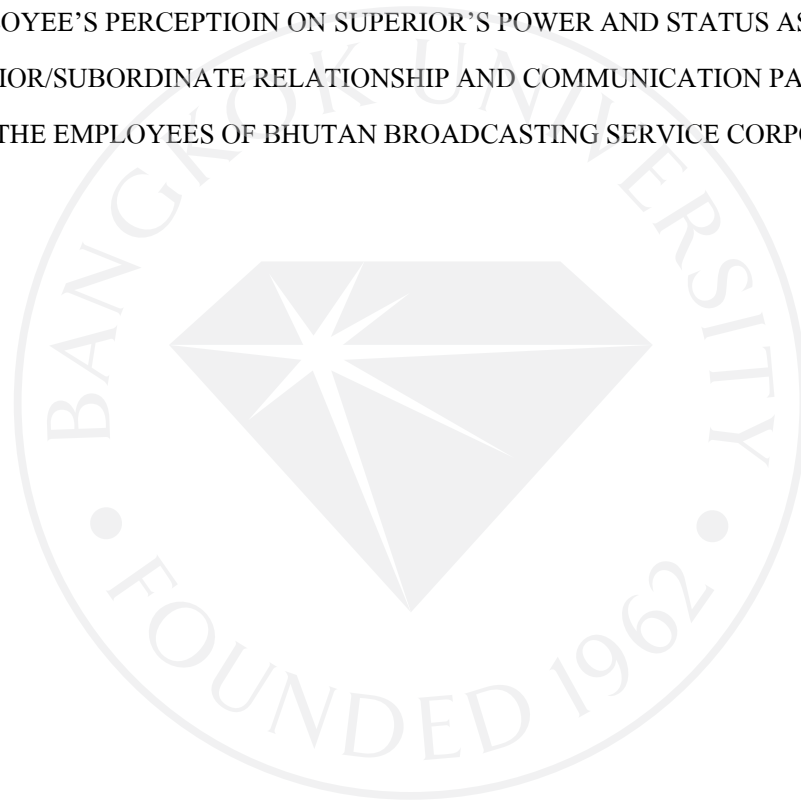
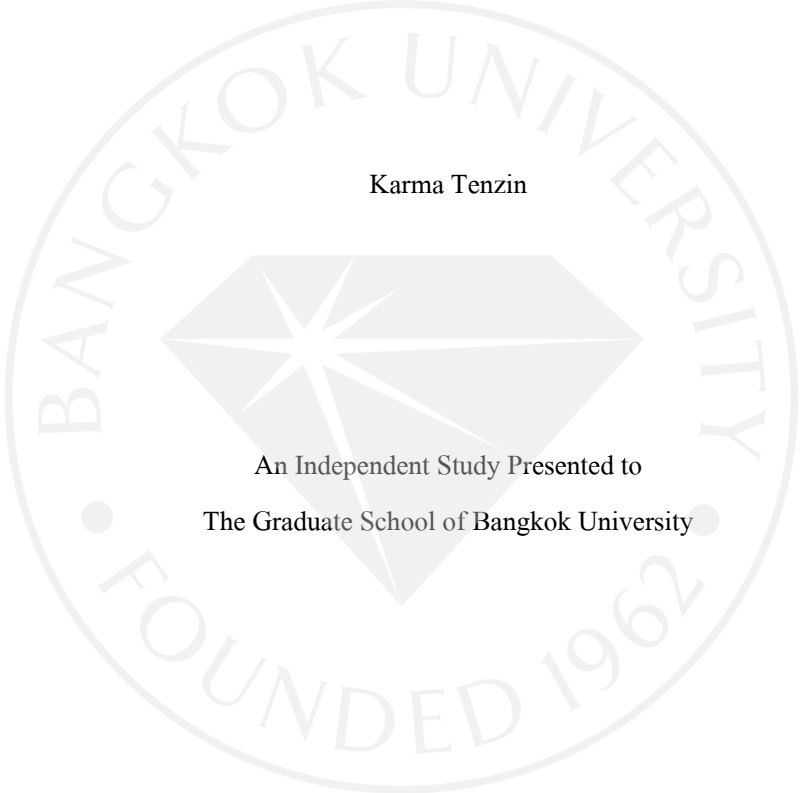


EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTION ON SUPERIOR'S POWER AND STATUS AS RELATED TO  
SUPERIOR/SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIP AND COMMUNICATION PATTERN AMONG  
THE EMPLOYEES OF BHUTAN BROADCASTING SERVICE CORPORATION



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An Independent Study Presented to  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Communication Arts

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the Graduate School  
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Title: EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTION ON SUPERIOR'S POWER AND STATUS AS  
RELATED TO SUPERIOR/ SUBORDINATION RELATIONSHIP AND  
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Employee's perception on superior's power and status as related to superior/subordinate relationship and communication pattern among the employees of Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (62 pp.)

Advisor of Independent Study: Dr. Rosechongporn Komolsevin, Ph.D.

### **ABSTRACT**

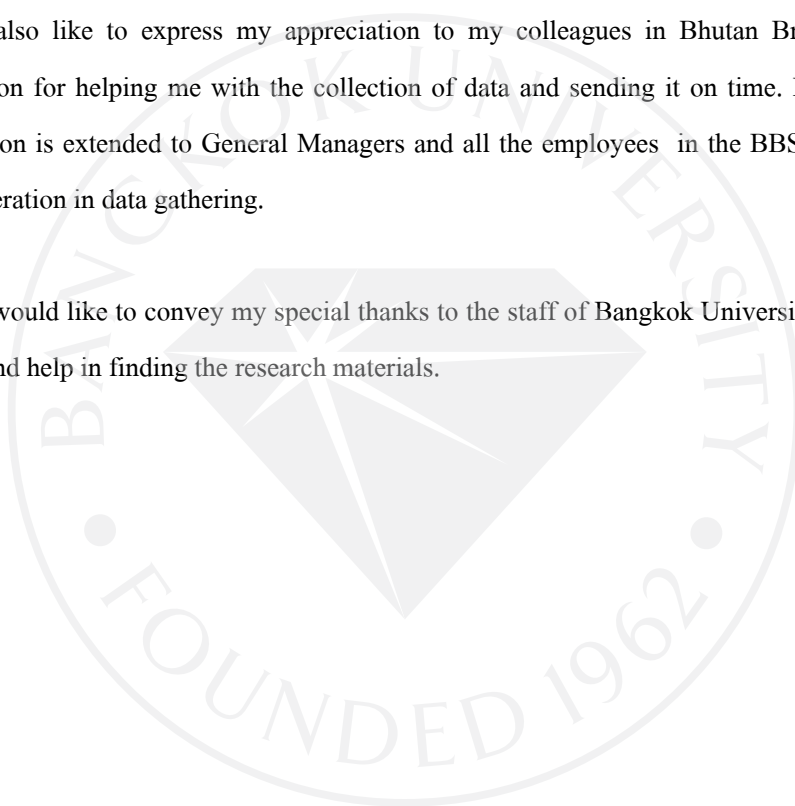
This study's aim is to evaluate different patterns of communication among employees in the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC). The study will also lead to the understanding of the characteristics of supervisors and subordinates along with their relationship that are related to the communication pattern in the BBSC. The independent variables (IV) in this study are information load on the subordinate, subordinates' attitude towards supervisor, supervisors' use of power and status perceived by the subordinates, and their relationship variables of trust and level of exchange. Communication pattern such as upward, downward and horizontal communication are dependent variables (DV). A combination of both quantitative and qualitative research method was used for the collection of the data in this research. For quantitative method, a total of 94 respondents which included 69 male subordinates and 25 female subordinates from BBSC took part in the research. The participants completed the survey questionnaires with five point likert scale. The data were analyzed by using Pearson correlation. For qualitative method, an in-depth interview was conducted with three General Managers via telephone. Results showed no relationship between independent variables (information load, subordinates' attitude, supervisors' power and status, and level of exchange) and dependent variables (downward, upward, and horizontal communication). However, result showed that trust between the supervisor and subordinate will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC. The quantitative results were consistent with the qualitative results.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Lastly, I would like to convey my special thanks to the staff of Bangkok University Library for their support and help in finding the research materials.



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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

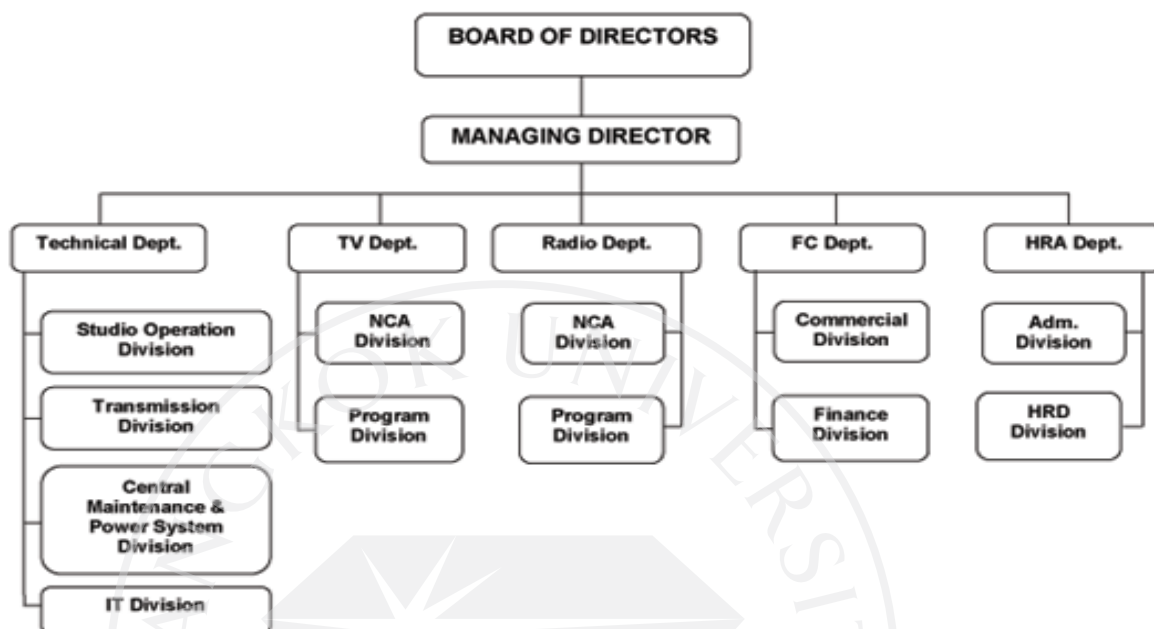
#### **Rationale**

The major feature of human experience is organizational life (Daniels & Spiker, 1994). As pointed out by Tom D. Daniels & Barry K. Spiker (1994), almost all people in today's time go to work and spend most of their days within the sphere of education, government, religious, social, political and in different types of organizations. Organizations are social establishments in which people interact in a complicated way (Zaremba, 2006). Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC) is one such social organization. Within the organization, there are subordinates, supervisors, administrators, and several other service personnel. Members of each of these groups come from various backgrounds with different personalities, occupy distinctive positions, and are expected to behave in certain ways. The role expectations of these groups and norms ascribed to them are different from each other.

