

# Management Concepts In Ancient Tamil Literature - A Study With A Special Reference To Communication Concepts In Kambaramayana

**M. Ramani**

Ph.D Scholar, Vels University, Pallavaram Vels Univeristy,  
Pallavaram, Chennai

**Dr R Magesh**

Professor, Department of Management Studies,  
College of Engineering- Guindy, Chennai

**Abstract:** *Kambaramayana, a famous Tamil Epic translated by Kambar from the Sanskrit version of Valmiki Ramayana., is about the story of King Rama. Many verses in the Ramayana of Kambar encompass a variety of Management concepts. This paper focuses primarily on Communications. Communication is the process of transmitting facts, figures, information and ideas from one to one and/or many through media or channels with proper feedback. Kambar has adopted several communication strategies such as non-verbal communications and Non-human communications in numerous verses in Kambaramayana.*

**Keywords:** *Communications, Non-Human communications, Body language, Strategy, Hanuman, Natural Events*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tamil is the oldest and classical Indian language steeped with a several treasure of wisdom, steeped with rich traditions and elocution in literatures. It is quite interesting to note that many management concepts currently practiced universally have been quoted in Tamil literatures at such and early age. Kambaramayana is one among such immortal literatures, translated by Kambar (who is supposed to have lived from 1180-1250 AD) from Sanskrit version of Valmiki Ramayana. Kambar has handled the subject deftly by making slight changes to Valmiki Ramayan and to suit the cultural sensitivities of the Tamil. His works have drawn large number of research scholars for an application of many universal truths, described therein, which are ageless and timeless. Many verses in Ramayana of Kambar encompasses variety of Management concepts such as Planning, Organising, Directing (Motivating, leading, Communicating) and controlling. This paper focuses how the immortal bard adapts communication strategy in his magnum opus.

## A. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study and examine the communication strategy adopted by Kambar in Kambaramayana and its relevance to the present day functioning.

## B. METHODS OF RESEARCH

This is a descriptive research concerned with communication found in Kambaramayanam. Standard Textbooks, journal articles on communication management were referred, studied and analyzed. There are a number of books written on Kambaramayanam. Primary data are also collected in person through guest lecture and other mode from focusing groups by administering constructed questionnaire comprising of some Events, Statements and Narrations found in Kamba Ramayanam in connection with communication aspects. The target groups are selected on the basis following criteria. (a) Respondents should have Tamil as a mother tongue (b) Should involve in Managerial and administrative practices and exposures. As such primary data collected from 121 samples comprising of IAS/IPS officers and High officials (not lower than district level rank) including Decision

making authorities, Controller(s) of Examinations, Principals and Correspondents and Entrepreneurs. The data are compiled and statistically analyzed by using the simple average method.

## II. COMMUNICATIONS IN KAMBA RAMAYANA

### A. ORAL AND FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

Proper communication eliminates delays, confusion, misunderstanding, distortions and bottlenecks

#### a. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN KOONI AND KAIKEYI

Mandharai alias Kooni, the servant maid by her dexterity in communications converts Kaikeyi the queen as a sworn enemy of lord Rama and compels her husband Dasaratha to exile Rama to the forest for 14 long years. This is one of the best examples of Negative Communication.

#### b. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN KAIKEYI AND RAMA

Kaikeyee came in Rama's chariot and said

*"There is one thing Rama., which the father commands the to do"*

and in the words of Kambar

*She said, The King commands all the earth  
By ocean girt thy brother Bharath shall rule  
And thou shalt wear the twisted Knot and tread  
The forest wide with Saintly steps and bathe  
In sacred waters, and in fourteen years*

Rama's reply to Kaikeyi was calm and filled with heroism of renunciation

*Even were it not my father's royal will*

.....

.....

*Less dear to me than mine? I say no more*

*I take the best command a sacred duty;*

*Behold, this very day I start and take My leave"*

-(Mandharai choozhchi padalam-Ayothy kadam-109-114)

Rama upheld the promise made by his father and took up the challenge in facing all that was to follow because of such a decision. He eventually braved all odds and took all the risks to uphold the promise made by a king ie his father (king Dasaratha) gave to Kaikeyi.

