

Communication Competence of Indian Engineers in IT & ITeS Sector

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The software industry has been the fastest growing sector of the Indian economy. The present study aims at assessing if the Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) engineers have the adequate skills to communicate best in cross-cultural environments as also reduce barriers while communicating and collaborating across functions, divisions and across companies. The results indicate that the professionals were substantially skilled in their listening, adjustability and flexibility components. Also, from the data analysis it could be inferred that demographic variables in this particular context have not been strong enough to differentiate the communication competencies between groups.

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Communication Skills for Business Professionals

According to Peter Drucker, the ability to communicate well is essential for success and is perhaps the most important of all the skills an individual should possess. As business professionals move up the ranks of management they spend fifty percent more time speaking than in any other management activity (Rader & Wunsch 1980). Not only do they spend more time speaking, but their oral communication is seen as more vital to their success than other skills such as writing. Tom Peters (2010) says "Communication is everyone's panacea for everything". There is no denying the fact that effective communication is at the root of virtually all success which mandates that even engineers, scientists and technocrats need to translate their work into understandable communications so that it can be applied outside their own level of expertise.

An unprecedented rush of information and communication technologies and expansion of international relations have resulted in the globalization of engineering education. The actual potential of an

engineer implies not only his professional knowledge, but also a number of social-humanities skills. These traditionally fall into the category of soft skills while forming the social-humanities competence of an expert. These abilities include self-education, critical and lateral thinking, self-discipline and professional communication (Fofanov et al. 2010).

Corporate demand for employees skilled in interpersonal communication is on the rise as organizational structures have become flatter and transformational leadership styles are fostered more and more. Organizations are working to recruit, promote, develop, and train transformational leaders who connect with employees emotionally and have verbal and coaching skills (Bass 1999, 1990). Numerous studies querying graduates, employers, and faculty members show communication skill as one of the top areas needing improvement among employees and new graduates (Maes, Weldy & Icenogle 1997, Morreale, Osborn & Pearson 2000). Reinsch and Shelby (1996) interviewed students with an average of 3.3 years work experience who were entering the Georgetown University Masters in Business Administration programme and found that their most challenging “workplace episodes were oral events, most of which required the creation or transmission of information”. The students wanted to improve their abilities in a wide range of oral communication areas such as self-confidence, poise, explanatory skills, situational analysis and persuasion. They suggest that students want to develop these skills because it is a real need in the business

world. Recently, Human Resource managers from Fortune 500 corporations included listening, speaking, team participation, and communication of information as most important for business school graduates in the 21st century (Porterfield & Forde 2001). Empirical research links social skills and other communication constructs with various organizational outcomes including job mobility (Kilduff & Day 1994), upward mobility, job level, and pay (Haas & Sypher 1991, Sypher & Zorn 1986), leadership ability (Flauto 1999) and general mental ability and job performance (Ferris, Witt & Hochwarter 2001).

Sometimes communication skills are ignored or relegated to the back seat in favour of more mechanical emphasis on certification in the technical mechanisms of project management via the Project Management Programme and other certifications (Heisler and et.al 2000). He further emphasizes that the incorrect interpretation of communications is “the root cause of many project failures.” In a report presented by FICCI (and prepared by ICRA) “The Skill Development Landscape in India and Implementing Quality Skills Training “ at 3rd Global Skill Summit in 2010 it was found that a major skill gap existed among Indian engineering graduates, thus making a strong case for the engineering colleges and institutions to focus more on employability and quality. The report indicates that 64 percent of surveyed employers are “somewhat”, “not very”, or “not at all” satisfied with the quality of engineering graduates’ skills. The top three most important general skills identified were

integrity, reliability and teamwork, while the top three most important specific skills are entrepreneurship, communication in English and use of modern tools and technologies (Retrieved on 17th Sept.2010 (<http://news.in.msn.com/national/article.aspx?cp-documentid=3373712>)As). According to Ellet (2007) in the “knowledge economy” employees are expected to think and act on their own and with employees distributed all over the world a well written document can be a hidden source of competitive advantage.