In performing their duties and responsibilities, it has become a mandatory that people interact and communicate with one another and with the members of the organization at large. They carry out their abilities in accordance with the procedure and rules of an organization. Within the boundaries of the work place, they develop personal and professional relationships with their colleagues, subordinates and with heads of the departments of an organization. Therefore, it is almost certain that people will take part in and cope with organizational communication throughout most of their life (Daniels & Spiker, 1994)

Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC) is a hierarchical organization. The Board of Directors is usually placed at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the General Managers and lastly the subordinates.

Figure 1. Organizational chart of BBSC



In terms of responsibility, subordinates are responsible to the heads; heads to Managing Director and Managing Director is responsible to the Board of Directors. Structurally, there is a series of Superior-subordinate relationships in the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC).

Functionally, this hierarchy of relationships is the basis for allocating and integrating roles, personnel, and facilities to achieve the organizational goals. Operationally, BBSC is a person-to-person interaction. Thus, interaction among the employees of the BBSC plays a vital role. The performance of the employee affects his or her relationship within the organization with colleagues, subordinates, and clientele he or she serves. Clearly, the relationships among people in the organization are varied and complex. The quality of the interrelations among people is affected by the quality of communication in the organization (Roberts, 1984, cited in Gunbayi, 2007).

Organizational communication has been defined as “the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationship to cope with environmental uncertainty” (Goldhaber, 1983: p.17). He further added that this process creating and exchanging the messages is ongoing, ever

changing, and continuous. Similarly, Daft (1997 cited in Gunbayi, 2007) defined organizational communication as “the process by which the information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behavior” (p.788).

Communication process should be effective to reach organizational goals and the quality of communication is an essential element (Young & Post, 1993). This is because through communication of one kind or another, employees learn what is expected of them, find out how to do their jobs, and become aware of what others think of their work. Accurate and quality communication is possible only if the meaning that the sender intended to convey is the same as what is understood and interpreted by the receiver. However, without accurate communication channels and networks any kind of coordination is impossible to be accomplished in any organization (Gunbayi, 2007). On the other hand, physical and emotional well being of the employees affects the overall performance of the individual and in turn affects the organizational goals and objectives. Similarly, Maslow, (1942, cited in Daniels & Spiker, 1994 & Miller, 2003) pointed out that attempts are made by people to meet certain needs: physiological, safety, social, self esteem, and self-actualization needs, to attain both personal and professional goals. As a result, communication pattern is one of the major issues that requires investigation and studied upon. This is because it can adversely affect organizational goals and objectives.

According to Ander and Level (1980), “Organizational communication literature includes a varied field of interest. Among those most frequently investigated and discussed are: directionality of information flow, accuracy and completeness of communication, modalities used in transmitting information, and distortion of information. One of the most important areas of study is the direction of information flow. This includes the topics of upward, downward, and horizontal communication” (p.51). Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to evaluate the different patterns of communication in the BBSC. This paper will also examine different variables: such as characteristics of head and subordinate, and their relationship that are related to communication.

### **Problem Statement**

The only broadcast industry of Bhutan, the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation, has around 300 employees at present. This is a big media organization and interaction among the employees of various ranks is inevitable in the daily operation as Lee (1999) pointed that interaction between superiors and subordinates is central to organizational work.

Although comprehensive data is not available on the interaction between superior and subordinate in BBSC, however, to the researcher's observation as an employee in BBSC for last seven years, BBSC lack efficient interaction. The employees working in BBSC do not trust each other. Similarly, the heads have no faith in subordinates and vice versa. This ultimately is leading to poor communication in BBSC, especially with the flow of information between superior and subordinate. Often times, it has been difficult to understand the meaning of communication directly. Nor it is easy to trace the source of communication.

Grapevine is a major player in shaping one's attitude to others in this organization, as there is low level of information flow from top or down. In addition, it has been difficult to understand from where the information is processed or distributed for the operation. There is always a mixed reaction among employees as who controls the information or how the communication is desired. Sometimes, the heads decide what they want and other times they leave the decision to the employees.

BBSC differs with the view of communication. Dunn et al. (2002) stated that with each team member performing a specialized function, the effectiveness of the team depends upon the ability of the members to communicate with each other to coordinate activities, and to implement appropriate strategies. Surprisingly, only few members who are in good post have the vested ability to communicate to others. This has resulted in frustration among the employees in the BBSC. And because of the frustration, it is alarming to point out that often time superior and subordinate interact with each others that are unsuitable (use of vulgar and abusive words) and at times use physical force to solve their misunderstanding. Consequently, many senior and professional producers who plays a

vital role in the development and overall performance of the BBSC have resigned from the organization.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance and an urgency to conduct a study to understand the issue as early as possible to build a professional working environment in the organization for its success. This paper, being the first of its kind, only attempts to elucidate the following research questions.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the pattern of communication among the individuals in BBSC?
2. What are the characteristics of head and subordinate that are related to communication pattern within BBSC?
3. How are the relationships between the heads and subordinates related to the communication pattern within BBSC?

### **Objectives of Study**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate communication pattern in BBSC by;

1. Assessing the pattern of communication among the individuals in BBSC.
2. Exploring the characteristics of head and subordinate, and their relationship with the communication pattern within BBSC.
3. Understanding how the relationships between the heads and subordinates relate to communication pattern within BBSC.

### **Scope of Study**

Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation in Bhutan is the place where the research was conducted. Since the researcher was at Bangkok University, prepared questionnaires were sent via email. With the help of a colleague in Bhutan, the questionnaire survey was carried out in the month of December 2008. In addition in-depth interview was conducted with the General Managers via telephone during the same period.

### **Significance of Study**

This research on communication pattern is important because it helps so many different aspects of individual's well being in the BBSC. Moreover, communication pattern helps many aspects of individuals work experience such as job satisfaction, commitments, motivation, relationships, organizational conflicts, and organizational performance. The employee alienation and dissatisfaction exist at an increasing rate among the employees in the BBSC. One of the reasons for this alienation and dissatisfaction could be the traditional centralized system where management makes most of the decision. Therefore, it is important to understand "how" and "why" so that it will help its employees to serve their clientele in a better ways and the organization at large. This in turn will help the organization achieve its goal and objectives.

### **Definition of Terms**

**BBSC:** - Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation is a media organization in Bhutan. It is the only National Television and Radio station in the country (Media Survey, 2006). According to the Special Report (2007) of Ministry of Information and Communications, Royal Government of Bhutan, through Royal Decree, it has taken up the status of corporation in the year 1992. Within 15 years of its operation, it provides 96 hours of television programming and 76 hours of radio programming in a week. Since February 2006, BBS TV has gone nationwide using satellite technology catering to 44 towns in the country and about 40 different countries (Special Report, 2007). Currently BBSC has more than 300 employees. It has five departments, which includes TV, Radio, Technical, Finance/Commercial, and Administration/Human Resource Department. The organization's mission statement is to "educate, inform, and entertain" the Bhutanese audience (BBS manual). According to the organization's manual, its objective is to act as a bridge between the people and the government.

**Communication Pattern:** - Direction of information flow: downward, upward, and horizontal.

**Downward communication:** - refers to message flow, which originates in the upper regions of the organizational hierarchy and move downward towards members in the lower levels of the hierarchy. Messages flow in the form of orders, directions, and guidelines.

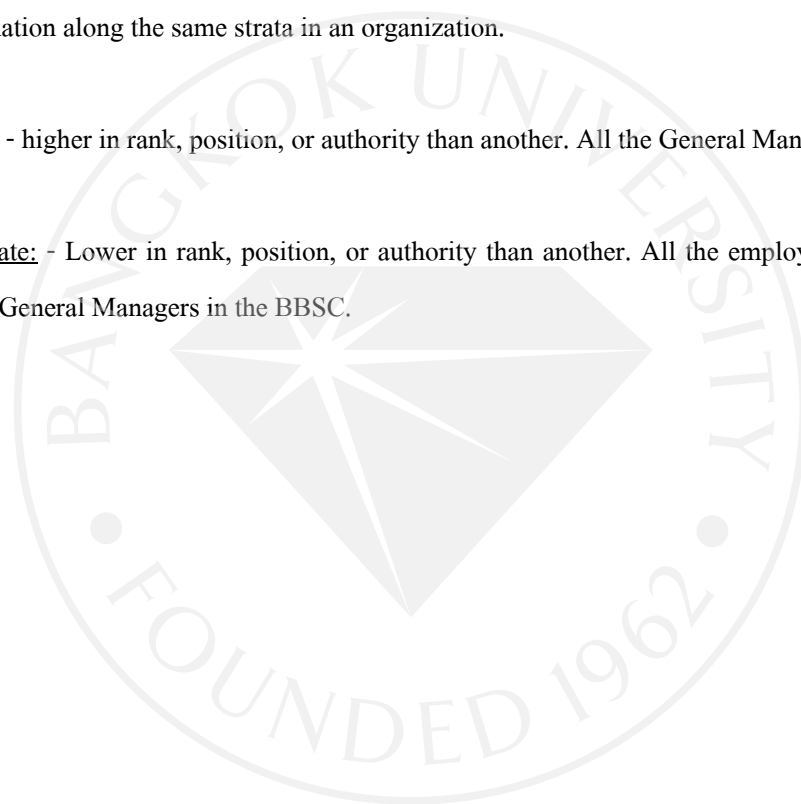


Upward communication: - refers to messages sent from the lower (subordinates) of the hierarchy to the upper levels (supervisors). Messages flow in the form of grievances, personal letters suggestion, etc.

Horizontal communication:- Communication among the members of the same work group; among the members of the work group at the same level; and among managers at the same level and the flow of information along the same strata in an organization.

Superior: - higher in rank, position, or authority than another. All the General Managers in the BBSC.

Subordinate: - Lower in rank, position, or authority than another. All the employees working under different General Managers in the BBSC.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

As stated in the previous chapter, the main purpose of this research is to evaluate the different patterns of communication that employees in the BBSC experience and the characteristics of heads and subordinates, along with their relationship that may affect the communication pattern within BBSC.

