

# Unit 10

## *Challenges to Effective Public Affairs Communication*

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### ABSTRACT

*The article deals with the historical aspects of the advent of public affairs system in the Western and the Eastern worlds and portrays its successes and weaknesses in Nepal. It then amplifies the functions of the organizations blending it with information and communication science as its tools. It underlies that information is a multiplier of power where control and equal access to communication is much more important than the physical forces. It advocates that only an effective communicative behaviour can democratically channel human actions and capacity building in organizations.*

*The challenges to creation of a New Nepal is that the people centered information policy needs to oversee national welfare promotion, sovereignty, security, utility emancipation and development values reflected in a democratic communication in the organizations. Effective communication is reflected in fostering understanding, encourage ideas, improve and manage communicative relations through various systems in cluster.*

*The query is how can media associate itself effectively as the mediator, arbitrator, conciliator and consultant for realization of a democratic, equitable public affairs system? The article attempts to analyze how communication is a tool of supervision as a nerve center for human discourse which helps in planning supervision and establishing linkages for creation of a democratic people centered work culture system to enhance effective public affairs system.*

### ETIOLOGY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Public affairs are intricately associated with Government, nongovernment, service, union, business and international organizations. Administration of development is linked upon how effective communication percolates in the organization. Chanakya in 3rd century advocated organizational differentiated division of labor, along internal, external, administrative village, municipal lines along Kautilya *arthashastra* to achieve material, protect, increase it and allowed equitable distribution along cultural ethos. Greek oversaw the procedure of office. French followed the term bureau even prior to 1789 revolution and Gurney prioritized civic and public sector management.

“Organizations refer to planned units, deliberately structured for the purpose of attaining specific goals, and do without social organizations altogether.” (Amitai, 1995, p.4). Historically bureaucracy also functioned as within some sorts of traditional, bureaucratic norms in India, China or Byzantium where both hierarchical and more community related diffused structures functioned by blending itself together. It was thus the purposeful integrative human groupings units which eventually materialized construction of The Great Wall of China, Taz Mahal or the Amphitheater of Italy.

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Eastern ethos of public sector derived strength from cosmological meaning under ultimate truth led *Ramrajya* philosophy. It culminated into Krishnaite holistic actor and lawful oriented Karmic salvation of deed without return. The codification of Buddha embraced an equitable *Sangha* led innovative democratic pragmatic institutional organizational cultural administrative discourse. In contrast Aristotle and Plato underscored 'rationality, spirit and *sophrosyne* or reasonable limits' that keeps all the elements of human personality in a harmonious situation.' (Johar, 1991, P43). It empathizes the relevance of the state in terms of its skills, enterprise and democratic work ethos.

Historically, the compartmentalized system of Nepal along the territorial Baise and Chaubise, Pallo and Majh Kirant was eventually followed by a more single leadership through one person led *Panjapatra* and *Lalmohar* militaristic divisive power oligarchy family polity. It collapsed under the ambit of totalitarianism, outside threat, and local oriented feudalistic agrarian economic behaviour. The *Dibyopadesh* led nationalistic, unitarian organization which advocated neutrality in foreign affairs, creation of national sustainability in economy and people responsive polity as the Biraj and Kalu Pandey administrative was settled along the public counseling led pragmatic system of people-interactive governance. The horizontal line of public discourse functioned along the *Bhardari* and *non-Bhardari* tradition mainly incorporated administration of finance through the Kumarichowk, maintenance through Chebdel, mining Taar, Kaushikoshthana finance, postal, Munsikhana and Adalat connoting the Court etc.

However, during the feudalistic Rana regime ranging from 1847 to 1951 manifest and latent conflict overrode between the entrepreneurship revenue economic characteristics the state advocated to a self-serving oligarchy cliental administrative patronage system. Only after 1951 did the nation embark upon a democratic system of governance with plenty of ideological zeal and commitment. Alongside it state initiated Block system of development commenced in 2008 BS, followed by the more monolithic organizational structure of the Buch Commission in 2009 B.S. Incidentally the inert powerful regressive landownership, local non enterprising community, status quo neo-literate lords joined hands in 1962 with conservatism, non-programmatic and non-enterprising Panchayat polity structure.

