

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION IN JOB SATISFACTION IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS: AN EXPLORATION**

by

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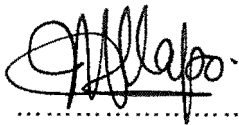
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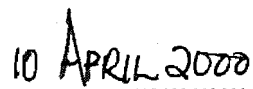
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SIGNATURE

(MR J M NHLAPO)



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SUMMARY

This researcher investigates the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications, a government policy-making institution that deals with post, telecommunications, and broadcasting services in South Africa.

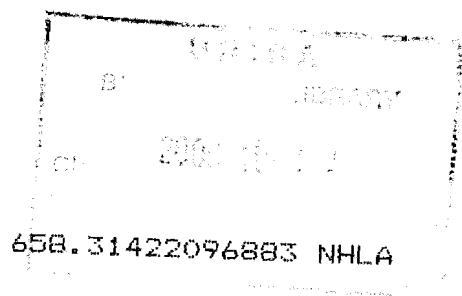
This study describes communication satisfaction as the overall degree of satisfaction an employee perceives in his total communication environment and job satisfaction as the degree of satisfaction the individual feels with his job.

Focus groups are used to explore the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications because they are appropriate and suitable in capturing the discussions reflecting emotions, particularly uncovering individuals' feelings about their environment. The emphasis is on finding out how communication motivates and makes employees satisfied in their jobs.

Qualitative content analysis, based on transcriptions from audiotapes, is used for interpretation and analysis of the data. These transcriptions reflect the descriptive nature of the data and people's own spoken words.

KEY TERMS

Communication satisfaction; Job satisfaction; Communication climate; Organisational integration; Personal feedback; Organisational perspective; Media quality; Relationship with supervisor; Focus Groups; Transcriptions; Qualitative content analysis.



Abstract

This study shows that an overall communication environment, which is called a communication climate, plays a major role in influencing job satisfaction of employees in an organisation. It points out to other researchers that, when conducting research on matters of job satisfaction, they should also investigate the role played by communication elements such as organisational integration, personal feedback, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor, instead of focusing only on salaries, promotions and other work-related incentives.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study explores the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications, a government policy-making institution that deals with post, telecommunications, and broadcasting services in South Africa.

Based on the literature reviewed, studies of this nature have been conducted in the past. However, they place little emphasis on communication variables. They deal with the role of wages, promotion, productivity, etc. in job satisfaction. Therefore, this study emphasises the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction.

Chapter one gives an overview and framework of the work itself. It gives a structure of how the following chapters are constituted.

In chapter two, communication satisfaction and job satisfaction are defined. Six communication perspectives are used as the basis for formulating theoretical foundations of the study. These are communication climate, organisational integration, personal feedback, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor. Maslow's needs hierarchy and Herzberg's two-factor theories are used to further explain the relationship.

In chapter three, this researcher describes the methodology of the study – focus group.

Chapter four uses qualitative content analysis in analysing and interpreting the data gathered from the focus groups. This researcher establishes the relationship between the text that is in a form of transcripts compiled from audiotapes of the discussions and the context, which is the communication environment in the Department of Communications.

Further, in chapter four the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the Department of Communications using the six communication perspectives as a guideline is discussed.

In chapter five, this researcher makes recommendations for the Department of Communications to implement so that the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction can be improved. These are drawn from the study.

Following chapter five is the section that contains the appendices. Appendix A is the moderator's guide that contains a list of questions for conducting focus group discussions. Appendix B contains transcripts compiled from the focus group discussions.

The final section contains the list of sources consulted in conducting the study.

2. THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION IN JOB SATISFACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS: AN EXPLORATION

2.1 THE NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study explores the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. The literature reviewed suggests that communication plays a crucial part in determining employee job satisfaction.

Therefore, this study defines these two variables (communication satisfaction and job satisfaction) and uncovers communication elements that influence their relationship. It also highlights some of the elements that are critical in the relationship.

2.2 THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION IN JOB SATISFACTION

Sypher (1981:6) and Clampitt and Downs (1993:7) state that research has uncovered a strong relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. Sypher (1981:8) indicates various studies that attempt to prove this relationship. Among them they include Level (1959), Sanborn (1961), Tompkins (1962), Jain (1970), Goldhaber, et al. (1978), and Wiio, et al. (1980). These studies find that although there is a correlation between the two variables, communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, the relationship appears to be situational and strongly influenced by organisational level.

With regard to level, Petit et al. (1997:81) state that an employee perceives supervisor's communication style, credibility, and content as critical in influencing the amount of satisfaction he/she receives from the job. Redding and Sanborn (1964:37) state that a favourable attitude between hierarchies that is promoted by good communication is the basis for job satisfaction.

In a field study of 327 hospital nurses, Pincus (1986:412) finds a positive relationship between communication and job performance, because those nurses know what is expected of them and their work environment is open and friendly. A strong relationship exists between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, particularly in supervisor communication, climate, and feedback. Therefore Pincus (1986:413) confirms that communication between an employee and his/her immediate supervisor is vital in ensuring job satisfaction.

Pincus (1986:399) states that communication satisfaction is a multidimensional construct. Therefore, some of the studies conducted find that, other than having a role to play in job satisfaction, communication is also related to job performance (Pincus 1986:400). Petit et al. (1997:83) state that as communication increases employees' job performance and satisfaction increase. They further state that if employees are exposed to appropriate communication in terms of trust, accuracy, etc., job performance will in turn be improved leading to increased job satisfaction. This is a result of clarified roles and responsibilities within well-defined relationships.

This author elaborates on the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. An attempt is made to look at other related variables such as job performance and theories that are influential in the relationship.

2.2.1 Communication satisfaction

In this study, communication satisfaction is used to refer to the overall degree of satisfaction an employee perceives in his total communication environment (Redding 1972:42; Downs & Hazen 1977:64). Thayer (1968:144) defines it as "the personal satisfaction inherent in successfully communicating to someone or in successfully being communicated with". Bee-Leng (1982:7) states that it is the degree of satisfaction an organisational member feels towards his or her co-workers, immediate supervisor, and top management.

According to Redding (1972:42), communication satisfaction combines, under a single category, a number of fragmentary and diverse phenomena of communication events and attitudes encountered by an employee in an organisation. In support, Downs and Hazen (1977:64) state that it comprises the following aspects:

- explanation of policies in answer to employee questions
- understanding what is expected of one in job performance
- advance notice of changes through official sources
- freedom to make suggestions to superiors
- adequacy of information on those company matters regarded by the employee as important to him/her
- extent to which important information is obtained from sources or media preferred by the receiver
- freedom to make complaints, to "sound off"
- accessibility or approachability of superiors
- degree to which a supervisor makes an effort to understand feelings and problems of subordinates
- degree to which supervisors express appreciation of good performance by subordinates
- degree to which higher officers or management are open and willing to initiate communication.

Sypher (1981:7) states that people become satisfied with their communication climate when they are told what they feel they need to know and when they are encouraged by their supervisors to express their feelings and opinions. However, it is not clear what aspects of communication are addressed at this level of interaction and how they link with the functioning of an organisation, but as

satisfaction with communication increases, positive perceptions of general organisational climate increase as well (Sypher 1981:7). Organisational climate in this context is "... a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment of an organisation that is experienced by its members, that influences their behaviour, and that can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics of the organisation" (Goldhaber 1993: 63).

According to Sypher (1981:2), communication satisfaction depends on good amounts of information received. In an organisation, this is a function of a relationship one has with one's supervisor. Therefore, Sypher (1981:2) interprets communication satisfaction in terms of amount, direction, and content of messages exchanged between employees, especially between supervisors and subordinates. Redding (1979:312) states that "considerate communication behaviours on the part of the supervisors result, most of the time, in more satisfied and more productive employees". This includes being supportive and listening with empathy to employee needs.

Pincus (1986:399) states that communication satisfaction is a multidimensional construct. It sums up an individual's satisfaction with information flow and other related variables. In their study, Downs and Hazen (1977:68) also find that communication satisfaction is a multidimensional construct that does not only account for more variance than other factors, but is loaded with other satisfaction factors within the organisation. Clampitt and Downs (1993:6) reflect the multidimensionality of communication satisfaction in a study they conducted, finding that "employees are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied in general, but can express varying degrees of satisfaction about definite categories of communication".

According to Downs et al. (1973:2), communication satisfaction consists of eight distinct dimensions:

- communication climate, which is a general response to communication environment on organisational and personal levels
- supervisor communication, which refers to immediate supervisor, including areas such as openness to ideas and listening to problems
- media quality, which refers to quality of media used in an organisation
- horizontal communication, which includes perceptions of grapevine, extent to which informational communication is accurate and free flowing
- organisational integration, which refers to the degree to which individuals receive information relevant to their jobs
- personal feedback, which refers to what an individual knows about how his or her performance is being judged
- organisational perspective, which refers to broad information about an organisation as a whole
- subordinate communication, which includes communication from subordinate employees to their supervisors.

Pincus (1986:402) further groups these dimensions into three categories in what is called the "Comm Sat-Outcomes" research model, and adds the ninth dimension, which is communication with top management. According to Pincus (1986:402) this dimension reflects recent research findings suggesting that employees' perceptions of top management and their communication practices may influence their job satisfaction.

The three categories identified by Pincus (1986:402) are informational dimensions, relational dimensions, and informational/relational dimensions.

Informational dimensions are predominantly focused on satisfaction with the content and flow of information throughout the organisation. These include media quality, organisational perspective, and organisational integration.

Relational dimensions are focused on satisfaction with communication relationships with other organisational members. They include subordinate communication, horizontal communication, and top management communication.

Informational/relational dimensions have a dual role on both relational and informational aspects of communication. They are supervisor communication, personal feedback, and communication climate.

This study focuses on six of the dimensions listed above: communication climate, organisational integration, personal feedback, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor. The dimensions of subordinate communication and supervisor communication are not discussed separately. They are incorporated within the dimension of relationship with supervisor, because they deal with communication relationships between the supervisor and the subordinate.

The dimension of horizontal communication is incorporated within the broader communication climate dimension, because of co-worker communication effect on the entire organisational communication climate.

2.2.1.1 Communication climate

In their study, Downs and Hazen (1977:66) find that communication climate, reflecting communication on both organisational and personal levels, plays a crucial role in making employees satisfied in their jobs. According to them, on the one hand, a positive climate motivates and stimulates employees to meet organisational goals. It reflects the extent to which attitudes toward communication are perceived to be healthy. On the other hand, it reflects the extent to which superiors know and understand the problems faced by subordinates. In this regard, it also includes information on how employees are being judged.

According to the report of the fifth session of the International Labour Conference (1966:61), communication procedures are designed to make available to the employees all the information they need to be as efficient and as satisfied as possible in their jobs. The report states that communication means more than giving the worker minimum instructions and information required for carrying out the job. It also means more than giving information on various aspects of the conditions of employment. It refers to various methods aiming at enlarging views, so that employees can see how their own efforts relate to the general activity of the undertaking, better understand its organisation, purposes and problems, feel really integrated in its operation and take a more active interest in it.

Redding and Sanborn (1964:520) state that better informed employees have higher morale to perform their jobs than less informed employees, because they know what is expected of them and what to do on their jobs.

According to Brody (1987:166), research demonstrates that organisational climate and job satisfaction are related to communication. In that regard, communication style and content are found to influence morale and employee relationships.

Penkala (1997:33) states that communication in an organisation must be able to inform, focus, and motivate. Therefore, communication climate must provide employees with:

- a general feel for the business situation from top management
- an understanding of their area's operating performance and how it is related to overall business performance
- an understanding of business objectives and how they are measured
- an understanding of what they can personally do to influence this information
- an understanding of how these and other events directly affect their work.

Roodman and Roodman (1973:57) state that communication climate should allow open-mindedness, receptiveness to change, and be problem-oriented. It should be able to resolve conflict and tension with a view to bringing a healthy working environment. Roodman and Roodman (1973:57) believe that this will relieve job stress, which is a consequence of dissatisfaction with the job.

2.2.1.2 Organisational integration

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that organisational integration revolves around the satisfaction of individuals with the information that they receive about the organisation and the immediate work environment, particularly getting information about departmental policies and plans, and requirements of one's job and personnel news.

Cherns and Davis (1975:15) state that "it is slowly becoming possible for workers to question life in the workplace without being castigated as misfits". New employees usually get confused when insufficient attention is given to integrate them into the culture of an organisation and be informed about organisational expectations.

Kramer (1993:149) states that a critical factor of integration occurs when old employees feel threatened by new employees during job transfers. Old employees tend to withhold important information until new members prove themselves as colleagues by demonstrating skills and knowledge. According to Kramer (1993:149), this behaviour limits depth and breadth of self-disclosure and prevents relationships from going beyond the initial stages indicated in relationship models.

Davis (1977:63) states that integration into the organisation has multiple objectives such as raising the general level of knowledge, competence, and action with respect to quality of working life issues. In a study conducted by Bullen (1982:60-116) various authors list factors that are considered crucial in

integrating employees into an organisation. Most of them are personnel issues. However, this author identifies common factors among them that have communication implications, especially for the purposes of this study. These factors are:

- opportunities to be informed about the organisation and its policies
- opportunities to learn about the organisation and the work itself
- the need for social interaction
- democracy in the organisation, which is seen as an opportunity to express preferences and take on decision-making responsibilities
- opportunity to be involved in planning for tasks
- finding and acknowledging relevance of one's job in the whole organisation
- employee participation in the management process
- social support and integration
- relations with supervisor
- workgroup relations.

2.2.1.3 Personal feedback

Hackman and Oldham (in McCormick 1979:286) state that feedback is the degree to which carrying out work activities required by the job results in an employee obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance. Wallace (1993:89) views feedback as active participation of the communicator and the recipient in a communication process.

Roodman and Roodman (1973:39) state that one-way communication is frustrating and causes uncertainty for both the sender and receiver because feedback does not occur. In this regard, it becomes frustrating for an employee to perform the job and get no feedback on it, because he or she needs a certain way of verification and restatement. Roodman & Roodman (1973:41) believe that one way of ensuring feedback is to provide employees with ample opportunity in the planning and development of the organisation.

McCormick (1979:286) views feedback as one of the communication factors that contributes toward job satisfaction and states that employees need to have regular and frequent feedback concerning the consequences of their work. Bullen (1982:30) states that for employees to make sense of their work environment, they require information about what is accomplished. In his study, Ford (in McCormick 1979:286) states that feedback emanates from the work itself rather than from some second source in the work situation.

Wallace (1993:90) states that feedback is determined by the manner in which communicating parties understand their individual personalities and frames of reference, and become empathic to each other.

Kopelman (1983:49) states that feedback provides information pertinent to:

- the specific kinds of activities that should be performed
- the levels of proficiency that should be achieved in each of these activities
- the individual's current level of proficiency in these activities.

Kopelman (1983:49) further states that feedback increases productivity as it enhances the desire to perform well and cues learned responses or serves to develop new responses. Kramer (1993:152) states that feedback helps newcomers during job transfers in exploring and understanding organisations while learning appropriate behaviours.

Kopelman (1983:50) states that feedback:

- corrects misconceptions
- creates internal consequences, a psychological state of internal work motivation, either negative or positive feelings about their performance
- may entail social consequences, which have been found to increase performance in a wide variety of work settings
- creates consequences in which employees may strive to look good to gain whatever rewards might result from management.

The study conducted by Lewis (1980:153) on the effects of feedback and the accuracy of communication finds that:

- two-way communication is more accurate than one-way communication
- person-to-person media allows for maximum feedback
- although two-way communication is more time-consuming than one-way communication, through feedback the communicator can change the message to ensure understanding
- communicators of two-way communication may tend to psychologically feel under attack because recipients may point out oversights or mistakes that have been overlooked.

Bormann (1969:151) states that communication feedback ought to be encouraged in organisations to ensure communication satisfaction. In this regard, eight steps are referred to in an attempt to encourage feedback:

- tell people you want feedback
- identify areas in which you want feedback
- set aside time for regularly scheduled feedback sessions
- use silence to encourage feedback
- watch for non-verbal responses
- ask questions
- use statements that encourage feedback
- reward feedback.

A study conducted by Kim (1975:1) finds that feedback increases workers' job satisfaction, especially in areas related to interpersonal dimensions. Kramer (1993:152) finds that employees who obtain higher levels of feedback experience more positive adjustment and job satisfaction than those who experience lower levels of feedback.

2.2.1.4 Organisational perspective

Organisational perspective refers to broad information about the organisation as a whole (Pincus 1986:402). Employees have to be informed about basic organisational policies and activities so that what they do would be in accordance with the organisation's direction (Redding & Sanborn 1964:163). In turn, they would have job satisfaction and high morale about organisational activities.

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that organisational perspective impacts on job satisfaction. According to them, employees get satisfied when they are informed about changes that include financial standing, organisational policies, and goals of an organisation. Goldhaber (1993:70) views organisational perspective as influenced by the culture of an organisation. Accordingly, members of an organisation use available facts to make up what might be viewed as 'social knowledge' of an organisation, which helps them to understand its activities and their role in it. It also helps them to understand global indicators and how they structure their experiences.

2.2.1.5 Media quality

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) view media quality as the degree to which employees perceive major forms of company media as functioning effectively. Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that well-organised meetings, well-written directives, and relevant organisational publications enhance communication and play a critical role in job satisfaction.

Regardless of the type of medium used in an organisation, Redding and Sanborn (1964:543) identify that techniques such as face-to-face interaction provide immediate interchange of communication rather than letters, memoranda, radio, or any house organ that permits only one party to send while others receive. They suggest that members of top management should spend more time talking to individual employees on an informal basis. They believe that having managers

attending and conscientiously mingling with employees in picnics or similar functions boosts their morale.

2.2.1.6 Relationship with supervisor

The relationship with the supervisor dimension comprises of all superior-subordinate communication relationships. Downs and Hazen (1977:66) state that this dimension involves downward and upward communication between superiors and subordinates.

Penkala (1997:33) states that supervisors are vital to an effective communication effort. Accordingly, they ought to understand the information they receive from management, apply it in their specific areas, and have skills to transmit it to other employees.

Anderson and Martin (1995:249) believe that people need communication to understand their environment and roles. Besides, Rubin (1993:164) states that communication influences the manner in which people make choices that will satisfy their needs. If unfulfilled, these needs can result in counterproductive communication behaviours. The entire environment can result in feelings of dissatisfaction with the job, superiors, and the organisation (Anderson & Martin 1995:249).

According to Anderson and Martin (1995:255), communication between supervisors and subordinates has motives and organisational outcomes. Motives are relatively stable personal variables explaining why one chooses to communicate, which, in turn, influences how one communicates. The outcome becomes the attainment of satisfaction that makes the environment conducive for working. This is reflected in their canonical analysis of employees' motives for communicating with supervisors and their satisfaction and commitment.

The development of supportive relationships between subordinates and their superiors is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction for employees (Kramer 1993:151).

Callan (1993:15) states that higher levels of job satisfaction could result from a shared agreement between superiors and subordinates, especially where the superior is seen as a communicator of role expectations and a subordinate as a role receiver. Schuler (1979:270) further states that communication should promote perceptions that reduce role conflict and levels of ambiguity.

Wheless et al. (1984:223) state that satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a consequence of employee's conversation with a supervisor. They further state that the key to satisfaction is supervisor's receptivity to information and communication from subordinates, which involves feedback, openness to ideas, opinions, suggestions, and innovations. They also find those employees who see their supervisors' communication and management style as more participative are more satisfied than employees who see their supervisors as non-participative. Therefore, their study concludes that high quality communication with supervisors is a predictor of job satisfaction (Wheless et al. 1984:223).

2.2.2 Job satisfaction

Knott (1979:8) defines job satisfaction as "the degree of satisfaction the individual feels with his job overall...". Bee-Leng (1982:4) views it as "any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say 'I am satisfied with my job'". Pincus (1986:396) states that the concept is used synonymously with morale and job attitudes to reflect individual's perceptual and emotional reaction to facets of work. Locke (1976:1297) states that job satisfaction is "a pleasurable or positive emotional state from the appraisal of one's job experiences".

According to the literature reviewed, job satisfaction results from an interaction between a person and his/her work environment. Locke (1976:1297) states that it is a function of a perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it as offering and entailing.

There are various theories that explain job satisfaction. For example, Taylor (Goldhaber 1993:77) assumes that human beings are completely dominated by external needs for economic rewards. Critics state that Taylor's analysis ignores the need for achievement or merit, which is one factor within Maslow's needs hierarchy. However, Maslow (Goldhaber 1993:77) states that the general environment has an effect on personal behaviour, which is shaped by basic human needs.