Organizations are the major form of institution in our society (Robbins, 1987). In the same manner, no organization can exist without communication (Davis, & Newstrom, 1993). The most interesting observation of individual working in the organization is that people are different. Mitchell (1982) pointed out that members carry different characteristics such as sex, age and size, their education and training background, and their personality like sociability or aggressiveness (p.95). Similarly, Zalabak (2002) pointed out that organization in our complex and turbulent society, need flexible and creative people who have diverse and well-developed communication abilities.

Whether one is working for movie company, a manufacturing or service firm or for that matter BBSC, Davis and Newstrom (1993) rightly stated that communication is the ever-present activity by which people relate to one another and combine their effort. Similar to the statement, Koehler, Anatol, and Applbaum (1981) states that communication is the mortar that holds the organization structure together and provides the basis for coordinating the relationship between individuals to achieve organizational goals.

Similarly, Karl Weicks's "theory of Organizing" states that, organizations are not structure made of position and roles but communication activities (littleJohn & Foss, 2005). They further added that Organization is something that people accomplish through a continuing process of communication

and their daily interaction and organizing activities plays important role in reducing the uncertainty of information (p. 256).

According to Robbins (1986), communication pattern encompass the direction that communication takes in groups, organizations, and as well as the channel by which communication flows. Therefore, it is important to discuss communication flow in terms of the direction in which it flows.

### **Communication Flow**

#### **Downward Communication**

Downward communication essentially refers to message flows, which originate in the upper regions of the organizational hierarchy and move downward towards members in the lower levels of the hierarchy (Lussier, 1990). In essence, it concerns communication between superior and subordinate where the superior generates messages and flow towards the subordinate. It is similar to water running downhill – that is, those at the top are more likely to initiate communication flows.

The most important function of downward communication is to achieve influence through information (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 2005). This type of information flow allows managers to exercise their authority within the hierarchical structure of the organization. In other words, downward communication provides superiors with a means of disseminating information to their subordinates in the lower levels of the organization. That is to say, downward flows of communication from superiors to subordinates allow for the issuance of orders, directives, commands, and other authority-related messages (Pace & Faules, 1989).

In most organizations, information transmitted via downward communication are of two general types: firstly, information concerning the current/future status of the specific aspect of the organization, new organizational policies, recent administrative decisions, and recent changes in the

standard-operating-procedures; and secondly, information of a task related nature which generally provide subordinates with the technical know-how to accomplish their tasks or assignments with greater efficiency and productivity. Therefore, It is the process of higher-level management telling those below them what to do and helping employees to recognize how their job assists the organization in accomplishing its objective.

However, over utilization of downward communication channel leads to over burden with messages resulting in plethora of orders, direction, and guidelines for the lower level employees (Kreps, 1986). He further added that superior often gives their subordinate contradictory and mutually exclusive directives, resulting to confusion and anxiety, which further leads to role conflict (p. 199). Therefore, the most persistent problem with downward flow of information concerns the accuracy and the adequacy of information reaching lower level of the organization.

When such problems of inadequate and inaccurate transmission of information via downward flow of information occurs, the most likely “culprit” is the fact that messages are filtered and distorted as they are passed from one individual to another down the organizational hierarchy. The phenomenon is very similar to what generally happens when people play the game commonly known as “passing the rumors” (Lewis 1987). That is, subordinate react most effectively to those pieces of information that they judge to be of greatest important, and in the process of focusing in on such information, often exclude other “less important” pieces of information. It is obvious that when too many of these “less important” pieces of information are removed systematically from the original message sent by the superior. The end result is that the original message loses its originality and is nowhere close to the message sent by the higher level, and consequently, leads to misinterpretation of the information by the subordinates.

### **Upward Communication**

Upward communication refers to messages sent from the lower (subordinates) of the hierarchy to the upper levels (supervisors). It cultivates appreciation and loyalty to the organization

by giving employees an opportunity to ask question and contribute ideas and suggestion about the operation of the organization (Housel & Daviz, 1977; Dubrin, 2007). Upward flow of information supplies valuable information of decision making by those who direct the organization and supervise the activities of others (Sharma, 1989, cited in Pace, & Faules, 1997). They further added that it allows and encourages gripes and grievances, complaints, suggestions, opinions, and ideas to surface and let supervisor know what is bothering those who are closer to the actual operation.

Upward communication channel have several important functions in the organization. First of all, it serves as a means for management to receive feedback regarding the relative success of a given message that was sent down the hierarchy. Through this type of communication or information flow, manager can receive feedback clues concerning whether or not a particular message, directive, command, or instruction was understood by those who received it.

A second important function is that it can stimulate employees to participate in formulating operating policies for their department or organization. Perhaps even more importantly, upward communication, because it allows subordinate to participate in the decision making process, also facilitates acceptance of those decisions which they had a part in making (Gibson & Hodgets, 1991).

The third function of the upward communication allows subordinate to offer suggestion and opinions (Koehler, Anotol & Applbaun, 1981). Very often, subordinates have better understanding of the problem facing the organization and hence they are in a better position to recommend changes. If top management is willing to accept the opinions and suggestions given by the subordinates, then upward flow of information can be very effective and helpful to superior in the top level. Along these lines, a fourth function of upward communication provides a means for top management to receive information concerning various aspects of the organization's operation. For instance, management can receive information concerning the efficiency of a new operating procedure, and on the basis of such information, can decide whether or not to continue with the program. Similarly, information via

upward communication provides clues to managers regarding the receptivity of subordinate towards new policies, directives, or decision (Robbins, 2003).

The problems of distortion and filtering found in the downward communication are also present in the upward communication. However in case of upward flow of information, Kreps (1986) states that due to fear of attribution from superior, it is often risky for employees to approach the problem or gripes that they have with the managements' downward communication. Moreover, managers are often unreceptive to honest employee's feedback and react defensively towards unpleasant subordinate feedback (p. 201). For example, the subordinate will convey only that information which makes him look good and the message preferred by the superior, which ultimately adds further distortion to the upward transmission of information. Similarly Lussier (1990), pointed out that hierarchal systems do not facilitate upward flow of information as they do for downward and this tends to result in communication failure.

### **Horizontal Communication**

Not all communication takes place downward and upward in the organization. Communication among the members of the same work group, among the members of the work group at the same level, and among managers at the same level and the flow of information along the same strata in an organization is known as horizontal communication (Zaremba, 2006). Managers in the organization engage largely in this type of communication as it communicates across chains of command (Davis & Newstrom, 1993). Therefore, it saves time and facilitates coordination. In addition, it is believed that sometimes horizontal communication carries information of a non-organizational or non-task related nature. In other words, horizontal communication frequently involves the type of information that is present when friends interact with each others.

Several texts have identified various function of horizontal communication. Firstly, it aids in task or project coordination (Koehler, Anotol & Applbaun, 1981). That is, by meeting with each other, members of a department or special project team can discuss how each person or persons are

contributing to the system's goal. Secondly, it allows organizational members to solve problems. For instance, group meetings to discuss solution to problem through technique as "brain storming" are made possible by horizontal communication flow. It is very much clear that through sharing of information members in the organization become aware of the activities of the organization and their colleagues. So the third function is to allow sharing of information among the organization members. Lastly, horizontal flow of information provides a mechanism for conflict resolution. For example, in the presence of conflict between members within a department or section, the ability to discuss the matter often leads to a resolution of conflicts. In the absence of horizontal communication, such discussion would be very difficult. One would have to go half way around the organizational hierarchy to get a message to a colleague if one were to remove horizontal communication.

However horizontal communication can create dysfunctional conflicts when the formal vertical channel are breach, when members approaches their heads to get things done, or when bosses finds out that their action have been taken or decisions made without their knowledge (Robbins, Millet, Cacioppe & Marsh 1998). The interesting problem in horizontal communication is "hoarding" of information rather than sharing the information with the colleague (Lorey, 1980). In essence, where there is competition it is not unreasonable to speculate that members of the organization might deliberately withhold or distort information so as to keep a competitive advantage over their colleagues. The other frequently seen problem is the conflict generated by interaction between the members of different departments. That is, the conflict is caused by the differing importance of various goals within various departments. Whatever the cause, conflicts appear to be a result of the existence of horizontal communication.

The majority of writing relevant to communication pattern focuses on individual character of either the superior or the subordinate and the nature of superior and subordinate relationship. Some of them are mentioned as follows:

### **Information Load**

As we are well aware of the fact, that communication is an essential factor for 'survival'. Particularly for organizations, information is a key to success. In other word, communication is view as a metaphorical pipeline through which information is transfer from one person to another (Axley, 1984; Reddy, 1979, cited in Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997). In most organizations, information flows at the heart of workplace activities. This is reflected in the fact that a significant part of many organizational members' jobs is dealing with information (Edmunds & Morris, 2000). Many research indicates the importance of employees being adequately informed (Miller 1996; Miller & Jablin, 1991, cited in Bartoo & Sias, 2004) and demonstrates that the better informed employees are, the less uncertain they are, the more satisfied they are with their jobs, and the greater their perceived performance (Douglas, 1990, 1994; Kramer, 1994, cited in Bartoo & Sias, 2004).

Getting adequate information, of course, does not necessarily mean an individual is getting the right amount of information. Information load refers to the amount and complexity of messages received by a unit of analysis, or an individual in the organization (Gibson, & Hodgetts, 1991). In other word, Information load refers to the amount of information employees receive in comparison to the amount of information they feel they need to receive in order to do their jobs.

Research consistently indicates that one of the most important sources of information for an employee is his/her immediate supervisor (Axley, 1996, cited in Bartoo & Sias, 2004). And employees obtain information through three primary strategies: initiating information requests, monitoring, and receiving unsolicited information (Kramer, Callister, & Turban, 1995). An example of initiating information requests may be an employee asking for and being given information about their job performance. Monitoring refers to the observation of other communication interactions in order to gain information (e.g., observing interaction between a supervisor and another employee). Receiving unsolicited information deals with information that is given to the employee without provocation or request (e.g., an announcement at a meeting).



As noted earlier, that information is a key to success, organizational members cannot afford to ignore information to carry out their job successfully. Therefore, it seems reasonable to speak of ensuring pressures upon these individuals to manage all incoming information. In other words, organizational members are likely to experience 'information overload'. Overload refers to receiving an overabundance of information, while "underload" refers to a lack of information. Both overload and underload are problematic for employees in that both have been linked to employee job stress (Ray, 1991). Employees who experience information overload feel that they receive more information than they feel they need and can effectively manage. Glauser (1984) investigated the effect of information overload and outlined a number of responses to it (e.g. omission, error, filtering, escape from the task, etc). Further, she observed that at higher rate of information flow, individual demonstrated greater filter, and omission in processing and transmitting information.