Communication Competence

Many scholars have attempted to define interpersonal communication competence: however, the process is likened to “climbing a greased pole” (Phillips 1984: 25) and competence is still considered a “fuzzy” concept (Jablin & Sias 2001: 819). The lack of a widely-accepted definition is due to the complexity of the communication process and the problems with its measurement (Rubin & Martin 1994, Wiemann et al. 1997). Earlier Communication Competence was defined as the ability to communicate with others with accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness (Spitzberg 1998). Trenholm and Jenson (1988) define Communication Competence as the ability to communicate in a personally effective and socially appropriate manner. The operational definition of Communication Competence by Friedrich (1994) suggests that it is a situational ability to set realistic and appropriate goals and to maximize their achievement by using knowledge of self to generate adaptive communica-

tion performances. Jablin and Sias (2001:125) define competence as “the set of abilities, henceforth, termed resources, which a communicator has for use in the communication process”. This definition is a strategic, goal-oriented approach to competence stressing knowledge and ability. Obviously these definitions go beyond communication that simply emphasizes the two main components: knowledge of communication and context and ability to obtain goals (skill). According to Friestad and Wright (1994), the diversity of definitions and treatments of competence exists because of the diversity of what scholars considered the most salient issues to the construct: knowledge (McCroskey 1982), behaviours (Wiemann 1977), or goal attainment (Spitzberg 1983).

Definitions of Communication Competence are becoming more specific as the issue of context is given more consideration. A more contextually sensitive definition of Communication Competence within organizations is the judgment of successful communication where “interactant’s” goals are met using messages that are perceived as appropriate and effective within the organizational context. Communication Competence in organizations involves knowledge of the organization and of communication, ability to carry out skilled behaviours, and one’s motivation to perform competently (Payne 2005).

Few researchers have attempted to systematically study competence within the organizational context. Monge et al. (1982) tested a model representing a performance-based (behavioural) approach.

The Communication Competence Questionnaire (CCQ) focused primarily on skills necessary to accomplish work tasks, and did not include relational forms of communication as essential to workplace communication. Their research does not incorporate motivation or knowledge, the affective and cognitive elements of competence. Few studies in management use the Communication Competence Construct; however, Penley et al. (1991) tested the impact of communication skills (clarity, articulation, and accuracy), motivation (oral, non-verbal, and written communication apprehension), and cognitive skills (cognitive complexity, perspective taking, and self-monitoring) on managerial performance. Results showed higher performing managers had higher verbal communication skills and lower communication apprehension; however, they did not have greater social cognitive ability.

More recently, Jablin et al (1994) and Jablin & Sias (2001) investigated threshold Communication Competencies in organizations. They define threshold Communication Competencies as, "... generic capabilities which are essential to performing jobs, but which are not sufficient to cause superior levels of effectiveness in communication". Jablin et al. (1994) provide a continuum of employee communication progressing from pre-competent to over-competent level. The research highlights that knowing the communication rules of an organization, which are learned primarily through the socialization process, is essential to competent communication.

In another study Payne (2005), applied a three component model of Com-

munication Competence (motivation, knowledge, and skill) within an organizational context and analyzed the relationship between job performance, position level, and Communication Competence. The results revealed that high job performers had significantly higher levels of motivation to adapt communication and higher levels of communication skills. Also, supervisors were more motivated to communicate and empathize than subordinates; level of job performance and job position did not influence level of communication competence.

During the past two decades, most theories of Communication Competence have been developed on the basis of Western conceptualization (Bostrom 1984, Harris 1979, Spitzburg & Cupach 1984, Wiemann 1977) of white, middle class Americans. Communication behaviour that reflects the competence of an individual is culture specific, thus behaviours that are understood as a reflection of competence in one culture may not necessarily be understood as competent in another (Cooley & Roach 1984). Echoing their thought, Miyahara (2010) also, advocates that the notion of Communication Competence as is currently conceptualized by Western researchers may not necessarily be relevant for non-Western cultures. He implies that the overall social, political, and economic surrounds of the Japanese society that influence people's perceptions of norms, rules and competence must be taken into account for a more meaningful and useful approach to theorizing interpersonal Communication Competence for Japanese.

Charoenngam and Jablin (1999), following the above line of thought, conducted an exploratory study to build upon their knowledge of the culture of the Thai people and their organizations to conceptualize and explore the nature of communication competence in Thai organizations. Lee and Chen (2000) in their study examine the relationship between psychological adjustment and cultural Communication Competence among members of immigrant families. Adolescents' host Communication Competence was correlated negatively with psychological problems, whereas their native Communication Competence was non-significantly associated with psychological problems. In addition, interaction between adolescents' host and native Communication Competence and parents' host and native Communication Competence were found to predict adolescent's psychological adjustment.