According to Bullen (1982:17), Maslow's human needs are classified in five levels:

- physiological needs such as the need for food and shelter
- safety needs for security, stability, and the absence from pain, threat, or illness
- belongingness and love needs
- esteem needs, including both a need for personal feelings of achievement or self esteem and also a need for recognition or respect from others
- the need for self-actualisation, a feeling of self-fulfilment or realisation of one's potential.

Likert (1961:240) explains a milestone in the theoretical explanation of job satisfaction. Likert (1961:240) believes that job performance is related to "the degree to which employees perceive that their colleagues' work is closely related to the work of the organisation, and that their individual goals in work are similar to the organisation's overall goals".

Likert (1961:99) states that high levels of interpersonal trust, interaction, and communication boost employees' productivity and morale. Communication is seen as flowing efficiently and constantly from all points to the decision-making centres. Such an environment makes employees satisfied and productive in their jobs.

Knott (1979:11) states that Herzberg's theory on job satisfaction is the commonly accepted explanation. Herzberg's theory, often called a two-factor theory, classifies factors affecting job satisfaction into two categories, motivators and hygienes. Motivators are those factors that lead to job satisfaction. Their absence does not lead to job dissatisfaction.

On the one hand, the two-factor theory looks at motivation factors as those that are intrinsic to the work itself and they lead to job satisfaction (Bullen 1982:19; Gruneberg 1976:1). These include a sense of achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, growth, and development. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction is caused by less than acceptable hygiene factors that are extrinsic to the work itself. These include supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, company policies, and salary. Gruneberg (1976:1) states that hygiene factors are a great source of dissatisfaction.

Therefore, the two concepts, job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, are not direct opposites. "Poor working conditions, bad company policies and administration, and bad supervision will lead to job dissatisfaction. But their opposites will not lead to positive job attitudes. Such factors as recognition, achievement, interesting work, etc. all lead to positive job attitudes" (Knott 1979:11).

In showing that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are not direct opposites, but are just separate factors, Bullen (1982:19) states that when employees perceive their jobs to be high on the extrinsic hygiene factors, there is no

dissatisfaction but no real satisfaction either. Therefore, hygiene factors can prevent dissatisfaction. Bullen (1982:19) states that "motivation factors intrinsic to the work are needed for satisfaction and motivation because they satisfy the individual's needs for self actualisation".

2.2.3 The relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction

This researcher discusses the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. So far, the literature reviewed suggests the existence of the relationship between these two variables. Therefore, this study is testing such a relationship in the Department of Communications.

Anderson and Martin (1995:253) state that the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction is evident when job performance gets positively enhanced as a result of employees having pleasure in doing their work. They become satisfied when they are included in decision-making processes. The overall communication climate is characterised by affection and relaxation while on duty.

Clampitt and Downs (1993:8) conducted a study in one organisation, finding that the department with the lowest rates of grievances and absenteeism has the highest scores of communication effectiveness. Employees in that department are satisfied with communication content and approach displayed by co-workers and management.

Kim (in Clampitt & Downs 1993:9) demonstrates that higher productivity is associated with more effective feedback about performance, and this is the duty of supervisors. Jenkins (in Clampitt & Downs 1993:9) states that it is for that reason that the effectiveness of supervisory communication is related to employee productivity.

In the study conducted by Petit et al (1997:93) organisational communication receives weak support as a moderator of the relationship between performance and job satisfaction. Only 2 of the 50 interactions show that satisfaction with work is influenced by the interaction of accuracy of information. The correlation between performance and satisfaction with work is greater for individuals scoring high in accuracy of communication than for participants scoring low. They conclude that appropriate and accurate information may enhance both performance and employee satisfaction with work, giving rise to positive feelings about their jobs.

Wheless and Wheless (1984:222) indicate that supervisor's receptivity to information and communication from subordinates is important in creating employee job satisfaction. It should involve flexibility and tolerance in listening to feedback, as well as openness to input of ideas, opinions, suggestions and innovations offered by employees. This receptiveness provides an emphatic sense of caring and concern, which are important factors in the human relations approach to understanding job satisfaction.

According to Varona (1996:132), the more satisfied employees are with communication, the more committed they will be to an organisation. Communication assists them in knowing the organisation, what it stands for and what it does in terms of activities related to line functions. This provides a sense of being integrated into an organisation. Once they are fully integrated, employees gain an organisational perspective, which is the broader knowledge of an organisation.

2.3 SUMMARY

This study explores the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. The literature reviewed suggests the existence of a relationship between these two variables, but states that organisational levels such as supervisor-subordinate relationship largely influence it.

The literature states that the relationship is related to other factors such as performance and productivity, because communication satisfaction is explained as a multidimensional construct that combines under a single category a number of fragmentary and diverse communication phenomena.

The literature suggests nine dimensions of communications. This researcher identifies and discusses six of them. These are communication climate, organisational integration, personal feedback, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor. The dimensions of subordinate communication and supervisor communication are not discussed separately. They are incorporated within the dimension of relationship with supervisor, because they deal with communication relationships between the supervisor and the subordinate.

The dimension of horizontal communication is incorporated within the broader communication climate dimension, because of co-worker communication effect on the entire organisational communication climate.

Maslow's needs hierarchy, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and Lickert's theory are used to explain the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction.

According to Maslow, employees' basic needs influence the way they behave at a workplace. The two-factor theory states that hygiene and motivational factors largely influence job satisfaction. Likert believes that an environment influences employees-satisfaction and productivity in their jobs

In the next chapter, this study discusses a focus group as the methodology used to explore the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

This study explores the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. In this chapter, this researcher discusses the methodology and the process used in gathering the data. The interpretation and analysis of the results are discussed in chapter four.

Various authors including Chua (1982), Downs (1977), Redding (1972), Sypher (1981), Gruneberg (1979), Goldhaber (1993), and Hoth (1979) investigated the relationship between these two variables as well. What is common in their respective approaches is the use of statistical analysis, a quantitative method.

Hoth (1979:40), as an example of a quantitative method, uses the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), with highly statistical elements in investigating the correlation between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction.

Questionnaires are sent to respondents and responses are measured in terms of scores. Sypher (1981:59) uses correlation as well to examine the interrelationships of the individual measures of communication abilities, perceived communication effectiveness, communication satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction. Accordingly, analysis of variance is computed to test significant differences between communication ratings of supervisors, subordinates, and co-workers.

In this study, this researcher explores the existence of a relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction using a qualitative method, focus group. Taylor and Bogdan (1984:5) state that this method produces descriptive data, people's own spoken words, and observable behaviour. Lindlof (1995:23) states that focus groups rely on narrative forms of coding and writing text to be presented.

3.2 REASONS FOR THE USE OF FOCUS GROUPS

This researcher uses focus groups to gather data. According to Grunig (1990:36), a focus group is a generic technique that can be applied in every sphere of human behaviour, rather than largely confined to market research. It involves a small group discussion of eight to twelve participants facilitated by the moderator.

This researcher believes that the investigation on communication satisfaction and job satisfaction, to a large extent, involves human behaviour - perceptions and emotions. As a result, emphasis is placed on understanding communication behaviour in the context of social interaction guided by personal experiences as suggested by Patton (1990:56). Focus groups are appropriate in gathering the data that is highly influenced by these experiences. As Krueger (1994:6) states, focus groups are appropriate in investigating communication because they are designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive and non-threatening environment to find out why people feel they way they do.

The nature of this study is such that the researcher needs to uncover individuals' feelings to find out what motivates and makes them satisfied in their jobs, particularly finding the role of communication in their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Templeton (1987:14) states that focus groups are more human, subjective, and more informal than quantitative research. Therefore, according to Bailey (1982:201), the choice of using focus groups under these circumstances is appropriate, because they share attributes of the qualitative research method such as flexibility, unstructuredness in data gathering, and open-ended questioning. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984:5), qualitative studies provide descriptive data and people's own spoken words.

Based on views by Greenbaum (1993:52), Grunig (1990:36), and Black and Champion (1976:369), this researcher uses focus groups because they promote spontaneity of natural conversation and generate insights and new ideas as well. Spontaneity allows the researcher to capture those statements that would have been difficult to gather using a more structured method. It is these statements that possess the reality of how people feel about their communication climate. Pitout (in press) states that through this method, focus group participants get stimulated to honestly and openly talk about their opinions, feelings, and attitudes.

There are views that state that, on the one hand, focus groups are best used in preliminary stages of survey research to guide quantitative methods. Morgan (in Grunig 1990:37) states that focus groups should be followed by more rigorous quantitative research. On the other, Keown (1983:60) states that a focus group is a qualitative tool to validate the results of a quantitative study. Greenbaum (1991:31) states that focus groups could be used after quantitative studies to find reasons for the results.

However, Zeller (1988:45) states that researchers should be comfortable in taking decisions based on focus groups. Grunig (1990:37) states that this technique can provide sufficient information that one can reasonably act upon to solve problems. It is on the basis of this that this researcher uses focus groups as self-contained research method, a "stand-alone method" as indicated in Pitout (in press). This makes the results of this study not generalisable to a larger population or other organisations. In other words, the data and the findings of this study are "too context bound" (Patton 1990:487) to permit empirical generalisations.

3.3 RECRUITMENT AND COMPOSITION OF GROUPS

The study was conducted in the Department of Communications using two groups of twelve and eleven participants respectively. Wimmer and Dominick (1997:97) state that a group should comprise of 6 – 12 participants interviewed simultaneously by a moderator. These participants were drawn from the telephone list of the Department. It had their names, telephone numbers, designations, and the divisions in which they worked.

Schiffman and Kanuk (1991:52) state that respondents are recruited based on carefully drawn up profiles. This involves a validation technique or a screener questionnaire to rescreen participants recruited from within the organisation. Accordingly, they have homogeneous profiles based on similar experiences, commonalities, and exposure to the same communication climate, which has implications on communication and job satisfaction within their workplace. Keown (1983:61) states that homogeneous groups are generally more open, comfortable with each other, and yield a high degree of group interaction than mixed groups from different organisations.

The Department of Communications had four divisions, namely Post, Telecommunications, Broadcasting, and Support Functions. The recruited participants belonged to all these divisions, three from each, except in the second group where there were eleven participants and where only two participants were recruited from Telecommunications. Three employees were requested to be on stand-by to replace those who might not have turned up for the discussions.

Focus group 1

The first focus group was conducted on 10 December 1998 from 09h00-11h00.

Divisions	Male	Female	Participants
Post	3	0	3
Telecommunications	2	1	3
Broadcasting	2	1	3
Support	2	1	3
TOTAL	9	3	12

Focus group 2

The second focus group was conducted on 11 December 1998 from 09h00-11h00.

Divisions	Male	Female	Participants
Post	2	1	3
Telecommunications	2	0	2
Broadcasting	2	1	3
Support	1	2	3
TOTAL	7	4	11

Participants' individual profiles cut across hierarchical structures of the Department, which were Administrative Officer, Control Administrative Officer, Manager, Senior Manager, General Manager, Senior General Manager, and Director-General.

For the purpose of this study, the Director-General, Senior General Managers, General Managers, and Senior Managers were excluded from the recruitment list because this researcher believed that their positions were too senior and may have influenced participation in focus groups. In fact, they may have inhibited participants from voicing controversial statements. This was regardless of the fact that communication in the Department was seen to be open and friendly, and that there were no signs of intimidation or victimisation when employees talked openly about issues affecting them. In fact, the researcher conducted the study at an appropriate moment when all employees and the management of the Department had just returned from two workshops on *People Management* aimed at identifying general problems and weaknesses that could be worked out to improve their work environment.

This researcher invited participants through formal letters indicating the topic and nature of discussion. Telephone follow-ups were made to confirm receipt of the letters and participation. Subsequently, clarification on the subject was given to some potential participants who called to say they had no clue about the role of communication in job satisfaction.

3.4 RECONCILING THEORY WITH QUESTIONS

Initially, the moderator's guide was used as a framework for conducting the discussions. However, group dynamics influenced the structure of questions to such an extent that this researcher asked questions that were not contained in the guide to seek more clarity on statements made by participants. Those

questions are reflected in detail in the transcriptions compiled from the focus groups.

This researcher followed Stewart and Shamdasani's (1990:76) funnel approach to questioning in conducting focus groups. The questions were general and broad focusing on communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. Subsequently, this researcher addressed specific questions related to the communication dimensions as discussed in the theory (communication climate, organisational integration, personal feedback, organisational perspective, media quality, and the relationship with supervisor).

3.4.1 General and broad questions

This researcher asked focus group participants general and broad questions on communication satisfaction and job satisfaction to assess their understanding and interpretation of the concepts. This was important in getting cues that might not have been covered by structured questions, particularly identifying communication elements that influenced job satisfaction in the Department of Communications.

The nature of the questions was based on the communication elements as discussed in Chapter 2, item 2.2.1. This study used them to guide focus groups and test the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the Department of Communications.

3.4.1.1 *Is there communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications?*

According to Redding (1972:42) communication satisfaction should combine, under a single category, a number of fragmentary and diverse phenomena of communication events and attitudes encountered by an employee in an organisation.

In the Department of Communications, this researcher attempted to find out whether there were communication attitudes and events that led employees to believe that there was communication satisfaction in their environment.

3.4.1.2. *What does an employee want from his/her job?*

This researcher started by explaining to participants that Pincus (1986:396) isolated five facets of job satisfaction, namely: supervision, work, pay, promotion, and co-worker relationships. It was stated to them that in organisations some employees got satisfied in their jobs when they felt their salaries were in order, when they got promotion, or when there was sufficient communication emanating from relationships with supervisors and or co-workers.

Hoth (1979:8) defines job satisfaction as “the degree of satisfaction the individual feels with his job overall.” Chua (1982:4) views it as “any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that cause a person to truthfully say ‘I am satisfied with my job’”.

Therefore, this researcher asked participants to state what made them satisfied in their jobs to establish whether communication satisfaction was one of the elements. Questions 3.4.1.3 and 3.4.1.4 were discussed together.

3.4.1.3 *In your view, what is or what should be good or satisfying communication in the Department of Communications?*

3.4.1.4 *How can communication satisfaction as a result of good or satisfying communication result in job satisfaction?*

This researcher attempted to find out if there was good communication in the Department of Communications and whether it contributed towards job satisfaction. It was also an attempt to determine participants' views of what good

communication should entail. The question was asked broadly to test Redding and Sanborn's (1964:37) statement that favourable attitude between hierarchies, that is promoted by good communication, is the basis for job satisfaction.

3.4.2 Organisational integration

3.4.2.1 *How do communication relationships and acceptance of new employees by other members in the Department of Communications contribute towards their job satisfaction?*

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that organisational integration revolves around the satisfaction of individuals with the information that they receive concerning the organisation and the immediate work environment, particularly information on departmental policies and plans.

Cherns and Davis (1975:15) link this dimension to personnel integration and state that new employees usually get confused when insufficient attention is given to integrate them into the culture of an organisation and be informed about organisational expectations. As a result, they view themselves as misfits thereby becoming dissatisfied in their jobs.

In the Department of Communications the study investigated the satisfaction of new employees with the information they received and the existing policies about their work environment, especially looking at how that information assisted them to integrate well in the organisation.

3.4.3 Personal feedback

3.4.3.1 *How does sufficient personal feedback, or lack thereof, contribute towards job satisfaction?*

McCormick (1979:286) views feedback as one of the communication factors that contribute towards job satisfaction and states that employees need to have regular and frequent feedback concerning the consequences of their work. According to Kopelman (1983:49), feedback increases productivity as it enhances the desire to perform well and cues learned responses or serves to develop new responses.

In his study, Kramer (1993:152) finds that employees who obtain higher levels of feedback experience more positive adjustment and job satisfaction than those who experience lower levels of feedback.

This researcher investigated whether feedback played a role in job satisfaction of the employees in the Department of Communications. Accordingly, participants were required to indicate the information that they believed was necessary as feedback and what a lack thereof would do in relation to job satisfaction.

3.4.4 Communication climate

- 3.4.4.1 *What are messages and message-related events that impact on job satisfaction?*
- 3.4.4.2 *How do these messages and message-related events impact on job satisfaction?*

The discussion on messages and message-related events covers questions 3.4.4.1 and 3.4.4.2, which influence communication climate.

Redding (Goldhaber 1993:66) define communication climate as “ ... a subjectively experienced quality of internal environment of an organisation ... which embraces members’ perceptions of messages and message-related events occurring in the organisation”.

According to Brody (1987:166), organisational climate and job satisfaction are related to communication. The communication style and content influence morale and employee relationships. The report of the International Labour Conference (1966:61) states that employees need messages that can make them efficient and satisfied in doing their work. It also adds that communication means more than giving the worker minimum instructions and information required for carrying out the job.

Redding and Sanborn (1964:520) state that better informed employees, as a result of good communication climate, have higher morale to perform their jobs than less informed employees, because they know what is expected of them and what to do in their jobs.

This researcher investigated whether a positive communication climate in the Department existed or did not exist. Based on the findings, this researcher established whether it played a role in job satisfaction. Participants were required to indicate messages and message-related events that were used to enhance a positive climate.

3.4.5 Organisational perspective

The discussion on organisational perspective is covered by questions 3.4.5.1 and 3.4.5.2.

- 3.4.5.1 *Does the management of the Department of Communications communicate the direction, vision, and mission of the Department to all the staff members?*
- 3.4.5.2 *How does that communication or a lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?*

According to Varona (1996:112), organisational perspective refers to “broad information about the organisation as a whole and includes items on notification about changes, ... and information about the overall policies and goals of the organisation”.

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that employees get satisfied in their jobs when they are informed about changes that include financial standing, organisational policies, and goals of an organisation. Goldhaber (1993:70) states that employees use available facts to make up what might be viewed as ‘social knowledge’ of an organisation, which helps them to understand its activities and their role in it.

This researcher investigated whether employees were affected positively or negatively in their jobs by knowing or not knowing the organisational perspective of their Department.

3.4.6 Media quality

This researcher acknowledged that media quality, according to Downs and Hazen (1977:67) refers to the degree to which employees perceive major forms of company media as functioning effectively. Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that well-organised meetings, well-written directives, and relevant organisational publications enhance communication and play a critical role in job satisfaction.

In addition, this researcher included information that investigated the extent to which employees knew the contents of the messages sent to or received from broadcast media about their organisation. This was an attempt to find out whether their departmental media empowered them to know about the activities of their Department.

The discussion on media quality is covered by questions 3.4.6.1 – 3.4.6.5.

- 3.4.6.1 *Is the media in the Department communicating?*
- 3.4.6.2 *Do you understand and know beforehand what will be broadcast in the media about your Department?*
- 3.4.6.3 *How does that contribute towards job satisfaction?*
- 3.4.6.4 *Do you know and discuss beforehand what messages should be sent to the media?*
- 3.4.6.5 *How does that discussion or a lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?*

Redding and Sanborn (1964:543) state that techniques such as face-to-face interaction provide immediate interchange of communication rather than letters, memoranda, radio or any house organ that only one party use to send while others receive. They believe that top management, by spending more time talking to individual employees and mingling with them in picnics or similar functions, can promote job satisfaction as a consequence of high morale.

3.4.7 Relationship with supervisor

- 3.4.7.1 *What would you describe as formal and informal communication relationships with your supervisors that contribute positively towards job satisfaction?*
- 3.4.7.2 *Why?*

This researcher attempted to get from the participants the type of communication they expected from their supervisors in relation to formal communication and informal communication. The separation of the two forms of communication was a deliberate attempt to test the role of each in job satisfaction. According to Anderson and Martin (1995:255), communication between supervisors and subordinates has motives and organisational outcomes. The outcome becomes the attainment of satisfaction that makes the environment conducive to working.

Kramer (1993:151) states that the development of supportive relationships between supervisors and subordinates is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction.

Sypher (1981:11) states that accessibility or approachability of supervisors, openness, willingness to communicate informally, and making effort to understand the problems of subordinates lead to positive job satisfaction.

3.5 CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

On the first day of conducting a focus group, 10 December 1998, eight of the twelve respondents turned up. This slightly affected the time for starting the discussion, considering that each discussion was scheduled for two hours, from 08h30 – 10h30. However, replacements with participants having similar profiles were immediately made because this researcher anticipated such a situation. The duration was extended by 30 minutes, allowing the discussion to end at 11h00.

On the second day, 11 December 1998, eleven participants turned up for the two-hour discussion starting from 09h00 to 11h00. The same style and agenda were used as the basis for conducting the discussion to maintain consistency in questioning and in using the moderator's guide.

Having noticed that the participants knew each other, this researcher requested them to state their responsibilities in the Department to create an atmosphere of friendliness and warmth. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:86) state that group members feel free to express themselves openly in a non-threatening and relaxed environment. This researcher reassured the participants that the content of the discussion would be kept in strict confidence and used for research purposes only. Further, interested focus group participants would be furnished with copies of the results.