The most significant relationship within an organization exists between a superior and subordinates. On the other hand most of the information in the organization are exchanged between Superior and subordinate. Therefore, it is possible that information load on the subordinates is related to the pattern of communication within superior and subordinate. For instance, as mentioned earlier that information obtained from downward message presents a puzzling paradox. This is because of over utilization of downward communication channel resulting in plethora of orders. This ultimately leads to filtration of information and communication distortion.

### **Attitude**

An attitude refers to general and enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object, or issue (Lussier, 1990). He further explained that, we all have favorable or positive attitudes, and unfavorable or negative attitudes about life, human relation, and work. Attitude shares certain properties with values, but they are different from values in fundamental ways. However, both attitude and value affect the behavior of a person. Attitudes are determinants of certain behavior because they are linked with perception, personality, feelings, and motivation. Supporting this statements, DuBrin (2007) pointed out that as attitudes linked with perception, learning, emotion and

motivation they are important parts of an organization behavior. For instance, emotions such as joy and anger contribute to the formation of employees attitudes in an organization.

Mattenson, Konopask, and Ivancevich (2005) highlighted that attitudes provide emotional basis of one's interpersonal relations and identification with others. They reported that employees are more likely to change their attitude if they trust their manager and perceived their manager as having a prestige. They underlined that "if managers are not trusted then his or her effort to change employees' attitude will fail... This is because employees will not believe on them or will not accept their manager's messages" (p. 69). Liking manager can lead to a change in the attitude of the employee because they try to identify with liked communicator or manager and tend to adopt the attitudes and behavior of the liked individual (Mattenson, Konopask, & Ivancevich 2005)

In this regard, McGregor identified two contrasting sets of assumptions people make about human nature, calling this as theory X and theory Y. This represents two different sets of attitude or belief system that effectively influence the subordinates. Supervisors or managers with theory X orientation rely heavily on coercive, external control method to motivate their subordinates. On the other hand, managers with theory Y attitude believe that subordinates give importance to their task and are responsible and independent to perform the task. Hall and Donnell (1979) found out that the managers with theory Y philosophy achieved better organizational objectives and better tap the potential of subordinates than those managers who believe in Theory X.

If the manager does not provide sufficient support and assistance to subordinates, there will arise a problem in the attitude of subordinates. When the manager pays attention to the subordinates, a high quality relationship will develop between manager and subordinates. This relationship makes the communication better where subordinates listen to their manager and express their opinion more openly related to their task. Hugles, Ginnet and Curphy (1993) pointed out that a supervisor or leader's interaction with subordinates depends on his or her implicit views of human nature. They

further suggested that supervisor's attitude to motivate others, to be trusted and influence others depend on his or her interaction with others.

Manager can change the attitudes of the employees towards the organization. In this regard, Sluss (2008) explained that managers can change their employees' attitudes in five different ways. Firstly, by 'social influence'. If there is high quality of relationship between manager and subordinates, then the opinion that are coming through will be perceived positively and most likely to be internalized by subordinates. The second way of changing the subordinate's attitude is 'behavioral alignment' where subordinates will think of his or her work align with organizational goals. The third is 'emotional contagion' where manager is seen as agent or representative of organization to shape the attitude of the employees. The fourth is 'task interdependence'. When supervisor and subordinates depend with each other on their task, they form common attitudes towards the organization. The final way of changing subordinates attitudes is 'organizational authenticity'. "If manager is found to be inauthentic to the organization, then subordinates will form negative attitudes towards the manager and organization" (p. 21).

### **Power**

Some form of power is universal in human group. It exists in small group, organization, family, and nation. Power has been defined variously as the actual control of another's behavior, the capacity to influence another's behavior, the capacity to affect another person's reward and cost, the ability of one person to get others to behave in a particular way to carry out certain actions, and the capacity to affect another's goal and accomplishment (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

Power and influence are two different terms, but many social psychologists define these two terms synonymously. For instance, if power is the potential or actual ability to influence others in the desired direction (Gordon, 1996), influence is an attempt to use power to change another person in a desired direction (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

All the definition of power includes an element indicating that power is the capability of one social actor to overcome resistance in achieving a decision, objective, or result. For instance, Pfeffer (1981) quoted Robert Dahl's definition of power as a relation among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done. Power, then, can be defined as force, and more specifically, force sufficient to change the probability of B's behavior from what it would have been in the absence of the application of the force.

After understanding the definitions of power, it could be agreed that power characterizes relationship among the social actors. A person may not be powerful or powerless in general, but only with respect to other social actors in a specific relation (e.g. relationship between superior and subordinate, within group member, or between members of different group in the organization).

In organization, use of power is an inherent element. Organizational leaders – managers, supervisors, administrators, and the like are expected to generate some measure of power in order to influence the behavior of subordinates. Some leaders use power effectively and succeed in promoting the goal and objectives of the organization, while others use power ineffectively resulting to frustration and alienation of personnel. Similarly, Glauser (1984), pointed out that superior with power will usually have influence over the subordinate but superior without power and influence may have significant effect over subordinates' careers, promotion, access to tools and equipment, etc.

Supervisors have a variety of power bases available for their use. As conceptualized by French and Raven (1959, cited in Piero & Milia, 2003), there are five sources of power for the supervisor. Coercive powers (based on the ability to administer punishment or to give negative reinforcement such as reducing status, salary and benefits), reward power (which rests on ability to deliver something of value to others which is either tangible or intangible such as supportiveness or warmth), legitimate (which resides on the position rather than on a person. Such persons with legitimate powers have right to prescribe the behavior of individuals), expert power (based on the person not position in contrast to the legitimate power. Experts are influential because they are source of information and

skills), and referent power (which is described as a role model power. When people admire someone, they confer upon the admired person the ability to influence their behavior. Referent power depends on feelings of affection, esteem, and respect).

Whatever source of power a supervisor chooses to employ, that choice is reflected in the communication behavior of the supervisor (Richmond, Wagner & McCroskey, 1983). They further added that whether the supervisor orders (as might be the case with coercive or legitimate power) or requests (as might be the case with other power bases), the power the supervisor wishes to employ is either directly stated or implied in the communication between supervisor and subordinate.

### **Status**

Similar to power is the status. Status is the social rank or position in the organization and it is a mark of the amount of recognition, honor, and acceptance given to a person (Davis & Newstrom, 1993). The status assigned to a particular position is typically a result of certain characteristics that differentiate one position from other position (Matteson, Konopaske & Inavceovich, 2005). Status within the organization can be based on a number of factors such as age, work seniority, education, performance etc. (Osbourne, & Hunt, & Schermerhorh, 2005). Status is an important factor in understanding human behavior because it is a significant motivator and has major behavioral consequences when individual perceive a disparity between what they believe their status to be and what others perceive it to be (Robbins, 2005).

A person's status usually affects the interpersonal relationship and communication in an organization (Masterson & Beebe, 1994; Smeltzer & Leonard, 1994). Status affects communication mainly because people play psychological game. Smeltzer and Leonard (1994.) pointed that, "a hurdle to effective communication develops when people at higher status levels intimidate those below them. They may intimidate by using complex terms, not allowing two-way communication, not communicating common knowledge, or simply not listening" (p. 41). On the other hand, those at the

lower level may not ask appropriate question for fear of appearing less knowledgeable, or they may act as if they understood the message when they really do not.

Koehler, Anotol, and Applbaum (1981) stated that persons who are equal in status are more likely to communicate with each other but when the status equality is in doubt, they are more likely to avoid communicating with each other. They further added that group members are more likely to ignore the comments and suggestion made by low status members than those made by the high status members. An interesting finding was made by Chompookum (2001) that superiors in the organization interact with subordinate more than with status similar peers who are in the different departments.

### **Relationship between Superior and Subordinate**

Relationship is a connection between individual in which they value one another and care for each other (Faules, & Pace, 1989). One of the most common and inevitable relationships in the workplace is the dyadic relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate (Lee, 1999). Within superior-subordinate dyad, occurs the most important communication link in any organization. As the primary form of communication, a breakdown has fundamental implications for overall performance throughout the entire organization (Clampitt & Downs, 1994; Downs et al., 1995 cited in Barker & Mustafa, 2007).

In media organization like Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC), where most of the tasks and projects require teamwork, close supervision by superiors, and constant dialogue between superiors and subordinates, supervisors generally provide subordinates with feedback, guiding and assessing their performance, leading them as a work group, assigning them to various tasks, and changing their roles and responsibilities in organizations. Subordinates follow their supervisors' guidance, sometimes exerting upward influence, and negotiating their roles. This dyadic relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate comprises a basic work unit in the organization. Therefore,

keeping positive relationships with superiors can lead to desirable outcomes for superiors, subordinates, and organizations (Lee, et al., 2005).

The quality of the superior-subordinate relationship is essential to the employees as well as the organization because subordinates recognize their immediate superior as the best source of information about events in an organization (Barker & Mustafa, 2007). Further, they added that employees identify their immediate superior as the main source for receiving information from the top management.

Many scholars have applied Leader-Member exchange model or LMX in order to understand the relationship between the superior and subordinate (Kim, Neill & Jeong, 2004; Barker & Mustafa, 2007; Lee, et al., 2005, Lee & et al, 2007). According to Leader-Member exchange (LMX) model, a superior develops different relationships with his/her subordinates. Because of limited time and resources and each subordinate's unique needs and characteristics, a superior's relationship with subordinates is not necessarily even for all the subordinates. Before LMX was introduced, two major assumptions guided the study of leadership (Dansereau et al., 1973 cited in Lee, et al., 2005). The first assumption is that subordinates are considered as a single entity work group because those with the same superior are homogeneous on their perceptions, interpretations, and reactions toward their superior. The second assumption is that a superior treated each of his or her subordinates in the same prescribed manner. Indicating that traditional view on leadership believes that leaders have a consistent leadership style towards all their subordinate members.

Unlike these assumptions, however, LMX model suggests that leaders' behaviors are not necessarily consistent towards all their subordinates. They differ in the types of relationship they develop with each subordinate because of limited time and resources and each subordinate's unique needs and characteristics. LMX assumed that there were two categories of the relationship. The "in-group" held a high quality relationship with the leader and thus received more attention and opportunity. Subordinates in this group sought to become more involved, expand their role and take extra

responsibility within the unit. A transformational style of leadership might be implemented for those in this group. The other was the “out-group” having a lower quality relationship and performing more routine duties with a more strict style of supervision. This group represented the implementation of a more formal employment contract and a transactional leadership style most often being implemented. The theory also suggested that the leadership process becomes more efficient when the leaders and members establish a high quality relationship.

