



ASSESSING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY OF WORKING MANAGERS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- Objective of this research paper is to assess communication competency of Working Managers.

Research Methodology- 273 Respondents were selected by using random sampling method from various parts of Delhi-NCR. Structured questionnaire was designed to assess communication competency of working managers. Statistical tools like mean, t-test, F-test (ANOVA) are used to analyze data with the help of SPSS.

Findings: Results show that, communication competency of working managers differ significantly for demographic variables like gender, work experience, position in the organization etc. Male managers possess better communication competencies as compare to female managers. Managers working at managerial positions are better in communication competency than managers at supervisory level.

Implications- It is clear that working managers in Delhi-NCR are not very much competent in communication competency. Organizations should focus on developing soft skills, more efficient training and development programs etc. in order to improve communication skills of their employees.

Keywords: Managerial Competencies, Communication Competency, Assessing.

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Human resource is the most important resource for an organization. Effective and efficient managers are vital for any organization's success, regardless of its nature and size. To be an efficient and successful manager one needs several competencies that enable him to perform proficiently at different managerial positions (Bhardwaj and Punia, 2013). Competencies may be defined as the set of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that a person needs to be efficient and successful in his job.

According to Hellriegel et. al. (2005), Managerial competencies are “a set of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that a person needs to be effective in a wide range of positions and various types of organizations.” They also recommended that to be a successful manager one needs to develop six core managerial competencies namely: Communication Competency, Planning and Administration Competency, Teamwork Competency, Strategic Action Competency, Global Awareness Competency, and Self-Management Competency. Current study primarily focuses Communication Competency of Working managers.

Communication is the most important element in human relationships. It is the fundamental need of all human beings. Effective communication is necessary to build organizations and societies at large. In simple words, communication means transfer of information along with understanding. According to Hellriegel et al. (2005) the term communication competency refers to “the effective transfer and exchange of information that leads to understanding between oneself and others.” Schultz et al. (2003) contends that communication is an activity that takes up most of the time of both managers and non-managers. Kelly (2000) advocates that organizational communication is the process of exchanging information between two or more people with the target of either motivating them or influencing their behavior. Communication competency is essential for effective managerial performance because managers need to direct other people in order to get the work done.

Communication competency is the most fundamental of managerial competencies. It has the following sub-dimensions:

- Informal Communication

- Formal Communication
- Negotiation

Shirazi and Mortazavi (2009) in their study found that responsiveness, effective communication, team building, proactiveness, negotiation, and decisiveness are the main characteristics of an effective manager. The study of Rao (2007) identified that Job knowledge, hard work, effective communication skills, team skills, calmness are the main skills of good managers. In their study, Abraham et. al. (2001) identified six most critical competencies that are leadership skills, communication skills, customer focus, result orientation, problem solver, and team leader to be an effective manager.

Organizations should assess competencies of their managers and find out the skill gaps. Since the competencies are behavioral, these can be developed (Boyatzis, 2009).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology designed and followed in the current study has been discussed under the following sub-heads:

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this paper is to assess the communication competency of working managers. The specific sub-objectives of the study are as following:

1. To assess communication competency of working managers.
2. To suggest workable guidelines for improving the communication of working managers.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. There is no significant difference across various age groups of working managers for the communication competency.
2. There is no significant difference between working managers of different gender for the communication competency.
3. There is no significant difference across various experienced groups of working managers for the communication competency.
4. There is no significant difference between working managers of different serving sector for the communication competency.

- There is no significant difference between working managers having different positions in organisations for the communication competency.

Research Design

Since the current study is related to assessment of the communication competency of working managers, so exploratory cum descriptive research design has been used in the current study.

Sampling Design and data collection

In the current study, random sampling method is used to collect data from 273 working managers across various parts of Delhi-NCR.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Statistical tools like mean, t-test, F-test (ANOVA) were applied on the data using SPSS. Test of significance has been used to check the significance of hypothesis assumed.

Table 1: Communication Competency on the basis of Age of Working Managers

Particulars	Mean values comparison						ANOVA test statistics	
	21-26 years	27-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	more than 40 years	Total	F-value	Sig.
N (Number of respondents)	29	99	97	34	14	273		
Informal Communication	3.5448	3.5091	3.6144	3.5529	3.7714	3.5692	.422	.793
Formal Communication	3.5448	3.5980	3.6742	3.6529	3.7571	3.6344	.319	.865
Negotiation	3.7241	3.5980	3.7443	3.5471	3.7143	3.6630	.668	.615
Communication Competency	3.6046	3.5684	3.6777	3.5843	3.7476	3.6222	.417	.797

Source: Primary data

Table 1 examines the association between age and communication competency of working managers. Communication competency has three sub-dimensions ‘informal communication’, ‘formal communication’, and ‘negotiation’. Comparison of mean values across different age groups indicates that competency level of working managers does not differ much

with the age of respondents, which means that working managers of different age groups possess similar level of communication competency.

F-statistics also indicates that competency level of working managers does not have a significant difference among different age groups. This difference is also not significant for all the sub-dimensions of communication competency. So the table 1 reveals that age does not contribute any significant variation in communication competency levels of working managers of different age groups.

Table 2: Communication Competency on the basis of Gender of Working Managers

Particulars	Mean values		Mean Difference	t-test for Equality of Means	
	Male	Female		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
N (Number of respondents)	160	113			
Informal Communication	3.6675	3.4301	.23741	2.364	.019*
Formal Communication	3.7375	3.4885	.24900	2.704	.007*
Negotiation	3.7250	3.5752	.14978	1.553	.122
Communication Competency	3.7100	3.4979	.21206	2.429	.016*

Source: Primary data

*significant at .05 level of significance

Table 2 depicts that whether gender brings any significant variation in competency level of working managers for communication competency and its sub-dimensions. Comparison of mean values between male and female working managers indicates that competency level of male and female working managers for ‘negotiation’ dimension does not vary so much, which mean that working managers of both genders possess similar level of negotiation skills. For the remaining two dimensions ‘informal communication’ and ‘formal communication’ and for overall communication competency male and female working manager possess different level of competency. Comparison of mean values also indicates that male working managers are more competent in communication competency than female working managers.