#### c. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RAMA AND SITA

Rama went to Sita's palace and tried to dissuade her from following him into the forest by telling her that she could not stand the forest heat. She restored as follows; (convincing Rama)

*Eendu nin pirivinum sudumo*

*Perunkadu?*

*Can huge forest burn*

*Hotter than parting? (222-Nagar Neengu Padalam-Ayothy Kadam)*

#### d. HANUMAN AS A GOOD COMMUNICATOR-EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Lord Rama was in total distress as he is not able to trace the whereabouts of his wife Sita. To relieve this stress Hanuman first conveyed the message that had located Sita at Lanka. 'Kandanan' refers to the Hanuman reporting of his finding of Sita in Ravana's garden in Lanka. Kambar alludes to Rama's eagerness to hear good news about Sita, and Hanuman not adding to the suspense dispel all fears harboured by Rama by starting his statement with an affirmative and positive work 'kandanan'. This word alone has created the wide range of discussion in various forums and heated debates.

*Seen have I, the jewel of chastity with my own eyes*

*In the southern city of Sri Lanka on the clear twirling wavy ocean,*

*Lords of Gods! From now on relinquish doubts and all Your sufferings*

*Said Hanuman and continued with his details*

-(The Return to Rama Padalam-Sundara Kadam (25))

Here Kambar applied A B C of communications-

A- Authenticity-----Seen I have

B- Brevity-----Chastity

C- Clarity-----Eyes

Always communicate Truth, in Brevity with Clarity

#### e. NASA'S FAILURE IN COMMUNICATION

The Space Shuttle Challenger disaster was probably the most significant event, in terms of its impact on the US space program, in the history of spaceflight. On the bitter cold morning of January 28<sup>th</sup> 1986, seven astronauts on-board Space Shuttle Challenger lost their lives in front of family, friends, and millions of TV viewers. The vehicle broke up 73 seconds into the flight, burning nearly 2 million liters of fuel in just a few seconds that created a sinister cloud of gas.

Lack of effective and failure in communication, combined with a management structure that allowed NASA to bypass safety requirements, was the organizational cause of the Challenger disaster.

#### f. MUMBAI BROKERAGE ISSUE

One morning, a young trader at a Mumbai brokerage made the biggest mistake of confusing the value of a client's order with the number of shares. Instead of selling stocks worth Rs 34 lakh, he punched in orders that amounted to a Rs 650-crore selloff. Within seconds, the market went into a tailspin and his employer, Emkay Global was left scrambling for cash.

#### g. ANGATHA AS ENVOY

Before initiating war proceedings against Lanka, Rama sent Angatha, son of Vali, as envoy to Ravana's court to have a final dialogue and negotiations. Rama knew the power of negotiations, talks and communications which are very helpful in solving problems. ms at the initial level and patiently. After

reaching Ravana's court, Angatha introduced himself in following manner

*I am a messenger who has been sent  
To tell you something, by the Lord of the elements.  
And also of the sea-gin earth,  
Sita's husband, the God of gods,  
The ultimate of your Vedas  
And the fate which controls the fate (21)  
And also continued as  
"There was a Ravana once upon a time  
Whom the son of Indra tied with his tail  
With his many lovely shoulders  
And jumped across many elephant-filled hills.  
He also churned the sea for the Gods  
With Mandra, to get them nectar.  
I happened to be his son", he said.*

-(13. Angatha's Envoy Padalam (24) -Yudha Kandan)

Here Angatha boldly introduced himself before Ravana, one who was defeated by his father Vali and disclosed his identity in his unique way. This was paralleled to that a Businessman /Manager introduces himself before a meeting or a new person with highlighting his company's profile. Also, he narrated the purpose of his visit.

"He who will never give up his grace  
Sent for me today and said.

