An analysis of communication in the office of grant, planning, management, and support City of Atlanta

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The purpose of this study is to focus on the problem of communication within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support in the Department of Community and Human Development - City of Atlanta. To have an adequate flow of communication in any organization, clearly defined goals and objectives must be understood by the members of that organization. This is a participant-observer study which is based upon a six month internship within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support. Much of the information used in this study was obtained through informal communication with line and staff persons in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support. Recommendations are given on how an adequate flow of communication could enhance and improve the operations within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support as well as raise the morale of the employees in that office.
AN ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE OFFICE
OF GRANT, PLANNING, MANAGEMENT, AND SUPPORT
CITY OF ATLANTA

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BY
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ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
DECEMBER 1976
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INTRODUCTION

The focus of this paper is on communication within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, located in the Department of Community and Human Development of the City of Atlanta. Due to the lack of adequate communication certain problems occurred within that office. These problems will be discussed in this paper.

A number of leading authorities of management and administration have emphasized the importance of knowing the goals and objectives of an organization and the flow of communication within an organization as it impacts on understanding of the goals and objectives of the organization. Luther Gulick, co-author of the influential Papers on the Science of Administration describes the problem of organization as one of creating an authority structure which will ensure an effective network of communication and control between the department head at the center and the sub-division of work on the periphery.\(^1\)

Chester I. Bernard, in his book, The Functions of the Executive, in one of the first systematic attempts to set forth a theory of organization, stresses the importance of authority not only in facilitating communication and control, but essential services from organizational contributors.\(^2\) Herbert A. Simon, the author of another classic,


Administrative Behavior, A Study of Decision-Making Process in Administrative Organizations, identifies three contributions of communication to administration of organizations: the enforcement of responsibility, the specialization of decision-making and coordination of activity. Harold J. Leavitt, a small group psychologist, discusses communication in his book, Managerial Psychology, as a basic technique of managerial control and coordination.

James S. McCormack, in his article, "Communication and the Organization" proposes that effective communication is a vital necessity to achieve the organizational goals in a formal organization. Michael F. Hall in "Communication within Organization" maintains that there are two important occasions for communication within organizations. First, there are times when decisions have to be made and a search for information provokes reports, discussion, and other types of communication. Second, there are occasions when attempts are made to modify the behavior of organizations for these two major types of communication within the organization.

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6 Ibid.
These and other studies gives one extensive insight into the importance of effective communication within modern organizations. This study is limited to observation in an internship placement over a six month period in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support of the Department of Community and Human Development, City of Atlanta.

This is a participant-observer study in which the problem of a lack of adequate communication between departments heads, line officials and staff officials have been identified and discussed. Some recommendations to help solve the lack of good communication within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support are proposed.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five sections: (1) the general setting of the research, (2) the functions of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support and the pattern of communication, (3) a description of the organizational structure of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, (4) a review of related literature and (5) recommendations and conclusions.
CHAPTER I
GENERAL SETTING OF THE RESEARCH

The City of Atlanta has undergone reorganization in the last three and a half years. A new city charter was adopted in 1972 and serves a population of 497,046 people. Under this new city charter a Department of Community and Human Development was established. This Department of Community and Human Development is one of the departments that comprise the executive branch of city government. There are eight other departments in the Executive Branch of the Atlanta City government which includes; (1) The Department of Administrative Services, (2) The Department of Budget and Planning, (3) The Department of Parks, Libraries, and Cultural Affairs, (4) The Department of Public Safety, (5) The Department of Environment and Streets, (6) The Department of Aviation, (7) The Department of Finance and (8) The Department of Law. The Department of Community and Human Development will be discussed in this paper.

The Mayor appoints a commissioner with the approval of the City Council to each of the nine departments of the Executive Branch. The Mayor also appoints a Bureau Director of each Bureau within the nine departments of the City of Atlanta. There are four Bureaus within the department of Community and Human Development. The four bureaus are: (1) Bureau of Correctional Services which provides the development and implementation of meaningful approaches to rehabilitate the chronic alcoholic, court offender, and other disorderly conduct offenders at
the Correctional Center. It also strives to provide improvement and renovation of existing conditions at the Atlanta City Jail, in order to comply with the existing Georgia Minimum Jail Standard Act, and upgrade the entire operation of the Jail, (2) Bureau of Building Inspection which provides safety to life and property in building construction through enforcement of five (5) technical codes: Building, Plumbing, Electrical, Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning and the Georgia Life Safety Code. The Bureau of Building Inspection also prosecutes violators of City ordinances through the city Court system and encourages judges to deal more severely with repeated violators, (3) Bureau of Human Resources which provides an array of services to approximately 120 thousand citizens in three (3) neighborhood facilities located within the City of Atlanta. This Bureau also develops and complements a mechanism for the delivery of social services to residents of areas impacted by community development activities and insures the provision of day care services for children of working mothers in Atlanta. At the present time the Bureau provides day care services to 973 children and their families in the city and provides linking services to 1,059 citizens of Atlanta living in the Model Cities area, and finally (4) Bureau of Housing and Physical Development which provides the resources to rehabilitate 360 housing units and making approximately 70 housing units safe and weather tight. The primary emphasis of this Bureau is directed toward impacting the lives of low and moderate income families and individuals residing in designated communities throughout the City.