Collier (2002) selected four approaches to the study of cultural and intercultural competence: ethnography of speaking approaches, behavioural skills approaches, cross cultural attitude approaches, and, finally, an approach thematizing cultural identity and competence.

Communication Competence in the Indian Context

Making the case for the transformational influence that Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) industry has had on the economic and social fabric of the country, Lesikar et al (2009) elaborate that a glance at the fast changing skyline and lifestyle of the inhabitants of

Indian metropolitan cities like Bengaluru, Gurgaon, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai is evidence enough of the impact. Though the Information Technology entrepreneurs like Azim Premji of Wipro, N R Narayana Murthy of Infosys and thousands of engineers from the various premier colleges and Indian Institutes of Technology had already established India's mettle during the 1980's but the country as a whole was still not involved in this process of globalization. According to a National Association for Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) IT-BPO Status Report 2009, "the industry gainfully provides direct employment to 2.23 million people and is creating indirect jobs for about 8 million people...." Indian BPO industry is on a fast track growth providing services to nearly all the Fortune 500 companies and many others, covering every conceivable sector that can be outsourced. The major players being Genpact, WNS Global Services, Wipro BPO, HCL BPO, ICICI OneSource, IBM Daksh, Infosys BPO to name a few (Lesikar, Flatley, Rentz & Pande 2009).

These software firms are seen as exemplars of organizational forms and practices that are relatively new to India. They are relatively flat organizations, with young management teams, informal but professional management styles, and with an emphasis on efficiency, punctuality and other virtues that an export orientation brings (<http://www.bpoindia.org/research/attrition-rate-big-challenge.shtml>). Research indicates that there is a strong link between Communication Competency and success in the

workplace. The present study aims to quantify if the Communication Competence of the Indian IT engineers matches with their professional skills. It explores and assesses if the Indian professionals/ technocrats have the adequate Communication Competence to communicate best in a cross-cultural environment, reduce barriers to communication and manage communication demands that one faces on the job. The study attempts, using the Wiemann and Backlund model (1980) that defines Communication Competence as: "the ability of an interactant to choose among available communicative behaviours in order that he may successfully accomplish his own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintain the face and line of his fellow interactant within the constraints of the situation."

Hypotheses

- 1) Communication Competence varies across age groups
- 2) Communication Competence varies across education groups
- 3) Communication Competence varies across gender
- 4) Communication Competence varies across experience

Survey Instruments

The study was based on the design and administration of a survey. For this purpose the Communication Competence scale by Wiemann and Backlund (1980) was used.

Sample & Data Collection

The list of National Capital Region based I-T organizations was obtained from the NASSCOM database. We contacted over 70 IT companies operating from NCR out of which only 14 organizations agreed to respond to the survey. Data was personally collected from IT firms (mostly from NCR region) for the study. Scales on Communication Competence were administered to managers at the middle and lower management levels. Before administration of the scales the purpose and importance of the study was explained to them and they were requested to respond by providing their free and frank opinions through the given scales. A total of 700 scales were given to 14 firms and a total of 146 filled in scales were received back.

The mean age of the sample was 25.72 years as they were distributed in two age groups: one, with less than 25 years (75 respondents) and the other with 25 years and more (71 respondents). The sample represented an age group with a minimum 28 and a maximum 38 years. The sample was skewed towards the male gender as there were 111 male respondents and 35 female respondents. The respondents were divided into three groups in terms of their education: one, with Bachelors in Engineering / Technology degree (89 respondents), second, with any other Bachelors degree (19 respondents), and third, with Masters degree (38 respondents). With regard to work experience, the sample was divided into two groups: one, with work

experience of 30 months and less (74 respondents), second, with the work experience of more than 30 months (72 respondents).

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted using SPSS 18 package. As a part of preliminary analysis bi-variate correlation was conducted between the 36 variables to test for multi-collinearity. The bi-variate correlation coefficients were well below the critical mark of 0.9 and hence, there did not exist any multi-collinearity issues with the data collected. Also, the coefficients were found to be statistically significant at 95% confidence interval.

