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COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF WOMEN EXECUTIVES: A STUDY



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ABSTRACT

Professionals who communicate effectively and confidently go further faster in their careers than those who don't. Today more than ever, top-notch communication skills are an absolute must if you want to get ahead professionally. It is evident that successful women executives possess good communication skills. Among the various managerial and business skills, effective communication skills plays a vital role towards success achievement of women executives.

KEYWORDS : *communication skills, women executives, successful, managerial.*

INTRODUCTION :

Communication is an important facet of life. Communication skills are essential in all spheres of life. Be it an interview or dealing with the project leader or working out a solution with a team or writing a report, getting across the point effectively is what matters.

The success of an endeavour depends on the ability to communicate effectively in today's fast paced life, everyone is asked to do more with less. In such a scenario effective communication holds the key. Effective communication centers round the usage of words, speed of delivery of words, pitch modulation and body language. Using the right tools to communicate the right messages at the right time can avoid crises and motivate people to work towards success. Truly said, communication works but for those who work at it.

People in organisations usually spend 75 percent of their daily time on communication through writing, reading, listening, speaking, inter-debate etc. Effective communication is an essential component for organisation success, whether it is the interpersonal intra group organisation or external levels.

In the present day information revolution and formation of knowledge societies, centres etc, the importance of communication has increased manifold. The importance of communication management and in day to day life of people can be judge from the following points:

- Motivates the people for a purpose.

- Communications helps the administration in arriving quick decision and implementation.
- Good communication is essential for proper planning and coordination.
- A Manager's/ Executive's success is conditioned by his ability to understand the needs and requirements of both employees and customers.
- Better communication helps better job performance.
- Effective and timely communication promotes cordial relations and work culture among the employees for increasing production and creates healthy and happy environment within and outside the organisation.

'Communication' is a key instrument to create relations, to strengthen relations between the two people or a group of people. Without communication methods, there cannot be good human relations and human relations require effective communication methods, tools, positive words, skills etc.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.To study the role of effective communication skills in achieving success for women executives.
- 2.To study the nature of non-verbal communication skills of women executives.
- 3.To study the suitability of methods of communication used by women executives.
- 4.To study whether women executives in different economic sector possess similar communication skills.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted in four districts of western Maharashtra viz. Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur and Pune. The study is purely based on primary data collected from women executives working in the five sectors viz. Education, Banking, Insurance, Medical and Manufacturing Industry. The primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire and observation method. For the present study 300 women executives from different sectors were interviewed and were also asked to fill up the questionnaire.

SELECTION OF SAMPLE SIZE

Different sources were used for getting the population of women executives working in the Education, Banking, Insurance, Medical and Manufacturing Industry. From the education sector, the Principals of Colleges and the Administrative officers in the Universities were selected.

In the Banking sector, Bank Managers were selected from selected banks viz. The Karad Urban Cooperative Bank Ltd., State Bank of India, Bank of Maharashtra, Bank of India, and Saraswat Bank.

In the insurance sector L.I.C Branch Managers and Officers were selected. In the Medical sector, Doctors were selected and in the industry sector, women managers and CEOs of manufacturing industries were selected.

Where the number of women is less than 50, 20% of the women were considered for the study. In case where there are more than 100 women in a particular area, 10% of the women are taken as sample size. However, in some cases where information was available, higher percentages of women were selected.

The selection was done on the basis of Cluster and Purposive sampling technique. The sample size was decided on a percentage basis of the universe.

Hypothesis: There is significant association of communication skill possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Tools of Analysis

The collected data is analysed with the help appropriate statistical tools such as, percentages, bar diagrams and chi square test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