Subsequent research provided considerable support for leader-member exchange theory. Kassing (2000) has pointed out the early findings of Graen and Schiemann (1978) that those members establishing high quality exchanges with their supervisors demonstrated higher agreement with supervisors than those who established low-quality exchanges. Subordinates in these dyads are often given more information by the superior and report greater job latitude. Recently Lee, et al. (2005) has summarized the earlier empirical findings, which states that the quality level of the LMX relationship is positively related to job performance, job satisfaction, delegation, effective maintenance of communication, and perceived organizational support. Consequently, subordinates with high LMX enjoy many advantages at the workplace in various ways, while subordinates with low LMX do not. For instance, high LMX employees were given favorable ratings, despite their actual performance (Duarte et al., 1994, cited in Bakar et al., 2007). The high quality LMX dyads shows high degree of exchange in superior subordinate relationships and are characterized by mutual liking, respect, trust, and reciprocal influence (Dienesch & Liden 1986).

This study focuses on the element of trust between superior and subordinate found in a LMX dyadic relationship. Trust can be defined as ‘the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party’ (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712).

According to social exchange theory, trust emerges from the successive exchange of benefits between the involved parties. Successful social exchanges lead to trust because they involve unspecified



obligations for which no binding contract can be written (Blau, 1964, cited in Neves & Caetano, 2006). This is a sign of mutual support and investment in the relationship.

The most common and unavoidable relationships in the workplace is the one between a supervisor and a subordinate. Characteristics of relationship highlights the need for members to trust each other in a significant manner and typically involve increased level of interdependence (Peterson & Codery, (2003). In other words, superior and subordinate depend on each other to accomplish both the organization and their own goals. The only pathway to effective task performance and goal attainment is through co-operation, and trust is considered a key precursor of co-operation (Smith et al., 1993, cite in Peterson & Codery, 2003).

Subordinates who trust their superior tend to communicate problem oriented information upward more accurately than those who do not trust their superior (Ayres, et al., 1973). Willemyns, Gallois, and Callan (2003) states that much research has found both upward and downward communication in organizations is significantly distorted or withheld as a function of power dynamics and level of trust or mistrust towards each other.

Blalack (1986) concluded in his study that trust was significantly related to the percentage of time spend in contact with superiors, percentage of information received from the superior, and desire for interaction with superior. Glauser (1984) mentioned that trust in one's superior is strongly related to both the frequency and accuracy in the flow of information. In the same manner, Gorden (1996) stated that trusting each other is the key factor that tends to facilitate more accurate and open communication. When individual or groups distrust each other, communication is more limited and reserved. (p. 278).

## **Conclusion**

This literature review explains about the different pattern of communication experience by the employees in the BBSC, such as upward, downward, and horizontal communication. Further, it explains how subordinate and superior's characteristics and their relationship may be related to the flow of information within the BBSC.

## **Hypothesis**

**H1.** Information load on the subordinates is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC.

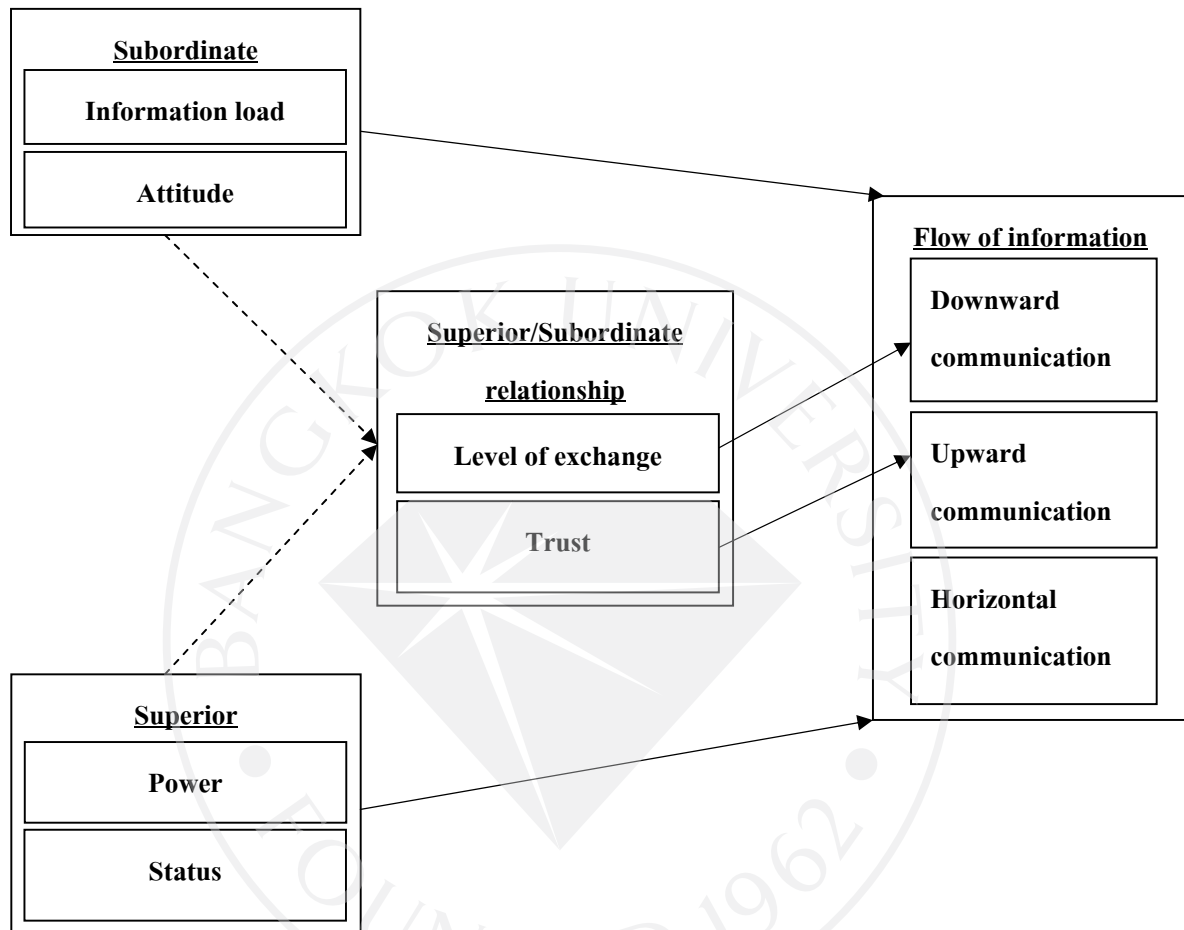
**H2.** The attitude of subordinate is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC.

**H3.** Power and status of the superior are related to the pattern of superior-subordinate communication in the BBSC.

**H4.** Trust between the head and subordinate will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC.

**H5.** Level of exchange between the head and subordinate will enhance the downward flow of information within the BBSC.

## Conceptual Map



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This study's aim is to evaluate the different patterns of communication among employees in the BBSC experience. The study will also lead to the understanding of the characteristics of heads and subordinates along with their relationship that are related to the communication pattern in the organization. This chapter presents both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

#### **Research Design**

A combination of both quantitative and qualitative research method was used for the collection of the data in this research. This is because several authors have favored a combination of both known as triangulation to gain broader and more complete understanding of the issues being investigated (Merrigan & Huston, 2004). Denzin (1978) as explains that the reason of triangulation is based on the premises that:

No single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors...Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This term is triangulation. I now offer as a final methodological rule the principle that multiple methods should be used in every investigation (p. 28).

Neuman (2006) notes using the triangulation method would improve the quality of the measurement. As the diversity of the indicator increases, confidence in measurement grows because getting identical measurement from highly diverse methods implies greater validity than if a single or similar methods had been used. These observations clearly show that both quantitative and qualitative methodologies work as complementary to each other when conducting an investigation and answering the research questions.

### Quantitative Research Method

Quantitative research method includes population and sample selection, measurement of the variables, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

### Population and Sample Selection

Since the research was conducted in the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation, the subjects of this study consisted of full time employees of BBSC. BBSC with five departments (TV, Radio, Technical, Human Resource & Administration, and Finance & Commercial Department) has the overall population of 300 regular employees. Since the population is already divided because of the existence of different departments, stratified random sampling method was employed for each department by selecting the subjects based on the population of employees in each department (see table 1). Therefore, a total of 100 samples were taken out from the total 300 population.

Table 1. Number of BBSC Subjects Selected based on the Stratified Random Sampling

Departments	No. of Employees	Assigned Quota
Human Resource & Administration	50	17
TV	71	23
Radio	58	19
Technical	87	29
Finance and Commercial	34	12
Total	300	100

## **Variables**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the different patterns of communication that employees in the BBSC experience. Further, it also leads to understanding the characteristics of heads and subordinates, along with their relationship that are related to the communication pattern in the BBSC. Therefore, information load on the subordinate; subordinates' attitude towards supervisor; supervisors' power and status; and their relationship variables of trust and level of exchange are the independent variables (IV). Communication pattern such as upward, downward and horizontal communication are dependent variables (DV).

## **Research Instrument**

This study used survey questionnaires as an instrument in the collection of data. The research instrument consisted of three parts. Part one focused on the demographic information of the sample such as gender, age, qualification, and their experience. Part two of the instrument was divided into nine sections covering all the variables for this study.

Section one consisting of five items asked about the information load on the subordinates with 5-point Likert scale statement ranging from 5 (always) to 1 (never).

Likewise, the second section consisted of 7 items about the attitude of the subordinate and 5-point Likert scale was employed with the score ranging from 5 (most) to 1 (least).

Section three consisted of 8 items asking about the perceived power of the supervisor by the subordinates and was measured by employing 5-point Likert scale with the score ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Similarly, section four consisted of 4 items concerning the status.

Section five consisted 9 items concerning the level of exchange between the subordinate and supervisor and was measures by employing 5-point Likert scale with the score ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

Section six consisted of 7 items about perceived trust by the subordinates toward their superiors. It was measured by 5-point Likert scale with the score ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

The last three section included a total 18 items about the flow of information in three direction-downward, upward, and horizontal communication. The 5-point Likert scale was used in measuring the three communication pattern in frequency scale with the score ranging from 5 (always) to 1 (never).

Part three consisted of two open ended questions. The first question was asked in order to obtain information regarding the difficulties faced by the respondents in communicating with the supervisors. The second question was asked to get subordinates' input on how to improve the flow of information between supervisor and subordinate in the BBSC (see appendix i for detail instrument).