There are also three offices in the Department of Community and Human Development, that are responsible directly to the Commissioner
and each offices has a director. The three offices are: The Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, which provides the setting of this research and where this internship took place, the Office of Consumer Affairs, which provides the elimination of deceptive practices in connection with consumer activities within the City of Atlanta, and last but not least the Office of Economic Development, which performs and utilizes all available resources to train and/or provide public service for Atlanta citizens through any available resources, such as federal grants, and recontracts with public and private non-profit agencies to provide meaningful public service employment.

The central location of the Department of Community and Human Development is at 100 Mitchell Street, S.W. with some bureaus located at 148 Cain Street, N.E. The Department of Community and Human Development employs two hundred and thirty persons.

According to a 1973 City Ordinance issued by the Executive Committee of the City Council, the functions and duties of the Department of Community and Human Development are as follows:

1) enforcing of all construction codes including building, plumbing, electrical, heating, and air-conditioning, and minimum housing maintenance codes, unsafe building demolition; regulation of building standard maintenance; supervision of elevator regulations and ordinances; supervision and administration of the Georgia Fire Safety Law; boiler inspection, issuance of permits relative to the functions contained herein and inspection of buildings; supervision of housing rehabilitation programs and projects.

2) providing assistance and advice to the Trade Examining Board; keep all codes up-to-date with assistance of Advisory Board.
3) handling the administration, interpretation and enforcement of the zoning ordinance including the issuance of street numbers and appeals to such board as is established by ordinance to handle such appeals.

4) administering certain of the projects that were under the Model Cities Programs;

5) encouraging and stimulating economic development of appropriate nature, quality, and location within the city; providing coordination among city development programs and similar activities in the private participation activities and establishment of priorities for development;

6) administering, implementing, and executing community and neighborhood development and redevelopment, renewal, conservation, and rehabilitation programs;

7) reviewing and coordinating, consistent with law, all public housing programs and service projects within the city;

8) providing relocation assistance to displaced persons and providing community services and property management in connection with the programs and projects for which such assistance is required;

9) initiating and conducting programs to improve aesthetic conditions within the city; eliminating unsightly conditions that affect the urban environment; and developing and administering beautification programs;

10) planning, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the delivery of various social services including, but not limited to, poverty programs, economic opportunity, day care, child development, manpower development, and programs for the aged;

11) coordinating and contracting for development of social services with various agencies located within the metropolitan area, including, but not limited to Fulton County's social services EOA, Community Relations Commission and private agencies;

12) Manpower programs;

13) Administering consumer protection programs;

14) providing management assistance to neighborhood services centers;
15) coordinating with planning agencies in the metropolitan Atlanta area such as the Atlanta Regional Commission, Central Atlanta Progress and United Way;

16) administering the City Prison Farm as a correctional and rehabilitation agency;

17) providing in-house architectural services to city departments.\textsuperscript{7}

The above are the general responsibilities and functions of the Department of Community and Human Development. This department provides direct services to over two-hundred thousand citizens in the Atlanta area. They perform services such as stated before, day care centers, Management Assistance to neighborhood services centers and manpower centers, such as CETA programs. The CETA programs which fall under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act of 1975 made available over one thousand jobs for a period of one year, for unemployed Atlanta citizens.

The functions and duties of the Department of Community and Human Development are carried out within the different bureaus and offices of that department, with each bureau and office director administering the programs with the assistance and the approval of the Commissioner.

\textsuperscript{7}City Ordinance, Department of Clerk of Council, Atlanta, Georgia, By Executive Committee, The Executive Branch, 1975. Section 4.
CHAPTER II
FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF GRANT, PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

The general responsibilities of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support are (a) reviewing individual community development project proposals formulated by City departments for funding under the City's block grant entitlement, to ensure their consistency with the Mayor's priorities, goals, and objectives, and planning guidelines of the Department of Budget and Planning and (b) integrating selected projects into a well-balanced community development program and plan. Additionally the Office is responsible for preparing the City's Annual application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and monitoring the implementation by participating departments of approved projects to insure that they are executed in a timely and effective manner.