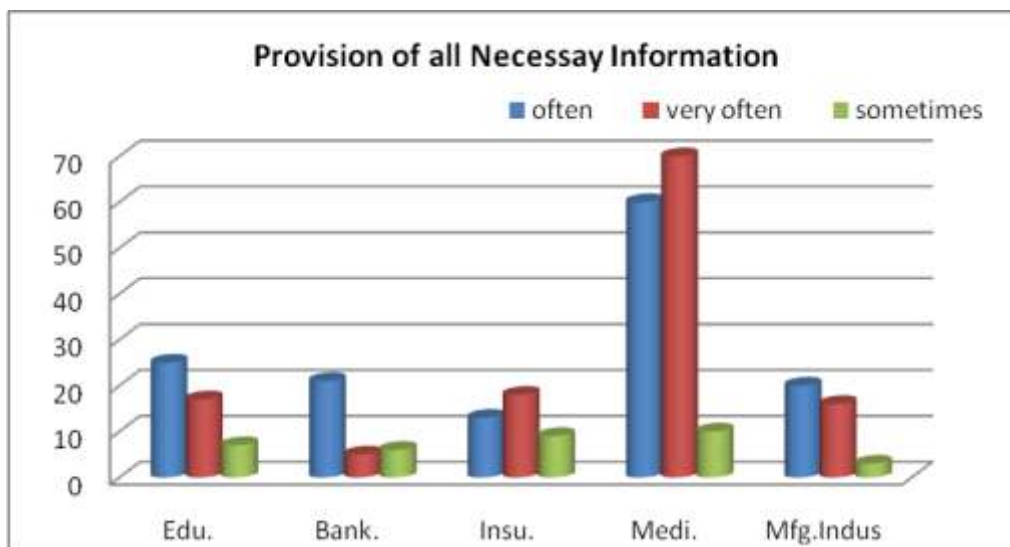
Section I: Hypothesis Testing

Table No. 1
Communication Skills : Provision of Necessary Information

Communication Skills	Sect.	Often						Very Often						Sometimes						Total
		Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	
Provision of all Necessary Information	Edu.	8	6	5	7	26	18.44	3	5	5	3	16	12.90	1	3	2	1	7	20.00	49
	Bank.	2	3	15	1	21	14.89	2	0	0	3	4.03	1	2	0	3	6	17.14	32	
	Insu.	2	4	3	4	13	9.22	7	1	7	3	18	14.52	0	1	7	1	9	25.71	40
	Medi.	5	5	43	8	61	43.26	11	6	42	10	69	55.65	2	1	7	0	10	28.57	140
	Mfg. Indus.	2	4	7	7	20	14.18	3	3	8	2	16	12.90	3	0	0	0	3	8.57	39
	Total	19	22	73	27	141	100.00	26	15	62	21	124	100.00	7	7	16	5	35	100.00	300
	%	6.33	7.33	24.33	9.00	47.00		8.67	5.00	20.67	7.00	41.33		2.33	2.33	5.33	1.67	11.67		100

Source: Primary Data

GRAPH NO: 1



The most important ingredient of communication is the information that has to be communicated. An executive has to provide all the necessary information required for communication, he/she should have the ability to understand the body language of people, and should be able to select the best method that is suitable for the communication in order to ensure that proper message is communicated to the recipients.

Table No.1 shows that 47% of the respondents Often provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 6.33% are from Satara district, 7.33% are from Sangli district, 24.33% from Pune district and 9% are from Kolhapur district. 41.33%

respondents Very Often provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 8.67% are from Satara district, 5% are from Sangli district, 20.67% from Pune district and 7% are from Kolhapur district. 11.67% respondents sometimes provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 2.33% are from Satara and Sangli district each, 5.33% are from Pune district and 1.67% are from Kolhapur district.

Out of the total respondents, 141 often provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 18.44% are from the Education sector, 14.89% from Banking sector, 9.22% from Insurance sector, 43.26% from Medical sector and 14.18% are from the Manufacturing Industry. 124 respondents out of the total say that they Very Often provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 12.90% are from the Education and Manufacturing Industry each, 4.03% from the Banking sector, 14.52% from the Insurance sector and 55.65% are from the Medical sector.

It is seen that 35 respondents out of the sometimes provide all the necessary information and details to make sure that the message is understood, out of which, 20% respondents are from the Education sector, 17.14% from the Banking sector, 25.71% from the Insurance sector, 28.57% from the Medical sector and 8.57% are from the Manufacturing Industry.

It is apparent that majority of the women executives ensure that they provide all the necessary information i.e. the facts, figures, references, the required details, descriptions etc. while communicating with others.