After the development of the research instrument, both validity and reliability of instrument was tested. The researcher's advisor investigated the face validity of the instrument used. The reliability of research instrument refers to the test of internal consistencies of the instrument in analyzing the data. This test was done to determine whether the instrument used in the study would provide the internal consistency to the expected level. The test of reliability was conducted after encoding the questionnaires into SPSS. The overall reliability test of the instrument showed Cronbach's alpha coefficient test equivalent to 0.722. The alpha is slightly higher than Synders' reliability of 0.70, which is considered "acceptable" in most Social Science research. Therefore, this research instrument represented stability across the different groups of employees working in the organization (BBSC).

### **Data Collection**

In order to collect data, the complete set of research questionnaires was sent to researcher's colleague in BBSC, Thimphu, Bhutan by electronic mail. Along with the research questionnaires, a covering letter explaining about the sampling method was sent as well. Then the researcher's colleague in the office distributed questionnaires as per the sampling method explained in the covering letter. After the collection of data, it was sent back to the researcher in Bangkok University via post.

From a total of 100 questionnaires that were distributed among the subordinates of Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC), only 98 questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The researcher then sorted four incomplete questionnaires. Therefore, a total 94 questionnaires were used in this study. The data that were collected from the samples are the Subordinates' perception towards their Supervisors/General Managers in the organization.

### **Data Analysis**

As a process of data preparation, the primary data collected were loaded into statistical software (SPSS). The respondent scores were tallied and summed up in order to obtain the total score of each measuring instrument. The score of the negative questions were also reversed to attain the accurate or precise measurement of the construct.

The systematic analysis was done with the help of Bangkok university library's SPSS program. The score from each sample were tallied and summed up to get the total score of each measuring instrument.

Demographic data were analyzed descriptively to understand the demographic characteristics of the employees in the BBSC. Following the hypothesis testing, Pearson correlation was used to test all the hypotheses predicting the relationship between independent variables (information load on the subordinate, attitude towards supervisor, supervisors' power and status, level of exchange, and the



trust) and the dependent variables (downward, upward, and horizontal communication). The acceptance statistical significance level was set at  $(\alpha) < 0.05$ .

### **Qualitative Research Method**

Qualitative research method includes key informants, issues of study, data collection, and data analysis.

### **Key Informants**

The key informants in this study are the General Managers who occupy a second top level in the organizational hierarchy after the Managing Director. All the respondents got the bachelor's degree with more than five years of work experience as the General Manager. Out of four General Managers in the BBSC, only three of them were interviewed.

As researcher is an employee in the BBSC, it was convenient to fixed an appointment for an in-depth interview with the General Managers. However, to fulfill the formal procedure, the researcher sent an invitation to all the general managers through email and later reminded them through mobile phone as well. All respondent were cooperative and informative. The interview date was fixed as per their convenience. Since the researcher is at Bangkok University pursuing his master's degree, an in-depth interview with the General Managers was conducted via mobile phone.

### **Issue of the Study**

The main issue of this study is that there is a lack of interaction among the employees especially between superiors and subordinates in the BBSC. As researcher being an employee in the BBSC for the last seven years, it was observed and felt that employees working in BBSC do not trust each other. Only few members who are in good post have the vested ability to communicate to others. This has resulted in frustration among the employees in the BBSC. And because of the frustration, it is alarming to point out that often time superior and subordinate interact with each others that are

unsuitable (use of vulgar and abusive words) and at times use physical force to solve their misunderstanding. Consequently, many senior and professional producers who plays a vital role in the development and overall performance of the BBSC have resigned from the organization.

### **Instrument**

Each interviewee was asked the following guideline questions based on the purpose of this study, which is exploring the communication pattern among the employees in the BBSC:

1. How important is communication in the BBSC?
2. Discuss and describe some of the ways through which you typically receive and give information to your staffs.
3. How would you describe the current situation with regards to accessing and sharing information with your subordinate in the organization?
4. How do you disseminate information to your subordinate? Please explain it.
5. What is the best way in informing your subordinate regarding the changes in the organization? Explain why and how?
6. Discuss why do you think keeping relationship with your staffs is important?
7. Discuss and describe some of your problems while communicating/interacting with your subordinate/staffs. How do you manage it?
8. What do you think are the reasons leading to disagreement between you and your subordinate?
9. What is the level of involvement of your staff/subordinate in developing plans and policies?
10. Discuss about the activities of your staff's participation in formulating organization's plans and policies.
11. What do you believe the current situation is with regard to co-operation and mutual understanding (sharing of work) between you and your subordinates and what effect does this have on your relationship with you subordinates?
12. Would you like to add anything more?

**Data Collection**

All the interviews were fully transcribed. The tape recorder usually used for recording the content of the interview was not utilized due to unavailability. However, the interview was transcribed simultaneously while interview is being conducted via mobile phone in their respective offices in the organization. An interview lasted on average 30 to 45 minutes.

**Data Analysis**

After getting the data from three in-depth interviews of General Managers, researcher read through all data. The data was then sorted and classified into several significant categories relating to the section in quantitative part.

**Conclusion**

The triangulation method was used in this research to gain broader and more complete understanding of the issues being investigated. Both dependent and independent variables in this research were clearly set and defined to get precise measures. The research instrument was developed considering the importance of measurement validity. In the same manner, data were collected with full consideration of ecological and time factors. Lastly, the data collected were systematically analyzed with much care to acquire the precise results.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents both quantitative and quality results of the study. Firstly, the quantitative analysis are presented, which includes respondents' demographic analysis, and hypothesis testing. Secondly, the qualitative results from the in-depth interviews of three general managers are analyzed and presented.

#### Demographic Analysis

The demographic characteristics of the respondents' are analyzed and the result are presented in table 2. According to the result, the sample consisted of a total number of 69 (73.4%) male and 25 (26.6%) female. Regarding the respondents' age, more than half (70.2 %) respondents fall under the age range of 26-35 years of age. others fall under the age range of 15-25 years of age (16 %) and 36-45 years (11.7 %). In terms of respondents' educational background, little less than half (48.9%) fall under bachelor's degree followed by higher secondary education 27 (28.7 %). Regarding the respondents years of service in the BBSC, more than half (59.6 %) fall under 1-5 years category and only 3 (3.2 %) of the respondents have more than 15 years of experience.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics		Frequency of responses (N=94)	Percent of responses
Gender	Male	69	73.4 %
	Female	25	26.6 %
	Total	94	100 %

Table 2 (continued): Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics		Frequency of responses (N=94)	Percent of responses
Age	15-25	15	16.0 %
	26-35	66	70.2 %
	36-45	11	11.7 %
	46-55	2	2.1 %
	Total	94	100 %
Education level	Primary	1	1.1 %
	Secondary	2	2.1 %
	Higher secondary	27	28.7 %
	Diploma	16	17.0 %
	Bachelor	46	48.9 %
	Master	2	2.1 %
	Total	94	100 %
Years of service	1-5 yrs	56	59.6 %
	6-10 yrs	31	32.9 %
	11-15 yrs	4	4.3 %
	More than 15 yrs	3	3.2 %
	Total	94	100 %

### Hypothesis Testing and Findings

#### Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis one predicted that information load on the subordinates is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC. Pearson correlation test was employed to test the

association between information load on the subordinate and their pattern of communication-downward, upward and horizontal communication. The significant level was set to Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) .05.

The result revealed that there is no significant relationship between information load on the subordinate with the downward communication with their head ( $r=.191$ ,  $p> 0.05$ ). Similarly, the association between the information load on the subordinate and upward communication with their head is not significant ( $r=.070$ ,  $p> 0.05$ ). In the same manner the relationship between information load on the subordinate and horizontal communication is not significant ( $r=-.104$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), see table 3. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported.

Table 3: Correlation between information load and communication pattern

		Info load	Down Com.	Up Com.	Hori Com.
Info load	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.191	.070	-.104
Down Com	Pearson Correlation		1.000	-.076	.062
Up Com	Pearson Correlation			1.000	.406**
Hori Com	Pearson Correlation				1.000

Note \*\* =  $p<.01$

Info load =Information load

Down Com =Downward Communication

Up Com =Upward Communication

Hori Com =Horizontal Communication

## Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis two predicted that the attitude of subordinate is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC. Pearson correlation test was employed to test the relationship between attitude of the subordinates and their pattern of communication with their head-downward, upward, and horizontal communication. The significant level was set to Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) .05.

The result revealed that there is no significant relationship between attitude of the subordinates and the downward communication with their head ( $r=.000$ ,  $p> 0.05$ ). Regarding the association between attitude of the subordinates and upward communication with their head is also not significant ( $r=.044$ ,  $p> 0.05$ ). Similarly, the relationship between attitude of the subordinate and horizontal communication is not significant ( $r=-.146$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) see table 4. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported.

Table 4: Correlation between attitude and communication pattern

		Att.	Down Com.	Up Com.	Hori Com.
Att	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.000	.044	.146
Down Com	Pearson Correlation		1.000	-.076	.062
Up Com	Pearson Correlation			1.000	.406**
Hori Com	Pearson Correlation				1.000

Note \*\* =  $p<.01$

Att =Attitude

Down Com =Downward Communication

Up Com =Upward Communication

Hori Com =Horizontal Communication

### Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis three predicted that Power and status of the superior are related to the pattern of superior-subordinate communication in the BBSC. Pearson correlation test of association was employed to see the relationship between power and status of the superior and their pattern of communication - downward, upward, and horizontal communication. The significant level was set to Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) .05.

The result revealed that relationship between power and status of the superior and downward communication is significant at ( $r=.247, p < 0.05$ ). However the relationship between power and status of the superior and upward communication is not significant ( $r=.102, p > 0.05$ ). In the same manner, the relationship between power and status of the superior and horizontal communication is not significant ( $r=-.075, p > 0.05$ ) see table 5. Therefore, this hypothesis is not fully supported.

Table 5: Correlation between power and status and communication pattern

		P0w & Stat	Down Com.	Up Com.	Hori Com.
P0w & Stat	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.247*	.102	-.075
Down Com.	Pearson Correlation		1.000	-.076	.062
Up Com.	Pearson Correlation			1.000	.406**
Hori Com.	Pearson Correlation				1.000

Note \*\* =  $p < .01$

\* =  $p < .05$

Pow & Stat =Power and Status

Down Com =Downward Communication

Up Com =Upward Communication

Hori Com =Horizontal Communication

#### Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis four predicted that trust between the head and subordinate will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC. In line with this, Pearson correlation test was employed to see whether trust between the head and subordinate will enhance upward flow of information. The significant level was set to Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) .05. The test revealed that association of trust between the head and subordinate and the upward flow of information significant and with positive relationship ( $r=.247, p < 0.05$ ) see table 6. Therefore this hypothesis is supported.