The specific functions of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support are:

1) Development, at the request of the Commissioner of Community and Human Development, proposed Community development priorities, goals, and objectives for inclusion in the Mayor's annual statement of City-wide priorities, goals, and objectives.

2) Provide technical assistance to operating departments and bureaus in the development of project proposals for funding with the block grant and in the implementation of approved projects.
3) Collect and review individual community development project proposals from city departments for consistency with city priorities, goals, and objective.

4) Make initial selection of projects to be included in the City's annual community development project plan after assessing (a) future funding implications and (b) ensuring that selected projects will result in a well-balanced community development program.

5) Prepare formal explanation for proposed projects not included in the initial annual project plan proposal; submit draft plans and explanations for review and comment.

6) Participate, through the established process for securing citizen input, in public meetings concerning the proposed annual plan; prepares information about the annual plan for use by the Commissioner of Community and Human Development in meetings with other executive departments and before the City Council.

7) Prepare the annual block grant application and budget for submission to HUD after the project plan has been approved by the mayor and the City Council; prepare subsequent amendments after approval.

8) Negotiate inter-departmental agreement necessary to implement the annual community development plan.

9) Ensure the preparation of environmental assessments for physical development projects; supervise preparation where necessary.

10) Monitor the implementation of approved projects by participating departments to ensure that projects are carried out in a timely and effective manner.

11) Operate and maintains a project reporting system to be utilized by all departments carrying out projects funded with the block grant.

12) Review proposed change to approved projects-e.g., size, scope, timing of implementation and in consultation with Department of Budgeting and Planning, recommend approval or disapproval to the Commissioner of Department of Community and Human Development and the Mayor.
13) Establish and maintain a close working relationship with HUD on all matters regarding housing and community development in the city.

14) Prepares in conjunction with other staff units, reports required by HUD; prepare and submit to the Commissioner of Community and Human Development regular reports on the progress of Implementation of the annual project plan.

15) Perform other such functions as the Commissioner of Community and Human Development may from time-to-time direct.

The Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support works closely with the Department of Budgeting and Planning, especially where the neighborhood planning units are concerned. The Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support is located in the Commissioner's Office where it can readily lend support and advice to the Commissioner of the Department of Community and Human Development.

PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION

The question all department heads should ask is: Are they communicating, and if so, with whom are they communicating? In the period of the six month internship, it was observed that lower level line officers and staff persons had limited formal communication with the Director of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. (See chart of organization of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support Appendix A). Likewise in the six month period, no staff meeting, which included each bureau and office head of the Department of Community and Human Development, was held. The only communication that was observed in the organization was with the department heads on a one to one basis.

This restricted scope of communication limited and fragmented the flow of communication throughout the Department of Community and Human Development.

Communication is the most basic process in the organization, it pervades the entire organization and impacts on the behavior of person at all levels. To understand the patterns of communication from other aspect of behavior in an organization is difficult. However, one can make assumptions that communication has affected the behavior of individuals in their respective roles at various levels within the organization.

Lee Thayer in Communication and Communication Systems states that:

It is very useful for those concerned with human communication...to distinguish between that which is potentially available...and that which is immediately consumable....

So...a helpful way of characterizing the basic process of human communication is to suggest that underlying all communication is the process of organizing and covertung raw sensory data into functionally consumable or processable units of information.9

Therefore it is consumable information which makes it possible for the members of an organization to work together efficiently in a collective capacity. Nevertheless from the participant observer role memos, letters, and other forms of communication were observed as the most often needed method of communication. For members to work together collectively, they must be informed verbally as well as through memoranda on the information that is necessary for individuals to perform their jobs effectively.

It is not to say that the persons in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support did not decipher what information that they did receive from each perspective support staff persons, but it was observed that the technical staff persons were not included in the process of interpretation of vital information. Communication flowed laterally, among individuals who have similar jobs, for example, the clerical persons and technical support staff communicated across lines. Such pattern of communication whether just routine information sharing, elaborate explanation or detailed instruction, provided a basis for individuals' future behavior, but does not relate him/her as part of the formal communication network.