This researcher made a short introduction on the purpose of conducting this study and on the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction. Pitout (in press) states that the “actual focus group usually begins with an explanation of the purpose of the project”. The two variables were explained to participants so that they could have the same understanding of the content of discussion and that no one was advantaged more than the other. This exercise was essential, especially explaining the concepts to them because their profiles were diverse in terms of academic background and the positions they occupied.

This researcher used the moderator’s guide as a guideline to structure questions and the entire discussion. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:51) state that a guide establishes the agenda for the focus group and provides a structure within which participants may interact and articulate their thoughts and feelings.

Pitout (in press) states that “a proficient moderator knows when to probe for answers and how to develop a line of questioning to elicit answers”. This researcher followed exactly what Pitout views as proficient moderating. The nature of the discussions was open-ended and yielded more responses than it might have had the style been structured and frequently interrupting participants. Grunig (1990:41) states that respondents usually perform well in a relatively open conversation and that most statements have a snowballing effect, leading to other thoughts and ideas as well. For example, through this approach, this researcher found appropriate responses that matched questions already asked earlier in the discussion. A respondent, in detailing a response for question four (example) would remark in such a way that his/her statements unconsciously answer question two (example), which was not sufficiently answered.

Although the discussions were unstructured, this researcher was cautious about time allocated for each focus group and therefore eliminated what might have been irrelevant to the topic. Keown (1983:61) states that the topic should allow

unstructured thinking yet narrow irrelevant conversation. In the initial phase, this researcher adopted what Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:76) dubs the “funnel approach to questioning”, which implies that one begins with broad questions followed gradually by more narrow questions. As a result, broad questions were asked ranging from “What does an employee want from his job?” to “How can communication satisfaction ... contribute towards job satisfaction?” This was followed by a general discussion to prepare participants and ensure that they had the same understanding of the subject.

While conducting focus groups was successful, the process of recruiting participants was not an easy one. Potential participants were unwilling to participate in these activities because they were never engaged in such activities before, particularly to discuss their Department’s issues that they perceived to be ‘sensitive’. After further explanation on the purpose and implication of the study, they agreed to participate. But then, another factor of a lack of punctuality emerged, which resulted in the first focus group beginning 30 minutes later.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

This study, as an exploration, is more inclined to qualitative analysis because focus groups conducted are based on a qualitative approach, characterised by flexibility and unstructuredness. As a result, this researcher finds qualitative content analysis, based on transcriptions from audiotapes, appropriate for interpretation and analysis of the data.

3.6.1 Transcriptions

The analysis of the data is based on the transcriptions done from the audiotapes resulting from the two focus groups (*see annexure B*). According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:103), transcriptions facilitate further analysis and establish a permanent written record of the discussions that can be shared with other interested parties.

Although the analysis is characterised by subjectivity that is inherent in qualitative research, this researcher gathers the data in such a way that other parties can use it. The transcriptions are not interpreted in their comprehensive whole because the nature of the study itself is not complex and does not have many contradictions that will warrant rigorous and detailed analysis. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:102) state that when results of the focus group are so obvious as to require supporting documentation, detailed analysis is unnecessary. They add that the amount of analysis and its level of detail and rigour depend on the purpose for which the research is carried out.

In the light of the above, this researcher interprets the transcripts for the purpose of identifying the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction. There is overwhelming evidence that shows the existence of the relationship between these two variables. Most of all, there are few contradictory cases, which are captured in the discussion.

3.6.2 Unit of analysis

According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990:108), a data-making process involves unitising, which defines the appropriate unit or level of data analysis. On the options available to be used as units of analysis, such as a sentence, sequence of sentences, this researcher uses a complete conversation as a unit of analysis.

A conversation possesses a lot of information that can be irrelevant to the discussion. Therefore, this researcher uses human speech, observations, and non-verbal communication as context units. Context units allow the researcher to interpret the dialogue within the context of the discussion (Stewart & Shamdasani 1990:108). Frey et al. (1991:38) state that context is important because in communication research different rules to data gathering may apply to different environments.

It would be difficult to use a sentence as a unit of analysis of the discussions, because during the conversation, each participant changes his/her statements frequently until he/she comes to the right one. Therefore, context units allow this researcher to understand how this relevant statement finally emerges. In this case, a unit of analysis is a complete dialogue.

3.7 SUMMARY

This study used focus groups to explore the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. The nature of the topic dealt with behaviour, perceptions, and emotions. This researcher found focus groups appropriate and suitable in capturing the discussions reflecting these emotions.

A telephone list was used as a sampling frame to recruit two focus groups comprising twelve and eleven participants respectively from the four divisions of the Department. They were homogeneous in a sense that they had the same understanding and experience of their respective communication environment. Senior management of the Department was excluded from the discussions because the participants might have found it uncomfortable to voice out their genuine feelings about the role of communication in their job satisfaction.

The discussions that were conducted were based on the moderator's guide that is provided in the study as Appendix A. The discussions were then unstructured but focused on the questions so that appropriate responses could be gathered within the set two hours of conducting focus groups.

This researcher used audiotapes to capture the discussions. Further, on the basis of those tapes, transcriptions were compiled for analysis and interpretation of the findings. This researcher believed that qualitative content analysis was suitable to analyse the data gathered.

In the next chapter the focus group results are interpreted and analysed.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

4.1 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

This study uses qualitative content analysis in analysing and interpreting the data gathered from the focus groups. Although Wimmer and Dominick (199:112) state that content analysis analyses communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner, this researcher uses qualitative content analysis to find the relationship between text as focus group content and context.

The nature of the conducted focus group is qualitative. As a result, the data gathered from the transcripts are approached from a qualitative perspective. Qualitative content analysis enables this researcher to best deal with the discussions that reflect the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984:5), qualitative studies provide descriptive data and people's own spoken words.

This researcher outlines six communication perspectives that influence job satisfaction. These are organisational integration, personal feedback, communication climate, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor. Each of these perspectives is treated like a sub-topic.

The analysis and interpretation of the results follow the sequence of the example described in Figure 1.

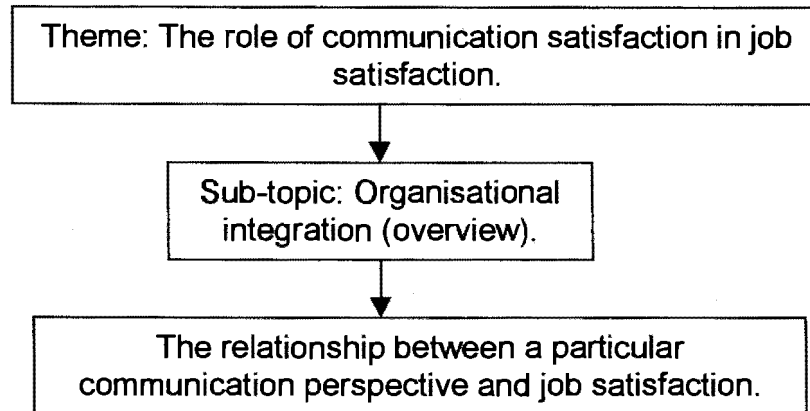


Figure 1- Sequence of the analysis and interpretation of the results

4.2 EVALUATION OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

This section is an evaluation of the focus groups.

4.2.1 Communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications

Participants use their subjective perceptions of the overall communication events and attitudes they encounter in the Department to make input to the discussions.

The participants are asked if there is communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications. One participant says, “out of a hundred I would give it forty”. There is a general agreement with regard to that. A lack of communication in the Department of Communications is seen as a consequence of management’s ad hoc decision-making, which lacks proper planning. According to the participants, most of the activities are done in a hazy way and without relevant information to execute tasks.

Participants state that authority should be associated with responsibility and the ability to know the activities of the Department. In contrast, management in the Department gives responsibilities to employees but withholds critical task-related

information from them, which later affects their ability to carry out those tasks. Participants view this as “setting us up for failure”.

One participant believes that there is communication satisfaction only in his section, which is achieved through weekly or fortnightly meetings where they usually air their views.

4.2.1.1 Communication satisfaction and job satisfaction

A lack of communication satisfaction is related to job satisfaction or a lack of job satisfaction in the Department. Participants state that one gets frustrated with the job that one does because the lines of messages are not clear and are indeed confusing. This results in one being dissatisfied in one’s job particularly because one cannot see how one can add value to the activities of the Department.

The participants state that a lack of information causes dissatisfaction in their jobs. One participant says, “If you do not have information you cannot work. You become frustrated and unhappy. This leads to a lack of job satisfaction”.

Some of the participants believe that they have initiative to do certain tasks. Accordingly, to achieve a task makes one to become satisfied in one’s job. However, the withholding of information by some supervisors in the Department discourages that initiative. As a result, one becomes lax.

An important factor in communication satisfaction and job satisfaction is to create a platform for employees to air their views. Participants state that holding meetings quarterly will mean that their concerns will be listened to after three months. So, they will sit with problems until then. To a large extent, one cannot function satisfactorily from an environment engulfed by problems.

4.2.2 Organisational integration

According to this study, organisational integration covers general communication relationships and acceptance of new employees in the Department of Communications.

One participant believes that relationships and acceptance of new employees are influenced by ethnicity in the Department. According to him, "the Department has become like an Anglo-Boer War whereby some ethnic groups were not recognised ... and that thing demoralises people".

Another participant states that ethnicity results in nepotism in the Department. Dissatisfaction in one's job comes as a result of not being promoted because one was Xhosa-speaking. Communicating the advancement of staff towards senior positions is also influenced by ethnic patterns of individual or group association. Nonetheless, some participants who are Xhosa-speaking as well refute this aspect of ethnicity.

There is a tendency by older people in terms of years of service to withhold information from new employees. Supervisors and fellow workers close up to their subordinates. New employees, considered to be "young and upcoming professionals", get dissatisfied in their jobs because the older generation forms itself into different subgroups and frustrate new employees by concealing information. For example, a lady in the legal section of the Support Division is frustrated by a lack of satisfying and work-related communication to such an extent that she resigned.

4.2.2.1 Organisational integration and job satisfaction

According to the participants, due to a lack of good communication relationships, employees find it difficult to integrate. There is constant lack of functional knowledge to make one productive in his or her job and in associating with other members in the Department. They say one gets demoralised from day one and

felt rejected by the organisation. One asks: "How am I going to say I am satisfied with my job while feeling that I have made a wrong decision by joining this Department?"

A lack of communication caused by strained relationships or a lack of proper welcoming of new employees makes people believe that they are being set up for failure in their jobs. One says that induction is important in this regard, getting to know people and the organisation.

When asked how the above affects job satisfaction, participants say that the absence of satisfying communication in this regard makes them dissatisfied in their jobs because they cannot find information they want to execute their tasks. "One feels one has been dumped", "I want to know what I should do, where I should go, who I should talk to, and how I should address people". These are statements from the participants.

Participants believe that a lack of flexibility by older people in terms of experience and age in the Department causes job dissatisfaction because they insist on the rules and regulations rather than on flexible ways that encourage initiative and job satisfying activities.

A contrary view from one participant rejects the claim that older people use rules to frustrate the young ones. Instead, "they try to strike a balance between the so-called new ideas and the administrative culture parameters in the Department".

The general feeling is that rules and regulations need to be improved to make way for a new communication and professional culture that would not frustrate new employees in the Department of Communications. There is a general feeling that rigidity makes new employees dissatisfied in their jobs.

4.2.3 Personal feedback

According to the study, personal feedback is the amount of working information received by employees from their superiors in the Department.

Participants generally agree that there is no personal feedback in the Department of Communications. One says that “we do not have that at all. It’s by default that you bump into feedback”. This participant says that he knows about the issues in his division through his supervisor’s printer that is situated in his office. He reads the letters and memoranda that are directed to the seniors, the Director-General, and the Minister. Generally, there is neither a structured nor an unstructured manner of telling subordinates about progress and status of projects in the Department.

The above example shows that junior employees are not informed about activities of their Department. One says: “... by default I see things that should be communicated to junior staff because they impact on projects that we are involved in. No feedback is given. As a result, the whole process of delivery gets stifled”.

4.2.3.1 Personal feedback and job satisfaction

A lack of personal feedback impacts negatively on job satisfaction. As one participant says, “It is a given that it affects job satisfaction. How can you perform without being informed about your performance? If you do not have that kind of information you cannot do your work. In turn, you become frustrated, unhappy, and dissatisfied in your job”.

The absence of meetings also causes a lack of job satisfaction. According to the participants, a meeting is the platform to air views and get rewards, not only material rewards, but also supervisors’ appreciation of good work done by saying “Thank you, you have done well, you have performed well on this”.

A lack of feedback disempowers staff from making progress in their work. They cannot perform to the best of their ability. One says that there ought to be a mechanism for reportback, especially by those people who usually travel overseas on projects. "We want to know whether business is concluded well or not. We want to know whether we are in the right direction or not, so that we can assist where possible". The absence of that progress information demotivates staff from assisting further.

4.2.4 Communication climate

This study discusses communication climate as employees' overall perception of internal communication messages and message-related events in the Department of Communications.

According to the participants, communication climate in the Department of Communications is not positive. This is caused by a lack of information flow, withholding of information by seniors, absence of feedback, and other factors that make staff not being informed about the activities of the Department. Because of the absence of regular staff meetings, messages do not have a proper platform where they can be discussed and shared among staff.

However, there are message-related events that are created by the internal communication section of the Department for staff of different divisions to mingle and share information, formally and informally. For example, *Bring you Own Braai (BoB)* an informal event that is organised once a month becomes a major source of satisfaction for some staff members. One says: "Normally, we do not have meetings in the Broadcasting Division. In the *BoBs* we find ourselves interacting with strange people. For me it works to talk about the Department at these events".

4.2.4.1 Communication climate and job satisfaction

Participants believe that a negative communication climate is a major source of job dissatisfaction. They state that it is almost impossible to achieve job satisfaction in an environment that does not communicate. The absence of basic flow of information becomes a frustration on its own. When information cannot filter down, employees cannot really take part in the Department's activities.

Participants unanimously state that social events such as *BoBs* provide a platform for job satisfaction. "They give us an opportunity to interact with people from other sections. 70% of what we talk about is work-related," they state.

"It is at such social events that one expands personal relationships with one's colleagues. It makes the whole environment nicer to work in," one said. The staff of the Ministry, which is based in Cape Town, says that in the absence of regular meetings with the Pretoria staff, they hold their own social events every Friday. For example, they go to a colleague's house and use that as an opportunity to discuss some of the communication problems they may be experiencing between themselves and the Pretoria staff.

4.2.5 Organisational perspective

This study discusses organisational perspective as the ability of the Department of Communications to communicate clearly its direction, vision, and mission to its employees.

According to the participants, the Department of Communications does not communicate its vision clearly. Although the framed pictures of the vision and mission are hung on the front wall of the reception, they are never communicated to the staff. As a result, they remain inaccessible and not handy at one's disposal. "Each time one wishes to revise the vision, one has to go downstairs to the reception to read them," one says. Participants say that they would like to have their own personal copies so that they could behave accordingly.

According to the participants, information about the vision, mission, and direction of the Department does not filter down to the lowest ranking employee. It is only the present Director-General who knows the vision and mission. As a result, most employees are neither aware nor informed of what is expected of them. "We are not even informed whether we are achieving our goals or not so that we could make some corrections where possible," one said.

There is a general feeling that to know about the vision and mission of the Department, management should ensure that information on policy and projects is accessible to the junior staff. For external conferences, the staff should be told about the reasons for the Department's participation so as to manifest the principles involved so that they can understand the direction taken. E-mails, bulletin boards, and other forms of reporting could assist in disseminating such information.

According to the participants, it helps to have a common understanding of the vision. "If we have a common understanding, we would be able to refute public allegations that cannot be substantiated. But because we also do not know what is happening, it becomes difficult to make informed decisions. One becomes disillusioned," one participant says.

4.2.5.1 Organisational perspective and job satisfaction

Lack of communicating the vision impacts negatively on job satisfaction because employees just work without being informed about what is expected of them.

A lack of knowledge of the Department's vision disempowers employees from engaging with the outside world. They do not have current information on the latest projects, associations, and developments that define the direction of the Department. One participant says: "It demoralises me to lack information about where we are going. ... When somebody inquires about your Department you

should be giving the direction. But now we cannot do that because a lack of relevant information makes us feel incapable of doing our job". In addition, another states that, "Our lack of internal communication affects the public as a whole because we cannot explain ourselves".

A good example reflecting the above is the Public Information Terminal (PiT). This project has been envisioned by the present Director-General. He is the main person among a few people who know what it is, how it works, and how it will improve the lives of the ordinary citizens of South Africa. The rest of the employees do not even know where it belongs in terms of the operational functions of the three Divisions. PiT is a telecommunications technology that is intended to benefit the postal services. "Does it belong to the Telecommunications division or the Postal division?" one asks. A lack of information about these issues causes job dissatisfaction because one cannot add value in the Department.

4.2.6 Media quality

This study discusses media quality as the amount of information received or sent out to the media by the Department of Communications. It reflects the effectiveness of types of media used to communicate internally such as memoranda, e-mail, bulletin board, workshops, and meetings.

The participants state that they do not understand and know beforehand what information is sent to the media about their Department. One says that it is a problem that goes beyond just the Department of Communications. "In the past we had a number of parliamentarians saying to us upon reading in the newspaper about the activities of the Department they wished to find out more about the broadcast matter at hand. We had to run to find out so that we could be informed to be able to make solutions to those issues," she says.

A lack of information is associated with poor communication as a result of under utilisation of different types of media in the Department. “We do not utilise facilities such as the Internet and the e-mail to their optimum. I find it strange that the Postal division holds a very important Southern African conference, the SATCC without us knowing,” says one participant. He continues to state that it is embarrassing for him not to have input on what he sees on television while seated with his friends. He states that he is supposed to know about the event before the media could broadcast it.

In view of a lack of communication in the Department, participants suggest that e-mail should be used rather than memoranda, “which do not work”, to inform the staff about the activities and upcoming events in the Department. They also believe that a bulletin board where all the reports are placed for staff to read will assist in improving media quality. This should be coupled with the availability of information in the Department’s library.

4.2.6.1 Media quality and job satisfaction

According to the participants, media quality impacts on job satisfaction. Not being aware of or informed about the activities and events of the Department causes staff to be dissatisfied in their jobs. Participants believe that seeing some of the things in the press without prior internal information also cause job dissatisfaction. The end result is to wonder about one’s role in the division and in the Department.

The participants are certain that effective media quality can contribute towards their job satisfaction because it will make them proud to know what their Department does so that they can confidently engage other people in informal discussion.

4.2.7 Relationship with supervisor

This study discusses the relationship with supervisor, which involves formal and informal relationships between supervisors and their subordinates.

Informal relationships such as drinking tea together impacts positively on job satisfaction because one is able to openly talk to one's supervisor about a range of personal and work matters. The relationship itself creates a climate for communication satisfaction.

An overriding aspect that should dominate the relationship should be honest and factual interaction. Participants believe that communication should be sound, solid, friendly, and reflect open relations. "If communication links are open, other work and non-work related problems will fade," says one participant.

Participants support a view of informal relationships. However, they state that they do not want their bosses to visit them at their homes, because they see too much of each other in the offices. Although informal, relationships should command respect from both parties. For example, it is disrespectful for a supervisor to send a subordinate to the shops to buy cigarettes. Accordingly, disrespect breeds hostile communication, and eventually job dissatisfaction.

The participants state that teamwork helps to increase a positive relationship with a supervisor. Drinking tea together in the mornings while having informal discussions closes the informal communication gap that is usually prevalent in most organisations. It makes it simpler to talk to supervisors in a relaxed mood. One says that some managers do not do that. Instead, they make themselves unapproachable. Another says that they "come in and lock their doors".

Participants believe that if they can translate positive informal and social relationships into a workplace culture, they can become strengths for working

together because they will be getting along well. However, this does not mean diversity of different sub-groups and cultures should be ignored in the process.

An argument is raised that some of the relationships between subordinates and supervisors in the Department of Communications are influenced by culture. To an extent, this is seen to be affecting communication satisfaction of those employees concerned. However, all participants state that “we will have to understand different cultural backgrounds, which should not have any prominence in the business They (cultures) should take a backstage character ... and we should adopt a business culture”.

Those who state that relationships should be task-oriented and be based on trust also state that a supervisor should trust one’s capabilities so that he/she could provide adequate working information. This should be coupled by giving support and guidance to the subordinate so that there is no feeling of withholding information in making one’s job productive. Relationships also involve taking care of subordinates’ daily needs, including giving information on training and development.