Likewise in 2031BS integrated level plan for village, district, local and regional level development was introduced. Restoration of multiparty democracy in 1991 ushered into liberalism, institutional structure and differential policy climate as the vehicle for democratic institution building. Here, inner party rivalry helped to build a competitive propaganda vehicle in 2051 BS through a government engineered resource and community level integrative participation through 'build your own village' and similar sorts of indicative *Swabalamban* village planning in 2052 BS .

Modern architecture of public affairs Fredrick W. Taylor advocated 'the fear of hunger and the search for profit' as the motivational theory of progress. He pointedly referred that 'Adam Smith's division of labor where job was broken down.' (Amitai, p.21, 1995, 23) as the classical coin to run effective organization structure. In contrast, Japanese justice driven management theory is acclaimed worldwide as it inculcates the values of integrative sharing, togetherness, internal discourse and uniformity in policy through equitable democratic communicative discourse led program specialization etc. as its democratic cornerstones practices as Watanabe and Gamble advocated in '*Public Betrayed*.'

Thus only when the encoders of public policy endeavored to interconnect programs of the institutional party and state craft policy which was obliged to blend with the grievances of the electoral public. Presently only democratic governance that addresses to meet the basic needs of food, water and clothing (security), usher into stability and tranquility and that envisages esteem and emotional integration of the society through a transparent and an equitable discourse will help usher people's aspirations through good governance in the society.

## **ORGANIZATIONS STRUCTURES**

Central level organizations in Nepal is led by more than 20 line Ministries which endeavor to disseminate the policy, constitutional and public affairs security, development and good governance. The challenges

ensuing are structuralism; repetitive redtapism, actor led rather than policy led climate. It is strengthened dependant upon survival theory during the terminal evaluation of financial, market, technical, socio-cultural, community aspirations and integrative communication mechanism.

Public affair cycle regiments functions along a stable set of accountability policy, mobilization, management input, planning control monitoring and resource manufactured efficiency. Organizational groups are associated in a formal, informal, temporary or permanent cohesive manner to accomplish development. Modern sovereignty of democratic governance rests upon awarding stewardship through delegation, organization formation, and people's sovereignty to local needs. "Organization functions as an outlet for affiliation needs; enhancing a sense of identity and maintaining self-esteem; means of testing reality; increasing security and a sense of power of coping (Mamoria, (1992), p.570 ). Nepal is on the threshold to meet people's growing challenges through a more dynamic, modern and transparent work ethos.

## **TYPES OF BUREAUCRACY**

Primarily the advancement of Nepalese bureaucracy has materialized mostly from genealogy characteristics much dependant upon the guardianship, rights and privileges rather than meritocracy. Attraction to specialized bureaucratic structure according to certain ethnicity, regional, cultural educational and power and prestige vestige chimes with Foucault's view. Thus the Janjatis were previously grouped towards the army, Chetris towards the army and some with the predominance of Brahmins with the administration and the madhesis to more vocational jobs.

However, as this system was not conducive to answer to the modern days calls, the challenge in modern recruitment practices in Nepali bureaucracy is being replaced through the conditioning theory by rewarding more job recruitment for women, ethnicity underprivileged social structure. It is dependant upon the theory of equitable justice driven functionalism system as underlined by Durkheim and Spencer to assure a more emancipator and a cohesive society for everyone to reap the fruits of equitable participation in public welfare through a people led organizational structure.

Incidentally, Nepali organization structure functions on a multivariate differentiated characteristic within a unity of command; hierarchy, line agency, group dynamics and team works. Centralized system of power relations is falling prey to decentralized, more locally autonomous balanced strategic approach. Thus to confirm to a more pro-poor, more indigenous and localizations organizational climate the existing undemocratic command organizational structure realities is being broken down while the central authority is being weak in stature.

Weber underlined 'that formal working relations demands specialists, division of labor, definite planning system, justice driven jurisdiction where rights and privileges are acknowledged.' ..Marx oversaw prevailing bureaucracy function as a source for formation of commerce and technology and furtherance of faith. ( Weber Max Talcott Parsons. (ed.) Henderson & Parsons. (1974). p.54-55& p. 32.).

The notion of the power emanating from superiors which was being viewed as legitimate compartmentalized the society without meeting its local gratifying value system. This approach will eventually collapse under its own inherent yolk as the centralized monolithic structure of Nepal has suffered. Thus currently the nation is oozing as it failed to envision "the capacity to foresee more than the outlines of the future, even a decade or two in advance." (Repet Robert (ed.) (1991), p.477.) The vitality of democracy lies in building a more self-belief, indigenous, transparent and grassroots system of organizational system of governance.