This lateral flow of information shared primarily on an informal basis does not give reinforcement to individual as holding meaning positions within the organization. This in turn create a feeling of inferiority and insecurity on the part of those who work under such limited and fragmented communication pattern. Likewise morale was low and the objectives of the organization was not clear and the level of obtainment was generally low. This was especially observed in the attitude of the receptionists, stenographers, and the secretaries who demonstrated a feeling of being somewhat removed from the ongoing activities and operations of the organization.

It is very vital that in order for an organization to survive and function, memorandums or directives should be sent out for just about everything, from when one should have a coffee break to methods and processes required in performance of assigned duties and tasks. But it was observed that few memorandums were circulated and no general
staff meetings were held. In the absence of staff meetings, at least more memorandums should have been developed and circulated to improve the quality and uniformity of communication to offset the observed low morale and expressions of insecurity, obviously, meetings of the staff should be held on a timely basis to complement the circulation of memorandums. Such meetings should be well planned with an agenda being prepared and circulated in advance.

There has been a considerable amount of research done on communications and communicative-related problems, and no research has grasped the problem of the barries to personal communication. Stephen Michael and Halsey Jones, in their book, *Organizational Management*, summarized these barries; ..."These are physical barries, and organizational barries. The consequences of these barries to good communication are evident in poor customs, relations, union management, line and staff conflicts, frustrated and apathetic employees, and poor coordination overall."¹⁰

Physical barries are probably the most or last inhibiting to communication. They include geographical separation which limits the media of communication, and face-to-face conversations which applied directly to the Department of Community and Human Development and the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. The commissioner of the department and the Director of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support offices are located at one location and their staffs are located at another.

Content barries are concerned not only with the language but with attitudes and overt behavior. As observed in the internship content barries are very evident in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support.

Psychological barries develop when a person has trouble relating to the group, the organization or society of which he/she is a member, he/she has a communication problem whose origin lies within himself/herself. Calvin Hall viewed the problem in the following way:

In the "neurotic" individual parts of himself which have been termed un-conscious or expressed or denied to awareness, become blocked off so that they no longer communicate themselves to the conscious or managing part of themselves; as long as this is true, there are distortions in the way he communicates himself to others, and so he suffers both within himself and in his interpersonal relations.\textsuperscript{11}

A number of support staff person in the organization are faced with psychological barries. How to remedy this problem, is a question that the directors themselves have to deal with. If these difficulties are not directly dealt with, the organization will cease to function properly.

SUMMARY

This section discussed the functions and duties of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support which is centrally located in the same office as the Commissioner of the Department of Community and

\textsuperscript{11}Hall, Calvin S. and Gardner Lindzey, Theories of Personality, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1957, p. 312.
Human Development. Some of the specific functions of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support are to provide technical assistance to other departments and bureaus, preparing formal explanation for proposed projects and monitoring and implementing special projects and programs that had been federally funded, just to name a few.

This section also consist of the pattern of communication and one's observation of the clerical and technical staff persons' vital roles and relationships within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. Various obstacles impede or distort the movement of information between and among the persons of an organization. These obstacles were described as content barries, physical barries, process barries, social barries, psychological barries, and organization barries that hinder the movement of needed information. Three of the barries were discussed in this section and examples were used to show how they related to the pattern of communication in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support.
CHAPTER III
LINE AND STAFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS
IN THE OFFICE OF GRANT, PLANNING, MANAGEMENT, AND SUPPORT

The Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support of the Department of Community and Human Development of the City of Atlanta has seventeen persons on its staff. Appendix A shows the organizational structure of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. This section focuses on a brief job description of each staff member and the relationship of the line and staff persons. The impact of line and staff persons within that organization is very important. The role of the line and staff persons in any organization is a vital one; therefore, without congenial relationships among these individuals, and an open line of communication, an organization will cease to exist.

It should be mentioned here that in later portion of this section that the term support staff will at times refer to receptionist, stenographers and secretaries and staff specialists may be referred to at times as program monitors, environmental assessment officers, urban planners and contract administrators. It should also be explained here, that the Bureau of Human Services and the Bureau of Community Development were housed at the same location as some of the staff persons who worked in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. The support staff performed some duties for the respective bureaus and this way have contributed to the problems of good line-staff relationships.
As stated above, there are seventeen persons in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. A brief job description of the seventeen persons in this unit will help to further describe their functions. The clerk III, also given the title of supervisor of the Word Processing Center, composes correspondence and memoranda for the director of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. This person also supervises and trains four (4) clerical employees in the Work Processing Center and assists in compilation and development of reports on projects that have to be presented to the Commissioner by the Director. The Word Processing Center is located in the Commissioner's office as a support unit. It is headed by the Director of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. All type written communication goes through the Word Processing Center and two stenographers are responsible for rapid, efficient and high quality processing of all typewritten communication. These stenographers also provide assistance (when necessary) for the Department of Community and Human Development's switchboard and the delivery and distribution of correspondence to each bureau and office within the department.