Iteration 1

In the 1st iteration, the KMO statistic was found to be 0.594 at significance level of 99%, which was sufficiently higher than the critical mark of 0.5 and hence the sample size was adequate enough to attain distinct and reliable factors. This iteration yielded 14 factors which in total explained 72% of variance. There were 6 factors which had only one variable loaded on them. These variables which loaded individually on 6 separate factors were q4, q35, q18, q20, q1, q2. There were eight other variables (q3, q5, q8, q9, q10, q16, q22, q34) that had very low factor scores (less than 0.4) and hence were not considered to be loaded on any factors.

Iteration 2

As there were 6 factors that had just one variable loaded on them, we ignored

these variables, and continued the second iteration with the 8 variables that didn't load on any factors. In the 2nd iteration the KMO statistic was found to be 0.615 at a significance level of 99%, which was sufficiently higher than the critical mark of 0.5 and hence, the sample size was adequate enough to attain distinct and reliable factors. This iteration yielded 10 factors which in total explained 64% of variance. There were 2 factors which had only one variable loaded on them (q16 & q9). There were seven other variables (q8, q11, q12, q14, q22, q28, q31) that had very low factor scores (less than 0.4) and hence weren't considered to be loaded on any factors.

Iteration 3

In the third and final iteration, we ignored the variables that loaded individually on 6 separate factors during iteration 1 and also 8 others that had low factor scores. We took this decision because these variables were either loading individually to factors or had less factor scores in either of the two earlier iterations. The behaviour of these variables indicated that they were unsuitable for Indian context and probably were not required. In the 3rd iteration the KMO statistic was found to be 0.669 (Table 1) at significance level of 99%, which was sufficiently higher than the critical mark of 0.5. It could be concluded that the sample size was adequate enough to attain distinct and reliable factors. The third iteration yielded 7 factors which in total explained 62% of variance (Table 2), which is reasonable. We yet had four variables q11, q12, q14 & q28 (Table 3)

that had very low factor scores and hence could not be considered to loading on any factor. Based on a qualitative assessment we could identify seven distinct factors: listening (q7, q17, q25, q27), extrovert (q23, q26, q29, q32), openness (q33, q36), understanding (q15, q19), effectiveness (q6, q21), flexible (q30, q31), empathy (q13, q24).

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.669
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	798.979
	Df	231
	Sig.	.000

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.381	19.912	19.912	4.381	19.912	19.912	2.614	11.883	11.883
2	2.148	9.765	29.677	2.148	9.765	29.677	2.136	9.709	21.592
3	1.999	9.087	38.763	1.999	9.087	38.763	2.108	9.583	31.174
4	1.570	7.139	45.902	1.570	7.139	45.902	1.824	8.289	39.463
5	1.314	5.971	51.873	1.314	5.971	51.873	1.790	8.137	47.600
6	1.151	5.231	57.104	1.151	5.231	57.104	1.687	7.668	55.268
7	1.101	5.005	62.109	1.101	5.005	62.109	1.505	6.841	62.109
8	.947	4.305	66.414						
9	.852	3.872	70.286						
10	.817	3.715	74.001						
11	.734	3.338	77.339						
12	.668	3.035	80.374						
13	.646	2.935	83.308						
14	.631	2.868	86.176						
15	.538	2.444	88.621						
16	.492	2.235	90.856						
17	.432	1.962	92.818						
18	.407	1.851	94.669						
19	.367	1.667	96.336						
20	.324	1.475	97.811						
21	.279	1.266	99.077						
22	.203	.923	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q6					.698		
q7	.663						
q11					-.644		
q12			-.584				
q13							.577
q14							
q15				.802			
q17	.829						
q19				.718			
q21					.704		
q23		.613					
q24							.814
q25	.801						
q26		.652					
q27	.580						
q28							
q29		.755					
q30						.817	
q31						.735	
q32		.661					
q33			.742				
q36			.806				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

ANOVA

Age: The mean age was 25.72 years with standard deviation of 3.79 years and variance of 14.35. We hypothesized that as respondents grew older, their Communication Competence would mature with time and with increased experience it would be better for older age group than younger age group.

H1: Communication Competence is dissimilar across age groups

The above table results indicate that H1 was not supported. The low F-val-

ues indicate that between two age groups the variance was very low and hence they overlapped each other to a great extent indicating fewer differences between them.

Education: We hypothesized that respondents with professional and higher degrees would be comparatively more matured than respondents with Bachelors degree and hence would have developed better Communication Competencies.

H2: Communication Competence is dissimilar across education groups.

