 %	35 %	15 %
Corporate	50 %	43 %	7 %
Academic	57 %	27 %	16 %
TOTAL	53 %	35 %	12 %

It is evident from *Tables 6 (A), (B) and (C)* that compliments are conveyed much earlier than the corresponding criticisms at all levels and across all categories.

However, there are notable differences in the timing of such communication with respect to upward communication as compared to downward or lateral communication. On an average, the subordinates and colleagues are complimented almost immediately while such communication with the boss takes longer.

Moreover, females and academics seem to be somewhat quicker in giving feedback to the colleagues as compared to males and corporates respectively. As against this, corporates seem to be quicker in giving feedback to the subordinates as compared to academics.

Table 7 (A) : Method of Complimenting & Criticizing the Boss			
Category	*Method of Complimenting*		
	Direct	Indirect	Talking to others
Males	74 %	15 %	11 %
Females	58 %	7 %	35 %
Corporate	74 %	13 %	13 %
Academic	60 %	10 %	30 %
TOTAL	67 %	11 %	22 %
	Method of Criticizing		
Males	41 %	32 %	27 %
Females	23 %	35 %	42 %
Corporate	40 %	30 %	30 %
Academic	26 %	37 %	37 %
TOTAL	34 %	33 %	33 %

Table 7 (B) : Method of Complimenting & Criticizing Colleagues			
Category	*Method of Complimenting*		
	Directly	Indirectly	Talking to others
Males	88 %	6 %	6 %
Females	70 %	15 %	15 %
Corporate	83 %	10 %	7 %
Academic	77 %	10 %	13 %
TOTAL	80 %	10 %	10 %
	Method of Criticizing		
Males	68 %	24 %	8 %
Females	50 %	35 %	15 %
Corporate	67 %	27 %	6 %
Academic	53 %	30 %	17 %
TOTAL	60 %	28 %	12 %

Table 7 (C) : Method of Complimenting & Criticizing Subordinates			
Category	*Method of Complimenting*		
	Directly	Indirectly	Talking to others
Males	91 %	-	9 %
Females	76 %	12 %	12 %
Corporate	100 %	-	-
Academic	70 %	10 %	20 %
TOTAL	85 %	5 %	10 %
	Method of Criticizing		
Males	73 %	21 %	6 %
Females	62 %	27 %	11 %
Corporate	77 %	23 %	-
Academic	60 %	23 %	17 %
TOTAL	67 %	23 %	8 %

It is evident from *Tables 7 (A), (B) and (C)* that direct communication is the predominant method of conveying compliments at levels and across all categories. However, the females as well as the academics seem to be also relying on the method of talking to others for complimenting the boss to a relatively greater extent as compared to the males and the corporates, respectively; though the most preferred method remains direct communication in all cases.

As against this, in the case of the boss, direct communication of criticism does not seem to be the preferred mode especially in the case of females and academics. Moreover, all categories seem to be more forthright in communicating criticism to subordinates and colleagues as compared to the boss.

Table 8 : Place of Complimenting & Criticizing				
Category	Complimenting		Criticizing	
	In Public	In Private	In Public	In Private
THE BOSS				
Males	32 %	68 %	12 %	88 %
Females	38 %	62 %	19 %	81 %
Corporate	33 %	67 %	7 %	93 %
Academic	37 %	63 %	23 %	77 %
TOTAL	35 %	65 %	15 %	85 %
COLLEAGUES				
	Complimenting		Criticizing	
	In Public	In Private	In Public	In Private
Males	65 %	35 %	15 %	85 %
Females	73 %	27 %	19 %	81 %
Corporate	67 %	33 %	23 %	77 %
Academic	70 %	30 %	10 %	90 %
TOTAL	68 %	32 %	17 %	83 %
SUBORDINATES				
	Complimenting		Criticizing	
	In Public	In Private	In Public	In Private
Males	85 %	15 %	21 %	79 %
Females	88 %	12 %	19 %	81 %
Corporate	93 %	7 %	20 %	80 %
Academic	80 %	20 %	20 %	80 %
TOTAL	87 %	13 %	20 %	80 %

Table 8 shows that people across all categories prefer communicating compliments as well as criticisms to the boss in private, while in the case of colleagues and subordinates, compliments are generally communicated in public while criticism is communicated in private.