There are also two administrative secretaries in the Word Processing Center who supervise a central filing system for the entire Department of Community and Human Development. These two administrative secretaries are also responsible for ordering and maintaining all payments for materials and supplies. They also do reading and editing of moderately complex correspondence and reports that the Director of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support submits to the director of the department and other units as required.
The Word Processing Center also has an action secretary whose responsibility includes coordination of the center as an associate supervisor and is also responsible for logging and recording of documents and assignments sent to or received by the Word Processing Center. The action secretary is responsible for the coordination of correspondence for special projects; (i.e., public hearings and conferences). This person must be well informed and proofreads all documents and compositions of correspondence that enter into the Center and be able and willing to perform all other clerical duties. The persons involved in the Word Processing Center perform all the typewritten communication, compilation of correspondence and the coordination of all other communication that should be distributed through the Department of Community and Human Development.

The Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support employs an Environmental Assessment Officer who is responsible for insuring the initiation and completion of environmental assessments required for projects selected for funding with community development block grant funds. This person is also responsible for designing a procedure for conducting environmental assessments and a format to be used by all departments to report the result of the assessments. He must work closely with each bureau and office in the Department of Community and Human Development and supervise the activity of persons in the Environmental Assessment Section which includes one (1) Environmental Assessment Specialist and one (1) Environmental Services Coordinator.

The Environmental Assessment Specialist is responsible for coordinating the preparation of environmental assessments on projects funded
through Community Development funds and conduct research and compile information on environmental assessments that will affect certain community development programs. This person also assists in the coordination of actions with other city departments and groups that are involved with environmental services for the City. The Environmental Assessment Specialist also performs duties as assigned by his/her supervisor.

The Environmental Service Coordinator plans, implements, coordinates, and monitors the initiation and completion of environmental assessments on Community Development projects and provides technical assistance to various city departments to determine whether an environmental assessment is needed. He likewise provides assistance in carrying out environmental assessments.

There are three contract administrators in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support whose duties involve receiving reports from various divisions, offices and bureaus and analyzing them for accuracy, making sure that they reflect the proper budget items. The Contract administrators prepare and review all contracts with other agencies in the City of Atlanta that will directly affect the Community Development programs that are the responsibility of the Department of Community and Human Development. The Contract Administrators are essentially left on their own, but performs duties assigned by their supervisor.

There are also three (3) Urban Planners (II) employed by the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. These Urban Planners (II)
duties involve coordinating activities among city departments and between the city and citizen groups and business. The Urban Planners (II) negotiate interdepartmental agreements necessary to implement the annual community development plan. They prepare reports that are required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and prepare and submit to the Commissioner of Community and Human Development regular reports on the progress of the implementation of the annual project plan.

Finally, there are two (2) Program Monitors that review the monthly agency reports in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. The Program Monitors check staffing, work space, the budget and type of activities being performed by the department. These program monitors also make on-site visits to various projects in particular program areas, and make observations to see that each objective is met. They also maintain a file system on all activities of various programs and prepare status, summary, and other reports on the progress of the projects.

The relationships between the line and staff in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management and Support will be discussed in the remaining part of this section. In observing the reactions and relations of the line and staff in this organization, it was noted that a lot of confusion and conflicts existed among individuals. The clerical staff persons resented the control exercised by the specialists staff persons. The Clerical staff persons resented the typing of letters, reports, or memorandums that were submitted to them by some of the specialist staff persons. The reasons that were given, through informal communication with the clerical staff persons, were that they resented the specialists
attitudes, they resented the fact that most of them were recent college graduates and were not well informed of what their duties were and had to come to them for advice. To further widening the gap in communication, the support staff persons at times did not relay telephone calls or submit messages to the specialist staff persons. This in return made the specialist staff persons react negatively toward the clerical staff persons, further widening the communication gap.