A factor that is sometimes seen to be contributing to a lack of communication satisfaction and good supervisor-subordinate relations is the inability of a supervisor to grasp the issues in the Department. Participants state that due to ignorance about the Department, some supervisors become defensive in their approach and withhold information. One says “I find it ridiculous that when one seeks guidance one gets feedback like ‘I have been here for a short period and I do not know’”. According to another participant who also tried to seek guidance and clarity from his supervisor, he got this response: “You’ve been long enough in the Department and you should know by now how to do it”.

Even under the above circumstances where the supervisor does not know, participants believe that at least the environment should be conducive for taking

initiatives to learn about issues in the Department. But learning becomes difficult when there is no clarity in one's job. A lack of job clarity affects the sending and receiving of messages in terms of who should do what, when, and how, etc.

4.2.7.1 Relationship with supervisor and job satisfaction

Positive formal and informal relationships impact on job satisfaction. One participant states that because of a positive relationship with her supervisor, she finds satisfaction in her job to the extent that she consistently tries to contribute the best of her ability to get tasks done.

Honesty and trust should drive the relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate. According to the participants, a lack of these aspects impacts negatively on job satisfaction as it hampers the communication process. When there is work to be done, it does not have to wait for the supervisor to give authority and a nod. By trusting one's capability, the supervisor also gives one the responsibility to continue with work in his/her absence. That makes subordinates' working lives easier. In turn, they become satisfied in their jobs since they are taking decisions that influence how they execute identified tasks.

Supervisors who are neither accessible nor available to assist their subordinates cause job dissatisfaction in their divisions. According to the participants, it is difficult to get some supervisors in the Department to sign important documents, respond to crucial questions that should give a go ahead to project implementation, sign memoranda to authorise staff training course attendance, and authorise requests for stationery and equipment.

One participant says that "one writes a formal letter requesting to attend a course ... and that memorandum stays on the supervisor's table for days. Supervisors' signatures have become expensive. ... To make them sign one has to physically drag them into it. Cellphones do not get answered. ... One ends up looking like an idiot when tracing someone. Although this practice does not affect job

satisfaction directly, it does affect the relationship with the supervisor. Eventually, it affects job satisfaction as well,” one participant says.

A lack of clarity and communication about job descriptions affects job satisfaction. Subordinates who do not get appropriate responses from their supervisors to their questions find it difficult to be satisfied in the relationship and the job itself. They get demoralised in executing their tasks.

In some instances, a lack of communication satisfaction caused by cultural differences and the supervisor’s ignorance, leads to strained relationships whereby the supervisor and the subordinate do not talk to each other. “I feel my supervisor is failing me in the Department,” one participant says.

4.3 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section on analysis and interpretation of the results reflects the existence of the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction in the Department of Communications. However, the conclusion and the findings are limited, as they do not cover all the ranks in the Department. Senior managers are excluded from the list of participants because their participation in the same focus groups may inhibit junior employees from voicing controversial statements about communication in the Department.

This study supports theoretical assumptions of Maslow, Herzberg, and Likert contained in this study. It reflects that a communication environment influences the behaviour and the needs of employees in the Department of Communications.

The fact that employees question their existence and roles in the Department of Communications shows the need for recognition and achievement as stated by Maslow (Goldhaber 1993:77). They consistently need to see themselves having input and their suggestions implemented in the Department. Failure to achieve this leads to dissatisfaction with their jobs. That is why, as a result of lack of recognition, a sense of belonging, and fulfilment, a number of employees, including a lady in the legal section of the Department resigned.

Herzberg's theory on hygiene and motivators states that job dissatisfaction is caused by less acceptable hygiene factors that are extrinsic to the job itself such as a lack of supervision, interpersonal relations, poor working conditions, unclear company policies, and salary. The study finds that employees in the Department of Communications are dissatisfied in their jobs because of a lack of these aspects highlighted by Herzberg. Participants state that their supervisors are not accessible, physically and via telephones. Instead, they switch their cellular phones off most of the time.

The study finds that the present Director-General is the only one who knows the vision of the Department. The rest of the employees do not have ways to share his knowledge and the direction that the Department follows. Participants state that this is frustrating to them since they cannot add value to how the Department is run. It limits their need for realising their potential and self-actualisation with regard to taking initiative in getting the job done. Compounding the problem is that supervisors too have limited knowledge about departmental policies that drive its activities.

According to Likert (1961:240), job performance is related to the degree to which employees perceive their fellow colleagues' work to be closely related to the work of the organisation, and the individual goals in work to be similar to the organisation's overall goals. Employees in the Department believe that activities of their supervisors are not supporting the overall goals of the organisation. They are dissatisfied in their jobs because this lack of alignment between activities and policies compromises their self-esteem and the ability to gain respect from outsiders because of the knowledge they possess about the Department. To a large extent, they feel disempowered to engage in any discussion with outsiders about the activities of the Department.

Participants confirm Likert's assumption (1961:99) that high levels of interpersonal trust, interaction, and communication boost employee productivity and morale. They state that the absence of these aspects in the Department causes job dissatisfaction because supervisors do not delegate, do not hold regular meetings with them, and there is no basic trust that subordinates can do the work, which is a lack of confidence in their employees.

The rest of the discussion focuses on specific communication perspectives as outlined in this study. These are organisational integration, personal feedback,

communication climate, organisational perspective, media quality, and relationship with supervisor.

The study finds that there is no communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications. As a result, most employees are dissatisfied in their jobs. These results support Redding and Sanborn (1964:37) in their statement that a favourable attitude between hierarchies that is promoted by good communication is the basis for job satisfaction in any organisation. In the case of the Department, it appears that the attitudes are not favourable in some divisions, which results in a general feeling of most employees being dissatisfied in their jobs. Generally, there is a lack of job satisfaction in the Department of Communications caused by various factors that are related to communication such as ad hoc decision-making by management, lack of consultation and information to execute tasks, lack of delegation and authority for subordinates, lack of adequate and formal meetings to address work and non-work related issues, lack of proper means for effective communication, etc.

4.3.1 Organisational integration

Cherns and Davis (1975:15) state that it is becoming easy for workers to question their life in the organisation and review whether they are not misfits in the whole structure, particularly new employees who get frustrated when insufficient attention is given to them in terms of information and expectations of the organisation. This is based on Maslow's need for recognition.

The study finds that because of a lack of communication satisfaction, employees in the Department of Communications are reviewing their commitment and actual contribution to the Department. The resignation of some staff bears testimony to the fact that if insufficient attention is given to employees, they will be dissatisfied in their jobs and decide to quit the environment. Most of the participants express concerns about their participation. In general, they are saying: "What are we doing in this Department?"

Tension between the 'old guard' and the 'new generation' emerges in the focus groups. This is as a result of what Kramer (1993:149) perceives as a threat that usually occurs when there are new people coming into the organisation. There is too much withholding of information until one proves to be experienced and skilled in a particular field. The same applies to the Department of Communications. Although it does not involve experience and skill, participants view the withholding of information as setting new employees up for failure.

The study finds that it is important for the Department to have an information package that contains important information about itself, the people, its activities, the movements, and other key information that would enable new employees to integrate well into it. This would help fast-track or complement the induction process.

4.3.2 Personal feedback

Kim (1975:1) finds that feedback increases job satisfaction. Accordingly, employees who obtain higher levels of feedback are more satisfied than those who experience lower levels of feedback. The Department of Communications is also characterised by this view. For example, one participant states that even though the supervisor is not always accessible, he consistently gives out instructions and responds to general staff requirements. He also informs them about their performance. As a result, she is always motivated to work and improve on her knowledge of executing different tasks as recommended by the supervisor. This shows that this employee receives clear instructions and direct information that enhances her work performance. This reinforces Kopelman's view that feedback increases productivity as it enhances the desire to perform well.

According to the participants, the absence of feedback causes the staff to be dissatisfied in the jobs because they do not know how they are performing. There

is little working information that they receive from their supervisors. In general, there is no communication culture that places importance on feedback. As a result, availability of feedback is inconsistent and unstructured. It depends on individual supervisors who sometimes hold divisional meetings or use other methods of sharing information.

4.3.3 Communication climate

The report of the fifth session of the International Labour Conference (1966:61) states that employees view communication climate as healthy when information they need to perform their tasks is made available to them and the general channels of communication exist to openly talk about issues that affect them.

This study finds that, because of a lack of a healthy communication climate, most employees of the Department of Communications on the one hand are not satisfied in their jobs. They state that a lack of basic functional information causes frustration because they cannot take part in the activities of the Department and make informed decisions. They feel alienated from the Department that they work for. This is coupled to the difficulty in voicing out grievances and seeking clarity on critical job and personal matters. On the other hand, they compensate for this gap by sharing information during organised social events.

A lack of proper communication styles and content influences climate. In the Department it is evident that those supervisors who have negative communication styles such as switching off cellular phones when desperately needed or during working hours cause low morale that results in job dissatisfaction of some of the staff members, particularly because they feel helpless in doing their job.

Generally, a lack of positive communication climate disempowers employees from knowing about the Department and its activities. In turn, this lowers their morale, as Redding and Sanborn (1964:520) state.

4.3.4 Organisational perspective

According to Pincus (1986:402), for employees to have job satisfaction and high morale about organisational activities, they should be informed about basic organisational policies and activities. Unfortunately, in the Department of Communications the vision and mission do not filter down to employees. Having expressed that a lack of information about their Department causes job dissatisfaction, participants state that they find no reason for participating in its activities.

This study confirms that communicating the vision and mission of the Department could empower employees to effectively engage outside stakeholders. It could also generate a sense of commitment to what the Department stands for. But then, it becomes difficult to find this sense of commitment and job satisfaction because employees do not know where the Department is going. According to them, it is only the present Director-General who has the vision. Information does not filter down. Those who possess it do not share it, and they leave most employees information bankrupt and unable to fulfil the defined objectives of the Department.

4.3.5 Media quality

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) state that well-organised meetings, well-written directives, and relevant organisational publications enhance communication and play a critical role in job satisfaction.

This study finds that because of a lack of effective media such as the optimum use of the Internet, e-mail, memoranda, and formally scheduled meetings in the Department, employees are dissatisfied in their jobs. They state that they cannot

figure out how they can assist in executing various tasks because there are no vehicles for clear instructions and information is consistently withheld from subordinates.

The study confirms that effective internal media provides a platform for communication satisfaction. This is coupled by holding regular meetings, which can provide a sense of job satisfaction by allowing employees to talk openly about what affects their work. One participant working in the Broadcasting Division states that together with his colleagues they hold meetings frequently. As a result, talking about work and non-work matters in the meetings helps him to be satisfied about a meeting as a communication medium.

A lack of quality internal media to disseminate information to employees leaves them not adequately informed about their environment. Instead, they find that the external media organisations get to know about the activities of the Department before the actual employees. From a communication point of view, it is not proper for employees to lack information on critical projects that the organisation is involved in because one is not equipped to share that information with other external people.

4.3.6 Relationship with supervisor

Downs and Hazen (1977:66) state that the dimension of relationship with supervisor involves upward and downward communication between supervisors and subordinates. Therefore, this researcher views it as two-way and mutually benefiting.

This study finds that a gap exists between supervisors and subordinates in the Department. They are not mutually benefiting from their relationship because supervisors are not accessible when desperately needed and there is a lack of regular meetings, which are supposed to provide a platform for the two parties to openly talk about their activities. This situation, as stated by Kramer (1993:151)

makes the development of supportive relationships in the Divisions very difficult and results in low levels of job satisfaction.

Although drinking tea together as a Division in the mornings is seen to be effective in promoting informal communication, it still needs to be inculcated as a culture in the Department whereby supervisors and subordinates would benefit from such exercises, which relax the mood and enhance communication satisfaction in different Divisions. The existence of trust, openness to new ideas, and employee innovation is the beginning of such a culture.

Unfortunately, the study finds that supervisors in the Department are not having confidence in their subordinates, and do not have time to identify opportunities for relationship building, except the present Director-General who encourages creativity and new innovation, and who gives employees support in the projects that he assigns to them. New ideas that are outside the parameters of the Public Service system are seen to be inappropriate for discussion and implementation. This causes job dissatisfaction to some employees.

According to Sypher (1981:11), a lack of accessibility and approachability of supervisors, openness, willingness to communicate informally, and making effort to understand problems of subordinates leads to employees being dissatisfied in their jobs. The study finds that employees in the Department are faced with a similar situation where they cannot openly talk about what affects them, whether work related or non-work related. There is a lack of encouraging formal and informal means of communication between supervisors and subordinates. However, it appears that some supervisors are having good relationships with their subordinates, as shown by an employee who says that their supervisor delegates work and gives regular reportback on work matters. In this regard, an issue of confidence in subordinates is highlighted as important for the relationship to exist.

In conclusion, the relationship with supervisor should address two factors, organisational outcomes and personal motives. The study finds that the Department is task driven and, as a result, there is no mechanism to address personal motives of staff. Although the focus is perceived to be on organisational outcomes (productivity of the Department), it compromises internal relationships and causes supervisors not to share information with subordinates. This is coupled with the perception of supervisors having 'no time', or organised structure or communication medium. In some instances, supervisors too are not informed about the developments in their respective areas. So, their inability to give direction causes job dissatisfaction in cases where they also feel defenceless or disempowered to report back to their subordinates.

The next chapter makes recommendations for future research and proposes actions for the Department of Communications to implement to improve communication climate.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section this author makes recommendations for future research and proposes actions for the Department of Communications to implement to improve its communication climate.

For future research, it is recommended that two more focus groups be conducted in the Department of Communications with officials in management positions to explore the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction. This could assist in getting and sharing more information about the contents of this study.

For the Department, recommendations are stated according to the six identified communication perspectives: organisational integration; personal feedback; communication climate; organisational perspective; media quality; and relationship with supervisor.

5.1 Organisational integration

Mechanisms of integrating new employees into the Department should be developed. They should include the induction manual and office visits to personnel at all levels.

Communication should flow to empower new and old employees with knowledge of different divisions within the Departments. This means information should be available at all times from colleagues and the system to enable employees to execute their duties professionally. The management of information system (MIS) can assist in solving some of the problems associated with lack of information.

5.2 Personal feedback

It should be culture for responsible officials to report back to their colleagues and subordinates about progress on a variety of issues within the Department.

Feedback should include information about the level of satisfaction in the manner tasks are carried out and projects' status.

Meeting frequently can assist in resolving most problems associated with lack of feedback. Divisions should meet on their own to pave the way for themselves within the operations of the Department.

Involving staff in decision-making structures such as management can assist them in getting informed about the status of events or other matters in the Department, because currently there is no formally recognised structure that serves this information purpose.

5.3 Communication climate

Internal communication messages and events should be developed for the promotion of a positive communication climate in the Department. Messages should flow from the bottom up and from top to bottom, as well as horizontally.

Social events should be increased because occasions such as Bring your Own Braai are found to increase communication across the Divisions.

Different Divisions ought to find ways to share messages and other related communication matters that influence their existence.

5.4 Organisational perspective

This researcher recommends that the Department communicates clearly its vision, mission, and objectives to its employees so that they are informed about departmental activities.

Communicating the direction of the organisation through workshops, visible and handy booklets, pictures, and copies that contain all the necessary information

can assist in ensuring that information on organisational perspective is disseminated widely.

The study finds that the present Director-General is the only official who knows the direction of the Department. This researcher recommends that he develops mechanisms to share his knowledge with the rest of the employees so that they become empowered about organisational perspective and are in a position to engage outsiders on any given subject on the Department.

5.5 Media quality

This researcher recommends that all the information to be sent out internally or to the external media be shared amongst the employees. Divisional meetings should be held to build information capacity of employees.

Key activities that reflect major policy shifts should be communicated to employees through internal communication measures such as brochures, flyers, leaflets, e-mail etc. These do not have to be held at divisional level, but throughout the organisation using common venues and forums for sharing information, specifically the library.

5.6 Relationship with supervisor

The Department should explore the use of formal and informal relationships between subordinates and supervisors to promote its values, particularly within the context of Emotional Intelligence. Appropriate events and tasks leading to the development of an organisational culture should support this.

The relationship between management and staff should be communication driven to realise most of the objectives of the Department. Matters that are associated with hostility and contempt should be avoided to create a climate of respect, trust, and confidentiality.

Because it appears that drinking tea together achieves teamwork, the development of work teams should be fostered to create a positive communication climate. It is recommended that supervisors become familiar with the activities of the Department to be able to explain to subordinates and give guidance and not becoming defensive when seen to be ignorant.

Finally, the Department should encourage initiative and talent. Those who display such traits should be compensated accordingly, not only financially, but emotionally as well through recognition and providing responsibility and freedom to perform.

APPENDIX A

THE MODERATOR'S GUIDE

Moderating style

The style that will be used for focus groups will be open-ended, but will be based on structured questions that would seek to establish the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction.

Time allocation

The time allocated for each focus group will be two hours.

Introduction of participants

Although they know each other, participants will have to introduce themselves in relation to what they do in the Department of Communications.

First explain the reason for conducting this focus group in the Department of Communications focusing on the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction.

Definitions

Communication satisfaction and job satisfaction will be defined so that all participants have the same understanding of the concepts for their effective participation in the discussion.

Questions

- Is there communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications?

- What does an employee want from his/her job?
 - Participants should list everything they think is important for them to make their jobs satisfying.

- Should communication variables be listed as well, the moderator will emphasise them and seek more answers on what good or satisfying communication is.
- In your view, what is or what should be good or satisfying communication in the Department of Communications?
- How can communication satisfaction (as defined for this discussion), as a result of good or satisfying communication contribute towards job satisfaction?
 - An answer to this question should be supported by a discussion that gives reasons for the relationship between the two variables.
- Discussion of the role of the communication factors below in job satisfaction?

Organisational integration – general communication relationships and acceptance of new employees in the Department of Communications

Question: When starting to work for the Department of Communications, what were your first communication experiences that you believe impacted on your job satisfaction?
How did they impact?

Personal feedback – the amount of working information received

Question: How does sufficient personal feedback or a lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?

Communication climate – an overall perception of internal communication messages and message-related events

Question: What are the messages and message-related events that impact on job satisfaction?

Question: How do these messages and message-related events impact on job satisfaction?

Organisational perspective - the ability of an organisation to communicate clearly its direction, vision and mission

Question: Does management in the Department of Communications communicate the direction, vision, and mission of the Department of Communications to all the staff members?

Question: How does that communication or a lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?

Media quality – the amount of information received from or sent out to the media

Question: Do you understand and know beforehand what will be broadcast in the media about your Department?

Question: How does that contribute towards job satisfaction?

Question: Do you know and discuss beforehand what messages should be sent out to the media?

Question: How does that discussion or a lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?

Relationship with supervisor - formal and informal communication relationship

Question: What would you describe as formal and informal communication relationships that contribute positively towards job satisfaction?

▪ Question: Why?

Closure

Allowing participants to comment on the questions and thanking them for participating.

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPTIONS

FOCUS GROUP ONE

TITLE: THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION IN JOB SATISFACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS: AN EXPLORATION

Date: 10 December 1998

Time: 09h00-11h00

Duration: Two hours

SPEAKER 1

At 11h00 we stop, finished or not, we stop.

Alright, initially what has happened is that I was doing a masters in communication and then there was a topic that I selected ... It's organisational communication, the way in which various cultures affect the organisation in terms of delivery and the communication package that align to that, then I finished that part. The other one that I raised was this thing in the Department, we were having workshops with people from the management, the issue that was raised was that, it is not easy for an organisation to have peoples' management workshop. Management normally fears to have such things because they surface many things, then it was suggested that that we look at the communication implication of those things but narrow to the role of communication in job satisfaction. So then, I thought that would be appropriate because the study would be able to benefit the organisation, of which it is a very important thing. Also inform the report although it is something that is independent of the report of the people management but certainly of one conducts such a things we discuss and then reach a consensus of which we don't have to reach consensus. That's

another thing, we don't have to agree if there are disagreements. Yes, we have to disagree but on substantiated things, and if we agree, that is also fine, but in the end what one will do is to brief the Director-General on the role of communication satisfaction in the Department. It is a narrow thing because we are focussing on this Department and with regard to job satisfaction then the people from the HR will have to have a benefit of that because it is something that is done internally by internal people at least it makes things easier. Then in terms of the process we will only take two hours without a non-stop. So we will conduct two focus groups. Are there any comments so far?

SPEAKER 2

I'm very much interested in what you said, that the different cultures could impact on the delivery of tasks etc. It can be an available exercise to inform management and to also give them inside on how to handle the influencing factors of culture in communication basically, so I think it can be an available exercise.