"Tell me the sinner who is dooming  
His entire clan to their death  
And, afraid to face a battle,  
Is hiding himself in his fortress,  
That he must surrender now  
Either the lady to me  
Or else his life in the battle field

-(13. Angatha's Envoy Padalam (31) -Yudha Kandan)

## B. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION (BODY LANGUAGE)

Hedwig Lewis (2000) defined as body language, "Body language is the communication of personal feelings, emotions, attitudes, thoughts through body movements-gestures, postures facial expressions, walking styles, positions and distance-either consciously or involuntarily, more often subconsciously, and accompanied by the spoken language.

Now it is discussed that how Kambar adapted Non verbal communication strategy in Kambaramayana.

### a. RAMA AND SITA IN THE ROAD SIDE OF MITHILAI

The message Communicated is as follows:

The poet Kambar conveys this as "Annalum Nokinal Avalum Nokinal". This is the best example of Silent Communication though amorous glances at each other

*Eye caught Eye, in Pairs and  
Each other devoured; their feelings brought to a standstill  
The Prince stood looking at the Princess and the  
Princess stood looking at the Prince*

(Mithila Padalam-Balakandan-Translated by Justice Maharajan)

At the streets of Mithila, along with Viswamamitra and Lakshmana, Rama had a brief glimpse of Sita's beauty with a glimpse of beauty who is standing on the balcony. Kambar beautifully describes the fleeting rapturous moment.

### b. NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION/ NON HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Kambaran indulges in a vivid portrayal of the entry of Rama into Mithila and the chance encounter with Sita and their mutual veneration towards each other, which forms the most beautiful part of the Balakanda. A beautiful town Mithila as it was further engulfed with charm when Ram entered all the "Mani Kodigal" (the Ivys) seemed to welcomed Ram and it looked as though the entire kingdom was welcoming Ram and beckoning "Come Rama.. The suite is waiting for you."

The very first verse in the 'Mithilaikkatchi padalam,' when they are nearing the fort of Janaka, is very enchanting.

*That fortified city with its jewelled flags  
Seemed to welcome with open arms  
The Prince with the lotus eyes  
And ask him to hurry up  
To meet the goddess who had left*

.....  
.....  
*The saw the flags on the terraces  
Dancing like the nympts in heaven  
At the thought of the young man  
Come to wed their Princess*

(Balakandan- Mithilai katchi padalam- 480 &481)

The fluttering flags atop the fort of Mithila, looked as if hands were waving and saying that Sridevi has come to reside there forsaking her abode of lotus due to the penance done by the people of the land and as though beseeching Rama to come forward to claim the hand of Sita.

### c. AT THE TIME OF DEPARTURE OF RAMA FROM AYODHYA

The learned poet Kambar analogies the gloom and the grief of the common people with few natural events on the eve of the departure of Rama from Ayodhya. Unable to bear the pangs of grief, Dasaratha the foremost and the citizens at large; even the domestic animals like the cows, elephants, their calves the trees wept profusely. The pain and agony was so profound

*Similar to the king Dasaratha, the cows cried, their calves cried,*

*The flowers which have opened that same day cried, the water birds cried,*

*The gardens that drip honey cried, elephants cried,  
And the war horses which move with the speed of  
wind also cried. (98)*

-(Ayothiya Kandan-Nagar Neengu Padalam)

## C. MIS-COMMUNICATIONS

When Vali fought the demon Mayavee and had to enter a cave during their fight, he ordered Sugreeva to keep a watch

outside till he came back out of the cave. After nearly a year's wait when neither Bali nor the demon came out, but the blood flowed out of the cave. Sugreeva thought that both have been killed. So he went back to Kishkindha and became its ruler. Eventually Vali returned and on seeing Sugreeva as king, Vali momentarily thought that he had been betrayed. This caused mortal enmity between the two brothers which originated by a terrible miscommunication.

So it is imperative to be beware of miscommunication at all stages, whether in an acquisition or in the management of talent otherwise it will lead to serious management failure.

Some of the recent examples are (i) Nokia encountered market failure because of the communication that favored unfocused discussions about strategy and less emphasis on clear plans to bring about new phone models in the market" (ii) Enron's collapse and (iii) British Petroleum oil disaster.