The specialist staff persons are not without their problems. Since the specialist staffers render a service that is indirect in its contribution to the organization's objective, their jobs are frequently more difficult to justify than those of the clerical staffers. It was observed that the conscientious specialist staff person faces a real dilemma. In the organization on a whole, the conscientious specialist staffers felt that there were no challenges in their positions. In one case, it was observed that the specialists had very little to do, other than write up reports that the city council had made a deadline for submission to them, in order that they could be voted upon. Therefore, long lunches were taken and informal sessions were held among their colleagues. Melville Dalton, in his book, Men Who Manage, stated that people in an organization who are unsatisfied in their jobs, experience displeasure with their managers have a tendency to form informal groups within that organization and will ostracize any one that will not conform to the norm and values of that group.12

Therefore, one can say that both the clerical staff persons and the specialists staff persons in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support are displeased and dis-satisfied with the organization.

The specialist staff persons as observed, formed poor relationships with the clerical staff persons, because of a lack of understanding on both parts, a lack of communication, and a lack of clearly defined tasks of each in their respective roles. In some cases this is attributable to the analytical nature of some of the staff work itself; the specialist should have a quiet atmosphere in which to develop his/her plans, write his/her proposals or just analyzing reports. Whatever the explanation, it is detrimental not only to the specialist, but to the organization as a whole. In reference to this and by being a participant-observer in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, it is observed that to acquire the quiet atmosphere that a specialist should have, he/she must have an office to himself/herself and not share an office with two or three staff persons who are not doing the same or similar job. Distractions have a way of preventing the most conscientious specialists from performing efficiently.

Therefore, one cannot readily expect willingness on the part of a staff person to promote a wholesome attitude toward his work, if the lines of communication have been disrupted along the way. Observations indicated that when any type of question arose among the clerical staff persons and among the specialist staff persons, one would have to call the office of their director to see if he/she were in and whether they could possibly meet with him/her that day or at his/her earliest convenience. Therefore, difficulties are encountered if the director and his staff is not housed in the same location.
CHAPTER IV
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Through the years, administrators and administrative theorists have placed increasing emphasis on communication in organizations. Administrative communication has evolved from the completely functional reporting system of ancient days. The history of oral communication is incomplete at this time. As for written communication, even primitive picture writings may be considered a form of communicating: records of hunts, reports of natural phenomena, schematic directions and so on. The history of civilization is, in a broad sense, the history of communicating, for whenever one cooperates for the fulfillment of common goals, communication is a necessity.

No evidence is available to indicate that early administrators were concerned with the style of communication. More studies has been made on communication in organizations than in communication itself.

In the late nineteenth century Frederick W. Taylor drew attention to management as a specialized field, he opened the door to the development of management as a profession. Frederick Taylor emphasised the need to be able to communicate with employees as a tool that all managers must acquire and retain.

In the 1930's, Chester I. Bernard, in his work entitled Functions of the Executive, called attention to the fact that, "a common purpose must be commonly known, and to be known must in some way be communicated."
With some exceptions, verbal communication between men is the method by which this is accomplished".13

Writing in 1957, Herbert Simon put even greater stress on the growth of communication in his book entitled, Administrative Behavior, A Study of Decision-Making Process in Administrative Organization. Simon stated that, "It is obvious that without communication there can be no organization, for there is no possibility then of the group influencing the behavior of the individual. Not only is communication absolutely essential to organizations, but the availability of particular techniques of communication will in a large part determine the way in which decision-making functions can and should be distributed through the organization...". Simon went on to conclude that "only in the case where the man who is to carry out a decision is also the best man fitted to make the decision, there is no problem of communication and in this exceptional case there is of course no reasons for organization."14

Both Bernard and Simon emphasized the interdependence of communication in the organization. Both writers conceived of organizational communication in term of what has since become the predominant orientation, which is known as the system approach.


Of particular relevance to the present day interest of communication in organizations are the contributions of Kurt Lewin and Jacob L. Moreno.\textsuperscript{15} Lewin's small group studies and Moreno's sociometric techniques for the empirical study of role relationships have together provided the impetus for what is probably the largest single emphasis in those empirical studies of communication in organizations. Nevertheless, the theoretical and empirical works of Renis Likert, James G. March, Albert Rubenstein and Norman R. F. Maier contributed greatly to the empirical work that emerged in the thirties and forties.\textsuperscript{16}

The size and complexity of modern organizations, with their numerous levels of supervision, makes the communication process, which is not easy in any case, particularly difficult. Much attention is now given to communication, and undoubtedly much of the recent improvement is attributable to stress on the flow of information and in general, better communication. Developing individual communication skills, however, will not solve conflicts rooted in basically opposed value systems,

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"nor are management and the workers also able to communicate effectively with each other though their messages may be exquisitely logical and beautifully reasoned."