SPEAKER 1

Okay let's take an informal approach to this one because it is not a formal thing. We'll just have to discuss and give each other a chance to talk and you know... but as a starting point we will have to have a premise of where we start for example we have to have established definition of what we mean by communication satisfaction of which that is very much important to make sure that we all understand that thing the same and then we move from there and we also have to have job satisfaction, understand what is meant by job satisfaction. Okay here we have these definitions as established you find that communication satisfaction is an overall perception that an individual has of the communication environment in the Department. Whatever you perceive in the Department as having communication implications to you, your colleagues or to the organisation that will be labelled as communication satisfaction for this discussion. That also includes the personal relationships with people, interpersonal and also includes

relationships with management and so on, but during the process we will be able to narrow that down to see how communication affects those relationships. Then with regard to job satisfaction it's anything that will enable all the variables or the elements in the organisation, that when combined an employee will be able to say that yes I'm satisfied with my job. That goes from communication as well, the salary, the structures of promotion and everything like that, all those things can make you say I'm satisfied with my job if ever you have them accorded to you, those are the established definition I would prefer that we use for this purpose. Now because we are attempting to find the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction, I will appreciate if the job satisfaction we are going to talk about will be specifically communication related or affected by thing that are communication related. I wonder if we need some more clarity with regard to that, then the first point then maybe I should ask anyone if he can just talk over this, there is no formal line. Alright is there any communication satisfaction in the Department of Communications?

SPEAKER 2

I would say out of a hundred, I would give it a forty, do you particularly mean in our sections or...

SPEAKER 1

Can you try to raise up some voice for recording purposes.

Communication satisfaction in the entire Department, you can narrow that down from your section and go outward because what you see in the inside might be in the result of a broader picture of the Department. The entire broader picture might be affected by these smaller components, but now as Dante has said, that forty percent you will have to explain why you see forty percent.

SPEAKER 2

Okay, I said forty percent because basically the kind of communication environment we are in is one that gives an employee a chance to have personal

development and things are done ad-hocly without any proper planning. As a result the message that goes down of filtered through to the employees is hazy and not clear, as a result one gets frustrated of the job that he is doing. I mean personally, I get frustrated with the job that I'm doing simply because the lines of messages that are coming through are confusing and not clear. When we interrogate, or try to understand it is like we are exposing the abnormalities in the work process. As a result the Department or is the Department adding value to my growth and that is why I come to the conclusion of saying that I would give it forty out of hundred.

SPEAKER 1

Is that specifically related to the section or you see it in totality that is the general norm in the Department or...?

SPEAKER 3

I would say specifically in the section that I am in, the multimedia section and I'm not sure about other sections what might be the situation.

SPEAKER 1

Okay let's hear from others, is there communication satisfaction in the Department?

SPEAKER 4

From my side and what I would say being faced with a lot of inexperience I'm ... you in the Department. Maybe one will acclimatise with what is happening here learning more about the culture of the organisation if there could be some programme of so to say that this is the culture of the Department.

SPEAKER 5

Okay the environment where I come from is called an academic slash technical environment, a technikon. Systems there are already in place, all I had to do was

to take my books and get to class in the morning and deliver lectures then go back to my office. So all systems are already in place. This in my opinion, relatively a new Department where what I have seen is that most sections are still trying to find their feet including the individuals within those sections.

SPEAKER 1

How is communication then with regard to these, is there any communication satisfaction and how does it affect people in those sections?

SPEAKER 5

Yeah, with regard to communication satisfaction, what I have seen happening is that if you come in the morning to do your work you'll get a call from up-top to say that you have to go to Cape Town. That in my opinion puts you off your plans. As much as it can be part of your job going down to Cape Town, the fact that you might have said to yourself the following week I want to do this and that and next week that...

SPEAKER 1

So, in other words you are saying communication planning or communication affects planning lack of communication affect planning?

SPEAKER 5

Maybe the planning is affected by lack of communication per se because if you look at the Department within other Departments or government for people up-top within the Department to give a directive to say you should go to Cape Town, they do not do it just out of thumb sucking you know. It may be a directive from the head of state that we need so many people from the Department and they have got to hit that call.

SPEAKER 1

But how does that affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 5

At the end of it, when you come back to ... of ... you start acting upon your plan and obviously there will be new inputs in the forms of that jobs that you need to execute and that would sort of like throw you off, you have to do some re-planning.

SPEAKER 6

It sorts of demoralises you.

SPEAKER 5

Naturally, you would at that point in time, maybe not be too eager to recheck your new work in relation to the plan, the intended plan.

SPEAKER 1

Okay let's hear Marius.

SPEAKER 6

Basically you have got your time frames worked out according to the projects that you have to work on. You've set up everything and then all of a sudden somebody comes in and upset the whole thing because of last minute notice. You have to respond, you have to get there no matter what. You have to drop everything you are doing. It forms resistance, you don't wanna go. It would have been better if you were informed earlier or better informed. I know I have to go down to Cape Town for instance next week. This is the reason and I am prepared for that and all of a sudden they tell you 16h00 this afternoon or tomorrow 07h00 you must be on the flight to Cape Town. There are other commitments that you have. Maybe you have meetings scheduled for outside people and then all of a sudden you have to cancel or reschedule them on a short notice and find that you don't know how long you are going to be in Cape Town.

SPEAKER 1

But does that really affect job satisfaction by being demoralised?

SPEAKER 6

Yes, in essence that if you move from one place to the other... board back, basically I feel as if they are pushing me. I can't finish my work because in five minutes time somebody is gonna call me for a meeting and tell me that I have to be there.

SPEAKER 7

Okay, I think to add to what Marius has just said, lack of planning in the Department affects job satisfaction. It seems like it is culture in this Department, because it starts right from the top and whoever does that, does it to subordinates until it gets to the last person. So I think maybe this is how things operate in the Department but definitely it affects job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 8

Well I think my experience with the public service so far, this is the second Department I've been in. Basically, if one has to be very frank, we have a leadership problem in the public service, you know, people cannot make decisions and you cannot be a leader if you cannot make decisions. In making a decision you have to be bold enough to stand by it so that if things go wrong you are still in a position to explain the discrepancy which led to the fallacy of whatever direction you took and from that be able to say I have learned one, two, three and in the next phase of the project I would take the alternate direction. But in the public service you find people very wishy-washy, you know. A person, your manager can undertake that and say that with this project we are taking this direction and when things get hot you know he kind of absolves himself/herself out of the situation. You as a junior official must bare the brunt. So that is the basic problem I have.

SPEAKER 1

How is communication related to that?

SPEAKER 8

What it means is really a management problem you know. You can have the root from which files are taken, divisions to the minister or division to the DG, but in essence it's just bureaucracy. You find that people don't even read those files, you know you are required to give an update in a form of a memo...

SPEAKER 1

Marius would you like to add?

SPEAKER 6

Yes, I think how can I explain it. It is a question of I know for instance where one of the junior was given the responsibility to take certain action, and once he takes that action he was pulling before the firing squad. I think it's a question of delegation, it's delegated but the responsibility is not given with it. If you communicate, you communicate basically delegation goes without responsibility in terms of reference so to say. If you are told you are responsible for this project, then you are responsible for it. And the way you determine it, it has to go forward. If you determine this is the way we go then your superiors must respect that. If for instance like in a situation the person says okay you are responsible for this and this situation or this decision he takes this decision and all of a sudden gets wrapped off his fingers because he's taken those decisions. I mean like then again it's a question of demoralisation, that person says what must I do if I don't do I get wrapped on the ... if I do it as I was told to do it I also get wrapped on the...

SPEAKER 9

So responsibility is given here without authority. You are given the responsibility but you are not given the necessary authority to carry out that responsibility.

SPEAKER 1

Alright, I suggest then that we move on. Here we have some of the elements that are out listed and they are about six. One of them is organisational integration, which for the benefit of this meeting I would describe as a general communication relationships and acceptance of new employees in the Department of Communications. That is organisational integration.

Now the question, how does this relationships and this acceptance affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 10

If I may come into that, I've been with the Department for three years but this one has been going on ever since. There is lack of communication in the Department The problem being the ethnic groups. This Department has become like an Anglo-Boer War whereby some ethnic groups are not totally recognised, it's like it has become an Afrikaner and Xhosa War in between. Tswanas and Pedis are not even recognised. That thing in that way demoralise people, it's like being coloured in a black and white area...

SPEAKER 1

Will I be right if I say then general communication relationships most of them are based on ethnicity, is that the interpretation?

SPEAKER 10

What I can simply say is that my senior manager is a Xhosa and I don't like the way she treats me and the way she talks to me in front of people. I have told her

many times but it is like a thing that is in her blood. She says anything to me anytime she wants to.

SPEAKER 1

How does that affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 10

You get a minute from the DG and it should go straight to her. She would come to me and say Ishmael take care of this, and if I go back to her and maybe ask her to show me how to do it. What she would say is that you've been long with the Department and you know what is happening. So it goes back to what Jubie has said that, the seniors, the management, they don't know what is happening and they just put things on you because they also don't know them and that affects job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, Monde.

SPEAKER 11

I just wanted to make a follow-up on what Ishmael has just raised because, seemingly it is a very serious issue. I'm trying to find out from what he had just said right now as to how the issue of ethnicity comes in, because according to me this is very serious and that his boss is a Xhosa and he is a Tswana. You know the way that she communicates with him is because maybe she is a Xhosa and he is a Tswana. I mean, I'm trying to find out exactly what is it that makes him think that it is the issue of ethnicity, because I cannot derive it from what he has just said.

SPEAKER 8

I think it has a serious tribalistic problem, whether real or perceived.

SPEAKER 1

Alright, why do we talk about it, it is time to zoom into communication, and that thing as a communication element and how does it affect job satisfaction, because we don't want to just go out...

SPEAKER 8

I can sight a personal example of a guy telling me that I am not Xhosa and my job is not secured, I can be fired at any time and that affects me, my delivery and my position in the Department. One cannot identify with the Department and this was said by a very junior official and not by somebody senior to pose a threat, but being said by a junior official that means something has been told to him or his perception. So the question of tribalism in the Department is either perceived or realistic.

SPEAKER 1

Gavin you've been quiet.

SPEAKER 12

Correct me if I'm wrong, doesn't this come back to human relation?

SPEAKER 1

The communication relationship and how they affect job satisfaction. The relationship as I'm hearing from now is that they are ethnic bound. Is that a general thing in the Department or in some specific sectors?

SPEAKER 7

Joe you go back to the question you raised about new people in the Department.

SPEAKER 1

The acceptance of new employees, when people come in the Department, are they accepted by everybody, is communication so nice that people can come to

your office and say hi Monde, how are you, you've joined us? Yes okay its nice you know, how does that affect you in job satisfaction, do you have something that you see forward?

SPEAKER 7

Can I respond on that? It depends on what position you are and let me just go back to what Ishmael has just said that some of us have been in the Department for almost four years and you apply for the position and somebody like Ishmael said you can't get the position. How do you expect us to communicate well with such people? You look at yourself and at that person and say, she' got what I have or more than what I have and obviously it will cause a bit of friction. Not lack of acceptance as such but it will take some time for you to get along with such people. So, it is not an easy thing.

SPEAKER 9

I think also that if you are a new employee in an organisation, you expect a lot from people that are already there. It is a natural expectation. There is nothing wrong about it, you want to feel accepted and that is one thing you want inside. But you see now the arrangements in the Department is that most of us who are new, the person who accepts you obviously will be the person who is in the reporting section. This person will take you to the personnel section and to fill certain forms and certain administration things. You are then taken to the section where you are going to work, whether out of personal experience or what I have observed, it's just once you put that person there, there is no programme in all sections to actually accept and conduct an introduction for the new employees in that section.

SPEAKER 1

How does that affect a new person in the job?

SPEAKER 9

Of course if you find that kind of environment, you feel rejected immediately. And if you feel rejected even in your office that will affect your job satisfaction. How am I going to be satisfied with the job when I feel like I have made a mistake by coming to this Department? Now one starts with the negative side of day one and say that he or she is not being accepted. One doesn't even know who the supervisor is for the section where one has been dumped. There are so many managers, as you know in many cases they don't know to which one you should report. So you are demoralised from day one, you have to find yourself.

SPEAKER 1

Marius I saw you waving...

SPEAKER 6

Yes I agree about the importance of introduction. Getting to know people and getting to know the organisation are of importance to me. I've seen recently with the new appointment at communications side, they would sit you down at personnel and tell you the situation and this is how you are going to work. The whole lecture they gave in brackets they inform you that this is your accommodation as I understand that she is coming from another country so she stays in a hotel and they gave her what she is entitled to brief her on the whole thing. When I joined the Department just over two years ago, it was also a question of fill these forms, you sit on the eighth floor, go and find your office. Okay I got there and I sat in the same office with Gavin and Ishmael and they basically took me and showed me what is going on, but it was like, fill the forms and off you go.

SPEAKER 1

But did that have any impact on your job?

SPEAKER 6

Yes, because what do I do? Where do I go and who do I speak to, how do I address people?

SPEAKER 1

What about the person who hired you?

SPEAKER 7

Okay maybe if we could propose this like what other government Departments do, like to get someone to start a job a week before so that if I am going to start communication services today, HR tomorrow,... so that I can get to know people better.

SPEAKER 1

Just a second...

SPEAKER 7

Okay if I am going to start a job at the communication services and I start a week before so that first day I work to multimedia second day I work for HR and third day I work for ... By that I get to know people better, because it happens in the Department that somebody has been hired in the multimedia division then after a month you find that because I don't work for multimedia section I don't know the person. It's only people from multimedia who are familiar with that person whereas others are not.

SPEAKER 10

The other thing that prompts, is negative acceptance for new employees. I would say basically in my opinion, it has tribalism and nepotism. If you take for instance Chantal, she's got a diploma in Human Resources or whatever diploma she has. She's been asking for a long time to work for HR division and no one is considering that, only to find that there are only few people employed in the HR

section. Also to find that those people are related to the employer and how does that affect the job description, how is she supposed to go on in a work, she doesn't know where she is going but she has got the direction. She's got a space in that section. There is a vacancy in that section but she is not considered, basically what I am saying is that Chantal is not Xhosa so how can they consider her to work for that section (HR).

SPEAKER 1

Can we go to the second element, which is personal feedback. Personal feedback is the amount of work information received. It's the work information that people normally receive. When you have a meeting you get the feedback of what happened you know. So is there anything like this in the Department, in terms of your work, do you have feedback for everything that's communication?

SPEAKER 2

We don't have that at all. It's by default that you bump into feedback. Let me give an example. I'm staying in the office with the printer. Well, it's a lovely computer but what happens is that most of the work that gets through to Ferosa, then passes my desk and as a result, by default I see things that should have been communicated through to junior staff. That impacts on projects that we are doing and you find that there is no feedback, no information given and as a result the whole process of delivery becomes stifled. Its very unfortunate that some of the thing you hear about them in the press instead of hearing them inside internally, and you wonder what is your role in the section and in the Department.

SPEAKER 6

I mean taking a contentious issue like the Broadcasting Bill that was in Cape Town and over the news. The whole issue about community radio stations. Are they going to be closed down ... I heard over the news. The people in Cape Town should have communicated to us via e-mail or fax that this is the issue. We

are not going to close the stations. If someone contacts you provide him or her with this relevant information.

SPEAKER 1

Did that affect job your satisfaction?

SPEAKER 6

Yes. What am I doing there? If I don't know how must I, as a public servant service the public if they come to me with a question, because there's been a couple of queries. People phone me and say " Listen, this is the situation, we hear this and this and this. Is this true? I don't know, and then it's the question of they must think I'm stupid.

SPEAKER 11

Yah, just to support Marius on what he's just said. It's another thing, which is really demoralising the staff and we as the junior staff, I'm experiencing it a lot. You find that you have been allocated a project, maybe your management is busy with something or else you submit your report and it ends there. You hear it over the news the following day and you don't come back with the report and but it's not something you cannot overcome if you are assertive enough. But I am happy that at least my section, now that we have raised here our concerns that you know with this kind of attitude, so we think that is affecting our morality and satisfaction and so on. So the management at least is showing signs of improvement. So if maybe we are really raising these things to our bosses and ... the satisfaction think again.

SPEAKER 1

Say for example, if you were to rate job satisfaction as fifty percent before lack of feedback, now this thing you say it has been addressed. How would you rate job satisfaction, considering the previous fifty?

SPEAKER 11

So you mean in my business?

SPEAKER 1

Yes, if you were fifty percent satisfied prior to addressing this issue, what would you say, because now there's a change, is it also job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 11

It's not hundred percent. I would say probably eighty percent. At least, I can see signs of improvement that at least they are telling us about... . For instance, the Postal Bill. They are telling us about everything that it's at this stage now, here are the problems, we are expecting this so everything. We are anticipating this and that. So, at least it makes you feel you are contributing something.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, can we hear other people? Personal feedback. Is it only in that form? Is there nowhere else where you expect feedback? Is it only in the areas that we have described?

SPEAKER 6

I would say not only the areas you've described, but I think we've just highlighted some instances or some examples where communication would have helped.

SPEAKER 1

The merit assessments? Does everyone know the process?

SPEAKER 10

That goes back to the organisational integration.

SPEAKER 6

Take that for instance. This if a future problem for, I would say, HR maybe personnel section. We've gone through a system where you go through a merit system, the criteria in which they measure you, okay. What they tell us now is listen this is the criteria we still use on you. Point A skills da da da for the points, okay. You get a point out of something but now, two things that trouble us in broadcasting and I know it troubles the management as well. What is the point of departure? What is the norm? Now what it indicates to you, for skills you must have the norm is this and this and this. If you're gonna have the norm, how can you measure somebody if you don't know where to measure it from? I mean like the one person can put the norm as A, B, and C, and it will resolve that he gets ... he's well above that and he gets a nine or three or one. Where another person might say the norm is A,B,C, D, and E and that same person gets a one.

SPEAKER 1

But, where is communication in that?

SPEAKER 6

Those norms were never communicated to us. Now they tell us, listen, next year we're gonna have a different system for different criteria on which we're gonna measure you. What's that year gonna be? I feel that as soon as that criteria is determined, I don't know if it has already been determined, but the sooner that is determined, it must be communicated to everybody so that I know, I get up to the measurement or when they're gonna evaluate me at the end of the year or next year. I want to know this and this and this is the areas on which they're gonna evaluate me on. I know that I've got pretty strong on this, I know I'm pretty strong on that. That's the area I must work on. The skills for instance, tertiary education, whatever

It might be. And I know okay, I must enrol for a course in this. I must enrol to further my studies in this.

SPEAKER 1

How does that, as personal feedback related issue, or incorporate in it, affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 6

That's a major issue. I mean like, if that's not communicated to me, I don't know what the criteria will be in which I'm gonna be measured next year. By the time that they measure me, ... all of the sudden the criteria is determined. I couldn't have done anything. Now I'm mad because I could have done something about this, or they evaluate me on certain issues and for instance on skills or education or experience. It's a question of I could have done something about it. Now I get this mark above one, I'm demotivated, I'm angry at my management because they don't foresee the situation as I foresee it. So, I don't wanna do anything.

SPEAKER 10

Which goes back to interpersonal communications, whereby you go do those courses to improve yourself and everything. Whereby at a last minute or it all depends on the situation between you and your senior, how you communicate, how the relationship between you two is.

SPEAKER 1

It's fine. We'll come to that. Is there anything again on that one?

SPEAKER 2

Yeah, it's a very contentious issue.

SPEAKER 1

Personal feedback.

SPEAKER 2

You see, management that does not have interest in its employee, it's really ridiculous. I mean coming to the same issue of assessment, in my case, okay, I'll talk about my case. The assessment form was put on Ali's desk for over a month, and he's aware I've been in the Department for almost over a year. Clear lines of communications, he's not interested. He is utterly not interested to commit himself and take responsibility that here's an employee, he been in this Department for a year, and ask people that have worked with me, you know, in terms of management, like Connie ...

SPEAKER 1

Alright, did he come to you because you said you have forms there? Did he come back to you with the reasons or the feedback, because that's a critical point? The feedback to tell you I can't do this because of this and this. Or I can do this, I'll do this when, you know.

SPEAKER 2

He did not come to me until I went forward and interviewed him as ...

SPEAKER 1

Did that have an impact on your job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

It has, it has an impact and I might also think of quitting. I might think of looking for another job, you know, because you ask yourself what ...

SPEAKER 1

Okay.