4.3   COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES

Two specific aspects of communication outcomes examined in the sample survey are communication goof-ups and the degree of satisfaction with one's communication dealings within the organization.

Table 9 : Frequency & Type of Communication Goof-ups					
Category	*Communicator Goof-ups*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	-	15 %	81 %	4 %	-
Females	5 %	41 %	45 %	9 %	-
Corporate	4 %	29 %	67 %	-	-
Academic	-	25 %	62 %	13 %	-
TOTAL	2 %	27 %	65 %	6 %	-
	Receiver Goof-ups				
Males	4 %	15 %	62 %	19 %	-
Females	-	14 %	72 %	14 %	-
Corporate	4 %	21 %	67 %	8 %	-
Academic	-	8 %	67 %	25 %	-
TOTAL	2 %	15 %	67 %	16 %	-

More than 80% of the sample respondents had faced the problem of communication goof-ups. This phenomenon can be attributed to noise in the communication process and various barriers, which hinder effective organizational communication. Between males and females, the former seems to experience a higher degree of communicator goof-ups. Interestingly there does not seem to be much of a difference between the corporates and the academics with regard to either communicator or receiver goof-ups.

Table 10 : Degree of Satisfaction in Communication Dealings					
Category	*Satisfactory Communication with the Boss*				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Males	3 %	6 %	35 %	50 %	6 %
Females	19 %	12 %	38 %	27 %	4 %
Corporate	10 %	7 %	47 %	33 %	3 %
Academic	10 %	10 %	27 %	46 %	7 %
TOTAL	10 %	8 %	37 %	40 %	5 %
	Satisfactory Communication with the Colleagues				
Males	3 %	3 %	20 %	62 %	12 %
Females	19 %	12 %	12 %	45 %	12 %
Corporate	10 %	7 %	17 %	49 %	17 %
Academic	10 %	7 %	17 %	59 %	7 %
TOTAL	10 %	7 %	17 %	54 %	12 %
	Satisfactory Communication with the Subordinates				
Males	-	3 %	12 %	50 %	35 %
Females	4 %	4 %	12 %	65 %	15 %
Corporate	3 %	3 %	10 %	60 %	24 %
Academic	-	3 %	13 %	54 %	30 %
TOTAL	2 %	3 %	12 %	56 %	27 %

It is evident from *Table 10* that all categories of respondents are more satisfied in their communication dealings with the subordinates and the colleagues as compared to their dealings with the boss. By and large, the overall degree of satisfaction in the communication dealings seems to be less in the case of females as compared to males regardless of the level. However, it is interesting to observe that there is no significant difference between corporates and academics in this regard.

5. CONCLUSION

Organizational communication has been viewed as highly significant by all the respondents without exception. While commenting on the significance of communication at the workplace, many respondents observed that communication is the lifeline of the organization and the overall effectiveness of the organization depends critically on the nature, content and outcome of organizational communication.

Based on the findings of the sample survey, the following preliminary conclusions can be drawn :

- Persons working in the corporate and academic organizations in India spend more time in talking than listening.

- Almost all employees use non-verbal communication at all levels and across all categories.

- Frequency of complimenting is higher than that of criticizing and compliments are also conveyed much earlier than criticisms at all levels and across all categories.

- Most of the employees face the problem of communication goof-ups regardless of the level or the category; though by and large they are satisfied in their communication dealings with their colleagues and subordinates but not so satisfied in their dealings with the boss.

- There are significant differences between males and females in terms of several aspects of organizational communication.

- There are a few differences in some aspects of organizational communication between the people working in the corporate and academic organizations.

In most cases, the differences in the given aspects of organizational communication across categories and levels observed in this study seem to corroborate the broad conceptual patterns emerging from the available literature on organizational communication.