The conceptual framework offered by George C. Homan, in his book, entitled The Human Group, continues in use as an analytic scheme for the analysis of organizational behavior. "If it were not for the unhappy association with predatory spiders, the fact would be much better represented by a web, the top leader at the center, spokes radiating from him, and concentric circles linking the spokes. Interaction takes place along the centric circles as well as along the spokes."

A recent attempt to research the possibility of a "unified theory" of management by Harold P. Koontz reflects an increasing concern with the operational aspects of communication in organizations. This kind of concern has led recently to several independent observations that the essential management and organization function is communication or information-processing. The spiraling emphasis on information technology since World War II, both hardware and software, has contributed directly to the present conceptual perspective on communication in the organization and has had a positive impact on the theoretical aspect of behavior in all kinds of settings.


Systems analysis re-evaluated the old notion of upward-downward-lateral, management-employee, and formal-informal communications. Robert C. Raymond in his work, Technological Planning on the Corporate Level, observed that the typical executive can receive and absorb only 1/100 to 1/1000 of the available information that is relevant to his decision.19

In his article, "Communication and the Organizations", James S. McCormack discusses the nature of formal organizations and then proposes that effective communication is a vital necessity to achieve the organization's goals. William Haney, in "Communication Within Organizations" discusses the importance of two-way communication and the effect of feedback on employee morale. Henry notes that "the common causes for the paucity of bilateral communication between a superior and his subordinates include the physical segregation of a superior through traveling and remotely located offices, reliance on essentially unilateral communication media such as general memos and announcements; and of course, the various kinds of psychological barriers...such as content barriers, physical barriers and process barriers...the superior may create or allow to exist."20


Finally, one needs to take special recognition of those very few functional-structural studies of communications in organizations referred to by Etzioni. As Etzioni suggested, much of the research that has been carried out in the past has been designed in the human relations traditions. More has been written about communications problems in organizations than any other single topic in the area of communication. There also have been numerous communication studies of an empirical nature. The earliest empirical studies of operational or functional communication in organizations are those of Edward Jacobson and Stanley E. Seashore in their article, "Reference Group Process in a Formal Organization" and Arthur Rubenstein in his article, "A Study of Communication in a Manufacturing Company."

Rubenstein's study, and a later one carried out by him, was essentially an attempt to characterize the effectiveness and efficiency of communication "channels". Rubenstein listed twenty different approaches to the measurement of organizational communication which he undertook prior to 1953. The notion of communication "network" and communication "system", while not the main topic of Rubenstein's orientation, are implicit in his approach and methodology.

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The Jacobson and Seashore study is significant for its emphasis on the interdependence of the structure and functions of communication events, and the manner in which they conceived the organization structure as dynamic patterns of communication events.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Many of the implications for research that derived from the above conceptual perspectives should be clearly understood. For example, if the individual is viewed as a complex information-processing system, research on human behavior in organizations could be based upon a view of the individual as the focal point of a set of information vectors that define the individuals functional role in that organization. Also, research on the communication within organizations may be based upon the same conceptual perspective.

In reference to the problems of downward and upward communication, the traditional approach was found very useful in most of the research that dealt specifically with that downward and upward flow of communication in organizations. The solutions are numerous, however, in suggesting the traditional approaches and methods, it has not brought one toward a theoretical framework in understanding the flow of communication among superiors and subordinates.

The findings and conceptualizations outlined above are hopefully more promising, in the sense of aiding in the formulation of better understanding of the flow of communication between the line and staff persons and the overall process of communication within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support. As Eugene E. Morrison said in
his book, *Computer in the World of the Future*, "... it is much harder to ask the right questions than it is to find the right answers to the wrong questions". Perhaps writers have been getting the right answers to the wrong questions. The conceptual powers of the theoretical stance presented here may help formalize a greater understanding of the need for adequate communication in a bureaucratic organization such as, how information is received or disseminated and how individuals will relate to other communication networks, both within an organization and between an organizations.

It should be observed here that most of the research on communication and organization was done in industrial organizations. Now the field is open to do indepth research on communication in municipal organizations. In observation and comparison of industrial and municipal organizations, one finds that municipal organizations are as complex as industrial organizations.

Some representative research studies in municipal organizations have begun to appear. For example, organization studies in the mode of those by Calvin Cadwallader "The Cybenetic Analysis of Change in Complex Municipal Organizations" and Norman Maier, *A Communication Theory of Urban Growth*, are suggestive of the kinds of research problems that may form employment of the present theoretical perspective.25


Research carried out from the present theoretical perspective on communication within organizations is only beginning to appear in widely diverse literature. Undoubtedly one will witness a gradually increasing array of research generated by the present theoretical orientation in the years ahead.