SPEAKER 6

I don't know where this fits in. But there's something that gets a person down is if your personal relationships are not taken into account by management as well just because they are not necessarily in the same situation. Even if they are in the same situation, I've got two examples, one is a situation where a person was forced to work overtime, okay, as he said "Please do to certain factors at home, I've got a problem with my child, it's exams", or whatever the case may be. "Please can't I work at another stage or can't we do something else, I'll do everything I can up to the time I knock off, but I can't do this specific thing". The person was just informed no ways. You will be there. Two days later, the senior management goes off and denies or declines invitation to a dinner hosted by another Minister to go and watch his son getting Award. I mean like, what does that communicate to the employee. My children are not good enough or my children are not a valid reason for not working overtime. But the senior management's children, they can become first priority. Just because you are a senior management maybe not involved, not married or something and you are willing to work after eleven o'clock at night, at the Department. ... you are married or involved with somebody else, you don't want to sit here until eleven o'clock at night. That's issues that must be taken into consideration because they affect job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 1

So, Chantal do you have anything to say before I suggest that we move to the next point?

SPEAKER 7

No, I just wanted to add to what Marius has said, because most of our senior management do not come from Pretoria, Eastern Cape, Bloemfontein and everywhere. So, because they don't have families around, they don't look forward to go home after work and some of us here we do have families. At half past four we want to leave, and for them, they can even leave at nine o'clock.

They don't expect you to leave early. Obviously, it affects job satisfaction and it will catch up with you by the time you'll get merited and all those things.

SPEAKER 1

Can we suggest that we move to another question. And we'll revert back to other questions if we still have some time.

There's another one of communication climate. It's an overall perception of internal messages and message-related events. You talk about things like internal workshops, you talk about the BoBs maybe. Are there any message-related events, internally, here in the Department? Let me first start by asking that. Are there any events that are organised internally, that help you to be up to date with communication in the Department?

SPEAKER 6

Yes, in the broadcasting section we have our monthly broadcasting meeting. Okay, it hasn't taken place for two or three months now because I see the management is stuck down in Cape Town. Basically what I'm saying is that there are meetings scheduled in the broadcasting section on a regular basis, just to where everybody finds out this is the situation on this project, this is the situation over here. So, yes there is internal communication.

SPEAKER 1

Does that affect job satisfaction? How does that contribute?

SPEAKER 6

Yes. You know what's happening here, you know what's happening there. So, you know really what's going on and you know who is responsible for certain projects. So if you get queries then you know where to refer people.

SPEAKER 1

Anything?

SPEAKER 4

Yeah, we do have meetings in our sections, which help to communicate activities that have been occurring, say over a month period. That helps to know as to what is happening in different units within the administration section. One thing I've learned is that, as we go into the meeting, we go with different purposes, you know, as against having purpose. I mean purpose where if you go to a meeting you are there to report what has been happening, solve problems, you know if there are any problems that occur. And then ... it is very very valuable. We get to a situation where one individual would ... meeting, you know and make sure that we drag the meeting into the late hours of the day. In that way I find it very less productive.

SPEAKER 6

It must be an information meeting, short and sweet. It doesn't have to go for more than an hour or two hours.

SPEAKER 1

So, I've noticed that the Department is divided into post, telecommunications, and broadcasting. Can we safely say people in broadcasting know what's happening in postal, as a communication climate, the overall perception. If you get, for example, people ask you outside, "What's happening at broadcasting?" Will you be in a position to answer them?

SPEAKER 12

You see my situation is that I work in the international section. So I'm supposed to know about postal, broadcasting, and telecommunication. But I don't know half of those sections, or what happens in ... I think our section is the first section that has to know that international trends or what's happening.

SPEAKER 1

So, does that affect your job satisfaction, to see that here you are, you are in international, you are supposed to know about these things? But now you don't know what's happening, does that have an impact on your job?

SPEAKER 12

I won't say there's an impact on my job because, as far as say I received a fax from someone and I see it's broadcasting-related, I know I have to take it to broadcasting, telecomms or whatever. But if there is something happening for instance like Broadcasting Bill... I should know long before the time, I should know what's happening so that I can be informed in my section, being international ...

SPEAKER 1

So if you are not informed of that, if there's no one telling you what's happening, so do you still, in your job say your are still satisfied?

SPEAKER 12

I would like to develop myself, if I get information it satisfies me...

SPEAKER 1

Okay, the DoC News. Does that have an impact on you? How does it contribute as a communication tool? How does it contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 10

We get it monthly, like if there's something that we do not know about broadcasting and anything... then we get a section whereby ... so like if the Broadcasting Bill, when it has launched what has been happening and the things like that. I've got no information like if the DoC News comes, there's a section about the Bill... then I have got some ideas.

SPEAKER 2

I just want to say that we have three divisions but, it's supposed to work like a ... that is in sink you know, but it does not happen like that. I see at the level of management that's where ... sink it actually filter down to the different levels. I mean to three sections where employees are to communicate what is happening at the Departmental level. That doesn't go down to that level. I mean if you look at issues like convergence and stuff like that, whether we like it or not we have to know about what's happening in postal, telecomms, and broadcasting. If our management, our leaders are not catching that spirit now, we are going to end up finding ourselves not informed about the industry that we are in. And it's going to affect our relevance in the Department, you know or our relevance in the broader industry. So, because there are compartments, divisions, postal, broadcasting, telecomms, they do impact on each other.

SPEAKER 1

Alright, they do impact each other, but you as in multimedia, if you are not informed about postal services or you are not informed about broadcasting, does that matter on your job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

It does it matters a lot.

SPEAKER 1

How?

SPEAKER 2

Because, I can give an example of PIT, Public Internet Terminal. It touches on broadcasting, it touches on postal, because I mean some of the aspects are of it are very interdisciplinary. You know, from the level of Andile, he's got the vision but if you look at management, management hasn't actually caught the vision of

how PIT can be rolled out. So, you try to get in touch with the industry, you try to develop the project further. But postal also, it's a partner in that roll out but there's no communication with us. We don't know how far they are in terms of communicating with the Post Office regarding PIT. They don't know how far in terms of PIT with the industry. So, that it becomes something that is user-friendly and easily accessible. So, that's a problem.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, do you have events, message related events like workshops, that help you to be up to date with what is happening? For example, transformation coming from the Public Service. Do you organise workshops about what's happening with regard that, the Batho-Pele workshops ... I mean, let's talk about that. Those kinds of events, which are communication related. Are they communication related and how do they impact on job satisfaction? Jubie you've been quiet.

SPEAKER 8

No. I'm still digesting.

SPEAKER 4

On those workshops, the transformation workshops etc, anything related to ensuring that there's exchange of information between the Departments, there's a package we are working on and at this point in time, I'm not ready to divulge on the content. So, there's something we are working on in Training. We are very hopeful, in fact very positive. Before the year 2000, before January there'll be something in place.

SPEAKER 1

All right, can we hear other people talking about this aspect specifically? The BoBs. Do they have any impact?

SPEAKER 11

I think for me, the BoBs ...

SPEAKER 1

As part of the communication climate, you know.

SPEAKER 11

I think those kinds of events for me, are the best ones in terms of communication because informal ... that's where I normally get most of the information about other sections. That's where we talk, that's where we interact most of the time, more than the formal meetings because normally, we don't have meetings together with broadcasting people or whoever. So, in most cases in the social gatherings, we find ourselves interacting with strange people, we talk about work and all those things. I mean it works, for me it works.

SPEAKER 1

Does it have any relationship with the job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 11

That is what I am saying. It's where I derive most of the satisfaction because it gives an opportunity to interact with other people from other sections, not only postal and in those circumstances, about 70% of our time we talk about work related issues.

SPEAKER 6

You develop and expand your personal relationship with your colleagues, which makes it a nicer environment to work in.

SPEAKER 10

So, that means we need a lot of social gatherings so that when we get a bit intoxicated and tongues get to be loosened up and we get to talk.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, anyone else?

SPEAKER 3

With us, we function a bit differently because we had what we called social occasions, which are only on Fridays. We get together with the Ministry and then organise a term of entertainment and go to someone's house, and we use that as an opportunity to actually discuss some of the problems we might be experiencing in terms of communication between some of us. Largely, in terms of job satisfaction, it depends on the different business units, because with us we only function properly through channelling of information from the business units. Initially, it was a bit of a problem because you find that people would even forget us in their addresses that when the e-mail starts they would forget the Cape Town office's address. I think that is the case even with the announcement of the Christmas party. It wasn't announced to all the staff in Cape Town. In terms of the e-mail, so what we normally do when we want information, we don't use the DoC News only but also the website because we find most of the time whenever there are contentious issues the Minister immediately releases the speech and is put on the website. So, for me because I do a lot of research, I usually go to check on the website just to check what is the story on this. Then automatically you will find something. Because I found that waiting for business units is very frustrating initially it impacted on my job satisfaction because I like to do things in time, at a certain date. So, I looked around and said okay, maybe these are the other means of getting that information but still it's not 100% because there are things that don't appear there and that you should constantly go and try to find information on.

In terms of the office functioning itself, I think we are going to have a workshop, because we have realised that we haven't really done much in terms of feedback. When Mongezi comes from Pretoria, it's usually for a day or two and

sometimes there is no time to have a regular staff meeting. So, we have a workshop to look at how exactly we will overcome some of the difficulties that I have outlined. Also how we as the office can have sort of measure in place.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, I'll try to move again because I see time is heading towards 11h00, but we'll see and be guided by the discussions you know. And there's another element, the organisational perspective. Organisational perspective is looked at as the ability of an organisation to communicate clearly to all the employees, its vision, mission and objectives. So, does the Department of Communications communicate that clearly? If so, how does it impact on job satisfaction? If it doesn't, how does it affect job satisfaction, can we talk about that element? Do you know the vision of the Department Ishmael?

SPEAKER 3

I think the vision is like impacts in terms of how we function, and Dante only touched it when we talked about convergence because largely the focus is on the communication and the fact that people need to be informed among other things. I think part of that is arming yourselves in terms of different aspects that fall under the Department itself. Crystallising it into the reality it's something that is very difficult. I don't think I am being pessimistic in saying that even if you have a lot of workshops at the end of the day the onus, I think is in the individual to actually go and try to find some of the issues themselves. There is of course an onus on other people to inform you, but then I think if one wants job satisfaction one has to accept that more than 50% is going to depend on him or her. You look at other people and you find that things don't happen the way we would like them to happen, so maybe if you want to stay in this environment you need to change certain things and then work on them.

SPEAKER 5

I would like to say on the issue of the vision and mission statement, it would be a question of creating an awareness of the staff members as to what is the vision and why do we need a vision in an organisation, making sure that our vision and mission are accessible, that is readily available, for example if you go to other organisations you find them hung on the wall with nice frames. That would be one way of doing it. I know we have got pamphlets all over. Some are in the library but then it all goes down to the culture of learning again. I mean when you see a pamphlet do you bother yourself to take it and page through it?

SPEAKER 1

But really the question with regard to this, is there organisational sense of direction and how it affects you as an employee, do you know where the organisation is going? Is that communicated to you so that you can engage yourself properly and be satisfied in the job that you do because they are in line with the organisation? I heard you say the DG has a vision, maybe I am inclined to ask. Does it filter into everybody in the Department?

SPEAKER 2

No, it does not.

SPEAKER 1

So, ... and how does that affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

Well it's a very difficult question I mean if you look at info.com.2005, which was approved by Cabinet. It captures in a summary, the direction where the Department should be going. The vision and the mission of the Department are going to be tested as to whether we deliver on projects like that, which say we are going to have a knowledge base on society and creating a better life for all citizens of South Africa and through policy formulation, through projects, and

through delivery of services. But then you find that the very same vision is not internalised by individuals or even management but not all of them, I think in summary that is the problem that the vision is not carried through.

SPEAKER 11

I think in terms of organisational perspective in the Department, we still have a lot to do because if you look at the management I doubt that most of them know the vision of the Department. You only see the direction of the vision of the Department only from the Director-General. Downwards they don't share the same vision. Look at the PIT for instance. That project is very interesting and according to me it ties very well with the vision of the Department, which aims to create an information based society throughout the Post Office network. If we can have the same kind of the PIT for instance obviously our people will have access to valuable information regarding some of the activities, government policies and many other issues. If we look at the Department no one knows where the PIT belongs. We are all having questions as to whether it is the postal section or the telecommunication project. Even myself at the postal, until today I don't know whether this is our project or telecommunications'. Really, we want to carry on with this project and the Post Office is much interested in it. They want to know because they can see what it achieved in exhibitions and even when they come to the Department but nobody knows as to r where does it belong.

SPEAKER 1

How does that affect you as an employee in job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 11

It demoralises me.

SPEAKER 1

How?

SPEAKER 11

Like myself, I do have the same vision, I want to see the Public Information Terminal installed. Let's take an example where we were exhibiting at Nasrec. Many people were interested and they asked the Chief if he can give them his name, and his contact number. Actually we were there for that anyway, and people made the follow ups, they said tell us we don't see where is it, we are interested. Those people are right. They have a right to inquire about that project because they were promised. Look out in the next four months and you will see the results, and when somebody out there is coming to you and inquiring about this you should actually be giving the direction, instead you don't, you feel now that you are incapable of doing your job.

SPEAKER 10

To add to what Monde has just said now, this... exhibition, it was the first time that we took the ... away, me and Leonard, whereby we had Minister ... on the first day of opening I had to explain and when I couldn't do that I had to rely on Leonard. When we finished, I told him we should have workshops on this so that all the staff members should have some information on this and know how they should work because most of the people in the public are very interested in this. They ask you why you have only four post offices and all you say is that no we are still coming there, and things like that. So, internally, it's like we don't communicate well and it affects even the public that you can't even explain the situation to anyone.

SPEAKER 1

That's interesting you know.

SPEAKER 3

For me again, the vision depends on interpretation and the amount of expectation that you put on yourself. For instance the PIT, ... you are working for this section which there is the procurement of the PIT, that for me would be

enough in terms of imparting information. Like when I am working in the parliamentary section I know that I have to know a bit of broadcasting and know about telecomm and know about postal. Now I look at myself and think that in terms of the human capacity that is there I cannot know the full details. I have at some point need to have a reference point and I think if you look at the vision in terms of awareness, I don't think that is how one should expect of oneself to know all the final details of an issue as long as one knows.

I think I mentioned earlier about reference point that if I have a problem here and there. I think that is important for me to know to whom I can refer a person if he or she needs help about information. I think largely that benefits to the way I assess myself in terms of what do I know about my job because I tell myself in terms of legislation I'm at the top and I must have a broader knowledge of everything.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, can we move to another element? The relationship with the supervisor, which is formal and informal communication relationships in the Department of Communications? How do formal and informal communication relationships with the supervisor contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 10

Well if I may come in on that, like I said before, formally I get a memo from my senior manager, Ishmael can you work on these? These are the minutes from the DG. The problem will come. If you find that I don't understand what I'm suppose to do, but it won't do me any good if I go back to the person who gave me that job and say can you give me a light as to how I should go about in doing this, as then I will get an answer like "You've been long enough in the Department and you should be knowing by now how to do this". Then how am I suppose to go on with this thing, that demoralises me, it affects my job description and my job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 2

Formally, you draft the memo, you find that you are writing a formal letter requesting to attend a course or something like that. Then the memo sits on the table for days. The supervisor does not want to put on his or her signature. You have to drag hands and try to get that person through a cell phone but you find that it is switched off or the person is in Cape Town. Tracing him becomes a long discovery of a million-dollar signature. You find that you follow the procedures but nothing comes through. People from outside are phoning to say hi you've booked for this course, where are the payments and then you start looking like an idiot, and that sound very embarrassing and crazy.

SPEAKER 6

My experience is a little bit different to what Ishmael has got. My direct superiors, I have got a great formal and informal relationship with that ...

SPEAKER 1

Let's concentrate on the first part of what you said. You have good relationships. How does that affect you or contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 6

I feel comfortable and secured. But I know that should I encounter any problem, I will go back to them and say, listen just give me some direction on this or give me some information on this project. I don't have a problem in that area.

The million dollar signature, yeah! We never know where our SGM is. Even with the secretary, she never knew where he was. We joked in our section that when its raining, Joe answered his cell phone, or if he answers it we say, listen tomorrow it's gonna snow and that's the type of attitude and I mean like there's been people trying to get hold of him for couple of days he sets up meetings and

he doesn't show up, and you have to speak to the people and tell them listen, I'm sorry Joe is not here.

SPEAKER 1

How does that affect job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 6

I don't think it affects the job satisfaction that much. But it affects the relationship between yourself and your manager, which eventually boils down to job satisfaction as well, but then it does not affect job satisfaction directly.

SPEAKER 1

Yes okay it makes sense, what are other people saying?

SPEAKER 4

As for me, the relationship is very well, formally and informally. As a result, I'm trying to put the best of me given the circumstances and I am very hopeful that we will get things moving.

SPEAKER 3

I can actually echo that as well. I think it establishes a sense of trust because with us our boss is always up and down to Pretoria, but it never presents a problem because of the relationship we have with him. If he goes and we have things to be signed, I can just put my signature on them. If he goes to ITU, he would talk to us and tell us that one of us will be responsible for managing our division during his absence, and we can then ask him what our limits are and what are our powers. If we want to go to training courses we can go and we have to put up in line what we have to do as a result, I think that as you said that it makes you want to work more because you get motivated. You also don't have a lot of stumbling blocks in terms of your work performance and its quiet positive to have that.

SPEAKER 10

Formally, as well coming to my section, it's like there is no co-ordination. If I can give you an example, for instance my colleague Gavin has been to the USA in the past month but it was just like Gavin is going to the USA. I went to my senior manager and asked her why we were not told about that. The answer that I got was that Gavin came and asked me to go. Just like that. The other day I saw Gavin and Johan were signing memos where they requested for new computers and the senior manager has signed it. I'm using a 386 computer. A meeting should have been called whereby each one of us were asked whether they need new computers or not. Maybe if we need them we would say definitely I need one, what about me, do I still have to go there and ask for a new computer, what for?

SPEAKER 1

What can we say with regard to that? Is it internal communication? How can this meeting shape up that?

SPEAKER 4

The sentiment that I get here is that maybe the senior manager is fairly new in the Department, I don't know if I am correct. He or she might be trying to find ... in the Department. In the light of that it is difficult to impart information fluently because it sounds like the subordinate or whoever is at the top is getting information as

SPEAKER 2

I don't want to get any manager or senior manager off the hook. Personally, I am just responding to what was said earlier. If there is a new person coming in and saying to you it won't take a year to learn how the Department functions. What interests does that person have if he or she wants to show good relationship with other employees to make sure that the section he or she runs, runs effectively

and efficiently? If there is no determination as to how the Department works then there is no excuse for any ignorance on how the Department works, especially at the professional level. It shows apathy to actually read, find out the information, go and seek advice from junior staff. So, I find it ridiculous that you get feedback like I have been here for a short period and I don't know anything.

SPEAKER 1

If that was in your case and your situation, what would you have felt with regard to job satisfaction or anybody for that matter?

SPEAKER 2

You see, it's in my interests that I know how the Department works, to add value to the Department so that I become satisfied with what I am doing and my seniors will be satisfied with my output. So, the responsibility starts with me and from there to be assisted by other people who are in the Department. That will help in having job satisfaction, I think that would be my contribution.

SPEAKER 3

For me I think it's a question of structure and co-ordination, because it's one of the things that are uncomfortable to everyone as well as myself. I mean, when you are in a job for a long time and someone new on top or senior comes in and you want to know how they are going to impact on it. They may subsume some of the duties that your are doing. Now if you are not informed with regard to that interference there's the danger again, the person does not inform you what it is that they are going to change and so on. They put you at a disadvantage in a sense that when they quarrel or whenever there are some problems, then decide you are not entitled to A, B, C, and D and they have decided as senior manager. So, I think it would have been important in that type of situation for the senior manager to outline his or her duties to the staff and in terms of their job description. He or she should be given the job descriptions and outline how he or

she is going to impact on the different sectors and how we are going to work from now on. I think that would help in terms of everyone's job description.

SPEAKER 1

In other words what you are saying is a lack of formal communication relationships in terms of a job description affects your job satisfaction as an employee now.

SPEAKER 3

Yes it does, because at the end of the day, it doesn't matter if you are a subordinate and somebody is coming from the top management, especially with the new matrix management that all the sectors are trying to adopt. You may be a subordinate, but you also have got your own responsibility. You know that as a senior manager, a person can come in with their responsibilities but at the same time they must also respect that you also have your own job to do. And if they are going to interfere, they must have a valid reason for that.

SPEAKER 1

Can we move to, actually we are supposed to close but may I summarise? There's this element of media quality that Marius has spoken about. You learn about things in the media instead of knowing them in the Department and I don't know how many people this affects. The amount of information received from or sent out to the media, then the question is, do you understand and know before hand what will be broadcast in the media about your section or your Department?

SPEAKER 3

Not all the time. I think that goes across the board. It's complaint that it goes beyond just the Department of Communications. You had quiet a number of Members of Parliament coming to us and saying hey your Department. We just read in the newspaper that it is A, B, C, and D and we have to run and look and

find out that were you also you informed that morning or the day before so I think those instances are not quiet sure what are the solution would be?

