

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Organisational structure is a variegated phenomenon, and it consists of features that characterise a bureaucratic form of organisation such as formal communications, hierarchy of authority, division of labour, rules and specifications of functions (Weber, 1947), alternative modes of departmentalisation (Chandler, 1962; Galbraith, 1972; Simon, 1960; Thompson, 1967), routines and performance programmes (March and Simon, 1958) and durable and formal mechanisms for reducing decision-making uncertainty for facilitating the performance of diversified activities (Khandwalla, 1973).

The volume of recent Indian work on organisational structure is small but steadily growing. Much of this work has concentrated on different types of structures, hierarchy of authority (with its variant of centralisation) and its consequences and functional and role specification and its consequences.

Maheshwari and Malhotra (1977) have identified a number of structures in a longitudinal study of seven large companies. Although

most companies started with a functionally departmentalised structure and those that had regularly diversified tended to adopt an area structure beneath a functional one. Several organisations expanded their functional structures to incorporate newer functions like, personnel, marketing, corporate finance, liason, internal audit and organisation and methods.

Bhat (1984) has discussed several forms of decentralised super-structures such as the sectoral or regional, functional and divisional and sought to predict their impact on quantity, concern and quality concern orientation of managers. He has predicted that the sectoral or regional sector will breed-out orientation because of competition between sector divisions, while a functional set-up will stress quality relatively more.

Narain (1981) has identified some differences in the structures of five large public enterprises. He has found considerable variation in corporate (i.e. head-quarters) staff.

Jose M. Peiri (1983) says that wider perspective of structure that includes interactive patterns (power communication, contact, workflow and so on) and super structure (culture, values, organisational paradigms and myths, several intermediate processes are relevant between organisation and individual behaviour. The analysis of these processes may contribute to clarifying the influence of

organisational structure on individual behaviours and attitudes and also to the structuring processes of organisation. There is a mutual and partial determination between individuals and organisation.

ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is considered to be the backbone of the organisations. The entire process of inputs and outputs of organisations is likely to be mediated through communication. The structure, extensiveness, and scope of organisations are almost entirely determined by communication techniques (Bernard, 1938). It may be impossible to influence any decision within an administrative process without communication (Simpson, 1957). Various components of an organisation and also between organisations, such as its size, its differentiated structure and its ability to handle decisions in a co-ordinated manner are supposed to relate each other atleast in part through communication. (Guetzkow, 1965). They are supposed to be related to communication. It is possible for example, that message passing from one person to another is inversally proportional to the distance between them (Miller, 1951; French, 1956) used digraph theory to demonstrate that the exercise of power is contingent upon communication-connections. There may be a congruence of power and communication-structures. May be even "the sooner the person speaks the more influence he will have" (French, 1956). Staff-employees have wider formal communication contacts than line-employees, and within each function, high hierarchical levels have

wider formal-communication contact than low hierarchical levels (Zagone, and Wolfe 1963). When individuals communicate serially messages - spread irregularly arriving at different locations in the organisations at different times. This fact may have its own implications for the functioning of the individuals in their relation to each other.

It has been observed that for the initial awareness "stage of receiving information, the mass-media are most efficient than interpersonal relations, but the reverse is true for the stage of acceptance (Katz, Levin, and Hamilton, 1963)". In large organised groups, the only source or the destination of many messages is distinct and known to the participants. Correctness of message is therefore, delayed. There, more reliance has to be placed upon the written word. That means, in such organisations, media like company paper, bulletin, notice boards, etc., are important.

While the above noted well-known variables are important, there is a possibility of culture playing its own critical role in communication. For example, Bales (1953) suggested Monto Carlo technique for generation of input-output matrices by postulation of "proactive" and "reactive" tendencies in formulation, a model of equilibrium in small groups. Such tendencies are based on, in part, upon the wide-spread custom in American culture that when one is addressed, one usually responds. In contrast, in Indian culture, a junior person (in age or position) is not expected to reply back to his

senior. Rekha Agarwal (1974) for example, reported that the flow of communication is restricted in Indian organisations because of larger status differentials. In western system, the lower level employees might not be able to communicate freely to their superiors but they feel bad about it in Indian context. While the western reason is also partly true but more important is the fact that Indian employees do not feel acutely bad about situation. Singhal (1973) reported that information travelled mostly downward and sideways (L - shaped) and seldom upward.

Timmappaya (1971) tried to differentiate good and bad Indian Hospitals on the basis of ward social systems. Inter-role perceptions, catering services and communication pattern, attainment patient maintenance, tension management and integrative and adaptive functions were more satisfying variable for the patients.

Chattopadhyaya (1974) observed that (only) when communication is relevant it helps to improve motivation and organisational climate. Only Dayal (1974) has highlighted the importance of better communication for effectiveness of Educational Institutions.

The above noted facts suggested two situations, only few research attempts have been made in the Indian set-up to study the effect of communication in general and organisations in particular. For example Sinha (1972) in his review of Industrial Psychology in India,

could locate only nine publications related to organisational communications. Out of these nine papers, five papers were of theoretical type and only few were research articles. For a later review of organisational psychology, researches in India for 1971 to 76. J.B.P. Sinha (1981) was able to locate only five organisational communications related to research articles. Research findings in India are equivocal about the role of communications in effectiveness of organisation.

Communication within the organisation helps organisational members to understand the organisation and variety of organisational tasks and means for accomplishing them. The socialisation of the members in the norms, values and practices of the organisation etc. Through social information processing (Salancik and Pfeffer 1978). Communication also facilitates the job attitudes and thus affects morale and motivation. Thus, organisational communication is important integrative attitude shaping variable. Choudhary (1978) has studied downward communications in a large public sector organisation with the help of questionnaire. His sample consisted of 60 managers from higher, middle and lower management level.

He has observed that the magnitude of the downward communication tended to increase as one ascended the hierarchy and the contact of communication also differed. Higher level managers tended to communicate downwards more task directives than lower level managers, while downward nurturant communication (e.g. suggestions to help subordinates) tended to be more frequent at lower levels.

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