Statistical Interpretation:

Ho: There is no significant association of communication skill (Provision of all Necessary Information) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

H1: There is significant association of communication skill (Provision of all Necessary Information) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Chi-square = 21.319; degree of freedom = 0; P = 0.000

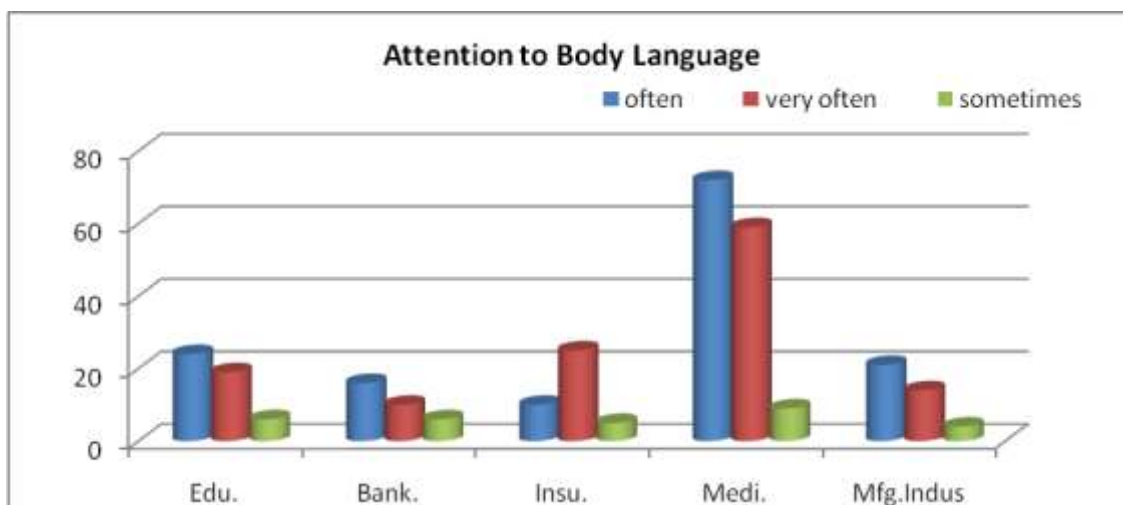
Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. Therefore, there is significant association of communication skill (Provision of all Necessary Information) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Table No. 2
Communication Skills : Attention to Body Language

Communication Skills	Sect.	Often						Very Often						Sometimes						Total
		Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	
Attention to Body Language	Edu.	6	7	4	7	24	17.14	4	6	5	4	19	14.18	2	1	3	0	6	23.08	49
	Bank.	2	3	7	4	16	11.43	2	0	6	3	11	8.21	1	2	2	0	5	19.23	32
	Insu.	4	3	0	3	10	7.14	5	2	14	4	25	18.66	0	1	3	1	5	19.23	40
	Medi.	8	8	47	6	69	49.29	8	3	42	12	65	48.51	2	1	3	0	6	23.08	140
	Mfg. Indus.	4	2	9	6	21	15.00	4	4	4	2	14	10.45	0	1	2	1	4	15.38	39
	Total	24	23	67	26	140	100.00	23	15	71	25	134	100.00	5	6	13	2	26	100.00	300
	%	8.00	7.67	22.33	8.67	46.67		7.67	5.00	23.67	8.33	44.67		1.67	2.00	4.33	0.67	8.67		100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.2



Non verbal communication is an important form of communication, which includes Body Language. Lot of information is communicated by gestures and actions. Therefore it is very important to pay attention to the body language in the communication process.

The above table shows that out of the total respondents, 46.67% say that they Often pay attention to body language of people, 44.67% say that they Very Often pay attention to body language of people, and 8.67% say that they Sometimes pay attention to body language of people in the communication process.

140 respondents out of the total 300 respondents say that they Often pay attention to body language of people, out of which 17.14% respondents are from Education sector, 11.43% from Banking sector, 7.14% from Insurance sector, 49.29% from Medical sector and 15% are from the Manufacturing Industry.

134 respondents out of the total 300 respondents, say that they Very Often pay attention to body language of people, out of which 14.18% respondents are from Education sector, 8.21% from Banking sector, 18.66% from Insurance sector, 48.51% from Medical sector and 10.45% are from the Manufacturing Industry.

26 respondents out of the total 300 respondents, say that they Sometimes pay attention to body language of people, out of which 23.08% respondents are from Education sector, 19.23% from Banking sector and Insurance sector each, 23.08% from Medical sector and 15.38% are from the Manufacturing Industry.

It is seen that majority of the women executives give importance to body language i.e. facial expressions, use of signs, gestures etc. while communicating with others.

Along with verbal communication, body language also gives out certain unspoken messages and information, which the women executives should be capable of understanding which can make the communication process more meaningful and effective.

STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION:

Ho: There is no significant association of communication skill (Attention to Body Language) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

H1: There is significant association of communication skill (Attention to Body Language) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Chi-square = 17.173; degree of freedom = 7; P = 0.002

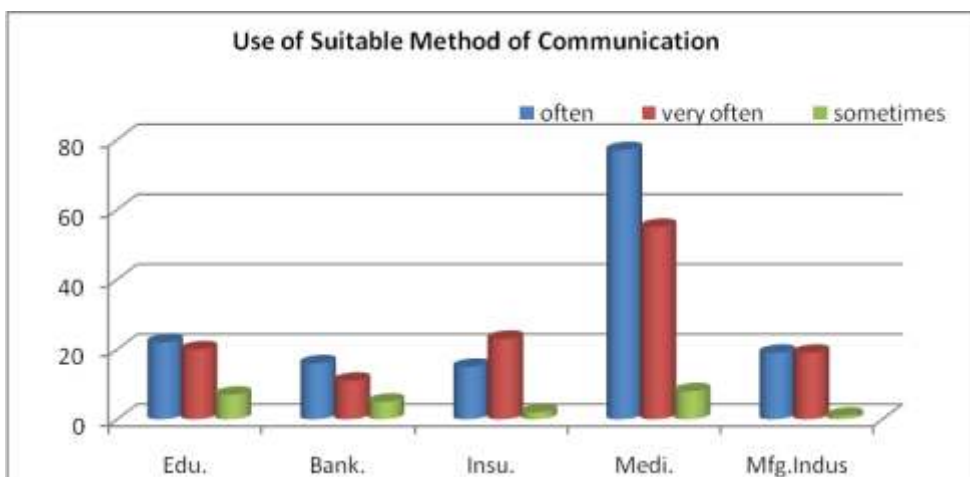
Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. Therefore, there is significant association of communication skill (Attention to Body Language) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Table No. 3
Communication Skills : Use of Suitable Method of Communication

Communication Skills	Sect.	Often						Very Often						Sometimes						Total
		Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	Sat	Sgl	Pune	Kop	Total	%	
Use of Suitable Method of Communication	Edu.	6	6	5	6	23	15.03	4	5	4	5	18	14.40	2	3	3	0	8	36.36	49
	Bank.	2	1	10	3	16	10.46	3	2	3	3	11	8.80	0	2	2	1	5	22.73	32
	Insu.	4	2	7	2	15	9.80	5	3	10	5	23	18.40	0	1	0	1	2	9.09	40
	Medi.	7	5	59	9	80	52.29	9	6	33	6	54	43.20	2	1	0	3	6	27.27	140
	Mfg. Indus.	3	3	9	4	19	12.42	4	4	6	5	19	15.20	1	0	0	0	1	4.55	39
	Total	22	17	90	24	153	100.00	25	20	56	24	125	100.00	5	7	5	5	22	100.00	300
	%	7.33	5.67	30.00	8.00	51.00		8.33	6.67	18.67	8.00	41.67		1.67	2.33	1.67	1.67	7.33		100

Source: Primary Data

Graph No.2



Modern technology have gifted us a large number of efficient, speedy and effective modes of communication like, telephone, telefax, e-mail, etc. However, a single mode may not be always suitable for different people and situations. An executive has to select the best mode so as to communicate the desired information effectively.

The best method of communication can be decided on the basis of richness of communication medium. Various communication channels are available viz. face to face, video conference, telephone, instant messaging, e-mail, weblogs, newsletters, and financial statements. The media richness is highest in face to face communication and it is leanest at financial statements. One has to use the rich media when the communication situation is non-routine an ambiguous, and requires transmission of large volume of information with immediate feedback. For routine situations, lean media can be used. The executives must be capable of quickly determining the best communication channels for a situation and should be flexible enough to use different methods as the occasion requires.

The above table shows that out of the total respondents, 51% say that before sending a message, they Often think about the best way to communicate it, 41.67% say that before sending a

message, they Very Often think about the best way to communicate it, and 7.33% say that before sending a message, they Sometimes think about the best way to communicate it.

Statistical Interpretation:

Ho: There is no significant association of communication skill (Use of suitable method of communication) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

H1: There is significant association of communication skill (Use of suitable method of communication) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

Chi-square = 17.35; degree of freedom = 7; P = 0.002

Ho is rejected and H1 is accepted. Therefore, there is significant association of communication skill (Use of suitable method of communication) possessed by women executives in different sectors.

CONCLUSION:

It is clear that most of the women executives take care that they use the best way of communication including verbal as well as non verbal forms, before sending a message to others so that the message is properly communicated in the intended meaning without creating any distortions or misunderstandings using the right channels.

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