Table 6: Correlation between trust and upward communication

		Trust	Upward communication
Trust	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.241*
Upward Communication	Pearson Correlation		1.000

Note \* =  $p < .01$

#### Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis five predicted that level of exchange between the head and subordinate will enhance the downward flow of information within the BBSC. To test this hypothesis Pearson correlation test was used and the significant level was set to Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) .05. The test revealed that association between the two variables, level of exchange between the head and subordinate and downward flow of information is not significant ( $r=.065$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) see table 7. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported.

Table 7: Correlation between level of exchange and downward communication

		Level of Exchange	Downward Communication
Level of Exchange	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.065
Downward Communication	Pearson Correlation		1.000

#### Qualitative Findings

The above results are derived from the quantitative analysis; however, as stated earlier, the qualitative methods will provide broader and more complete understanding of the issues being investigated. As usual, the conversation started with an informal talk such as hi, hello and how are you doing in Bangkok? This helps the researcher to proceed to further put forward the question to the

interviewees. As an appetizer, the researcher asked the interviewees about the importance of communication in the BBSC. The following are what interviewees had replied:

“Communication is the cornerstone in a business like ours, be it personal or official. Even at the managerial level, communication remains critical for the overall progress of the organization. It is about being able to communicate decisions to the people, which matter most. This is because when the organization works towards a common goal – it is crucial for every member in your department, division or team to be aware of what is being planned. Even otherwise managers need to be good communicators for you to be able to pass one’s ideas, objectives, and goals clearly. A good communicator no doubt makes good managers.”

The other interviewee replied in a similar manner, to quote;

“Unlike other organizations, communication is the bedrock for all Media Organizations.”

The in-depth interviews shed light on this investigation into General Managers’ relationship with their subordinate, use of power, and their ways of information sharing. Interview with the General Managers revealed that current issues and concerns that need to be addressed are being discussed at the management meetings. Management meeting is a forum where General Managers share information, develop plans and strategies for the organization and the respective departments. This in turn is disseminated to the employees through the system of morning meetings. This indicates that most information are generated at the top management and are then shared among the employees through morning meetings in their respective departments. Further, it is known through in-depth interview that such meeting provides opportunity to the employees to raise their concern, issues, and feedbacks. The following are the responses from the interviewees:

“Information from the MD comes to the GM and the GM in turn relays it to the concerned head of the section who then will accordingly inform the concerned

person. Other times problems and concerns are raised by individuals during the regular meetings and then it is discussed and solutions sought.”

Similarly, the other interviewee stated:

“I chair the morning meetings and share information clearly with people what has been discussed in the management. In turn, I receive views, suggestions, and comments on decisions that affect my department. Following the discussions, we plan our day-to-day operations. I also regularly sit with my two managers and section heads formally or mostly informally and share information.”

General Managers also noted that bulk of communication or information sharing also takes place through intranet and the email where they email out to people in the departments for their views and suggestions.

It is revealed through in-depth interview that information they share with their employees are not complex nor it is beyond the employees understanding. However, General Managers noted that since all the employees’ educational level and experience are not similar, some take more time to cope with the instruction related to their work.

Two interviewees mentioned that for any kind of problem/work related issues, they ask for employee’s opinion first. If employees’ stated opinion is correct or acceptable, then the managers advise the employees to proceed with their ideas. Both the General Manager argued that such technique motivates the employee in regard to their work. If the ideas and suggestions of the employees are not correct or acceptable, then General Managers advice on how to perform the task or deal with the situation.

There are situation when employees are unwilling or not sure to serve certain task. To overcome this situation, General Managers share their experiences with the employees. The General Managers

asserted that sharing their own experiences helps the employee to understand the circumstances/work better, one interviewee acknowledged that:

“In case of problems regarding a particular task, I share my experiences with the employees. I believe that sharing experiences helps the employees to understand the task better. In particular, the background of the information will help the employees not only to better understand the work they would be performing but also assist them how to perform and deal with the problems.”

The above acknowledgement made by the interviewees reflects that the General Managers use of power in their interaction with their subordinate. In line to this, the in-depth interview revealed that some top management or Managers lacked knowledge related to their work. The lack of knowledge emerged as a particular barrier to the supervision of the employees. However, they noted that little training on mid and top management has helped them in overcoming the barrier. Therefore, all the General Managers interviewed were content with the way they were using the power and knew how to carry out their work, in which they were engaged, as one interviewee stated:

“The biggest drawback was that the top management did not have any management training which resulted in trying to run the organization on a daily basis because we were not able to plan and implement effectively. But with the training of Mid and Top level management we received, it was really an eye opener and we have learnt a lot and already feel that we will be able to be more organized and steer BBS on the right path.”

All the General Managers stressed that they could make their employees' feel that employees have a commitment to meet. The General Managers mentioned that in the morning meetings workloads are distributed according to the consensus. The Manager then follows up on these allotted target and work, sometimes on the weekly or on the monthly basis. If the employee is falling short in meeting

the target, the General Manager(s) inform the employee(s) and ask him to take the necessary steps to meet the goal. One interviewee pointed out:

“Either weekly or monthly basis I analyze whether producers are able to fill up their airtime. If the producers are not able to produce in time, then I inform them regarding their performance and provide them with helper in completing the production. Applying this techniques can help me and my department to meet in reaching the target.”

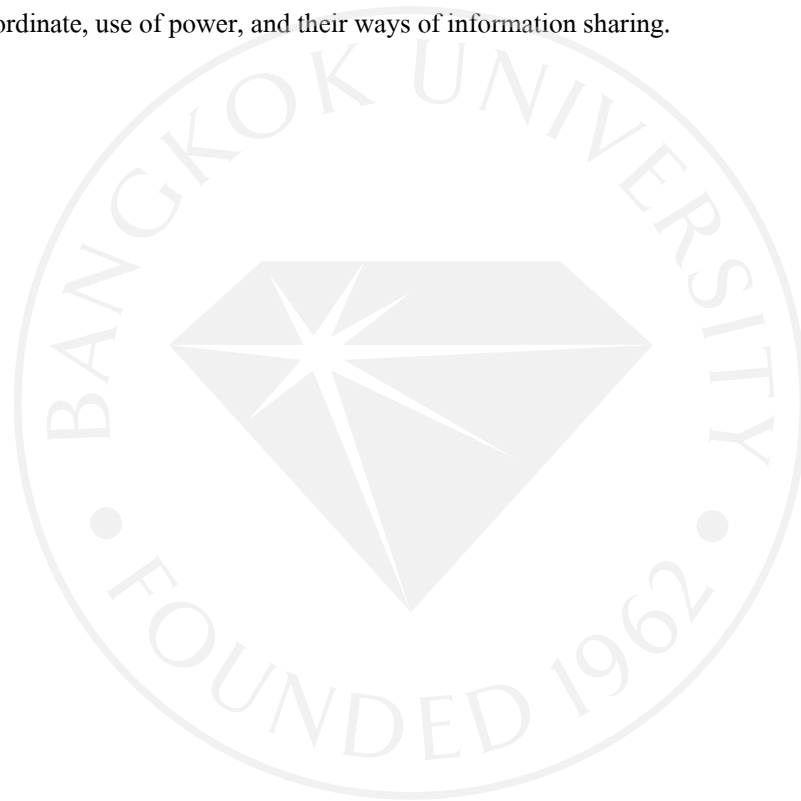
The General Manager also stated that distribution of workload alone would not make the employees fulfill their respective task. In the in-depth interview, the General Managers emphasized that establishment of trust and bonding with the employees is required; further two way communication with the employee is more essential. According to the General Managers, trust and communication would assist in achieving the set target of the department and organization at large. Relating to this one interviewee noted:

“Whenever I receive information from the Broad of Directors through MD, I share with my employees. To me sharing information builds trust and confidence between my subordinates and me. As a General Manager, I need this bonding to achieve my department goal. The GMs even share the minutes of the MCM the very next day.”

The above statement noted that how General Managers use information and sharing leads to building trust between the Supervisor and subordinate in the BSSC.

**Conclusion**

All research hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation test. Only one hypothesis, which predicted that trust between the head and subordinate, will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC showed significant relationship and it was supported. The other four hypotheses were not accepted. The in-depth interview with three General Manager was also analyzed. This in-depth interview added light on this investigation into General Managers' relationship with their subordinate, use of power, and their ways of information sharing.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the results and discusses the findings. The researcher discusses the findings along with their implications and contribution to the knowledge regarding the communication pattern among the employees of Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC). Based on the finding this chapter also provides the recommendations to Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (BBSC) and future research. In addition, it highlights the limitation of the present research study.

#### **Summary of the Results**

Four out of the five hypotheses which predicted the relationship between independent variables (information load on the subordinate, subordinates' attitude towards supervisors, supervisors' power and status, level of exchange showed) and dependent variables (downward, upward and horizontal communication) showed no statistical significance. Therefore, these hypothesis are not accepted. However, the fourth hypothesis, which predicted that trust between the head and subordinate, will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC showed significant relationship, therefore this hypothesis was supported.

The in-depth interview with three General Managers shed light on this investigation into General Managers' relationship with their subordinate, use of power, and their ways of information sharing. The result revealed that there is no information load on the subordinates, use of expert power by supervisor and building relationship between supervisor and subordinate through trust.

## **Discussion**

This study's aim is to evaluate the different patterns of communication among employees in the BBSC experience. The study will also lead to the understanding of the characteristics of heads and subordinates along with their relationship that are related to the communication pattern in the organization. The following part discusses the results of each hypothesis and draws the conclusion.

Hypothesis one predicted that information load on the subordinates is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC. This hypothesis is not accepted. This indicated that there is no association between information load on the subordinate with the pattern of communication- downward, upward and horizontal communication with their head in the BBSC. This means that information received from their supervisor is clear and simple and is not beyond subordinates understanding. In other words, there is no information overload on the subordinate. Therefore, the information they share do not undergo omission and distortion leading to smooth flow of information with supervisor and subordinate in the BBSC. The results also show that most of the subordinates were not engaged in unimportant meeting and unnecessary instructions.

The in-depth interview result relating to information load revealed that most of the information is not complex and easy to understand. Although most of the information are generated from the top management, it is disseminated clearly among the employees through morning meetings of the respective department.

The results from both survey and in-depth interview showed that there is no information load on the subordinates. Therefore, both the results are consistent. The reason for this result could be that the message sent by the supervisor are clear and understandable by the subordinates. In this respect, Gibson and Hodgetts (1991) argued that, relatively simple to understand, routine message can be handled in much greater abundance than unpredictable and complex message.