#### a. BRITISH PETROLEUM OIL DISASTER

British Petroleum is the third largest energy company & the fourth largest company in the world, and one of the six gas super major measured by 2011 measured revenue. It operates over in over 80 countries and has 21,800 service stations worldwide. Its Production is about 3.4 million barrels per day. This disaster claimed 11 lives, 17 Injured and 6,104 birds, 609 Sea Turtles and 100 Dolphins reported to be dead The loss to Gulf tourism was accounted for more than \$22 billion. The reasons behind this disaster that BP seems to ignore the role of crisis communication, before, during and after the crisis. Specifically, BP seems to ignore that communication during the first hours of a crisis can have remarkable implications for the company image and brand

The White House oil spill commission report also pointed out that bad management and a communications breakdown by BP and its Macondo well partners caused the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico

Dale Carnegie, has reiterated "90 percent of all management problems are caused by miscommunication." In his bestseller "How to Make Friends and Influence People,"

### III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### A. RESPONDENTS PROFILE

The percentage distribution of the respondents' profile is shown in Fig2. Out of 121 respondents, 25 (20%) are IAS Officers, 25 (20%) are IPS Officers, 25 (20%) are Entrepreneurs and remaining 61 (40%) are from other officials like District level officers, Principals, Controller of Examinations etc.

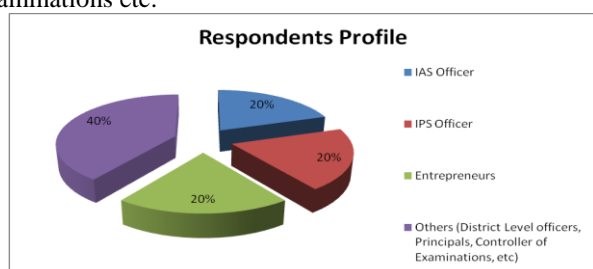


Figure 2: Profile of Respondents

#### B. EFFECTIVE AND POWERFUL COMMUNICATION

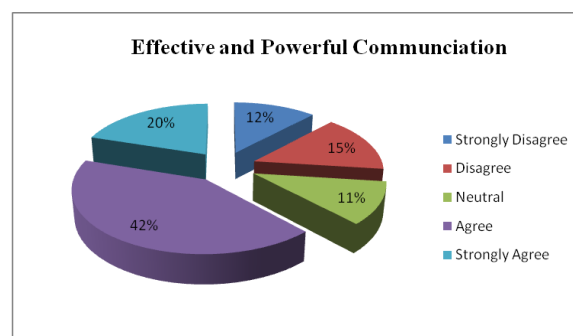


Figure 3: Effective and powerful Communication

In the area of effect and powerful communication (Fig 3), around 16% of the total respondents strongly agree, 36% of the respondents are agreeing, 21% remains neutral followed by 15% and 12% of respondents are disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively.

*Inference:* In the area of effect and powerful communication in kambaramayana, around 62 % of respondents are toeing my line of investigation in this great work.

#### C. NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

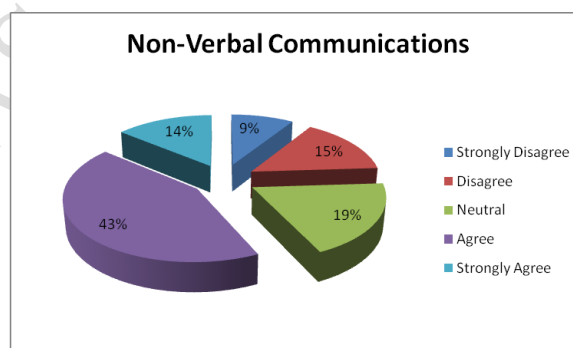


Figure 4: Non-Verbal communications

In concern with Non Verbal Communication (Fig 4), around 20% of the total respondents strongly agree, 42% of the respondents are agreeing, 19% remains neutral followed by 15% and 9% of respondents are disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively.

*Inference:* In the area of Non-verbal communication in kambaramayana, around 57 % of respondents are toeing my line of investigation in this great work.