The t-statistics also indicates that competency level of working managers does not have a significant difference between male and female working managers for ‘negotiation’ dimension. This difference is significant for ‘informal communication’ and ‘formal communication’ sub-dimensions.

Table 3 gauges the communication competency level of working managers across various experience groups. Comparison of mean values across different experience groups indicates that competency level of working managers vary for the dimensions ‘informal communication’ and ‘formal communication’, which means that working managers having different levels of experience possess different level of competency for these dimensions. For ‘negotiation’ dimension, all the working managers irrespective of their level of experience possess similar level of skills. Communication competency varies with different experience level possessed by working managers. Working managers with more experience are more competent in communication than lesser experienced working managers

Table 3: Communication Competency on the basis of Work Experience of Working Managers

Particulars	Mean values comparison						ANOVA test statistics	
	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-9 years	10-12 years	more than 12 years	Total	F-value	Sig.
N (Number of respondents)	15	155	68	17	18	273		
Informal Communication	3.1733	3.5045	3.7471	3.4588	3.8889	3.5692	2.717	.030*
Formal Communication	3.3333	3.5406	3.8353	3.5882	3.9778	3.6344	3.437	.009*
Negotiation	3.4000	3.6142	3.8059	3.5765	3.8444	3.6630	1.427	.225
Communication Competency	3.3022	3.5531	3.7961	3.5412	3.9037	3.6222	2.938	.021*

Source: Primary data

*significant at .05 level of significance

Further, F-statistics indicates that competency level of working managers have a significant difference among differently experienced groups. This difference is not significant for the sub dimension ‘negotiation’, whereas for ‘informal communication’ and ‘formal communication’ this difference is significantly different. So the table 3 reveals that level of

experience contributes a significant variation in competency levels of working managers for communication competency.

Table 4 indicates that whether serving sector of working managers brings any significant variation in competency level of working managers for communication competency and its sub-dimensions. Comparison of mean values between manufacturing and service sector working managers indicates that competency level does not vary for all the dimensions of communication competency, which means that service sector of the working managers does not produce variation in level of communication competency. The t-statistics also depicts that competency level of working managers does not have a significant difference between manufacturing and service sector working managers for communication competency.

Table 4: Communication Competency on the basis of Serving Sector of Working Managers

Particulars	Mean values		Mean Difference	t-test for Equality of Means	
	Manufacturing	Service		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
N (Number of respondents)	90	183			
Informal Communication	3.6578	3.5257	.13209	1.246	.214
Formal Communication	3.7289	3.5880	.14091	1.447	.149
Negotiation	3.7156	3.6372	.07840	.773	.440
Communication Competency	3.7007	3.5836	.11713	1.271	.205

Source: Primary data

Table 5: Communication Competency on the basis of Position of Working Managers in the Organization

Particulars	Mean values		Mean Difference	t-test for Equality of Means	
	Managerial	Supervisory		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
N (Number of	219	54			

respondents)					
Informal Communication	3.6146	3.3852	.22943	1.840	.067
Formal Communication	3.7032	3.3556	.34764	3.065	.002*
Negotiation	3.7233	3.4185	.30477	2.575	.011*
Communication Competency	3.6804	3.3864	.29395	2.731	.007*

Source: Primary data

*significant at .05 level of significance

The table 5 shows that whether position of the working managers brings any significant variation in competency level of working managers for communication competency and its sub-dimensions. Mean values comparison between managerial and supervisory working managers indicates that competency level of managerial and supervisory working managers does not vary for ‘informal communication’ dimension, which means that working managers having different position possess similar level of informal communication. For the remaining dimensions ‘formal communication’ and ‘negotiation’ and for overall communication competency managerial and supervisory working managers possess different level of communication competency. Comparison of mean values also indicates that working managers at managerial position are more competent than working managers at supervisory position for ‘formal communication’ and ‘negotiation’ and for overall communication competency.

The t-statistics further indicates that competency level of working managers does not have a significant difference between managerial and supervisory working managers for ‘informal communication’ dimension. This difference is significant for ‘formal communication’ and ‘negotiation’ and for overall communication competency. So the table 5 depicts that variation in position of the working managers at organization contributes significant variation in communication competency levels of working managers.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis has revealed that work experience has emerged as a significant differentiator for communication competency for working managers. Working managers having high experience possess higher level of communication competency than having lesser

experience. Male managers are more competent than female managers and there is a significant difference between male and female managers on the basis of Gender. Managers working at managerial positions are superior in communication competency than their counterparts working as supervisors. Managers working in manufacturing and service sectors possess similar level of planning and administration competency. It can be seen from the results that Working managers are at the above average level of planning and administration competency.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Communication competency is the most fundamental of managerial competencies. One need to be proficient in these skills is order to be an effective and efficient manager. But from the findings it is quite obvious that Working managers in Delhi-NCR are not very competent in communication competency, which indicates some limitation with the current education system and training and development programs provided by the organizations to their employees. It focuses more on increasing the productivity of the employees. Organizations should focus on developing more soft skill development programs, mentoring, coaching, training sessions etc. in order to improve communication competency of their employees. Managers must emphasize on developing soft skills, formal and informal communication as well as negotiation skills so that they can become more valuable asset for the organizations.

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