Hypothesis two predicted that the attitude of subordinate is related to their pattern of communication with their head in the BBSC. This hypothesis is not supported. This indicates that subordinates' attitude is not related to their communication pattern with their supervisor in the BBSC. In other words, they have favorable attitude towards their supervisor, which allows both supervisor and subordinate to engage in a proper communication pattern. This also means that subordinates are more responsive towards supervisors' instruction related to the Job.

The in-depth interview shows that supervisor also perceived a favorable attitude of the subordinate towards them. From the in-depth interview, it is known that supervisor use motivation techniques such as asking opinion and feedbacks from the subordinates about the job. If the opinions of the subordinate are correct and accepted then subordinates are advised to go ahead with their ideas. If there suggestion and opinions are not accurate they are clarified but not ignored. This helps in forming favorable attitude of the subordinates towards their supervisor and as well as work.

Both the results from survey and in-depth interview are consistent as it revealed similar results indicating favorable attitude of the subordinates towards their supervisors and job. This could be explained by understanding the formation and influence of attitude of the employees in the organization. For instance, emotions such as joy and anger contribute to the formation of employees attitudes in an organization. In this regard, the in-depth interview result supported that supervisors in the BBSC tend to give support and help their subordinates in performing their job. The support and help might have led to the formation of favorable attitude of the subordinates in the organization.

Hypothesis three predicted that Power and status of the superior are related to the pattern of superior-subordinate communication in the BBSC. This hypothesis is partially accepted. The result revealed that power & status of supervisor is related with downwards communication. However, there is no relationship between power & status of supervisor with upward and horizontal communication. This finding indicates that supervisor use power in downward communication. The use of power could be either coercive or other good power like expert power by the supervisor.

According to the in-depth interview, the results revealed that most of the supervisors are using expert power in the organization. The supervisors use their expert power by sharing their experiences and expertise with their subordinate especially when their subordinates are not in a position to carry out the task related job. Therefore, both the results are consistent with each other.

Hypothesis four predicted that trust between the head and subordinate will enhance the upward flow of information within the BBSC. This hypothesis is supported. However, the strength of the relationship is low but it could possible that the strength may increase with the increase in sample size. The result indicates that relationship between superior and subordinate based on trust can enhance upward flow of communication within the employees in the BBSC. The information between supervisor and subordinate are shared and discussed openly. The result indicates that supervisor act in the best interest of the subordinates and is concerned for their well being in the organization. These activities encourage or provide subordinates with an opportunity to approach their supervisor resulting to more of upward communication between them in the organization.

Similarly, in-depth interview revealed the existence of trust between supervisor and subordinate communication in the BBSC. The in-depth interview showed that General Manager are of the view that trust plays an important role in two way communication between supervisor and subordinate. Trust and communication would assist in achieving the set target of the department and organization at large.

The reason for this finding could be an unavoidable nature of relationship between supervisor and subordinate in the work place. Characteristic of relationship highlights the need for members to trust each other in a significant manner and typically involve increased level of interdependence (Peterson & Codery, 2003). The other explanation for this finding could be, both supervisor and subordinate trust each other to set their target and goals consensually. In this respect Smith et al. (1993) cited in (Peterson & Codery, 2003) points out that the only pathway to effective task performance and goal

attainment is through co-operation, and trust is considered a key precursor of co-operation. The result of this study is in-line with the findings of Ayres, et al. (1973) who concluded that subordinates who trust their supervisor tend to communicate problem oriented information upward more accurately than those who do not trust their superior.

Hypothesis five predicted that level of exchange between the head and subordinate will enhance the downward flow of information within the BBSC. This hypothesis is not supported. This indicates that the level of exchange between the head and subordinate is not associated with the downward communication. In other word, supervisor does not provide subordinate with resources that goes beyond what is specified in the work description. It also mean that supervisor provide information equally to all the employees.

The in-depth interview could not provide a result related to the level of exchange between supervisor and subordinate. The interviewees were reluctant to respond to the question relating level of exchange. Therefore, the discussion would be based on survey result alone.

This finding contradicts with the earlier finding. Kassing (2000) has pointed out the early findings of Graen and Schiemann (1978) that those members establishing high quality exchanges with their supervisors demonstrated higher agreement with supervisors than those who established low-quality exchanges. Subordinates in these dyads are often given more information by the superior and report greater job latitude. For instance, high quality exchange employees were given favorable ratings, despite their actual performance (Duarte et al., 1994, cited in Bakar et al., 2007). Therefore, the main reason for this finding could be that supervisors in BBSC are sharing information to all the subordinates equally without categorizing the employees as in-group and out-group. The other reason could be the fact that respondents may have played or manipulated in answering the questionnaires, thinking that it may have negative impact of their image in the organization.

### **Limitations of the study**

There is no research that is perfect and this study is no exception. Since this research was conducted in limited time along with other regular course work, researcher lacked enough time to cover the in-depth study of the concept.

This study is limited to Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation, Thimphu Bhutan. Therefore, the result of the study could be applied only to BBSC. Consequently, the result may not be generalized to other organizations. It is recommended that researcher consider the difference between media organization and other different kind of organization such as private, government and how these differences will influence the communication pattern.

The other limitation is due to small sample size consisting of only 94 respondents, which according to the social science research is too small a size. On the other hand, there are too many variables in this study. Too many variables with a small sample size may lead to type II error where null hypothesis is accepted when it is false.

Another limitation is the collection of data, since it was done by the researchers' colleague in Bhutan, it may be possible that the colleague might have altered sampling technique, which in turn may lead to the limitation on the validity of the study.

### **Recommendation for Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation**

The problem presumed prior to this research was attributed to selected variables that the researcher believed had a strong impact is found not to be true by this study. Therefore, BBSC may study other factors such as job satisfaction, Work environment, and employees commitment towards organization.

The results indicate that factors such as subordinate attitude towards their supervisor are of positive nature. Similarly, the use of power by the supervisors are mostly related to expert power, which would be an asset to BBSC. Therefore, keeping the importance of this factors in mind and their contribution towards proper functioning of an organization could be further nurtured and promoted.

### **Recommendation for Future Studies**

The study was limited to some selected variables that the researcher believed had a strong impact on the communication pattern. Other variables, such as message, Network & Channel, and structural characteristics should be considered in the future research.

Future researcher may take into considering the right sample size (maximum sample size 400 respondents) for the generalizability of the findings.

Similarly, use of new media like internet, e-mail and other computer mediated communication (CMC) are on the rise. As a result, next researcher could study the impact of this technology on communication pattern.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion mentioned in this chapter is only from the researchers' perspective, which was gathered from both theoretical studies and researcher's experiences as one of the employee in the BBSC. Yet, the researcher wishes that this study would greatly benefit the organization and contribute some knowledge with regard to communication pattern in the BBSC.

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## II. Communication Behavior

Please put the tick (✓) mark where it is applicable to you against each statement.

Sl	Section I- Information Load	Always	often	Sometimes	rarely	never
06	I spend too much time in unimportant meetings with my supervisor.					
07	I am responsible for unmanageable number of instructions.					
08	My supervisor expects more information from me than my skills and abilities.					
09	My supervisor gives me clear instruction*.					
10	I ignore some of the information sent by my supervisor.					

Sl	Section II- Attitude	most	much	So-so	less	least
11	I feel that I am my own boss in most matters.					
12	I make my own decision without the concern of my supervisor.					
13	I understand my responsibility and do my work without the instructions from my supervisor.					
14	I feel that I am always ordered.					
15	I like instructions given by my supervisor.					
16	I usually hear about important changes through rumors rather than management communication.					
17	Company policies and procedures for employees make no sense to me.					

Sl	Section III- Power	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18	I prefer not to speak if my idea is against what supervisor thinks.					
19	Supervisor wants me to work according to his/her desire.					
20	My voice is not heard by my supervisor.					
21	My supervisor rewards me when I perform my job accordingly.					
22	My supervisor warns me even when I make minor mistake.					
23	I depend on my supervisor's knowledge and expertise to perform my job.					
24	I admire the ability of my supervisor.					
25	I have to consult my supervisor before I do almost anything.					

Sl	Section IV- Status	Always	often	Sometimes	rarely	never
26	My supervisor listens to those members with same rank as him/her.					
27	My supervisor gives suggestion to those members with same position as him/her.					
28	I prefer working with colleagues having same level of experience.					
29	I prefer working with colleagues having same level of knowledge.					

Sl	Section V- Level of exchange	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
30	I am liked by my supervisor as a person.					
31	I am a person my supervisor would like to have as a friend.					
32	My supervisor is a lot of fun to work with.					
33	My supervisor provides me with support and resources that goes beyond what is specified in my job description.					
34	My supervisor is willing to apply extra effort, beyond normal requirement to meet my work goals.					
35	My supervisor does not mind working hardest for me.					
36	My supervisor is impressed with my knowledge about job.					
37	My supervisor respects my knowledge and competence on the job.					
38	My supervisor admires my professional skills.					

Sl	Section VI- Trust	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
39	My supervisor openly shares personal information with me.					
40	My supervisor doesn't really tell me what is going on.					
41	I have faith in the integrity of my supervisor.					
42	I can rely on my supervisor.					
43	My supervisor typically acts in the best interests of me.					
44	My supervisor does not show concern for me.					
45	My supervisor keeps his or her word.					

Sl	Section VII- Downward communication	Always	often	Some times	rarely	never
46	All information has to route through supervisor.					
47	I receive instructions from my supervisor in the form of orders.					
48	My supervisor makes the final decision.					
49	I receive information from my supervisor regarding the changes in the office.					
50	My supervisor ignores me while I speak.					

Sl	Section VIII- Upward communication	Always	often	Some times	rarely	never
51	My supervisor listens to me.					
52	I am free to disagree to my supervisor					
53	I tell my supervisor when thing are going wrong.					
54	My supervisor acknowledges feedback.					
55	I participate in the decision on the adoption of new programs.					
56	I participate in the decision on the adoption of new policies.					
57	My suggestions are accepted by the supervisor.					

Sl	Section IX- Horizontal communication	Always	often	someti mes	rarely	never
58	I consult my colleagues for suggestions.					
59	My colleagues ask for my suggestions					
60	We discuss things that are not related to our work.					
61	We organize informal meeting among ourselves for discussion.					
62	We arrange meetings to discuss work related problems.					
63	We resolve misunderstanding among ourselves through open discussion.					

**III. Open ended questions.**

1. What are some of the difficulties you face in communicating with your supervisor?
2. Give any suggestions to improve the flow of information between you and your supervisor in the BBSC.

Thank you for your cooperation and your participation in this research.