#### D. CONVINCING COMMUNICATION

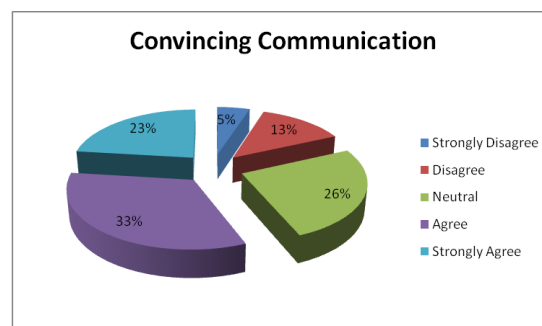


Figure 5: Convincing communications

With respect to Convincing Communication (Fig 5), around 23% of the total respondents are strongly agreeing, 33% of the respondents are agreeing, 26% remains neutral followed by 13% and 5% of respondents are disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively.

**Inference:** In the area of Convincing communications in kamabaramayana, around 56 % of respondents are toeing my line of investigation in this great work.

#### E. MIS-COMMUNICATIONS

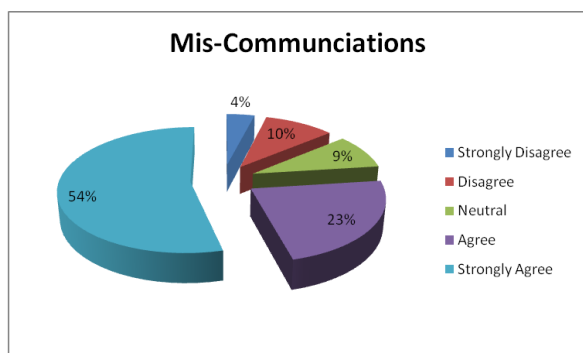


Figure 6: Mis-Communciations

In regards to Mis-Communication (Fig 6), around 54% of the total respondents are strongly agreeing, 23% of the respondents are agreeing, 9% remains neutral followed by 10% and 4% of respondents are disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively.

**Inference:** In the area of Mis-Communications in kamabaramayana, around 58 % of respondents are toeing my line of investigation in this great work.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing is a short narrative of my conviction as to how the immortal bard through his unique vision focused on the managerial implication in is monumental work Ramayana as it is existed during those times which are more revelent to your modern times as well. Hordes of scholars have already

researched on various issues of Kamabaramayana and presented their verses more exhaustively. But mine is just a specific study on the subject of managerial communication with my own yardstick from kamabaramayam. The researcher had endeavored to cite examples of how concurrence and typical are the impression of his great visionary the trends parallel to our modern milieu.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Aiyar, V. V. S. (1950). *Kamba Ramayanam, a Study: With Translation in Verse Or Poetic Prose of Over Four Thousand of the Original Poems*. Delhi Tamil Sangam. Publications-New Delhi,1952
- [2] ET Bureau. *Communication error at Emkay leads to Rs 650-crore selloff; Nifty crashes by 900 points* Economic Times, Oct 6, 2012, Mumbai City Edition
- [3] Carnegie, D. (2010). *How to win friends and influence people*. Simon and Schuster.-
- [4] Hunde (1996) *Kambaramayanam – an English prose rendering-Bharatiya Vidyaya Bhavan Mumbai,1996*
- [5] Lewis, H. (2012). *Body language: A guide for professionals*. SAGE Publications India.
- [6] Maharajan, S. (1996). *Kamban*. Sahitya Akademi. Mumbai, 1998
- [7] Narayan, Rasipuram Krishnaswami. *The Ramayana: a shortened modern prose version of the Indian epic*. Penguin, 1972.
- [8] Pal, K. (2008). *Management Process and Organizational Behaviour*. IK International Publishing House Pvt. Limited
- [9] Sundaram (1989) *Kambaramayanam English translation* Published by Department of Tamil Development – Culture, Government of Tamilnadu 1989
- [10] Goldenberg, S. (2010). BP oil spill blamed on management and communication failures. *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/dec/02/bp-oil-spill-failures>.