Table 4: ANOVA Results (H1)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Listening	Between Groups	.131	1	.131	.413	.521
	Within Groups	45.659	144	.317		
	Total	45.790	145			
Extrovert	Between Groups	.007	1	.007	.014	.905
	Within Groups	74.638	144	.518		
	Total	74.646	145			
Openness	Between Groups	.129	1	.129	.373	.542
	Within Groups	49.750	144	.345		
	Total	49.878	145			
Understanding	Between Groups	.015	1	.015	.043	.836
	Within Groups	50.733	144	.352		
	Total	50.748	145			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	.009	1	.009	.022	.884
	Within Groups	59.958	144	.416		
	Total	59.967	145			
Flexible	Between Groups	.755	1	.755	2.361	.127
	Within Groups	46.026	144	.320		
	Total	46.781	145			
Empathy	Between Groups	.190	1	.190	.285	.594
	Within Groups	95.817	144	.665		
	Total	96.007	145			

Table 5: ANOVA Results (H2)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Listening	Between Groups	4.367	2	2.183	7.537	.001
	Within Groups	41.423	143	.290		
	Total	45.790	145			
Extrovert	Between Groups	.270	2	.135	.259	.772
	Within Groups	74.376	143	.520		
	Total	74.646	145			
Openness	Between Groups	.912	2	.456	1.331	.267
	Within Groups	48.967	143	.342		
	Total	49.878	145			
Understanding	Between Groups	.246	2	.123	.348	.706
	Within Groups	50.502	143	.353		
	Total	50.748	145			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	.098	2	.049	.117	.890
	Within Groups	59.869	143	.419		
	Total	59.967	145			
Flexible	Between Groups	.500	2	.250	.772	.464
	Within Groups	46.281	143	.324		
	Total	46.781	145			
Empathy	Between Groups	2.640	2	1.320	2.022	.136
	Within Groups	93.367	143	.653		
	Total	96.007	145			

The above table results indicate that H2 was not supported. The low F-values indicate that between the three education groups the variance was very low and hence they overlapped each other to a great extent indicating fewer differences between them.

Work Experience: We hypothesized that respondents with higher work experience during their professional career would be comparatively more matured and would have developed better Communication Competencies than the respondents in their early career stage.

H3: Communication Competence is dissimilar across work experience groups

The above table results indicate that H3 was not supported. The low F-values indicate that between the three education groups the variance was very low and hence they overlapped each other to a great extent indicating fewer differences between them.

Gender: There have been studies in the past which have indicated that women tend to have better communication skills due to higher patience, listening capability etc. compared to that of males.

H4: Communication Competence is dissimilar across gender

Table 6: ANOVA Results (H3)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Listening	Between Groups	.008	1	.008	.027	.871
	Within Groups	43.300	136	.318		
	Total	43.309	137			
Extrovert	Between Groups	.011	1	.011	.022	.883
	Within Groups	71.019	136	.522		
	Total	71.031	137			
Openness	Between Groups	.256	1	.256	.737	.392
	Within Groups	47.253	136	.347		
	Total	47.509	137			
Understanding	Between Groups	.007	1	.007	.019	.890
	Within Groups	49.486	136	.364		
	Total	49.493	137			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	.546	1	.546	1.293	.257
	Within Groups	57.447	136	.422		
	Total	57.993	137			
Flexible	Between Groups	.687	1	.687	2.074	.152
	Within Groups	45.090	136	.332		
	Total	45.777	137			
Empathy	Between Groups	.040	1	.040	.057	.811
	Within Groups	94.786	136	.697		
	Total	94.826	137			

The above results indicate that H4 was not supported. The low F-values indicate that between the three education groups the variance was very low and hence they overlapped each other to a great extent indicating fewer differences between them.

Discussion & Conclusion

Most studies in the communication area have only addressed competence from a skills perspective (Monge et al. 1982). This research expands traditional approaches to the study of communication in organizations beyond a social