This brief review of the literature is intended to be indicative of at least two significant points (1) that the state of theoretical development in communication in organizations has been such that no single integrated body of literature has been accumulated; and (2) that any useful theory of communication in organizations must ultimately take account of the theories and empirical evidence of a wide range of pertinent conceptual developments.
CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSIONS

Communication is the most basic process in the organization and indeed, is coextensive with it. Because it pervades the entire range of department heads' behavior, it is not easy to distinguish communication from other aspects of such behavior. Nonetheless, some recommendations are given in this section that should improve the communication process in the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support.

The nature of the responsibility of management for communication is aptly summarized by Lee Thayer when he notes:

It is very useful for those concerned with human communication...to distinguish between that which is potentially available,...and that which is immediately consumable....

So...a helpful way of characterizing the basic process of human communication is to suggest that underlying all communication is the process of organizing and connecting raw sensory data into functionally consumable or processable units of information.26

Hence it is consumable information which makes it possible for members of an organization to work together efficiently in a collective capacity. Whether the communication is just routine data, elaborate explanation, or detailed instruction, it not only provides a basis for the individuals' future behavior but also related him to the organization

as a part of the communication network. He receives and sends messages in the network, and the nature and frequency of sending and receiving reveals as well as reinforce his position in the Organization.27

One recommendation that should apply and be most useful to the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, is that the office head should discuss with all unit directors the importance of passing on information to promote sound attitudes and high values for their respective positions with less waste or discontentment. And, to further encourage all directors and unit heads to review their own communication activities and be willing to improve them. Specifically, it is suggested that a course in Communication for the staff of the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support should be offered.

A second recommendation is to establish a Management Information System, (MIS) which is a part of the downward flow of information which has its counterpart in that part of the upward flow. An MIS reports back certain of the results of carrying out orders and authorizations. This feedback information tells higher management the consequences and implications of its decisions as reflected in routine operations. It permits management to correct and improve the quality of its decisions and the effectiveness of organizational design in

the broadest sense of that term. In the light of the mission of the organization, the MIS is a communication system which encompasses gathering, processing, recording, and reporting information about the acquisition, transformation or utilization, and disposition of organizational resources as the organization carries out its mission. The most basic MIS in the business enterprise is the accounting system.28

One method for getting special feedback information is through employee suggestions systems. Such a system makes provisions for helping employees to make constructive suggestions for improvement. The suggestion is usually recorded on a special form which may or may not be forwarded through the immediate supervisor to a suggestion system committee which evaluates the suggestions for implementation. Suggestions systems can be useful because the work process and the division of labor are generally specified by higher management without permitting or encouraging participation by the persons doing the work.

A second way of getting adequate feedback information at the managerial level, and vice versa is to set up performance appraisals in such a way that an individual's performance is reviewed by some persons in addition to his director. Whether utilizing group appraisals or having a committee of senior managers and line and staff officials review complete appraisals. It will give the line and staff officials as well as the department heads a chance to

engage in upward, downward and lateral communication, relieved of the upward communication only.

Finally, the department should resort to periodic attitude surveys conducted by outside consultants. This will provide unsigned questionnaires by lower-level personnel in addition to which they are given opportunities to unburden themselves of attitudes and opinions which they would otherwise harbor indefinitely and to the detriment of the organization eventually.

The final recommendation is that the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support should have regular meetings with the whole staff as well as a departmental meeting, so that the line and staff officials feel more a part of the organization and that their presence counts for something. This will give the line and staff officials the opportunity to become aware that they are part of an organization by being exposed to the department on a formal basis.

CONCLUSION

It was asserted at the beginning of this paper that there is an inadequate communication flow within the Office of Grant, Planning, Management, and Support, of the City of Atlanta.

The functions of the Department of Community and Human Development and the Office of Grant, Planning, and Management was described as the performance of general services to the community with close supervision by other agencies within the city.

The study discussed and reviewed related literature on communication behavior in terms of various obstacles which impeded or distorted the
movement of information between and among the department heads and line and staff members of an organization. These barriers included physical problems, communication content, psychological obstacles, difficulties inherent in the communication process including one- and two-way channels, interpersonal impediments, and organizational structure.

Overall there was an attempt to show that restriction of communication in an organization may hinder the organization and the goals and objectives of that organization would not be met.

Recommendations to the problems of the flow of communication have been given and related literature has been cited to give one a better understanding of the importance of adequate communications in an organization, not only industrial organizations but a municipal organizations also.
APPENDIX
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