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Some aspects of Organizational Communication

Questionnaire

1. Sex: ❏ Male ❏ Female

2. Age: ❏ below 30 ❏ 30 – 40 ❏ above 40

3. Sector: ❏ Corporate ❏ Academics

4. How much of your working time is spent in talking?
    ❏ below 20% ❏ 20 – 40% ❏ 40 – 60%
    ❏ 60 – 80% ❏ above 80%

5. How much of your working time is spent in listening?
    ❏ below 20% ❏ 20 – 40% ❏ 40 – 60%
    ❏ 60 – 80% ❏ above 80%

6. How often do you find your *boss/colleague/subordinate,* trying to say something more than what his/her words convey?

    Boss: ❏ Never ❏ Rarely ❏ Sometimes
    ❏ Often ❏ Always

    Colleague: ❏ Never ❏ Rarely ❏ Sometimes
    ❏ Often ❏ Always

    Subordinate: ❏ Never ❏ Rarely ❏ Sometimes
    ❏ Often ❏ Always

7. As a communicator do you find yourself communicating ONLY through your words?
    ❏ Yes ❏ No

    If "yes" then go on to Ques. # 9

8. How often do you find yourself communicating beyond the spoken words with your *boss/colleague/subordinate*?

Boss: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
         ❑ Often ❑ Always

Colleague: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
              ❑ Often ❑ Always

Subordinate: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
               ❑ Often ❑ Always

9. Have you ever faced any communication *goof-ups*?
    ❑ Yes   ❑ No

    If "no" then go on to Ques. # 11

10. How often have you faced communication *goof-ups* when you were the *Communicator/Receiver*?

Communicator: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
                 ❑ Often ❑ Always

Receiver: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
             ❑ Often ❑ Always

11. You are satisfied in your communication dealings with your b*oss/colleague/subordinate*?

Boss: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
         ❑ Often ❑ Always

Colleague: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
              ❑ Often ❑ Always

Subordinate: ❑ Never ❑ Rarely ❑ Sometimes
               ❑ Often ❑ Always

12. How often do you find yourself complimenting your b*oss/colleague/subordinate*?

   Boss: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                  ❏ Often   ❏ Always

   Colleague: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                  ❏ Often   ❏ Always

   Subordinate: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                  ❏ Often   ❏ Always

13. Where do you find yourself complimenting your b*oss/colleague/subordinate*?

   Boss: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

   Colleague: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

   Subordinate: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

14. When do you find yourself complimenting your b*oss/colleague/subordinate*?

   Boss: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

   Colleague: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

   Subordinate: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

15. How do you find yourself complimenting your b*oss/colleague/subordinate*?

   Boss: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

   Colleague: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

   Subordinate: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

16. How often do you find yourself criticizing your boss/colleague/subordinate?

   Boss: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                 ❏ Often   ❏ Always

   Colleague: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                 ❏ Often   ❏ Always

   Subordinate: ❏ Never   ❏ Rarely   ❏ Sometimes
                 ❏ Often   ❏ Always

17. Where do you find yourself criticizing your boss/colleague/subordinate?

   Boss: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

   Colleague: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

   Subordinate: ❏ in public   ❏ in private

18. When do you find yourself criticizing your boss/colleague/subordinate?

   Boss: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

   Colleague: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

   Subordinate: ❏ immediately   ❏ later   ❏ much later

19. How do you find yourself criticizing your boss/colleague/subordinate?

   Boss: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

   Colleague: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

   Subordinate: ❏ directly   ❏ indirectly   ❏ talking to others

20. Your communication with your *Boss/Colleague/Subordinate* comprises of what proportion of the following elements?

ELEMENT (indicating the nature of communication)	PROPORTION (indicating the % weightage in your total communication - adding up to 100)		
	Boss	*Colleague*	*Subordinate*
Instructions			
Suggestions			
Complimenting			
Criticizing			
Expressing concern			
Casual talk			
Avoiding			

21. What in your opinion is the significance of communication in your workplace?