Table 7: ANOVA Results (H4)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Listening	Between Groups	.934	1	.934	3.109	.080
	Within Groups	42.983	143	.301		
	Total	43.918	144			
Extrovert	Between Groups	1.264	1	1.264	2.464	.119
	Within Groups	73.368	143	.513		
	Total	74.632	144			
Openness	Between Groups	.373	1	.373	1.109	.294
	Within Groups	48.034	143	.336		
	Total	48.407	144			
Understanding	Between Groups	.030	1	.030	.084	.772
	Within Groups	50.718	143	.355		
	Total	50.748	144			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	.088	1	.088	.209	.648
	Within Groups	59.854	143	.419		
	Total	59.941	144			
Flexible	Between Groups	.047	1	.047	.144	.705
	Within Groups	46.591	143	.326		
	Total	46.638	144			
Empathy	Between Groups	.298	1	.298	.446	.505
	Within Groups	95.609	143	.669		
	Total	95.907	144			

skills approach using Wiemann’s (1977) scale of Communication Competence, which incorporates listening, extrovert, openness, understanding, effectiveness, flexibility and empathy. The primary findings of this research did not show support for any of the hypothesis and has resulted in startling inferences. Hence, it could be inferred that demographic variables have not been strong enough to differentiate the Communication Competencies between groups.

There could be three possible explanations for the same:

- i) The nature of the industry (i.e. IT services) by default needs every employee to be high on Communication Competence and hence due care would have been taken at the recruitment stage itself.
- ii) Alternatively, they would have been imparted regular communication skills

development training programs because of which no major difference was found between the groups.

- iii) Also, their frequent travelling to different geographic locations and exposure to wider diaspora could have helped them in honing their communication competency

Managers in IT sector in India are skilled at interaction management which includes fluency, verbal ability, and social adaptability.

The results of the data analysis indicate that managers in IT sector in India are skilled at interaction management which includes fluency, verbal ability, and social adaptability (these were some of the parameters the managers were tested on). They manage interactions because they have the ability to speak fluently, use their voice and body expressively to communicate, generally say the right thing at the right time, and more importantly, do not impose their views on others. They were found to be effective conversationalists, adapting their communication, and managing interactions with people including strangers with comfort irrespective of their age, education, gender or work experience. They find it easy to get along with others since they treat people as individuals, understand them by placing themselves in their shoe and let them know that they understand what they mean. They do not make unusual demands on them, are flexible and adapt to changing situations by not arguing with someone just to prove that they are right.

Managers in IT sector in India are flexible enough to adapt to conversational partners and contexts. They generally know what type of behaviour

It seems clear that managing interactions is inseparable from adaptability. Adaptability is the ability to perceive relationships and adapt messages accordingly (Duran 1992) and the results indicate that managers in IT sector in India are flexible enough to adapt to conversational partners and contexts. They generally know what type of behaviour is appropriate in any given situation. They are aware what others feel and display sensitivity to others' needs of the moment. They make the other person know that they understand what he/she means and are supportive of the same. These specific skills assist managers in getting along with others who in turn find it rewarding to talk to them and share their problems with them respectively. They are good listeners, pay attention to the conversations and are genuinely interested in what others have to say. They have the ability to reciprocate affect displays, send verbal responses showing understanding and feelings for others, and listen actively. The results further show that the Communication Competency of the IT managers helps them build warm relationships with people. They are close and personal with people.

These superior levels of effectiveness in communication found in managers in the IT and ITes sector that go beyond the threshold Communication Competency

could be attributed to the fact that the manager in the IT sector have to travel a lot within and outside India. They work closely with people who come from different parts of the world, leading to the increased awareness of Indians about the different value systems prevalent in different parts of the world. More so since their predominant business partners happen to be from US and the Europe, they could have been impacted heavily by the Western values such as open communication, collaboration, trust, authenticity, autonomy, and confrontation for resolving conflicts (Pareek 1988). The close interaction with geographically spread audience and the periodic interventions could be the factors impacting the Communication Competency of the managers. This work clearly supports communication as a potential contributor in building effective interpersonal and harmonious working relationships. High levels of Communication Competence are important to organizations. The communication skill dimensions supported by this study are all critical thinking skills involving empathy, effective listening, adaptability and flexibility. High levels of affective, cognitive, and behavioural competence components are essential for establishing and developing strong relationships within organizational systems.

Future Research

Using sample organizations from the same sector to assess the Communication Competence of the managers is sufficient; however, different companies especially from different sectors have different rules of communicating, or different criteria for evaluating the appropriate-

ness or effectiveness of communication and different communication environment. For this reason, future research should apply this model to different types of organizations to ensure if the managers in other sectors also display the same communication competence as in IT and ITes sector. Future directions might involve a comparative study of testing Communication Competence of managers from multinational companies and managers from the typically Indian companies which should throw light on the role of organizational culture in impacting the Communication Competence of their employees.

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