SPEAKER 1

Yes, but does that affect your job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 3

Yes, it does affect my job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 10

If I can add, what Ingrid is saying is that, as public servants we should know what is happening in the other public sectors as well.

SPEAKER 1

In the Department here, like Marius is in the broadcasting section, you are supposed to know before hand, I assume what is going to be in the media today, maybe even wait to watch the news. You find that you are watching the news with your family and you see your colleagues toyi-toying and you don't know what is going on and so like Marius has said that affects job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 6

Oh! Why I'm the in the unit.

SPEAKER 1

Is there anything that people feel we need to cover as a communication element that affects job satisfaction. We've round up all our elements up to this far and just in closing what is it that you feel has been left out as a communication element that affects job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 4

I think that a lot has to be done on the communication culture. A lot has happened in terms of technology and a lot of information flooded all over the world. That being the case, we still have managers who, when they went to school, information was by way of books and newsletters. Now there's the Internet where you can get everything. So maybe there should be some kind of culture, culture orientation to have the staff members here say, if you've got so much information... so as to perform best.

SPEAKER 1

Anyone else?

SPEAKER 11

I think Joe we don't utilise the facilities like the Internet and e-mail, I find it strange in the postal section since last week with this... conference. It was very important for other sections to know that the postal section is organising the SATCC for Southern African countries rather than seeing it on the news on that day, maybe informing other staff members too because I find it very embarrassing sometimes to see something about broadcasting for telecommunications sitting with my friends in front of the television at home and they tell you that there's your Minister talking about something which I was supposed to know beforehand. Sometimes, I answer honestly that I don't know, but then if I have a chance to explain when I know a bit I try all possible best. I think we must use e-mail instead of memos because they sometimes don't work. If an e-mail informs you that there an event coming, even if you are not invited just to inform you especially on big event s like conferences for instance like TRASA. It was very important for me to know what it was about just to be informed. How will we create an informed base society if we really are failing to inform each other?

SPEAKER 1

Okay, it's now 11h00 and I would suggest with due respect, that we close. I would really like to thank you for the participation and anytime that you feel your need to discuss something communication related please feel free to come and we will share that thing. I mean I also have vast knowledge based on communication, which I have not used because of my functions in the Department, but the sharing of such information can help us. Things like the diversity people talk about diversity, cultural diversity how does it affect the organisation, we have many cultures coming in now what do we do, what is expected of you, how do you integrate, so we need to discuss those things.

SPEAKER 11

I think Joe that there were some issues that were raised and I feel we cannot leave them as they are today because I believe some of them are dangerous. Before we can reach any conclusion that so and so is treating you so because you are a Xhosa or Zulu. For me that is really unacceptable. Unless we have an example like Jubie for instance that so and so said to me on this particular day, if I am a Zulu or Xhosa my job is not guaranteed. Only in those circumstances that we can say, now that it has been straightened. Not because your senior manager was telling you to do A, B, C, and D. Now that you didn't understand the task then you reach the conclusion that you are a Tswana, whoever. You are ill treated because of your ethnic group. I mean something must be done about this.

SPEAKER 1

We will do another study based on these things, it's nice to talk about these issues especially they came out during the people management workshop.

SPEAKER 3

People use occasions to make certain animosity if they have got ... to blow it out of proportion and I think that needs to be addressed.

SPEAKER 1

We have to conduct a formal study with regard to diversity, culture and so on.

THANKS.

FOCUS GROUP TWO

TITLE: THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION IN JOB SATISFACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS: AN EXPLORATION

Date: 11 December 1998

Time: 09h00-11h00

Duration: Two hours

SPEAKER 1

Communication satisfaction

Communication satisfaction. Let's just describe it as to understand the concept in an organisation. It is a subjective perception of the overall communication events or messages that people can say that alright, I'm satisfied or I'm not satisfied.

Communication in the Department is a subjective thing. There is no communication services section that can say communication in its Department is a subjective thing that you perceive yourself within your environment, but it's about the total environment. It might be in your section, it might be broader in the whole organisation. If you are satisfied with it, it is then that you describe the environment as being communication satisfying.

Now job satisfaction includes all those elements that when combined one can say I'm satisfied with my job, That person is the only person who is able to describe or combine those elements that he or she subjectively wants to shape his job. On ... description or his Job satisfaction. In most cases you will find that the only thing that satisfies a person is his salary or his relationship with the management.

Then maybe if I may ask, starting from there, is there any communication satisfaction in the Department?

SPEAKER 2

If I may come in at this point (controversy will get me out of this one).

The main issue that was raised at the people management workshop was lack of communication, and not only between the people but both horizontally and vertically, at all levels especially between the management and staff.

SPEAKER 1

So, if they say there was lack of communication between the management and staff let's focus on that, and find out what is it that is expected.

SPEAKER 2

I suppose this can be defined as lack of flow of information. The other side of that would be the withholding of information from people. In other words, disempowering and taking authority away from people because if you don't have the knowledge, you can't perform, and they feel that certain knowledge is being withheld from them and that causes them to malfunction or ... to be set up for failure.

SPEAKER 1

So, is there any relationship between that and job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

I think it's given.

SPEAKER 1

How?

SPEAKER 2

If you do not have information, you cannot do your work. You become frustrated and this will make you unhappy, so there is no job satisfaction. But I would like to think that lack of communication is the major source of problem in the Department.

SPEAKER 3

I'm just going to agree that there is an element of communication within the sections that we are working with. As it has been said that there is a tendency of withholding information.... I think that would definitely have implications on one's expected outputs. According to the obligations of the establishment and this will result in people becoming ... In that way, for one not to be in a position to exercise the initiative, we get in a lot of ways that is to see ourselves achieving the set objectives.

SPEAKER 1

So, let's all participate in this informal thing, let's try to...

Is there anyone who feels there is communication satisfaction at some point?

Let's try to get those points.

SPEAKER 4

I think this depends on the section you are in. If I can give you an example, in our section we can only improve communication through weekly or fortnightly meetings, in particular section and let them grow into the whole communication Department as the Director-General proposed in the workshop, where there will be junior staff representatives in management meetings. So, I feel like at least if we could have meetings because in meetings it is where you can air your views.

SPEAKER 1

Will that have any consequences on job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 4

It will definitely, because I don't have a platform, and if I'm dissatisfied right now, I know that I can't just air my views right now, but after three months and at least if we hold meetings at fortnight then that will make things easier for me to cough out what I have inside.

SPEAKER 5

I will be repeating what the previous speaker has already said. I think a lack of feedback is very much linked to communication and also linked to reward because, when people talk about reward I think in terms of ... rewards or/and in terms of material things. For instance if we don't get feedback from our seniors or from our colleagues or people at the same level/section you know it affects our job satisfaction. For instance, to say I thank you, you have done well, you have performed well on this. This shows that there is lack of communication in terms of appreciating what we are actually doing. Knowledge of staff depends on job satisfaction as you have said that we are not looking for just salaries but also to be satisfied with what we are doing.

SPEAKER 6

Another problem is when only different individuals are empowered ...
I fail to understand how one can perform to the best of his ability when he is not fully empowered.

SPEAKER 1

So, if you talk about that is there any communication with regard to that?

SPEAKER 7

Definitely.

SPEAKER 1

How do you describe it as an element of communication?

We see that alright the situation affects job satisfaction, but now is there any communication element in what you are saying?

SPEAKER 6

You are basically being left behind to the fact that you are still new in the section and you have to start somewhere.

SPEAKER 5

I think there is. I mean if you talk about sharing, information is not made accessible to you and obviously it disempowers and the end result is job dissatisfaction because information as Johan was saying is not filtered through. You are somehow marginalised and that leads to processing of people because if you don't communicate with me, if you don't tell me about my responsibilities, or sharing information with me, you'd expect me to do certain things. We have certain expectations of not realising that we are not informed as far as tasks are concerned because they have blocked information and end up saying do this but not really appreciating whether I do have the skills and that I do have the information to do that task.

SPEAKER 3

You know just to add to what Vusi has said, I'll turn it as the organisational culture of which that I think has to be understood by people in that particular establishment. That is what are the ... of the business from the people and what are the end objectives and vision of the business in itself. If that cannot filter down people/ individuals, I mean there will never be any success in that environment. What I can say, you know Joe as Vusi had said there are no defined parameters within which people should be operating. People do not know what is expected of them in terms of set obligations, and probably it could be that direction and vision is known at the top. Probably there is lack of understanding or lack of interest in people who should be driving that process, that is, making sure that there is a common understanding of the set visions and goals, that

does get communicated to the people on the ground and with that they will be in the “know” of what is expected of them.

SPEAKER 1

If I may proceed, there are various elements that I have listed here:

- The organisational integration
- Personal feedback
- Communication climate
- Organisational perspective
- Medium quality
- The relationship with the supervisor

All those elements are communication elements but we'll zoom into them right now.

The first one is organisational integration, which for purposes of this discussion is the general communication relationships in the Department and the acceptance of new employees in the Department. When they are accepted, do they know what is happening? Are they welcomed? You know, how is the situation, that type of communication satisfaction. Does that affect their job satisfaction, by being in their jobs as employees or even all the employees being accepted? I think this thing is two fold, its about new and old employees but we can just discuss around it.

How do communication relationships and acceptance of new employees by other member in the Department contribute to our job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

Maybe just to get the ball rolling so to speak, there are couple of things that you've touched on and that come from management course.

Induction courses for new employees seem to be a big vacuum in that people are not being introduced to the Department properly. The other one is you have what is commonly termed... and the young and upcoming professionals I think that the term that they want to use is the so-called young and upcoming professionals and that's a nice term that they want to use. So those are the variables

SPEAKER 5

Just to add on that, I think this is also linked to group dynamics. There are people who are free, comfortable and established. They form closed networks and they don't want to open up. I mean it happens to all groups, I'm not saying it's a particular feature prevalent in the Department, who would not open up to new coming people somehow they may feel threatened that, you know that they are probably established with the challenges. They will close up and they will cut up communication for those who are new and the end result will be job dissatisfaction, whereas probably in an organisational culture which encourages, which is permeable you know, which opens up to new coming people and encourages them so that they don't feel threatened because really one of the major problems I think we are facing in the Department as Johan was saying. We have the old guard here in the Department, and is very used to doing things in a particular pattern. We have got new people, new professionals who are coming with new ideas new visions and would like to introduce new styles of doing things and the old guard is likely to close up. We also have groups and sub-groups and somehow and eventually they will interfere with the overall objectives of the whole organisation

SPEAKER 1

So, Tlale you have been quiet, what do you think?

SPEAKER 7

To add on that, I think opening up to your subordinates creates a good communication skills between friends and subordinates in a section. There would be good productivity in some other sections. ... I don't want to name them, there was a lady who resigned because she did not know what was expected of her to do. She was introduced to the work that she has never done previously and the people who worked with her in that section did not show her how to do the job, she instead came to work and stood there in her office the whole day without doing anything.

SPEAKER 2

That means that this lady is a classic example. She was set up for failure as we said earlier. She was given a task she couldn't do, she didn't have the information and she didn't have the power to do the work.

SPEAKER 1

What happened?

SPEAKER 2

She resigned.

SPEAKER 7

You know just to add on what the previous speaker has said, it is true because if the overall ... is not understood by everyone, it is very much difficult for them to fit themselves in on the process (to integrate on to the whole organisation). One could feel very much frustrated in a form of drafting documents if you don't know the end results of that. I mean the impact it will have in the whole situation, you don't feel part of it and I think that should be such measures. You should be forming part of the induction one should know what are the expeditions of the business, what is there for them and what is there for the business, and one

should be able to define ways and means of which can contribute in enhancing their skills as well.

SPEAKER 6

Just to add on what Vusi has said, he has talked about the old guard, in most cases you find that they are not much flexible ... in-comers. They look at you and see a very young man ... For sometime they say that there is nothing he can tell me, in most cases they don't adjust to new strategies which people bring in. They turn to undermine them.

SPEAKER 4

On the allocation of the induction like if I may defend HR because I feel it is the responsibility of the HR, what they did is, in fact, Mr S'dumo came very late in the Department ...

SPEAKER 1

I mean what we are trying to find is the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction in the Department. We won't solve the situation as you have said and is not a specific thing that it belongs to the section that has done wrong or right. It's just the importance of communication satisfaction, induction as an element of communication satisfaction, whether it enhances job satisfaction or ... you know ... so I think we are covered.

SPEAKER 2

If I may come in and perhaps say something about the way I see what is referred to the old guard perhaps I'm not gonna try to explain why they operate the way they do. But the way I see it is that they've been around for a while and any organisation be it on government or private sector, they have set rules and regulations that they have to perform by financial regulations. And the feeling might be that if you don't work within the parameters then you set yourself up for future problems, especially on the financial side, you can run into major problems

and even on other issues as well. So maybe what they are trying to do is to strike a balance between the so-called new ideas that want to work outside of these parameters. Perhaps what they want to do is to bring these new people more in line with the organisational culture and the prescribed rules and regulations that they should work according to. I'm not saying whether it's right or wrong. All I'm saying is that these guys are trying to perhaps like an old lady ... in a ... trying to teach the young ones, saying this is that, you gonna bump your head, come hold it, let's move it this way, trying to guide the young ones. So, it's not always negative, it can also be positive, I don't want to get into an argument here. I'm just trying to say...

SPEAKER 8

I don't know if I will be ... that but what I was saying is that times are changing, technology is changing. I mean we can only stick to the rules, rules are there to be changed, and we have to improve them if that is the case. Well, my perception was that maybe they are not prepared to face a challenge.

SPEAKER 9

If I can contextualise this, during the ... management I raised a suggestion that for instance we would like to see a situation in the Department whereby you say I'm in need of a R50 00, I can go to the finance section or R100.00 I could go to the finance section and say look here I'm in a serious crisis I need money. Since I'm working here, I'm expecting that the organisation should borrow me R50.00 and of course deduct it from my next salary, but we were told that the rules as they are, they are non-negotiable and now you begin to wonder that as a Department you cannot bend those rules to our advantage, I mean obviously I'm not stealing that money because it is still going to be taken from my salary and its not like I'm causing a major disturbance here with the budget, so those are the kinds of rules which we are saying they need to be flexible.

SPEAKER 1

What kind of communication? Where is the element of communication within that, because I see it's more of an administrative thing, let's try to put communication in, how can we phrase it? I recognise that it's fine.

SPEAKER 9

For me it's part of communication like I'm saying this is how I see things should be done, I'm raising an opinion, I'm raising an idea

SPEAKER 1

Does it have to do with trust for example? Do they trust the employees that they would bring this thing back?

SPEAKER 10

I think it is not based on trust, it's maybe a question of ... how can I put it ... ?

SPEAKER 2

I think that what is being said here is that the people want management and the supervisors also to be open and receptive to new ideas. They don't have to introduce us to new ideas, but at least they must be willing to listen, they want to discuss it with them you see and, if it is necessary change the rules as it had been said. I have got nothing against rules that must be changed as long as it is an improvement.

SPEAKER 3

It is a question of people being receptive to new ideas. I think it is an environment that has to be changed to overcome these obstacles. ...

SPEAKER 1

Can we move to the next point, personal feedback. It is the amount of working information. How does sufficient personal feedback or lack thereof contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 4

If I initiate things and I do not get feedback there is something wrong. The person might be trying to get credit for that

SPEAKER 6

If I come with a brilliant idea, I expect my manager to tell me that, not him going to the management meeting and get credit for that. It's my idea.

SPEAKER 1

How will that contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 6

If you are credited for your ideas ... you feel recognised.

SPEAKER 3

On the other hand, we need to have feedback from sectional meetings about projects ... The management must also collate all the reports from business units and share it with us.

SPEAKER 2

One of my questions is, How do we communicate that type of general information. A possible way of doing that is to have quarterly information session where all the staff gets together to listen to the presentations from the DG and senior management. And this should be open to questions.

SPEAKER 5

Feedback should be more about the outputs of what we have done, going to the field itself to see those telecentres we are talking about, see our own creations.

SPEAKER 6

Feedback allows us to improve on our past mistakes. You get more motivated if you get feedback about where to improve.

SPEAKER 1

Whether you have done right or wrong or something else

SPEAKER 6

Yes.

SPEAKER 1

Can we go to another point, communication climate? It is an overall perception of internal communication messages and message-related events. If we are talking about internal communication messages, for example, we have the public service that communicate policies. Do we have a chance to talk about that, all those messages and see how they affect the Department? And other thing, message-related events, the workshops. If we do have the workshops, how do they impact on job satisfaction? They are message-related events. We also have the BoBs, social functions as communication events. What is its role in making you satisfied in your jobs.

SPEAKER 6

Even if there are workshops, they are focusing on the interest of the top management. What about the junior staff.

SPEAKER 1

So, what should be the situation?

SPEAKER 6

They should be more open and broad.

SPEAKER 5

... it's a source of creativity. So, functions like the BoBs offer the right social interaction, meeting as friends and colleagues to ask about what you are doing in your section. This gives a sense of identity. Can we imagine if we do not have social activity ... Obviously, it would impact negatively on job satisfaction, performance. You would feel alienated, feel you are not part of ...

SPEAKER 3

By attending those conferences ... that is one of the planning processes, that is the objective is to bring change to that individual or probably benefit him ...

SPEAKER 10

You know, in our sections we send information through documents, memos, e-mail, etc. Can we agree, there is no communication that can replace direct interaction? I think one of our shortcomings is that management did not use the opportunity of having direct interface with staff. They always relied on memos, e-mails. That is not enough.

SPEAKER 3

Let me ask Vusi. With this new technology coming in, how do we react to it, because others do not even open it?

SPEAKER 10

It is a serious problem because it is quite common for people to say I'm very busy ... You meet them in the corridors but still they say I very busy. Somehow, we have tended to substitute some of the values that define us as human beings. We substitute them with technology.

SPEAKER 1

We acknowledge that. But does it have any role in job satisfaction? Or you just lack that personal touch but you are still okay with your job?

SPEAKER 6

It does affect job satisfaction because if I want to communicate with you and you tell me you are busy and you talk to me through e-mail. At times I need to face you to air my views. If you do not have time for me, it will have a very big impact on my job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 5

Karl Marx, one of the greatest social scientists, once wrote about the concept of alienation where he said capitalism as a system alienates the workforce. You are alienated from your means of production. But if you can look at the technology, what it is doing now, it alienates people. People are now talking about tele-working that you can actually do work at home. But that substitutes other benefits of interacting, of working with other people. In fact, I think it would introduce other problems, although of course capitalists are looking at profits and are looking at other economic benefits that are introduced. Working at home, I believe they will introduce other elements that phenomenon of alienation and people feel that they are not part of the organisation but they are working of course in the organisation but they are not really part of the organisation.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, if we may move further, we'll come back to this point if time still allows us to. But we want to capture them as we go on. There's another one, an organisational perspective, which is the ability of an organisation to communicate clearly its vision, mission, and direction. Basically, its ability to communicate that to everyone.

So, the question is – Does management in the Department of Communications communicate the direction, vision, and mission of the Department to all the staff members? And how does a lack of communication contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 7

I don't think it is clear. The vision of the Department is not communicated to the people.

SPEAKER 1

But is there any vision?

SPEAKER 7

There is a vision, but the information does not filter down to the people on the ground, you know, the management, this is what is expected of you and that is impacting very much negatively on job satisfaction of individuals.

SPEAKER 1

If I may ask, because there is a vision and mission, does everybody understand that? Communication satisfaction, remember we are trying to identify the role of communication satisfaction in job satisfaction. Now, communication satisfaction in this case will be based on communicating the vision, mission, and objectives of the direction of the Department. Is there communication satisfaction around those elements that I've talked about?

SPEAKER 2

What I have noticed and I don't know for how long it has been. It might be for a couple of days in certain places. In this building you have a nice front vision and mission statement hanging on the walls. I think this is a very good exercise. The duty of management would have been to assemble all the staff of this Department and to hand over to them a copy of the vision and mission

statement. That has not been done up to today. If I need a copy of that statement, I have to go downstairs and read it for myself. I would appreciate it if I could have my own personal copy that I could say this is mine and I could really do what it says.

SPEAKER 6

If you have a business and set goals, we need to know whether you are achieving these goals or not. I don't want to see each time I write a cheque every time for the same person going overseas without having any idea what that person is going to do there. When he gets back he doesn't provide me with a report back of what he was doing there. I have no idea whether the business is going in the wrong direction or what.

SPEAKER 1

Can we try to structure this one, because we might find that the person is reporting to his seniors but not to you as a person signing a cheque. The lines of authority don't allow him or her to report to you, you know, it's possible. Can I have some more ideas on that?