## **PROBLEMS ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

The problems associated with organizational communication are multifaceted. Question arises as to what is the actual goal of communication and how communication and how is it different from what needs to be the goal? How can conflict on time,

space and management be solved equitably in a hierarchical system? What are the relations among the separated organizational elements?

The objective of decentralization communication helps to interactively involve the people, make them responsible to local needs, capacity building through equality, transparency, inclusive cohabitation and enhance local leadership through national sovereignty, unity and stability. Local development attempts to meet the aspirations of the have nots and other target group, human development through innovation, value addition, entrepreneurship, social inclusive etc. followed by interactive trickle down approach.

Information strategic priority needs to plan human resources, capacity building policy in accordance to the information technology 2063 BS. A public service organization adheres only in rhetoric to decentralization dissemination climate. Herein, growing inner and outer thought percolation, polarization of the societal units along cultural, economic, regional line dampens the spirit for growth of a vibrant democratic behavior. However the have nots and the marginalized community deserve a more opportunity, inclusive and emotional felt needs space for them to realize their aspirations as actors in the public organizational sphere.

Modern mass communication interfaces with interpersonal and intrapersonal classical developmental neo-classic decision making model. Most of the human resources of the organization fall prey to the prevalent bifocal structural policy on a local and international system policy approach. It represents the structural functional theory of the media system. "Effective operation of democracy depends on the people' ability to analyze, discuss and contribute to government decision-making." (Timalsena, 2003).

Negates of bureaucracy ties it up with an iron cage, leap service, rent seeking, red tapism, adhoc, value free technocrats. It's imperative that a survival theory of behavior coalesce with the growth of a healthy vibrant organizational development. Often ineffective communication system, inadequate untruth information dissemination style creates adverse meaning. The society is yearning for a more competitive, transparent and people led organizational discourse climate.

## **COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES**

Communication today is the key element in the development and implementation of policies and programmers aimed at the well-being and welfare of people everywhere. "Reinventing governance in Nepal, involves transgress not only the government but also the horizontal actors like the NGOs, self – help groups consumer associations entrepreneurs" association, civil society and local government institutions. (Maskey, 2000, p.11.) Foremost it involves the people, who are the ultimate beneficiaries in development of such policies so that they are able to effectively participate locally in the required development plan structures.

Linear autonomy of the organization provides impetus to play towards a more liberalized system of governance and comparative efficiency of organization in the contextual human relations situation. A concerted managed information plan incorporates multidimensional socio-economic changes and seeks professionalisms as specialization, independence, expansion of knowledge and competence and opportunity for all to be a part of the evolving democratic institutional culture with compassion.

However, the prevailing communication dissemination practices in Nepali organizational negotiation prevalent among the lower level stems from withdrawal of solution, middle level employees corresponds more to the principle of collaborative, positional principle and higher ranks relies on more accommodative compromise structure. Society is information hungry. Much material about government operations is being provided voluntarily defended by legislation and subordinate legislation. However, when there is insufficient flow of information it retards the societal knowledge sources.

Communication must reflect the aspirations of the people. Communicators should keep cordinal relations with its audience. The information should contain more depth, analytical and a healthy news and opinion."(Pokhrel, P., 1994 (p.4). The view is that the media often may not be successful in telling people what to think, but they have considerable success in telling people what to think about." (Warren K., Philip

H. & Edwin 1979, p.399). Communicators can involve in the socialization and co-relational discourse climate so as to build a vibrant people's networking information structure reaching even till the grassroots level.

Actually the traditionalists, charismatic and revolutionary organizational strategic plan should function along the public service methods. Karl Deutsch calls for greater emphasis on "intelligence amplification" using information technologies to increase human understanding." (Dizard Wilson, P.11).

The barriers to communication stems from many aspects as it could emanate from personal and human behavior as emotions, sensual, mental and semantic as interpretation, gesture as decoding, signing and technical as space, mechanical physical obstruction, technologic malfunction, time lags. Likewise, criticism, fear of reprisal, poor supervision, insincerity and mechanical barriers are personal barriers. Communication and information policies for public affairs involves basic relations of a person's need and value relations where influence is valued whereby informant can inculcate to become a vital nerve centre of new and modern thought and aspirations to meet the growing challenges of the democratic pluralistic society like Nepal.

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