SPEAKER 4

I think what you are saying is not necessarily to come and report but to make us aware of the activities that our senior managers or management is involved in. Because we are part of the mission of the Department and again, to come with creative ways of communicating the vision and the mission of the Department. For instance, one thing that comes to mind is to organise, if say you have gone to ITU to attend a ... conference, and call a meeting or just a session just for thirty minutes just to take out that information and inform people that we went to the ITU and these are the issues. You can tell us it was nice in the States and we did this and that, but you know to make the whole thing creative but at the same time imparting to the people that when we are talking about ITU, we are talking about an international organisation that has got a direct bearing on the work that we are

doing. I mean it sets standards. It is also again involved in frequency management you see. So that when people go overseas, they should come back and brief us and maybe we can organise briefing sessions, thirty minutes or so briefing sessions to be taken from our work just to present and say this is what we've been doing and this is what we would like to know about our work because it's part of the vision and mission of the Department.

SPEAKER 2

Other ways of doing this is to possibly e-mail, to have a bulletin board where all these reports written could be placed. In other words, if you also feel so strong about knowing or wanting to know what happened, you can go to this bulletin board and see that particular report and read it. That is one way of doing it but not taking away anything that you see.

SPEAKER 1

Bongani I saw your hand.

SPEAKER 3

You know what Vusi had said, you know within the business unit. I think there probably is something that has to be mandatory. That is, for each and every individual that has been to an overseas visit, he or she must give a report of what the visit entailed... You know I find it probably in a way it might not add value to the whole establishment for people to be It is not going to add value to the whole environment, as there is no feedback, and you know, the fact that change it has had on the person, did it have any significance? I don't think it has. There is no way that information can be with-held from people, that this is what has been achieved or this is what we want to achieve we found the basis that is been undertaken.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, we'll come back to that. So, are we saying we need feedback in that regard. People should come back and inform everybody one way or another of what is happening with regard to the mission of the Department? Are we achieving it, or do we have to make some corrections?

SPEAKER 2

Maybe I heard words like compulsory or mandatory, I don't know maybe that should be the case but I have to say but at least those reports must be accessible to anybody that wants to read them. They must be available to anybody not only to the DG and the Minister or be locked somewhere in the closet where no one can see them, but to everybody because that is the way of empowering people. When they know that they have access to that information through a central point, e-mail or in the library, get the report and just go through it then you are up to speed as to what is happening.

SPEAKER 1

S'bu, what do you think?

SPEAKER 4

I don't have much other than to support Vusi in what he said. I was surprised yesterday. I saw the Minister running around the day before yesterday, only to find that the Sowetan published that the Minister is in India with some businessmen from South Africa but no one has communicated that to us. We know nothing, but it's been in the Sowetan, people from outside the Department know that.

SPEAKER 1

So, that on its own is one element, but what we have been discussing about, the broader direction of the organisation, the communication thereof and how it affects job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 4

It does affect. If the Minister will leave with businessmen without our knowledge and we will only hear from people who read the Sowetan. What is that to discuss e-commerce you see, I mean if that is communicated to us.

SPEAKER 6

Again, do different sections have business plans?

SPEAKER 1

Yes, they are supposed to. Let's find out from you.

SPEAKER 11

Yes I think they are supposed to have business plans but probably that depends on what format are they using. You know over a year, financial obligations, which are supposed to be in place in each and every section that gets updated each and every time.

SPEAKER 2

If they have business plans, what do they do?

SPEAKER 6

No, if one has a business plan one obviously has to report to one's shareholders. Organisations and institutions such as Standard Bank report to their shareholders. Like this report to the staff members or what you call shareholders. One goes up with the business plan. We do not have a business plan, I fail to understand why we are here...

SPEAKER 2

I don't think we have business plans. What we have are projects, you start with the project while you've got certain things to do and finish it, and then start with the new one, that is the way this Department operates.

SPEAKER 2

I don't think we have business plans in the strict sense of the word, what it means. What we have is projects.

SPEAKER 3

To add to what you have said, there are projects, but projects are governed by a window period That is what we want to achieve with the business plan you know. Say in about twenty years time, that is if we want to achieve this in about twenty five years time from now and then that comparison for putting in place, in terms of giving financial obligations, our commitment in ourselves that this is what is expected and that is what we want to achieve probably over a six months period which will be monitored all the time.

SPEAKER 1

You have touched on another element Sbusiso, the element of media, which is media quality here? It is defined as the amount of information received from or sent out to the media. Now the question is, do you understand a note before hand, what will be broadcast in the media about your Department, how does that contribute towards job satisfaction?

Sections are operating in their own way, sometimes they need to conduct media briefings, how far and how is the Department operating?

SPEAKER 5

I mean as you say, it's almost a zero amount of information that we know. If you can go around to sections and ask ordinary people how much they know about

what is one of the major projects that the Department - electronic commerce. They are afraid to say that Jay is talking about ... But when you think thoroughly some of us are likely to attend some of this meetings, but not every person has the opportunity to attend management meetings or some of the informal meetings that are taking place in the Department. The cellular big process is one of the major initiatives in the Department in place but a very few people know about that.

SPEAKER 1

Do you know about it? How does that contribute towards job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 5

Maybe it's because I'm fortunate to attend some of these meetings, but not all the people are lucky enough to attend these meetings to get to hear about some of these things.

SPEAKER 1

But does that contribute...

SPEAKER 5

It does for me because it makes me proud to know that I know what the Department is doing. I can engage with other people informally and I can actually contribute in some instances, for example why there is this uproar about this R100 million license fee for a cellular operators. I can follow up because I know actually what it is all about because I think some people are not aware of that. It makes me own the work that I'm doing because I'm actually in touch with the day to day issues that are taking place in the Department which are eventually communicated to the outside part.

SPEAKER 1

Others?

So are you satisfied with the media?

SPEAKER 6

You see the media can convey a very negative perspective of your company such that it leads to you resign because of the pressure and not being satisfied. Every day one opens the papers only to find negative things about the Department of Communications. When people find out that you work at the Department of Communications they turn out to have so many questions.

SPEAKER 1

So, those questions do you have answers for?

SPEAKER 6

No, you know, at times you don't even have answers for them. You don't even know the reason for you working there.

SPEAKER 1

How do you feel about that?

SPEAKER 6

Because some of the allegations are not even true, you have no answers for these things.

SPEAKER 4

You become dissatisfied and you can't answer questions from people outside who want to know about the Department. As Vusi put it, he is lucky he can attend to some of those meetings and he can have access to some documents in line with the questions asked. What about me, whose working in the very same Department without having access to that information? I mean, people from outside tell you about the cellular license which we have to pay, how do you

expect us to pay the hundred million rands, whereas we know nothing about that, you see, I never have access to that, I only saw it on the newspapers.

SPEAKER 1

Anybody else?

SPEAKER 5

Who is responsible for the interface between the Department and the outside? The reason I'm asking this is that, can that person ensure that the information sent outside out to the media is equally distributed inside the Department? So, what I really wanted to find out is that who is responsible for liasing with the media on behalf of the Department?

SPEAKER 3

I don't know, I was just going to say that if there was a common understanding with executive business, if we had a common understanding of the common executive vision of the business, then probably we would be able to refute these allegations that cannot be substantiated. In a way we could be making informed decisions to those people, that those allegations could probably be in a sought of a yardstick to us to do anything introspectional. Probably there could be something wrong that we are doing, of which maybe they could be pointing back to us as we have said that there is lack of communication. There is a disillusion in the staff that is not supposed to be happening. An issue that would have been identified as not communicating the objectives of the business and people not being aware of what is expected of them. Of which ... still revolves around that and if it could be clarified that what is really there for us and what is the business and where for people to understand what is in place.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, then can we move to another point, which is the relationship with the supervisor, which talks about formal and informal communication relationships.

Not any type of relationship, communication relationships. So how does formal and informal communication relationships contribute to your job satisfaction? Formal could be work-related issues only and informal could mean maybe visiting at home or things like those you know, meet outside.

SPEAKER 3

I think it does count to each and every individual's satisfaction, also with the ... of trust. That interaction with one you know, in an informal way, one's individually with their supervisors, and also the maintaining of their tasks with those individuals. I find that very much important and I think that can only be achieved by relying on information that is going to be factual from the supervisor to the subordinate, you know I think that is very much crucial. With the breaking up of that task one can just forget. The interaction between these two individuals has got to be in a very much honest way and also with publicity you know as well it has got to be in an honest way and it has got to be maintained in that way.

SPEAKER 2

If I may add to that, I think that the relationship between any two people in the Department, for example the supervisor and subordinate doesn't matter on which level a specific person is, that is the important form of communication within the Department. One and his or her direct supervisor or immediate subordinate, must have a sound, solid, and friendly relation-building type of communication. One must not hide anything from that individual. If those communication links are open, I think that then the majority of other problems will just go away. The will fade.

SPEAKER 1

What are activities that should be part of ensuring that that happens? E.g. we've talked about home visits.

SPEAKER 2

Are you talking about activities that should take place, I don't want my boss to visit me because he sees me enough in the office

SPEAKER 4

What I suggest Joseph is that, I think that we need to remind supervisors that as human beings we are equal. Equal in a sense that he is my manager and we both possess the same dignity. If they can remember that, it is then that we can have a relationship. It is then that one can be satisfied with their job, because sometimes a person can treat you as if you were a baby. I mean it's like entering my personal place. I know I need to respect my manager, but if he tells me to go and buy him cigarettes, that indicates disrespect. We all have the same human dignity.

SPEAKER 7

Yes, I think that it is not acceptable to be sent by one's supervisor to go and buy him cigarettes. One should also consider the time that he will be wasting. The manager should go by himself. We are employed here to do work and get compensation at the end of the month.

SPEAKER 5

I think the issue of trust is also very important. If my supervisor doesn't trust me it means he or she doesn't believe in my capacities or abilities. The way he or she is going to relate to me is going to reflect that, because you find that if you don't trust somebody you don't share any information with him or her... .

SPEAKER 1

This information will be mishandled in other words.

SPEAKER 5

It will be held in the other way. But if there is that element of trust and..., particularly if the supervisor is white and the junior staff is black it comes out very strongly and the element of trust and the element of actually believing in this person that he or she has got a capacity and skills to do this. I just feel that maybe we can just outsource the DG in to all other sections because he believes in us and that we have the ability. You'll wonder at times when he gives you a task and ask yourself whether the DG thinks you can do it, but then he gives you the support and eventually do that and say to yourself that I can actually do this. Some managers don't do that they don't believe in us, they don't believe that we are actually able. If they can change, they can begin to see that we are potential people who can do our tasks.

SPEAKER 1

Can you explore that?

SPEAKER 6

Again, I think our supervisors should realise the fact that we come from different backgrounds and cultures. If according to my culture I have to dance in the office every time and my supervisor is against it. How can I perform that day knowing that I did not worship my God?

SPEAKER 7

Maybe I'll differ with you. It says we...

SPEAKER 1

Let's also differ with each other because the aim is not to have one point out forward and then agree, no we have to discuss these things and see whether they are issues that affect job satisfaction. There is no point in me saying something that is not true and we ... all of us, you know, So let's try to engage in these things and see whether really this is the issue, you know.

SPEAKER 7

You know I was going to say for the interest of the business, I think we all need to understand you know, that we have got different cultural backgrounds of which they shouldn't have any prominence in the business and they should be ... as the backseat culture. We should try and minimise their effects on our day to day business atmosphere. They must take the backseat character, because if we allow that to happen, it can be confusing in a lot of ways but it must be respected, culture must be respected.

SPEAKER 1

That is what is termed sub-cultures.

SPEAKER 2

So, we should rather adopt the business culture then.

SPEAKER 6

What I was actually saying was that, I mean a ... I will take anti-biotic to perform very well, if I have those things around I perform very well. If I'm not allowed an opportunity to dance around, I don't perform and I become less satisfied of what I am doing.

SPEAKER 10

You know I can hear you, if it's going to affect your whole performance, you cannot be stopped but it should not interfere with the way you execute your duties and also it shouldn't affect other people as well as their ways of executing their duties. It should not affect other people as well.

SPEAKER 4

We need engagement, I mean we need to be engaged as Vusi has said about the question of trust. I need to give a little analogy of that, I mean human beings

are like Techniques or Pioneers, you know these expensive systems. You can buy a Pioneer for 16 thousand put it in a plug, as long as you haven't switched that plug on, that thing won't deliver. So, we need people to encourage you and engage you people. People who will tell you that in fact you can do it? Whether you know it or not, you can do it you've got the potential, so go for it. You see, that is the thing we need, for one to be satisfied.

SPEAKER 5

I think what my brother was trying to say here, is that maybe we should be sensitised to nuances and ... of the diverse country. Not necessarily putting that into prominence to our work, because for instance if we think about the way we mourn and ... , okay if say somebody is a very important person we've got different ways of mourning and maybe Johan has got a different way of mourning, the Jews have got different ways of mourning, we have got to accept that. For instance if I come to work wearing all black, it's how I feel I should mourn. Somebody else should not worry about how I'm dressed or maybe criticise that, as long as I'm still coming to work. Maybe for example I need to have a day off, maybe the day after the burial or so. We need to take those things into consideration because they're very important in every organisational culture, you know of course, not minimising the overall objectives of the whole organisation.

SPEAKER 2

I think we're a bit off the topic here but may I ask a question regarding this, this is very interesting. Shouldn't that be the responsibility of the employer to enrich the other cultures by informing them of how the others operate? Is this more like a personal thing that you should, on your own time, learn more about other cultures? I'm just asking this question because...

SPEAKER 5

We need a diverse training, for instance that ... was here to discuss. It is important and it is an organisational thing and not an individual thing because from there if you don't understand again, it depends on communication, it will have an impact on communication and eventually it will have an impact on your productivity in the organisation.

SPEAKER 1

Then what you are saying in other words as the question comes back to Johan here, is that we are talking about the supervisor and subordinate's relationships, meaning that your supervisor and yourself should understand each others' cultures, so as to be able to function. That's the bottom line.

SPEAKER 4

It's very important, even clothing

SPEAKER 2

That shouldn't override everything as we have just said, we must be sensitive to those...

SPEAKER 3

Yes, I hear you Vusi, because I think that is very much crucial you know. That cultural diversity must be understood and one has to be conscious with it. You know, the implications and effects it will have. You know to be aware because that is very much important, so that you also limit that arrogance that might develop as well.

SPEAKER 5

No. I was saying that because like we have ... brains
That takes them 30 seconds of my time...

SPEAKER 1

Okay, Tlale you have been quiet, what do you think?

SPEAKER 8

To elaborate on that, like for instance in our section I think there is good communication between all staff members. Like before when our senior manager was here, each and every morning she would come to our offices and would drink tea together. It was like an informal thing but it created good communication. So, in that way things were very easy it even became very easy to talk to her about our job satisfaction.

SPEAKER 2

You see now. That is a simple way of opening to these channels I was talking about earlier.

SPEAKER 6

Some managers just don't do that, they make themselves unapproachable...

SPEAKER 4

Untouchables.

SPEAKER 2

They come in and lock the door.

SPEAKER 1

So, all those things they affect our job satisfaction. So, in conclusion is there anything that maybe you feel should also be noted as part of communication satisfaction, and the manner in which it affects the whole issue of job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 7

You know Vusi mentioned that the DG is giving out his responsibility to individuals and by also maintaining and developing that interaction within individuals in guiding them. S'bu also said if people can't be given the responsibility, they can never be motivated. I think that is crucial, for each and every individual to be motivated and be given the responsibility because that develops us. ...I do understand that... is capable although there might be shortcomings and I mean they are going to achieve the objectives with the help that would be given to them, of which should apply to each and every individual. People must be given the responsibility to work.

SPEAKER 1

So, can each one of us summarise and conclude maybe, if there is a need? If you feel you can say anything you can.

SPEAKER 5

I just wanted to say when we talk about communication, there are certain issues that probably need to be accepted like integration, integration of say a white and a black.... At times we tend to be divided into subgroups. I've always raised that all the time we need to think of it in terms of race. Of course, we can't dispute that but you know sometimes you wouldn't always want to meet with people of the same colour..., sub-groups have some particular interests around. Maybe we also need to be sensitised. You know that we need not to flood each other. What I mean is that it would be superficial for me to go and mingle with white people just because I'm trying to promote integration. At the same time, we just need to accept that they are a sub-group in themselves and I'm more comfortable to mingle with my own black brothers. At the same time all of us black and white are committed to the overall goals of the organisation. So, I'm saying sub-groups are not necessarily negative, as long as they don't sabotage the objectives of the organisation.

SPEAKER 2

On the same point, on Friday evening when we had a year-end function and it was so obvious that when the majority of the blacks arrived, most whites were already there and were sitting on one side of the wall. Then, I noticed that black people started to fill up the other side that was empty. Then at one point the DG was sitting at the other point and he was sitting and just looking around. I walked over to him and I said I don't like the look on your face, look at what is happening here. This is a social event but yet blacks are sitting this side and whites are sitting that side. Do you know what the DG said to me? He said: "Johan, I don't think we must force the issue, this is natural, leave the people, don't force them to sit at the same table". I said it is natural because this is exactly how you want things to be. Again the DG told me that one must be sensitive to. I'm not making an issue out of it but just accept it, it's a way of life, I don't think it was done deliberately to exclude certain people because Sudia was actually sitting at my table said the DG.

SPEAKER 1

That's a good comment.

SPEAKER 7

Yeah, I think so, in a way it does happen naturally, it cannot be forced, but I think people must understand that it shouldn't be in a way that is going to undermine the whole processes that take place. I'd feel uncomfortable with people who are sharing the same race with me and speak the same language or whatever but it must not be personalised ...

SPEAKER 1

What is the role of that in job satisfaction? Of all that we have discussed?

SPEAKER 5

It's all about relationships, linking to the point that we were talking about earlier, on formal and informal relationships between people of a certain

SPEAKER 1

For example, you have said that black people were sitting at the tables while white people were sitting, somewhere else. How does that contribute to job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

It doesn't. I said to the DG that my personal view is that it would have been nice if people of different cultures and races were to mingle with each other and share tables together. I think if we could enhance that side, which is a social side, the relations could become stronger.

If me and my good friends here, if we get along well, we pass each other on the corridors then we talk about either rugby, soccer, or the weather for that matter. By the time I get to his office and I want to talk to him about induction of courses, he will be open. He will be receptive to my ideas and we can talk about it without any racial barrier. That is the way I saw it, but the DG said to me, that I should not push it.

SPEAKER 1

If with your permission, I don't know guide me in this one. That you did not integrate there has nothing to do with job satisfaction. But had it happened that you integrated would it have had any role in job satisfaction?

SPEAKER 2

I'm for the opinion that it would have had a positive impact in the working environment.

SPEAKER 1

Okay, if that is not happening it doesn't necessarily mean that

Okay, I think we can conclude unless there is something else.

SPEAKER 6

Just to conclude on what I was saying, there will never be job satisfaction and communication satisfaction for as long as we undermine each other. Be it because of your culture or because you don't have right qualifications, for as long as we still undermine each other we definitely won't reach any goal.

SPEAKER 4

One last point on job satisfaction is lip service. I mean there is a lot of lip service in the Department. You know there is no implementation. Having that leads to dissatisfaction. I can give you one classical example, I mean there was this thing of the second and third notch. The Public Service talked about that. We were told that it was going to be implemented in the Department. Management was just sitting until we pushed on our own then it was implemented. So, if you can guide about lip service, I think we will be satisfied.

SPEAKER 11

This type of communication that he was just talking about just now. The pushing from the rank side, that result was positive and the majority of the people did get it in that case. Even though I take your point, it's not always for subordinates to approach the supervisors with their problems and say listen I think you need to do something about this. I'm doing it at the moment, this morning I gave Sikose a letter and said: Dear Sikose, I told you on several occasions about this problem, I need you to do something about this now. She said yes of course, thanks for reminding me.

SPEAKER 1

So, does that leads to job satisfaction in the end?

SPEAKER 2

Absolutely.

SPEAKER 1

What if the letter is not attended to?

SPEAKER 2

I will follow it up in three to four weeks, but this is, what she said is thank you for reminding me, it could be lip service, but I pray that it's not.

SPEAKER 7

Joe another thing that I think should be clarified are the forms of communication in the Department or probably in the government. It seems as if it should be a way from the supervisor to the subordinate, nothing up. An you know it just gets ignored and that creates an environment of non-commitment of the supervisor and that ends up being lip-service of which I think there is something that should be structured. I mean the form of communication it should be... and then with that, respect will be maintained because if it's going to be just one way, there will be that environment of undermining other individuals and that lack of trust. I think that can be changed, you know the type of bureaucracy.

SPEAKER 1

Anyway, thank you.

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